

**Bronx Community College**  
**PRESIDENT’S REPORT TO THE COLLEGE SENATE – NOVEMBER 2017**  
*Thomas A. Isekenegbe, Ph.D.*

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As we get closer to the end of this Fall 2017 semester, there is so much exciting news to share. Bronx Community College is thriving in our 60<sup>th</sup> year and experiencing great positive movement as an institution. The following are some of the highlights from the recent past and activities we look forward to in the remainder of November.

BCC ranked 6<sup>th</sup> among Associate Degree-granting institutions in The Chronicle of Higher Education’s top 10 lists of public U.S. campuses with great success in moving low-income students into the middle class (i.e. Social-Mobility Rate). We were placed among the top 1,000 colleges among the 27,770 analyzed worldwide. In the 2017 paper, “Mobility Report Cards: The Role of Colleges in Intergenerational Mobility”, students were tracked from nearly every U.S. college, including non-graduates, and measured their subsequent earnings against millions of anonymous tax filings and financial-aid records. They looked to see how well colleges helped students whose parents were in the bottom 20 percent of income levels reach the top 20 percent for individual earnings. This is exactly the kind of work we are here to do and I am proud to announce that we are recognized on the world stage for this level of student success.

As part of Mission Possible, President Isekenegbe has challenged Bronx Community College to reach a goal of 35% three-year graduation rate by the college’s 65<sup>th</sup> anniversary in 2022. To kick start this campaign, we launched a student contest for a logo design and tagline. Students were tasked with creating a “35 by 65” campaign logo, with or without a tagline, that can get everyone on board with this initiative. The first prize winner will receive \$500 and the second prize winner will receive \$200. Submitted concepts, if selected, would provide the foundation for the final logo. The deadline for all submissions is Tuesday, December 12, 2017. For any student interested in more information about the contest, please have them contact Professor Lisa Amowitz at [lisa.amowitz@bcc.cuny.edu](mailto:lisa.amowitz@bcc.cuny.edu). Additional activities designed to accomplish this goal will be shared during our Spring 2018 Convocation.

This Fall, I am pleased to share that BCC has 40 student clubs and organizations chartered and recertified (including 8 new clubs). Voter registration initiatives were successful with 550 new voters registered on campus, thanks to the efforts of NYPIRG and others. The Office of Student Life continues its student-focused work, collaborating with the BCC Food Pantry for a Fall Food Harvest drive. The Annual SGA Halloween Party and Costume Contest took place on October 27<sup>th</sup> from 9:00 pm - 1:00 am and was attended by over 250 CUNY students. Collection efforts for Hurricane and Earthquake relief resulted in over 2,500 items collected and donated to Puerto Rico via the Empire State Relief and Recovery Effort; Antigua and Barbuda via the Consulate General of Antigua and Barbuda; and the Virgin Islands, Puerto Rico and Mexico via The Bronx Federation of Teachers, Parent Committee. A special thank you to Edwin Roman and Monique Guishard for helping coordinate and to Jose Bisono, Mark Guido, and Robert Parsons, who delivered two truckloads of goods around The Bronx.

On October 20<sup>th</sup>, the Office of Advancement, Communications and External Relations, in collaboration with local community partner, Union Community Health Center (UHC), convened a meeting of local partners with the purpose of establishing a Hurricane Maria Bronx Taskforce. The overarching purpose of this first meeting was to discuss a unified plan to best serve individuals and families who migrate to the Bronx from areas affected by the hurricane. The meeting served as an opportunity for organizations and government officials from across sectors—education, health, housing and workforce—to meet in person to discuss ways to most adequately serve those affected, with a focus on establishing a streamlined referral process. To support future students who have been displaced by hurricane, BCC is working on establish a Hurricane Maria Emergency Relief Fund.

BCC continues to offer the Leadership Certificate Series, which offers a variety of leadership and professional development topics to enhance and develop a student’s leadership potential. Students have the opportunity to earn a leadership certificate by completing program requirements. Leadership Certificates are presented during the Annual Excellence in Leadership Awards. We have also continued the Lunch with Leaders Seminar Series – an informal opportunity for students to gather, listen and participate in a free-ranging discussion presented by successful leaders. Students have a chance to better understand the requisite skills for entry and success in various career fields, and to hear personal anecdotes about how these leaders succeeded, challenges they faced, and career advice they want to share. Remaining Fall 2017 speakers include Mr. Famod Konneh, Bronx Borough Director with the NYC Office of the Mayor in the Community Affairs Unit (November 14, 2017 from 12:00 pm-2:00 pm) and CUNY Trustee Una S. T-Clarke, B.S., M.S., C.D. (December 5, 2017 from 12:00 pm – 2:00 pm). Please encourage your students to attend.

Thank you again to everyone who participated in BCC's 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary gala. 291 attendees enjoyed a one of a kind sunset cocktail reception in the Hall of Fame that included memorable performances from students and alumni. Over \$200K was raised for student resources and BCC was highlighted on November 8, 2017 in a BRONXTimes article.

The BCC Foundation will kick off the Season of Giving with its partner Municipal Credit Union (MCU). MCU will donate 100 turkeys to BCC on November 16<sup>th</sup> from noon-2:00 pm in the RBSC Playhouse Auditorium for raffle for BCC students. On November 28<sup>th</sup>, BCC will take part in the national movement, Giving Tuesday. Building off of the success of last year's campaign, we encourage the entire college community to use this opportunity to participate in fundraising in support of scholarships and emergency assistance for BCC students.

Please join me in congratulating members of the BCC community on grants received in September/October 2017. \$1.5M was awarded by the NYSED through the Liberty Partnership Program (PI Simone Rodriguez-Dorestant). \$555K was awarded by the Robin Hood Foundation for Future Now (PI Elizabeth Payamps). \$150K was awarded by the Petrie Foundation for a Preschool Career Path Program (PI Madelaine Centeno). \$124,615 was awarded by the NYSED for the Displaced Homemaker Program (PI Blanche Kellawon). \$672,756 was awarded the NYC Department of Small Business Services for a new healthcare training program. The program, to be launched in 2018, will prepare students to become Certified Recovery Peer Advocates (CRPAs) who can provide coaching, support, information, guidance, and motivation to those seeking or sustaining recovery from a substance abuse diagnosis. BCC's training program will mirror the only other CRPA training program currently offered by CUNY (at Queensborough Community College). As a "stackable credential", this training will offer students the chance to earn up to three credits toward the BCC AS Degree in Public Health. BCC students interested in learning more can contact Michael McShea in the office of Workforce Development and Continuing Education. This grant application was written by members of the Office of Workforce Development and Continuing Education, working in collaboration with Department Chair Janet Heller and Assistant Professor Stacia Reader (Health, Physical Education and Recreation).

On September 21<sup>st</sup>, the United States Post Office located on Jerome Avenue was rededicated the "Dr. Roscoe C. Brown, Jr. Post Office." Congressman Jose E. Serrano, a lifelong friend of our BCC President Emeritus, led the effort to have both Houses of Congress and Former President Barak Obama pass the law rededicating the Post Office in Dr. Brown's honor. Former Mayor David Dinkins and Bronx Borough President Rueben Diaz Jr. were also in attendance to honor Dr. Brown's contribution and legacy to the United States, The Bronx, and CUNY.

October 12<sup>th</sup>, Astronaut Lee M. Morin visited the campus for some down-to-Earth talk with middle- and high school students and current BCC science majors about the futures that could await them in the "STEM" fields. Astronaut Lee M. Morin served on the International Space Station and spent three months in orbit around the earth, including 14 hours of spacewalking. Dr. Morin discussed his experiences as a highly honored scientist-astronaut and his unique perspective on STEM careers and then answered questions from the audience. Dr. Morin was accompanied by U.S. Congressman Jose E. Serrano, a ranking member of the House Appropriations Subcommittee that oversees NASA and advocate for education in the sciences and technologies of the future.

Our BCC Counseling Center has been awarded "approved site" status for NYC First Lady Chirlane McCray's New York City THRIVE Program for underserved and vulnerable populations. This initiative pays the FTE salaries over a time span of three years provided the site can offer clinical supervision and a teaching, learning professional milieu. BCC will host three THRIVE participants. In February, First Lady McCray will return to BCC to visit with those involved in THRIVE and reading her favorite children's book at the Early Childhood Development Center.

During National Hispanic Heritage Month, we hosted four successful events – Salsa Under the Sun, Comedy Hour with Three Hispanic Comedians, the documentary screening of Rubble Kings, and a Latino Students in Service Panel. To continue our recognition and celebration of the contributions and heritage of members of the Latino community, BCC will be hosting Bronx Borough President Ruben Diaz Jr.'s annual Puerto Rican Hispanic Heritage Month celebration. This event will honor FDNY Chief Inspector David Franco, FANIA All-Star Master Percussionist Nicky Marrero, and Fox 5 NY Meteorologist Audrey Puente and is open to all in Colston Hall, Lower Level from 5:30 pm-8:30 pm, with the program beginning at 6:45pm. Email [roltan@bronxbp.nyc.gov](mailto:roltan@bronxbp.nyc.gov) to RSVP, if you would like to attend.

As we approach the holiday season, I want to give thanks to everyone for their hard work, and commitment to BCC. I hope everyone enjoys the coming season.