

Bronx Community College
PRESIDENT'S REPORT TO THE COLLEGE SENATE – MAY 2017
Thomas A. Isekenege, Ph.D.

For the past two weeks, festivities have brought with them an air of celebration on campus to mark our 60th Anniversary. Adding to this excitement is our biggest celebration, the 57th Commencement Exercises. As we rapidly approach the end of this Spring 2017 semester, all roads lead to graduation and commencement ceremonies. We anticipate approximately 2,200 students will be eligible to participate – 806 from August 2016 and January 2017 and another 1,400 from June 2017. I am inviting everyone to join in BCC's 57th Commencement Ceremony on Friday, June 2, 2017, on Ohio Field. Approximately 60 volunteers will be needed during this ceremony to provide assistance with providing directions, distributing programs, assisting family and friends of graduates finding seats, assisting guests with special needs, and manning water stations. If you are interested in volunteering, please contact Manny Lopez or Sanjay Ramdath.

- **FALL 2017 ENROLLMENT:** Registration is underway for the Summer 2017 semester. As of May 15, 2017, 1,828 continuing students had enrolled. Please encourage your students to register as soon as possible for the summer session. Our final headcount for Summer 2016 was 3,197 students and we are hoping to exceed that number this summer. We are excited to announce that BCC received approval to extend ASAP enrollment to students with 17 to 30 credits beginning with the Fall 2017 cohort.
- **60TH ANNIVERSARY:** We would like to acknowledge the countless individuals from various college units who both assisted in putting together the 60th Anniversary Celebration and who took time to participate. 60th Anniversary balloons, banners and posters festooned the campus. On this day and throughout the year, we are celebrating our past while looking ahead to a prosperous future for the College. The day opened with a presentation from Chief Technology Officer Loic Audusseau on the new BCC mobile app. There was also a presentation from the firm assisting the College with the web redesign and college rebranding. At the Annual African Day Parade, students, staff and faculty marched from Roscoe Brown Student Center to the Colston Hall patio to the beat of drummers. Many participants wore traditional African dress, and sampled traditional West African cuisine. We ended the day with a delicious slice of birthday cake for all.
- **MIDDLE STATES:** A successful Middle States kickoff luncheon was held on Tuesday, May 2nd, 2017. The luncheon provided an opportunity for the entire Steering Committee and working group members to meet for the first time. Please join me in extending thanks to them for their willingness to serve on the various self-study committees. Workshops for Committee members are scheduled from now until the end of the semester and will orient participants to the expectations and/or requirements of MSCHE and to the BCC self-study design.
- **STUDENT SUCCESS:** Upon the recommendation of the BCC Commencement Committee, I am pleased to announce the Valedictorian and Salutatorian of the Graduating Class of 2017. Ms. Shahin Sultana, receiving her Associate Degree in Science, Liberal Arts and Sciences, Biology, is our Valedictorian. Mr. Mohammed Mfosah, receiving his Associate Degree in Science, Liberal Arts and Sciences, Biology, is our Salutatorian. Additional congratulations go out to Bright Tsagli (Engineering major), who is the recipient of the Phi Beta Kappa Association of New York 2017 scholarship. Each year, the Phi Beta Kappa Association of New York Awards scholarships to students who, after completing studies at a NYC Community College, are continuing their education at a 4-year college. Congratulations also to Veronica Santana Alvarado (Sociology major) and Beverly Emers (Human Services major), who received the Vice Chancellor's Excellence in Leadership Award on May 12th, 2017. Students receiving this award have demonstrated outstanding leadership in both academic and co-curricular activities. Please join me in celebrating the academic achievements of these exceptional scholars!
- **ADMINISTRATION & FINANCE:** The new BCC Student Mobile Application was successfully launched during the 60th Anniversary celebration on May 11, 2017. This free app is a convenient way for BCC Students to stay connected 24/7 and be aware of what is happening. Users have access to their courses, campus updates, college maps, social media, and much more. Please visit <http://www.bcc.cuny.edu/mobile/> to download the app now.

Our College is partnering with YouVisit, a leading virtual reality company, to develop an online and multi-language interactive virtual BCC campus tour. The design of the BCC virtual campus tour will allow potential students to immerse themselves into our campus as if they were actually here in person. YouVisit will use robust media technology to accomplish this design, including 360 degrees photos, videos, traditional photography, 2D video, video tour guides, and a virtual reality component. Sample tours are available on the following website: <https://www.youvisit.com/education>. We anticipate the launch of BCC virtual tour this summer.

The College is in the process of developing a BCC Bronco Pass/ID Card. This smart card is usable for many BCC financial transactions, including at vending machines and printers. More information and details to come.

- **ADVANCEMENT, COMMUNICATIONS & RELATIONS:** Bronx Borough President Ruben Diaz, Jr. has allocated \$500K, which has a state matching fund of \$500K (for a total of \$1 million dollars), for the renovation of The Hall of Fame Playhouse at Roscoe C. Brown Student Center. These improvements will provide a fully accessible route from the entrance to the exterior entrance of the Hall of Fame Playhouse through the lobby, and onto the stage. The project also includes related upgrades to the telecommunications, AV systems, signage and mechanical equipment.

BCC has also been awarded a \$300K grant to purchase furniture and new equipment for the Child Development Center by The Dormitory Authority State of New York (DASNY).

Over the past few years, the College has been working diligently on plans to improve Gould Memorial Library and restore it for full use. In order to make a plan for fundraising, an Existing Conditions Report will need to be completed. As a follow-up to our raising \$300K to complete this report, an RFP was submitted and 22 architectural firms submitted proposals for consideration. Finalist interviews took place this week. The selection of the firm will be made and announced soon. Work is expected to begin in June 2017 with a final report on the condition and needs of the building to be submitted in Fall 2017.

- **WORKFORCE & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT:** We are pleased to announce an enhanced course offering for Summer 2017 in the Division of Workforce and Economic Development. The new offerings include a selection of ESL and TASC (formerly GED) classes. These classes are open to the families, neighbors and friends of BCC students, as well as the Bronx community. Our College has been designated as an official testing site for the TASC exam. This will enable students taking our TASC (GED) test prep course to take the TASC exam on campus.
- **CAMPUS ACTIVITIES:** The soft launch of “We the People” - The Democracy Project interactive art installation and information center was held on Monday, May 15th, 2017. This Project, envisioned by BCC Digital Arts student Stephanie Martinez, aims to inform, engage, and support a political point of view without pressure. This interactive installation invites the BCC community to “Write the right,” in response to the prompt, “I have a right to…” and, after sticking their note to the sign, insert their pencil into holes drilled into the sign. There are also stand-up signs explaining the Bill of Rights and “Know Your Rights” when encountering officials. The Democracy Project is planning a larger scale event for September 18th, 2017, to coincide with Constitution Day.

This year, BCC will be participating in the First Annual Fleet Week College Fair hosted by the Department of Veteran Services for New York City. The event will take place on Saturday, May 27th, 2017 from 10am-4:30pm at Fordham University Lincoln Center Campus at 60th Street and Columbus Avenue. Thank you to Betsy Montanez, Coordinator of the Office of Veteran and Military Resources, for organizing our involvement.

The Office of Personal Counseling was awarded two more ThriveNYC post-graduate social work fellows after one fellow spent a year on campus as a probationary clinician. These two additional social work clinicians will provide free support services for three years, five days a week. This initiative was created by New York City First Lady Chirlane McCray as part of an effort to provide greater mental health and substance abuse services. It was awarded to BCC Office of Personal Counseling due to our dedication and mission in serving as a teaching facility.

Kam Wong, CEO of Municipal Credit Union, was the first speaker in the new BCC Alumni Trailblazers Speakers Series. This series brings talks from BCC alumni to campus. Mr. Wong discussed how his time at BCC transformed his life from an immigrant kitchen worker to the current CEO of Municipal Credit Union. Mr. Wong took time to share his wisdom with today’s students, gave a generous gift of \$20K from MCU, and offered 5 initial internships for students. The visit rekindled Mr. Wong’s relationship with BCC and established a new partnership with MCU.

The 39th Annual Roscoe Brown Run the Bronx event was held on Saturday, May 6th, 2017. This was our first run without President Emeritus Dr. Brown, who passed away last summer. Prior to the start of the Run, Dr. Brown’s bib displaying the number 1, was retired and a moment of silence was held. In total, over 1,300 people participated in this year’s Run, including BCC faculty and staff who were vying for the President’s Cup.

BCC’s 2017 Gala will be one of the closing events for BCC’s 60th Anniversary celebrations. It will be held on campus in the evening on Wednesday, October 25th, 2017. Please pick up information about discounted early bird tickets and opportunities to join a planning subcommittee from the Office of Advancement in Philosophy Hall from Assistant Vice President for Advancement Angela Wambugu Cobb.