

# CUNY Newswire

## Prominent Educator and Scholar Dr. Felix V. Matos Rodriguez Appointed President of Hostos Community College

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Dr. Felix V. Matos Rodriguez, who has had a distinguished academic, educational and social service policy career, has been approved by the City University Board of Trustees to serve as president of Hostos Community College. Chancellor Matthew Goldstein had recommended Dr. Matos Rodriguez after a national search.

Dr. Matos Rodriguez is the former Secretary of the Department of the Family for the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, a cabinet-level post. A cum laude graduate of Yale University, where he majored in Latin American Studies, he received his doctorate in history from Columbia University. He has taught at Yale, Northeastern University, Boston College, Universidad Interamericana in San Juan and the City University. At CUNY, he served for five years as director of the Centro de Estudios Puertorriqueños/Center for Puerto Rican Studies, a nationally recognized research center at Hunter College.

In a joint statement, Board of Trustees Chairperson Benno Schmidt and Chancellor Goldstein said: "Dr. Matos Rodríguez brings to this critical leadership position a truly exceptional combination of scholarship, academic achievement, and administrative skill, along with tremendous energy and talent and a deep belief in the mission of Hostos Community College. His extensive experience at universities and in foundations, policy centers, and government has been marked by a firm commitment to high standards and social advocacy. Dr. Matos Rodríguez' appointment is an extraordinarily positive development for Hostos Community College, The City University of New York, the borough of the Bronx, and our city."

Dr. Matos Rodriguez succeeds Dr. Dolores M. Fernandez, who served as President of Hostos Community College since 1998. At the board meeting, the Board of Trustees unanimously adopted a resolution of appreciation thanking President Fernandez for her exemplary service.

Hostos Community College, named after the 19th-century Puerto Rican patriot and educator, was established in 1968 and admitted its first class of 623 students in 1970. The college has grown to about 5,100 students and occupies a six-building campus on 149th Street and the Grand Concourse, one of the most accessible locations in the Bronx. One of six community colleges in the City University's 23-campus integrated system, Hostos offers associate degree programs in the liberal arts and sciences and a variety of career-specific fields.

Dr. Matos Rodríguez was Secretary of the Department of the Family for the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico through December 31, 2008. He formulated public policy and administered service delivery for a host of programs, including Child Support Enforcement, Adoption and Foster Care, Child and Elderly Protection, Food Stamps, Temporary Assistance for Needy Families, Child Care, and Head Start. He managed a \$2.2

billion annual budget and oversaw nearly 9,500 employees. In 2005 and 2006, he served as Social Welfare and Health Advisor to the governor of Puerto Rico.

Dr. Matos Rodríguez is a member of the history department at the CUNY Graduate School and University Center. He is currently on leave as associate professor of Black and Puerto Rican/Latino Studies at Hunter College, and teaches courses on Caribbean, Latin American and Latino history. From 2000 to 2005 he was director of Hunter College's Center for Puerto Rican Studies, one of the largest and most important Latino research centers in the U.S.

He has published extensively in the fields of migration, women's, Puerto Rican, Caribbean and Latino studies. He is the author of *Women and Urban Life in Nineteenth-Century San Juan, Puerto Rico, 1820-62* (University Presses of Florida 1999; Markus Wiener 2001); the co-author of *Pioneros: Puerto Ricans in New York City, 1896-1948* (Arcadia Publishers, 2001); the editor of *A Nation of Women, An Early Feminist Speaks Out: Mi opinión sobre las libertades, derechos y deberes de la mujer* by Luisa Capetillo (Houston: Arte Público Press, 2005). Among his other works are *Boricuas in Gotham: Puerto Ricans in the Making of Modern New York City* (Princeton: Markus Wiener, 2004), which he co-edited with Gabriel Haslip Viera et al., and *Puerto Rican Women's History: New Perspectives* (M.E. Sharpe Publishers, 1998), which he also co-edited.

Dr. Matos Rodríguez's work has been published in peer-reviewed journals such as the *Journal of Urban History*, *The Public Historian*, *Latin American Research Review*, *Centro Journal*, *Revista de Ciencias Sociales*, and the *Boletín de la Asociación de Demografía Histórica*, in addition to having chapters in several anthologies.

He was the founding editor of the series *New Directions in Puerto Rican Studies* published by University Press of Florida, and has reviewed manuscripts for Temple University Press, Rutgers University Press, M.E. Sharpe, Blackwell Publishers, *Hispanic American Historical Review*, and the *Revista de Ciencias Sociales*.

Dr. Matos Rodríguez' expert commentary has appeared in leading newspapers and publications including *The New York Times*, *The Boston Globe*, *The Chronicle of Higher Education*, *The Chicago Tribune*, *Congressional Quarterly*, *The Daily News*, *Newsday*, *The Atlanta Journal-Constitution*, *El Diario/La Prensa*, *Hoy*, *El Nuevo Día*, and *Hispanic Outlook in Higher Education*. He has been a member of the advisory editorial boards of the *Latino Studies Journal* and *New York Archives*.

He has been a program officer at the Social Science Research Council in New York City and a board member of *Aspira of New York, Inc.*, *Phipps Community Development Corporation*, and the *Community Advisory Board of El Diario- La Prensa*. Dr. Matos Rodríguez' many awards for community service include a special recognition by the New York City Council during the 2003 Hispanic Heritage Month, and by the New York State Senate and House Puerto Rican Latino Caucus for excellence in education in 2002.

Hostos College's goal is to offer access to quality higher education leading to intellectual growth and socio-economic mobility through the development of linguistic, mathematical, technological, and critical thinking skills needed for lifelong learning and for success in a variety of fields. Hostos takes pride in its historical role in educating students from diverse ethnic, racial, cultural, and linguistic backgrounds. Key to its mission is the provision of transitional language instruction for all ESL learners along with Spanish/English bilingual

education to foster a multicultural environment for all students. The college is a resource to the South Bronx and other communities by providing continuing education, cultural events, and expertise for the further development of the communities it serves.

The City University of New York is the nation's leading urban public university. Founded in New York City in 1847 as the Free Academy, the University's 23 institutions include 11 senior colleges, six community colleges, the William E. Macaulay Honors College at CUNY, the Graduate School and University Center, the CUNY Graduate School of Journalism, the CUNY School of Law, the CUNY School of Professional Studies and the Sophie Davis School of Biomedical Education. The University serves 243,000 degree-credit students and more than 240,000 adult, continuing and professional education students. College Now, the University's academic enrichment program for 32,500 high school students, is offered at CUNY campuses and more than 300 high schools throughout the five boroughs of New York City. The University offers online baccalaureate degrees through the School of Professional Studies and an individualized baccalaureate through the CUNY Baccalaureate Degree. More than one million unique visitors and two million page views are served each month by [www.cuny.edu](http://www.cuny.edu), the University's website.