



A MESSAGE FROM INTERIM PRESIDENT

Daisy Cocco De Filippis, Ph.D.

AMERICAN AIRLINES FLIGHT 587

I remember that it hit my community hard, and that everyone seemed to have a connection to the flight, or had lost someone.”

--- Dominican-American novelist and poet Elizabeth Acevedo

Nineteen years ago, tragedy struck. On November 12, 2001, American Airlines Flight 587 took off for the Dominican Republic. What should have been a routine flight ended in catastrophe: shortly after takeoff, the plane crashed in Belle Harbor, Queens. All 251 passengers and nine crew members died, as did five Belle Harbor residents. It ranks among the worst aviation accidents in our country's history.

90 percent of those who died were of Dominican descent. We at Hostos feel a particular connection to the Dominican Republic. Eugenio María de Hostos, whose name our institution bears, spent many years in Santo Domingo, where he opened schools, developed his educational theories, and raised a family. He is buried there. Students of Dominican origin account for almost twenty percent of our enrollment, making them the most numerous group of the Hostos family. Our campus is located near the heart of NYC's Dominican community.

Our tears and our thoughts are with all those who died on Flight 587 and with the people who knew and loved them.

I hope you will join me in a moment of silence at 9:18 AM on November 12 to remember and honor all those who lost their lives on that fateful day. Though they are gone, they live on in our hearts.

The 13th century Persian poet Rumi has written:

Don't run away from grief, o soul,
Look for the remedy inside the pain,
because the rose came from the thorn
and the ruby came from a stone.

Out of the sadness of loss blossom the flowers of memory.

Mil gracias y bendiciones,

Daisy Cocco De Filippis, Ph.D.
Interim President

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