



A MESSAGE FROM INTERIM PRESIDENT

Daisy Cocco De Filippis, Ph.D.

I'm sorry to announce that Deirdre Aherne, former Associate Dean of Student Development and Enrollment Management at Hostos, passed away on November 7, 2020. Her time at the College began in 2008 and concluded in 2013. For the last seven years she worked as social activist for a variety of causes, foremost among them climate change.



After retiring from Hostos, "Dee" remained a friend of the College and will be fondly remembered here by her friends and colleagues. She is survived by her partner of 42 years, Marilyn Benetatos. The cause of death was ALS (Lou Gehrig's Disease).

The family has requested that people make a donation in Dee's name to 350NYC, a global grassroots network working in over 188 countries to prevent climate catastrophe. Please contribute here: https://www.flipcause.com/secure/cause_pdetails/NjYyODI

Thinking of Dee, Tino Villanueva's poem "You, If No One Else" came to mind:

Listen, you
who transformed your anguish
into healthy awareness,
put your voice
where your memory is.
You who swallowed
the afternoon dust,
defend everything you understand
with words.
You, if no one else,
will condemn with your tongue
the erosion each disappointment brings.

You, who saw the images
of disgust growing,
will understand how time
devours the destitute;
you, who gave yourself
your own commandments,
know better than anyone
why you turned your back
on your town's toughest limits.

Don't hush,
don't throw away
the most persistent truth,
as our hard-headed brethren
sometimes do.
Remember well
what your life was like: cloudiness,
and slick mud
after a drizzle;
flimsy windows the wind
kept rattling
in winter, and that
unheated slab dwelling
where coldness crawled
up in your clothes.

Tell how you were able to come
to this point, to unbar
History's doors
to see your early years,
your people, the others.
Name the way
rebellion's calm spirit has served you,
and how you came
to unlearn the lessons
of that teacher,
your land's omnipotent defiler.

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