

The S·D·E·M Gazette



STUDENT DEVELOPMENT + ENROLLMENT MANAGEMENT • Issue #13



A note to staff from VP La Toro Yates

Welcome to the Spring 2022 semester! The semester marks my first as the new Vice President for Student Development and Enrollment Management. I look forward to working with the SDEM division to make sure every student feels welcomed, connected, and part of our Hostos family.

The goal of SDEM has been to provide a safe and healthy campus and an excellent learning environment for our students. I am excited to share the work we have done on behalf of our students. Below, you will find some updates on our work this past semester.

We look forward to a successful 2022 working together!

Best,
La Toro Yates, Ph.D.

“Education is not the filling of a pail, but the lighting of a fire.” —W.B. Yeats

COVID-19 VACCINE POLICY FOR SPRING 2022

As we all know, the beginning of the Spring 2022 semester is rapidly approaching, and we are all doing our best to support students through the registration process. Many of you have already heard or read that CUNY is implementing a COVID vaccine booster mandate for all students. As we are all trying to navigate these new changes, we are patiently waiting for the central office to send out specific communication so we can all be effective conduits of information sharing to our college community. The good news is that as of 1/11/2022 students can begin to upload their COVID booster proof onto CUNY First. Our students are already submitting proof of boosters, which is a great sign that they are tuned into the new changes. The Health and Wellness team is reviewing and approving submissions as they are uploaded onto CUNY First. As we receive updates and communications from our central office, we will be sure to share out with our college community, so we are all better informed and provide the best services to our students. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to reach out to me via email at fwander@hostos.cuny.edu. I wish you all good health and wellness as we enter into a new year and a new semester.

Best,

Fabián Wander, LCSW | Director of Health and Wellness
Student Development and Enrollment Management
Hostos Community College, CUNY

Here are some helpful resources about the COVID vaccines.

[New York City's Vaccine Finder](#)

[The Center for Disease Control's "Key Things to Know"](#)

[#VaxUpCUNY](#)

Helpful resources for students.

[Surviving COVID-19: a #RealCollege Student Guide](#)

[COVID-19 College Support page](#)

[New York resources for students](#)



HOSTOS' WELCOME FESTIVAL INVITES COMMUNITY TO CELEBRATE THE START OF NEW ACADEMIC YEAR

On Thursday, August 19, Eugenio María de Hostos Community College celebrated the start of the upcoming 2021-2022 academic year. President Daisy Cocco De Filippis and the Division of Student Development and Enrollment Management were proud to welcome over 100 students, faculty, staff, and alumni to the Hostos Welcome Festival, which took place at the new Evelina Antonetty Playground.



The festival was open to all members of the local community and included free food, raffle prizes, and information tables from various Hostos departments. Representatives from the MTA and honored guests including New York State Comptroller Thomas DiNapoli, Councilmember Rafael Salamanca, Assemblymember Karines Reyes, and representatives from Assemblymember Kenny Burgos' office were also in attendance.

Comptroller DiNapoli said, "[The] welcome back event was a testament to the efforts of the faculty and staff at Hostos ahead of this fall. I am grateful for their efforts and wish each student many successes this academic year." Comptroller DiNapoli also surprised the College with a check in the amount of \$9,986, returning to Hostos the institution's previously unclaimed funds, which will be used for student emergency funds, providing financial assistance to students on the road toward degree completion.

"It was an important and beautiful moment to celebrate the resilience of the Hostos Community College family, and our ability to engage in safe practices, as we move gradually, according to the CUNY and State and City guidelines to bring necessary in person services to our very determined and engaged students and colleagues," President Cocco De Filippis shared.

SDEM extends its gratitude to its dedicated staff whose hard work made the Welcome Festival possible.

CUNY EDGE Transfer Day

The CUNY EDGE program continued to provide quality support to our student members this fall 2021 semester.

Among the many events and workshops we hosted this semester to support academic, personal, and professional growth, we held a campus-wide CUNY EDGE Transfer Day Event (the event was offered to CUNY EDGE members at all CUNY colleges). The goal of the day was to provide students with important information to facilitate their transitions from Associate programs to Bachelor programs. The event included a panel of Financial Aid and Transfer Services representatives, as well as CUNY EDGE Directors who spoke to the financial aid and transfer process for CUNY institutions. After our panelists spoke, the student participants were moved to virtual breakout Zoom rooms according to the senior college they expressed interest in transferring to. In each break out room, there was a CUNY EDGE Director as well as a representative from the senior college to answer any additional questions that the students had specific to that school. The expected learning outcome was for students to feel empowered to make informed decisions about the choices they make regarding transferring to senior institutions.



STAFF NOTE, Alma Matters Award: This semester we are also excited to announce that our CUNY EDGE advisor, Jennifer Williams, was awarded the Honorable Mention Award at the Alma Matters Awards Ceremony. The Honorable Mention Award salutes a Hostos graduate who demonstrates commitment to helping our institution transform the lives of students, and indeed Ms. Williams embodies this dedication.

Hostos Commemorates Veterans Day and Announces First-Ever Joe Alicea Veterans Fund Scholarship Recipients

The Eugenio María de Hostos Community College Office of Veterans Affairs has established the first Hostos student awardees of the Joe Alicea Veterans Fund scholarship: **Specialist Michael Colón** and **Petty Officer Second Class Shalikhah Ellington**. They will each receive \$1,000 in support of their academic journey.

Michael Colón, a resident of the Bronx, served in the US Army for four years holding the rank of Specialist E4 and was stationed in Ft. Carson, Colorado. Specialist Colón is majoring in Radiologic Technology and is currently on the Dean's List. He is expected to graduate in the fall-winter semester of 2021 and plans to move ahead towards a bachelor's degree.

Also living in the Bronx, Shalikhah Ellington served in the US Navy and held rank of Petty Officer Second Class – PO2/E5. She served for 10 years and was stationed on USS Aircraft Carrier Nimitz. She currently attends Hostos and is majoring in Nursing and anticipates graduating in 2023 and plans on completing her bachelor's degree at Lehman College.

"I've been working really hard to finish school and creating a new life after the military. It's kind of a hard transition. So, this is a boost of hope and I am grateful," Ellington said of the award. "I will use it to buy books, because nursing textbooks are expensive."

The Joe Alicea Veterans Fund was established in honor of Joseph "Joe" Alicea, long-time Financial Aid Director at Hostos who served the College for over 39 years. Alicea dedicated his life to Hostos Community College, was always supportive of Veterans, and was adored at the College. Alicea was a CUNY man through and through earning his associate degree at Bronx Community College, his bachelor's at Lehman College, and his master's at Baruch. He passed away in 2019 and survived by his wife Ivette Alicea and his two daughters. In appreciation and gratitude of a life dedicated to service, Hostos honors his legacy and hopes that Alicea's example can be a guide for Veteran students.

LETTER FROM THE ALICEA FAMILY

Joe Alicea was truly an institution at Hostos Community College. A CUNY grassroots graduate and administrator for over 40 years, Alicea dedicated his life to his work and his family and impacted the lives of so many faculty, staff and students before his passing in 2019.

In February of 1968, Alicea was drafted into the U.S. Army as an Infantry Individual Fire Crewman; designated Military Occupational Specialty (MOS) 11-C at the mere age of 19.

Alicea quickly distinguished himself in training on the M-14 and M-16 rifles earning designations as a Sharpshooter and Expert, respectively. After completing his training, Alicea was deployed to Vietnam where he spent his second year in combat. After three years, Alicea returned home and was honorably discharged. Alicea's awards and honors include the Bronze Star, the Army Commendation Medal, the National Defense Service Medal, the Vietnam Service Medal, the Vietnam Campaign Medal (with two overseas bars), and the Combat Infantryman's Badge.

A proud Army veteran, he participated in veteran ceremonies each year, but like many veterans, he suffered in silence, never sharing detailed war stories of Vietnam, the sacrifices and losses he endured or even his military accolades. But he always had an uncanny ability to turn negatives into positives and credited his time in service as the pivotal moment that changed his life forever.

The core values he learned during his service — loyalty, duty, selfless service, honor and, most of all integrity — became the guiding light for how he lived after he returned home. He used his GI bill and drove a taxi at night to complete his associates from Bronx Community College and became a counselor at Hostos Community College in the Office of Financial Aid. While working full time, he pursued his bachelor's degree from Lehman College and was quickly promoted to Assistant Director of Financial Aid.

He saw higher education as a means of personal and professional development and discovered his true passion: selflessly serving underprivileged students and fighting for equitable access to higher education for 30+ years. He encouraged those around him daily to pursue higher education and even as Director went back to night school and completed his masters in Higher Education from Baruch College.

Alicea was resilient and relentless in his pursuit of education. He believed in empowering those around him, students who he helped each year but especially members of his staff who he always encouraged to continue their education. He was a true leader, always wanting the best for his team and his family and it's only fitting that there is now a memorial scholarship in his name.

The Alicea Family would like to thank Hostos, the entire CUNY system, and everyone who has donated and who will continue to donate, so that this scholarship fund can solidify his passion as a lasting legacy and he can continue to provide access to higher education to all students, especially to our veteran students who have sacrificed so much to serve our country.

Congratulations to Michael Colón and Shalikhah Ellington.



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More than 60 events were presented by SDEM units this past fall. Highlights include:

THE CUNY VACCINATION MANDATE, NON-COMPLIANCE AND, ITS IMPACT YOUR ACADEMIC PROGRESS?

A Discussion with the Dean hosted by Mr. Leslie King, Interim Associate Dean of Student Development, with guest Mr. Fabian Wander, Director of Health and Wellness. Students received information about the impact of the CUNY vaccination mandate and enrollment.

Over 80 students attended and had their questions answered by the Interim Dean king and Mr. Fabian Wander.

2021 THANKSGIVING FOOD DRIVE TAKES PLACE AT HOSTOS

On November 19, the Hostos Health and Wellness Center joined the Montefiore Medical Center and Empire Blue Cross Blue Shield to host the College's annual Thanksgiving food drive.

Fabian Wander, Director of the Health and Wellness Center, collaborated with Hostos Board Member Jason A. Caraballo and Administrative Coordinator Single Stop USA Madeline Cruz to make the event a reality. Over 2,000 bags of food were distributed at the drive, which was held in the A-Building Parking Lot.

"This year's drive was especially important," Wander said, "as we were able to serve so many Hostos families and community members during these challenging times." He thanked Cruz and Caraballo, the Office of Public Safety, Campus Operations, and volunteers from the Hostos Leadership Academy for their hard work.

Among those who attended were Dean of Community Relations Ana Garcia Reyes, Development Specialist Idelsa Mendez, and colleagues from Building and Grounds, Public Safety, SDEM, and the Office of the President.



ANNUAL TOY DRIVE AND DISTRIBUTION

On Dec 13th, 2021 the Hostos Family Empowerment Program (FEP) held a very successful Annual Toy Drive for our hard working Hostos Community College student parents spear-headed by the amazing FEP Manager Christeen Francis. Thanks to all the incredible volunteers we were able to serve over 100 parents and almost 200 children for the holidays. We were fortunate to receive an abundance of toys donated by our generous college faculty and staff.

Students on the Move

Transferring from colleges is a process of exploration and transition. During your sophomore year, you should have an idea for what do you what schools you want to consider as well as the requirements to enter.

After graduating in June with an Associates in Liberal Arts, Elias Tapia arrived at the Transfer Services office prepared. He had researched other institutions offering Radiologic Technology and came to us with a list of 10 universities. After narrowing down that search by location, we completed several applications and began the "wait" process. With a 3.5 grade point average, Tapia was accepted at all institutions, however, he decided to accept an offer with St. Francis College for the Bachelor of Science in Radiography. Along with his acceptance, Tapia was awarded a renewable Merit Scholarship of \$10,100 per year, to offset the cost of the higher tuition. Tapia states "I've gained a new perspective on the transfer experience and college in general. Transferring colleges can be a daunting experience and it's not a decision that should be made lightly. But, at the end of the day, it was absolutely the right one for me".

St. Francis College students work with the Center for Allied Health to complete clinical work in three areas of concentration: Radiation Therapy, Diagnostic Medical Sonography, and Radiography. At St. Francis College. For additional information and assistance with the transfer process, please visit our Transfer Services office in the Savoy Building or give us a call at (718) 664-2765 to schedule an appointment.



EDUCATE • DEVELOP • GRADUATE • EMPOWER

CUNY EDGE Mitsui Scholarship: Each year the CUNY EDGE Program is awarded funds from the Mitsui USA Foundation to provide a scholarship to two CUNY EDGE students (one student pursuing their Associate's Degree and one student pursuing their Bachelor's Degree) among all of the CUNY campuses. This year we are excited to announce that out of every CUNY college our CUNY EDGE student from Hostos, Ms. Claudia Sanchez, was awarded the Mitsui scholarship providing her tuition for one year of study at Hostos Community College.

Student Corner

Ten Hostos students participated in this year's Annual Biomedical Research Conference for Minority Students (ABRCMS), one of the largest communities of underrepresented minorities in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics. Two of the 10 also presented at the Society for Advancement of Chicanos/Hispanics and Native Americans in Science (SACNAS) National Diversity in STEM Conference, held in October.

Scarlet Martínez Cardoze and **Onyinyechi W. Obineche**, two Hostos students who participated in ABRCMS 2021 were selected with the ABRCMS 2021 Presentation Award. The research work is In Silico Discovery of Neutralizing Agents Targeting SARS-CoV-2 Spike Glycoprotein. Martínez Cardoze and Obineche worked with research mentor Professor Yoel Rodríguez. Obineche's research experience was sponsored by CRSP (CUNY Research Scholars Program). Martínez Cardoze's research was sponsored by the CUNY Community College Research Grant (CCRG) awarded to Dr. Yoel Rodríguez and Dr. José A. Fernández Romero of the Borough of Manhattan Community College. Martínez Cardoze's is a former CUNY's Hostos LSAMP Fellow ('19-'20). Onyinyechi W. Obineche (Cohort 2019–2020) and Scarlet Martínez Cardoze (Cohort 2020–2021) are HEAT Scholars.

Hostos Allied Health students Fatima Choudhry and Silvia J. Prado Carpio are the recipients of the Nasry Michelen Foundation's first \$2,000 allied health scholarship award.

Oumou Dili Traore knows how empowering education can be. After she graduated from high school in Mali, she accepted an aunt's invitation to come and study in New York City. English lessons at CUNY in the Heights were followed by enrollment at Hostos. Qualifying for the prestigious **Kaplan Leadership Program**.

Student **Natasha Villegas** designs a new future for herself at Hostos. Thanks to Professor Andrew London's generosity, Villegas has continued to soar since enrolling in the Digital Design & Animation program in 2019 and going on to intern for TED-Ed as an assistant pre-production artist.

Hello and Goodbye (staff)

Dr. La Toro Yates, Vice President of SDEM

Marian Esquilin, Interim Scholarship Coordinator

Catherine Garcia-Bou, Children's Center Manager

Sashey Pimentel, CUNY EDGE advisor

Retired: **Mercedes Moscat**, Transfer Services Director and **Theresa Hammonds**, Transfer Services Coordinator.

SDEM UNSUNG HERO

I would like to nominate Dean Gomez for the Unsung Hero Award. Her passion and commitment to ensuring students are heard and their needs are met is truly inspiring and infectious in a great way, as her enthusiasm motivates me and I am sure my fellow colleagues, to work that much harder to deliver quality services to our students. Not only does she ensure that Hostos students are succeeding but she is also always so supportive of the Directors in SDEM. Dean Gomez always makes herself readily available to help, guide, or advise Directors if they have any work-related questions and also goes the extra mile by checking in on our personal wellbeing as well. I know personally, that this has been so important and so appreciated especially during these trying and challenging times. Her thoughtfulness, empathy, and dedication are truly remarkable and I am so lucky to call her my supervisor, my mentor, and my friend.



Stay tuned for our next issue in the fall!

**Do you have a recommendation for SDEM's Unsung Hero*
If so, email ebonilla@hostos.cuny.edu your nominations.
A committee will then review and select the SDEM Unsung Hero.**

***nominations remain anonymous**