

HCC: Succeeding Under Trying Circumstances



“Alone”
By Maya Angelou

Lying, thinking
Last night
How to find my soul a home
Where water is not thirsty
And bread loaf is not stone
I came up with one thing
And I don’t believe I’m wrong
That nobody,
But nobody
Can make it out here alone.

Dear Hostos Family and Friends,

Bienvenidos, entren, and spend a little time getting to know us! Over the past year, Hostos Community College has continued to embody its mission as an anchor institution in the South Bronx, where academic excellence meets local impact. From record-setting athletic wins and global leadership visits to student-centered initiatives and groundbreaking research, the College’s momentum has been both forward-looking and community-rooted.

Even amid national challenges facing higher education, Hostos has remained unwavering in its mission: to provide opportunity and access to high-quality education to all who seek it. We have consistently affirmed our role as both a sanctuary and a springboard for growth, and as a place where aspirations take root regardless of background, age, or circumstance.

This enduring mission was reflected in every milestone, from millions raised for scholarships to the U.S. Department of Education’s first-ever Post-Secondary Success Recognition Program Award. Through literary publications like “Peace & Poetry,” groundbreaking faculty research, and student-led academic symposia, Hostos not only responded to the moment; it helped define it. Regardless of trying circumstances, we continue to stand as proof that community colleges can lead with equity, grow with purpose, and serve with heart.

Mil gracias y bendiciones,

Daisy Cocco De Filippis, Ph.D.

President

Eugenio María de Hostos Community College, CUNY



BOUNDLESS GROWTH, LOCAL IMPACT

Hostos reaffirmed its role as a vital civic and cultural hub in a year defined by powerful storytelling, student excellence, and deep community pride.

Our 57th Anniversary celebration amplified diverse voices, with the launch of “Peace & Poetry: An Anthology,” a collection of works by students, faculty, and renowned poets that reflects the College’s founding values of equity, access, and community. We also honored the legacy of our namesake with a special presentation by Professor Emeritus Orlando Hernández, who shared insights from his book, “Documentos de la Liga de Patriotas Puertorriqueños Fundada por Hostos,” revealing unpublished works by Eugenio María de Hostos and highlighting his unwavering commitment to Puerto Rican independence and educational reform.

Caimans Athletics reached new heights, with the Lady Caimans securing an unprecedented eighth consecutive CUNY Championship, a record in conference history, while the men’s team earned back-to-back titles and national recognition across NJCAA programs.

Cultural programming flourished through the Hostos Center for Arts & Culture. From Lunar New Year events to performances by internationally acclaimed artists such as Bobby Sanabria, Grammy-winner Albita, and Leonardo Paniagua, we honored the rich histories of the populations we serve.

Hostos’ role as a civic anchor was demonstrated when President Luis Abinader of the Dominican Republic addressed hundreds of Bronx-based Dominicans in our Main Theater, showcasing our campus as a space where global conversations take place.

Ensuring that all feel welcome, our College put together a series of events highlighting our commitment to diversity. The third annual Multi-Faith Symposium was a powerful call for peaceful coexistence, fostering open dialogue across differences and affirming the shared values that unite us. Through this flagship event, alongside other activities and diversity trainings, we continue to combat antisemitism, Islamophobia, and all forms of discrimination, maintaining a campus where every identity is valued and protected. Building on that commitment to equity, we unveiled our new Women’s

Center, a vital, inclusive space supporting advocacy, healing, and degree completion for our majority-female student body.

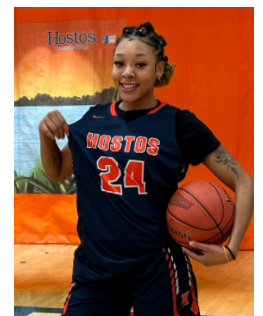
Our leadership also received well-deserved recognition. President Cocco De Filippis was named to the Bronx Power 100; Dr. Evelyn Fernández-Ketcham, VP of Continuing Education and Workforce Development, to Nonprofit Trailblazers; and Dr. Eric Radezky, Director of External and Governmental Affairs, to Higher Education Trailblazers by City & State New York. Dr. Shiang-Kwei Wang, Provost and VP of Academic Affairs, was also honored as one of amNY/PoliticsNY’s 2025 AAPI Power Players. And Community Relations Dean Ana García Reyes was honored as a “Mujer Destacada” by El Diario for over three decades of community engagement with diverse stakeholders in higher education.

Showcasing our community impact, President Cocco De Filippis inspired Bronx youth at the Bronx Chamber of Commerce Women of Distinction Luncheon in March at Villa Barone Manor. She shared her powerful educational journey, emphasizing the importance of mentorship and the transformative value of books in developing well-rounded individuals. And in June, she was also honored by Senator Jose M. Serrano as one of the Women of Distinction 2025 for her contributions to the Bronx community.

INVESTING IN STUDENT SUCCESS

At Hostos, student success is the foundation of our mission. This past year, we earned national distinction when our College was named one of only six institutions in the country to receive the U.S. Department of Education’s inaugural Postsecondary Student Success Recognition Program Award. Among hundreds of colleges nationwide, Hostos stood out for advancing equity, boosting degree completion, and driving socioeconomic mobility for students who historically have been underserved by higher education.

That momentum was evident at our 55th Commencement ceremonies, where nearly 850 graduates, ranging in age from 15 to 73 and representing over 30 countries, walked the stage. At this year’s celebrations, keynote speaker and proud Hostos alumnus Luis Eladio Torres ’94, Principal of P.S. 55, delivered a stirring message celebrating the resilience of the graduates, affirming that the Bronx builds champions. His sentiments reflected the



strength embodied by Valedictorian Esmé Lorraine Durán '25, who reminded the audience that Hostos students are not just learners, but also caregivers, workers, parents, survivors, and dreamers. The ceremony also welcomed distinguished guests, including Bronx Borough President Vanessa L. Gibson, Council Members Pierina Sánchez and Eric Dinowitz, and CUNY Trustee Mayra Linares-García. We also awarded an Honorary Associate of Humane Letters to longtime benefactor Michael Potack, whose support includes the College's second-largest endowed scholarship.

Ensuring access to higher education also means making it financially possible. In May, the Hostos Foundation Scholarship Benefit raised over \$355,000 in support of scholarships. Hostos alumna, former Miss New York USA, and TV presenter Génesis Suero emceed the event, at which we honored Benny Lorenzo, Managing Partner of Aspira Capital Management; Cira Ángeles, President and CEO of L.A. Riverside Brokerage; and Julissa Reynoso, Partner at Winston & Strawn and former U.S. Ambassador.

Earlier in the academic year, our 18th Annual Golf Outing, held at the Pelham Bay and Split Rock Courses, raised more than \$130,000, a clear sign of substantial community investment in our students' futures.

We also expanded targeted support for first-year students through a \$200,000 grant from the Ichigo Foundation, launching the Gateway to Year 2 mentoring initiative to strengthen students' foundations in English and math with summer courses.

Celebrating our students' resilience remains a vital part of our culture. Through events such as the President's Recognition Tea in honor of Women's History Month and the Recognition Barbecue, we honored 27 exceptional students who overcame significant challenges on their path to academic success.

For those in STEM nearing graduation, a transformative \$1 million gift from Benny Lorenzo's Aspira Capital Management and the Wright Foundation — Hostos' largest endowed scholarship — now provides annual support to help students reach their goal.

We aim to prepare our students for careers while fostering a strong intellectual foundation. We achieved that by convening Industry Summits: Education (Fall 2024) and Community Health (Spring 2025). Through these events,

we created vital spaces for students to explore real-world career pathways and connect with industry leaders in the community.

The Title V Developing Hispanic-Serving Institutions grant continues to bear fruit through the successful implementation of a First-Year Mentoring Program, designed to support new and transfer students in their transition to college life. By fostering collaboration among mentors, advisors, faculty, and staff, the program has contributed to improved retention rates among first-year students.

Our student-parents showed incredible determination as they balanced their academic goals with the demands of parenting. Stacy Delgado was honored by the CUNY Child Care Council at the "Celebrating Student Parent Success" event in October. She graduated last December and transferred to a four-year institution, all while raising her two-year-old daughter, Riley, who attended the Hostos Children's Center.

Another outstanding student-parent, Chyna Bryant, was highlighted by CUNY Central as an exemplary model of balance, drive, and excellence in both academics and athletics. After transferring to Hostos in 2022, Bryant found the supportive environment she needed, both on the basketball court and in the classroom, while raising her daughter, Aviana, who also thrived at our Children's Center.

Moreover, during a recent arts workshop led by Studio in a School teaching artist Karina Cavat, families explored sculpture and storytelling side by side. Among the young artists was Marley, the daughter of accounting student María, whose painting was selected for display in Studio in a School's "Littlest Learners" exhibition, showing that our youngest students are also reaching new heights of creativity and recognition.

CULTIVATING SCHOLARSHIP & RESEARCH

Hostos continued to stand as a center of academic and intellectual production, celebrating the 20th anniversary of the "Hostos Review / Revista Hostosiana." For two decades, this distinguished journal has uplifted Latina/o/x, Caribbean, and Latin American voices, cementing Hostos' legacy of literary and humanistic excellence across the hemisphere.

Faculty scholarship reached new heights with the publication of “Righteous Sisterhood” by Sociology Professor Sarah Hoiland (Temple University Press, 2025), a groundbreaking exploration of gender, politics, and power within a women’s motorcycle club. For his part, Humanities Associate Professor Thomas Beachdel invited us all into his inner world and scholarship, as showcased in “The World Between Us,” a feature-length HBO documentary that brings his work as an art historian to a global audience. The film follows artist Marie Tomanova and Professor Beachdel over five transformative years as they navigate the excitement and challenges of the New York City art world. This documentary shows Hostos faculty’s commitment to sharing their scholarship in dynamic, creative formats.

This academic year, our scholars continued to take advantage of our intellectual hub, the Hostos Research Center (HRC), which hosted an Open House in October. At this event, faculty emerged as the heart of the College’s growing research culture. Co-directed by Dr. Sofía Oviedo, Director of Research Programs, and Dr. Yoel Rodríguez, Professor and Chair of the Natural Sciences Department, the Center showed it is a faculty-driven incubator of ideas, inquiry, and innovation. This spirit was embodied by Dr. Debasish Roy of Natural Sciences, who presented his research on antimicrobial resistance at the event. His project exemplified hands-on mentorship, with his student research assistant playing a crucial role in fieldwork and data collection across the five boroughs.

Among its commendable initiatives, the HRC, along with the Committee on Sponsored Programs and Grants (CSPG), awarded 12 ADELANTE (ADvancing Excellence in Liberal Arts, scieNces, Technology and Engineering) grants. Each project will engage a student research assistant to promote mentorship and provide students with experiential and career-building experiences.

Our culture of mentorship was further expanded through a cross-campus partnership with six CUNY Graduate Center doctoral fellows. As part of the HRC Scholars Program, these graduate mentors work alongside faculty to guide Hostos students through original research. Their efforts were showcased at the Spring 2025 HRC Scholars Program Mini Conference, at which we welcomed our friend, CUNY Graduate Center President Joshua Brumberg.

For their part, 22 faculty members from across disciplines were honored for completing the ACUE “Effective Online Teaching Practices” certification, a year-long professional development journey supported by the Title V DHSI grant and led by English Professor Lou Bury. This milestone not only reflected their commitment to student success

in all modalities but also strengthened their capacity for impactful teaching.

Notably, this year’s Faculty Research Day brought together faculty, staff, students, and administrators to celebrate a vibrant culture of academic scholarship, publication, and innovation. Organized by the Senate Grants Committee and the Grants Office, the event featured 21 interdisciplinary presentations, many of which were collaborations with students, as well as a keynote address by York College Professor Cassandra Silva Sibilin on the application of artificial intelligence in education.

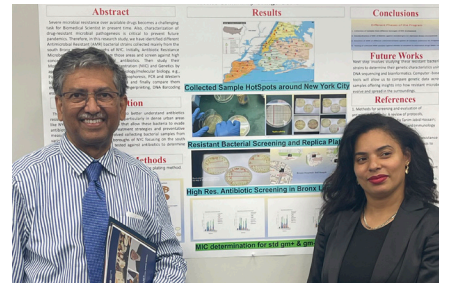
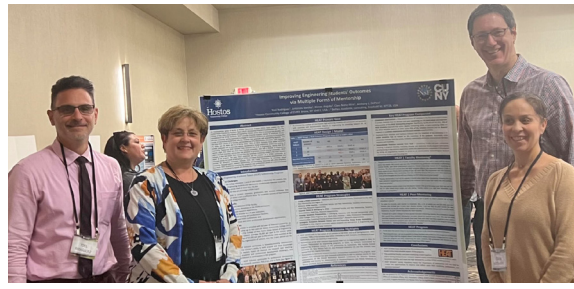
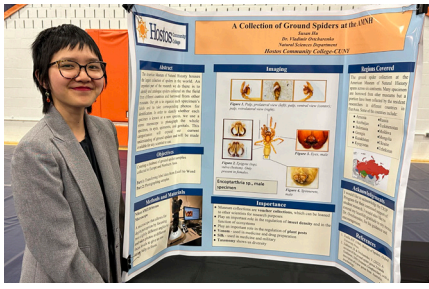
Student research also expanded significantly. The Third Annual Student Symposium featured over 120 presenters — nearly tripling in size since its launch — and included a multidisciplinary STEM poster showcase.

Academic excellence at Hostos earned national recognition, with Marco Alvarez and Minerva Ramirez Sencion being named 2024–25 Kaplan Leadership Scholars. Alvarez also received the prestigious 2025 Cooke Undergraduate Transfer Scholarship, one of the most competitive awards in the country.

That same spirit of achievement was celebrated at the 41st Annual Honors Convocation, where Valedictorian Esmey Lorraine Durán, Salutatorian Yuka Terada, and top scholars were honored for their academic distinction. Earlier in the academic year, the unveiling of the Hostos Champions Hall of Fame paid tribute to 10 individuals whose contributions left enduring marks on the College’s legacy: José E. Serrano, Evelina Antonetty, Elba Cabrera, Bill Aguado, Magda Vasilov, Jerry Meyer, Wally Edgecombe, Isabel Li, Antonio Martorell, and Angelo Romano.

Forward-looking conversations continued through the Collaborative Online International Learning Symposium, which explored the evolving role of artificial intelligence in education and career preparation. And a new \$2 million award from the National Science Foundation for the HEAT2 program brought the College’s total number of active NSF grants to seven, reinforcing Hostos’ role as a leader in engineering and STEM education.

Together, these milestones tell one powerful story: Hostos remains an engine of opportunity whose growth is inseparable from the well-being of the Bronx. As we look to the year ahead, we will continue to pair bold innovation with the values that have driven us since our founding: equity, access, and shared responsibility. We are prepared to advance our mission one student, one family, and one community at a time.



THRIVING THROUGH CHALLENGES

