

# Closing Achievement Gaps

A college-wide initiative, Designing for Success, strengthens student outcomes from enrollment to graduation.

“We are incrementally improving rates of student retention and graduation but that leaves thousands of students out of the success narrative,” said BMCC Interim President **Karrin E. Wilks** this past October 16, as she led a community forum in BMCC’s Theatre 2. “We need a sense of urgency and passion in order to improve student success in a more dramatic way.”

The purpose of the forum was to update the college community on the status of BMCC’s college-wide Designing for Success initiative, the urgency of which reflects realities faced by community college students both at BMCC and beyond. Nationwide, full-time students graduate at a rate of 57 percent within six years, according to the American Association of Community Colleges (AACC), and based on data from the U.S. Department of Education and National Student Clearinghouse Research Center. At BMCC, the three-year graduation rate in 2014 among first-time, full-time freshmen was just over 20 percent, and in 2016 the one-year retention rate for first-time freshmen was 63 percent.

Looking at the same data disaggregated by race, ethnicity and gender, Wilks told the packed room in October’s forum, equity gaps are revealed. “We can’t keep doing what we’re doing and achieve a different level of results than this,” she said. “This is the fundamental challenge we need to address in our planning process.”

That process, grounded in BMCC’s Designing for Success initiative, focuses on every stage of student experience at BMCC—from enrollment to graduation and transfer to a four-year school or



An enrollment management staff person guides a student through the admissions process at BMCC.

entry into a career. The initiative is driven by the work of hundreds of faculty and staff in five working groups: Designing Career Maps, Implementing Career and Academic Communities, Redesigning Onboarding, Designing First-Year Success, and Designing Pedagogy and Research. Related efforts

include BMCC’s Equity and Inclusion Initiative. Altogether, the groups are examining ways to apply and scale up proven strategies to build student success, such as those shown to be effective by the AACC Guided Pathways 2.0 national effort, of which BMCC is a member.

*Continued on page 2*

## Inside:

5 One Student’s Pursuit  
of the American Dream

6 BMCC Ranks Third Nationwide  
in Raising Student Mobility

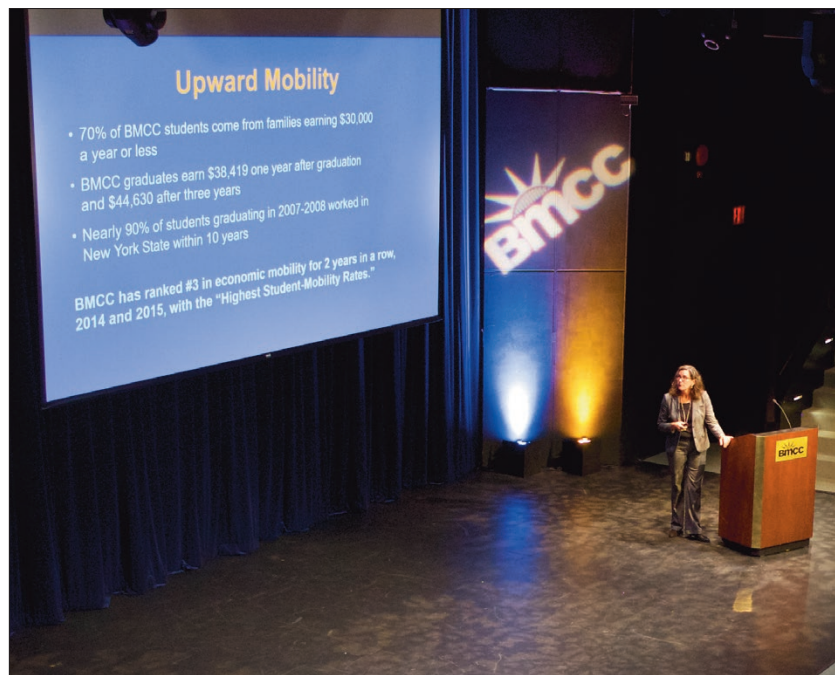
7 Charles McGill Scholarship  
Fund Carries on His Legacy

8 Then and Now



# Closing Achievement Gaps

Continued from page 1



Interim President Karrin E. Wilks speaks at a BMCC community forum, October 16.

Core beliefs essential to the vision of the Designing for Success initiative include the guiding tenet that students can learn anything under the right conditions, or what is called a “growth mindset,” Wilks says. After screening two videos highlighting BMCC students at the October forum, she pointed out that they “embody the kinds of stories we want to increase—and we can’t assume we can accomplish that by doing the same thing we have always done. Our students want degrees. This is what they are telling us. They want upward mobility. We need to redesign what we are doing, in order to create different outcomes.”

## Student success begins with enrollment

The Designing for Success working group focused on “onboarding”—an industry term for the application, enrollment and registration process—“looks at the initial stage of the relationship students are building with a college,” says **Kristin Albright Waters**, director of enrollment services at BMCC. “We want our students to believe and know that they can be successful—and getting enrolled should be a reinforcement of that positive message. We are working to create a

student experience in which the intake is a continuous, flowing experience, as opposed to the stop-start type of process that many colleges, including BMCC, currently have. Bottom line, we don’t want any stopping point to be a ‘stop out’—a point in which the student discontinues the enrollment process altogether.”

Ultimately, she says, the college will offer a process in which a student can express interest in BMCC and leave the same day with a schedule of classes. Some steps in that direction include the implementation of technologies designed specifically for onboarding. Another step forward is the launch of the BMCC Panther Station, Albright Waters says, “that will provide specialists to meet with students and send reminders of next steps for successful enrollment. Altogether, these efforts support the college’s retention efforts.”

And what do students think of the current enrollment process? “My experience had its positive and negative moments,” said business major **Michelle Ramos**. “The application was a little lengthy, but all-in-all, easy to understand. The most frustrating part was obtaining all the necessary documents—my high school equivalency diploma, transcripts and

immunization papers. One great help was the all-day freshman orientation, in which I met staff members and fellow students, and took a campus tour. It made me feel like I belonged here and was hands-down my favorite thing about the admission process at BMCC.”

## Bringing students up to speed with college-level work

Another Designing for Success working group is focused on pedagogy and research, especially that which brings students up to speed with college-level work. At BMCC, more than 80 percent of first-time freshmen are placed in remedial, or developmental instruction in reading, writing or—in a majority of cases—mathematics, based on their CUNY Assessment Tests scores. Typically, this delays graduation. In fact, nationwide, as few as one in five students placed in developmental math courses successfully completes a credit-bearing math course, according to data from the Community College Research Center at Teachers College, Columbia University. “Improving developmental outcomes remains one of the most pressing issues facing community colleges,” says President Wilks. “Put simply, we will never improve retention and graduation rates without improving developmental outcomes.”

Implementing co-requisite instruction—classes blending

“Put simply, we will never improve retention and graduation rates without improving developmental outcomes.”

**KARRIN E. WILKS,**  
**INTERIM PRESIDENT**

developmental and college-level, credit-bearing content—is one strategy that has proven to move students through mathematics remediation more quickly. BMCC Professor of Mathematics **Yevgeniy Milman**, who helped develop the mathematics co-requisite courses says, “The skills that a student needs to be successful in the credit-bearing course are embedded in the co-requisite curriculum, and the students have the opportunity to see the relevance of those skills, which enable more complicated tasks.”

Building on that success, co-requisite courses are being expanded to serve students who need writing and reading remediation, as well. English Professor **Chamutal Noimann** is helping to lead faculty development that enables faculty to embed remediation into their college-level courses. This includes building an awareness of interventions and support services into the curriculum, she says, to combat the



**BMCC Commons**

Please address any queries or information about the BMCC Commons to:  
[publicaffairs@bmcc.cuny.edu](mailto:publicaffairs@bmcc.cuny.edu)

**Manny Romero**  
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

**Lynn McGee**  
COMMUNICATIONS  
MANAGER

**Cody Lyon**  
STAFF WRITER

**Louis Chan**  
DIGITAL  
MARKETING  
COORDINATOR

**Rob Gizis**  
GRAPHIC AND  
MULTIMEDIA  
DESIGNER

**David Pangburn**  
VIDEOGRAPHER

**Cynthia G. Blayer**  
WEB CONTENT  
MANAGER

**Thomas Volpe**  
DIRECTOR OF  
PUBLICATIONS

**Rosslynn Pieters**  
ASSOCIATE DIRECTOR  
OF MARKETING

**Sharmela Bhagwant**  
GRAPHIC DESIGNER

**Jamal Jones**  
GRAPHIC DESIGNER

**Jeff Wong**  
GRAPHIC DESIGNER

**Annette Maccarone**  
OFFICE MANAGER

**Yulia Kuzmina**  
MULTIMEDIA INTERN





high rate of student “withdraws” or stopping out of a class without receiving credit. Also, Noimann explains, she and her colleagues are following the five California Acceleration Project Instructional Design Principles. “These result in developmental courses that have similar content and tasks as college-level courses,” she says, “but they reflect an understanding that students might need more in-class support than better-prepared students.”

Another component of co-requisite instruction is providing remediation on an as-needed basis. “Grammar guidance occurs as students edit their own work, or an algebra review could happen as students analyze data related to an issue they’re investigating,” Noimann says. Reducing class size is an effective strategy she advocates, as is a better understanding of “the emotional dynamics behind students’ self-sabotaging behaviors.” Overall, Noimann says, “We believe the answer does not lie outside our classrooms, in add-on success courses or early alert warnings from counseling, but in the fabric of how we teach—our interactions with students, class activities, grading and policies.”

### Career and Academic Communities provide guidance and support

Implementing Career and Academic Communities is a Designing for Success working group that has helped connect BMCC associate degree programs with emerging and robust labor market areas. **Lesley Rennis** is chair of the health education department and co-chair of the Implementing Career and Academic Communities working group, along with with **Sunil Gupta**, dean of Continuing Education and Workforce Development, and **Mahatapa Palit**, chair of the Business Management Department. While higher education is one of the best paths to a career, “That path is rarely linear,” Rennis says. “The Career and Academic Communities will help our students explore professional interests broadly

and early on, making it more likely that their academic paths lead to professional competence, career satisfaction and family-sustaining incomes.” The Career and Academic Communities, she says, will also help students understand how skills learned in the classroom translate to the workforce.

“Many first-generation college students are in need of a great deal of guidance and mentoring as they transition into community college. The Career and Academic Communities are a significant tool for these students.”

**LESLEY RENNIS,**  
**CHAIR, HEALTH EDUCATION**  
**DEPARTMENT**

“Studies show that many students consult with friends and family members when it comes to important career decisions,” says Rennis. “Most of these students have family members who attended college themselves and who are already in the professional workforce. Our students don’t always have the same type of connections. Many first-generation college students are in need of a great deal of guidance and mentoring as they transition from community college.”

The Career and Academic Communities, she says, along with support from faculty and staff, are a significant tool for these students as they move forward in their higher education.

*For more information on BMCC’s Designing for Success initiative or to join a working group, visit:*

[success.bmcc.cuny.edu](http://success.bmcc.cuny.edu).

## PRESIDENT’S MESSAGE

# College-Wide Initiative Aims to Improve Outcomes for All Students

BMCC is committed to improving student success, not incrementally but dramatically. This remains the highest priority of our 2015–2020 Strategic Plan, Reaching Greater Levels. In 2018, we also launched, as Phase 1 of our 2020–2025 strategic plan, our Designing for Success initiative.

Designing for Success is based on the principle that every system is perfectly designed to achieve the

outcomes it produces. We have been incrementally improving three-year graduation rates, from 15.9% for the Fall 2011 full-time freshmen cohort to 22.7% for the 2015 cohort. But fall-to-fall retention rates are going down, from 65.7% for the Fall 2014 cohort to 57.8% for the Fall 2017 cohort—and significant equity gaps persist across outcomes by race, ethnicity and gender.

From a design perspective, we are getting the results we are designed to achieve. We need to redesign key aspects of the student experience to dramatically improve outcomes. From a mission perspective, we have a moral imperative to do better, to realize our leading role as a community college in advancing equity and social justice through expanded opportunity, inclusion and economic mobility. Designing for Success is about taking what works to scale—for all students, not leaving thousands behind.

Over 140 faculty and staff are currently engaged across five Designing for Success working groups to transform the student experience from first contact through graduation and beyond, based on evidence about what is most critical to student success. BMCC’s participation in Guided Pathways 2.0 provides proven models, a national network, and dedicated time through which to integrate and coordinate all BMCC efforts to improve student success, driven by our strategic priorities.

Framed by the principle that students can learn anything under the right conditions—and that it’s our collective responsibility to create those conditions inside and outside the classroom—we must strategically redesign policies, processes, and practices as needed to get better results. To dramatically improve student success requires the contributions of every member of our college community.

I am grateful to and inspired by so many faculty and staff sharing their expertise and demonstrating their passion and deep commitment for our vital mission. As we strive to make BMCC the very best it can be, we welcome your questions and suggestions.

Sincerely,

Karrin E. Wilks, Interim President  
Borough of Manhattan Community College  
The City University of New York





## Milestones

BMCC professors have redesigned 20 courses to allow criminal justice majors to use open education resources (OER) at a potential total savings of \$2,500 in textbook costs. The effort was funded by a December 2016 grant from Achieving the Dream Inc.

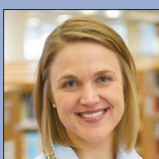


The 2019 cohort of the Faculty Leadership Fellows program includes 17 faculty members from 13 academic programs: **Sidney Askew, Mohammad Azhar, Lynda Carlson, Cheryl Comeau-Kirschner, Marcelle Edinboro, Jennifer Gilken, Luis Gonzales-Urbina, Benjamin Haas, Maureen Keenan, Sophie Marinez, Syreeta McFadden, Gloria McNamara, Christine Priano, Jill Richardson, Michele Ronda, Shirley Leyro** and **Tracy Bealer**.



BMCC Professor and Open Knowledge Librarian **Jean Amaral** was one of five CUNY

representatives invited to attend the Open Education Leadership Summit 2018 in Paris, December 3 and 4. The summit was organized by the International Council for Open and Distance Education, the Open Education Consortium, the Ministry of Higher Education, Research and Innovation and the Ministry of National Education and Youth of France.



**Kristin Albright Waters**, director of enrollment management services at BMCC, has

been elected to the Nominations and Elections Committee of the American Association of Collegiate Registrars and Admissions Officers (AACRAO), a non-profit association of more than 11,000 higher education professionals that provides leadership in academic and enrollment services.

## Paired Courses Enrich Student Perspectives

Studies from the Association of American Colleges and Universities and others indicate that underrepresented students—particularly minority, first-generation, transfer and low-income students—benefit from high-impact practices at BMCC including paired instruction or linked courses offered through the BMCC Learning Academy (BLA).

“The paired courses make course work more meaningful and enable students to see connections between concepts and across disciplines,” says BLA Director **Sara Crosby**. A cohort of about 25 students takes two classes in which the professors have reviewed their syllabi together and aligned some of their learning outcomes, she explains. In addition, the professors are in constant

communication with an advisor dedicated to the same group of students.

Professor **Amy Sodaris** is teaching Introduction to Sociology, a course linked with Introduction to Psychology taught by Professor **Masha Komolova**. The student cohort also attends a success seminar led by BLA Advisor **Mark Podlas**. Their theme is “Inside Out: Identity, Self and Society,” and in one assignment, “The students debated whether gender is hard-wired as part of our biology, or learned through social interactions, society and culture,” says Sodaris. “They referred to readings in both psychology and sociology, and it deepened their insights. This kind of support system and academic integration offers an exciting way to create community and help prepare students for college life.”

## A Showcase of Significant Findings

The BMCC Office of Academic Affairs premiered its faculty speaker series, “Significant Findings,” in Fall 2018.

Twice each semester, the series will feature faculty research on topics of public relevance. On October 25 at 199 Chambers Street, Criminal Justice Professor **Shirley Leyro** (above) shared her research examining the experience of CUNY



noncitizen students. On November 8, Sociology Professor **Elizabeth Wissinger** (left) presented her research on gender, fashion and data as tools for assessing the social impact of wearable technology.



## BMCC Professor Receives \$1.5M NSF Grant



BMCC Mathematics Professor **Claire Wladis** (pictured above, left) has received a \$1.5 million National Science Foundation (NSF) grant—the largest ever received by a BMCC faculty researcher—to develop the first test to measure

how well college students understand fundamental algebra concepts. Wladis is principal investigator of the five-year research project and co-principal investigators are BMCC Mathematics Professor **Kathleen Offenholley** and

CUNY Graduate Center Professor of Educational Psychology **Jay Verkullien**. BMCC Mathematics Professors **Dale Dawes, Elisabeth Jaffe** and **Audrey Nasar** will participate in the research and development of the test.

## Faculty Artists Exhibit Their Work



*In Form*, a group exhibition featured in the Shirley Fiterman Art Center from November 8 to December 15, showcased the work of faculty artists who teach in the Art Foundations Program of the Music and Art department at BMCC. *In Form* presented the faculty artists **Aisha Tandiwe Bell, Zeke Berman, Gianluca Bianchino, Tess Bilhartz, Bernardo Justin Campoy, Simon Carr, Betty Copeland, Jody Culkin, Elisa Decker, Cathy Diamond, Pat Genova, John Goodrich,**

**Xico Greenwald, Joe Haske, Sarah Haviland, Ann Hjelle, Jayne Holsinger, Alessandro Keegan, Thea Lanzisero, JJ Manford, Michael Paris Mazzeo, Siobhan McBride, Alisa Minyukova, Jung He Mun, Lisa Nicchi, Carol Pereira, Thaddeus Radell, Jessica Ramirez, Kimberly Reinhardt, Julia Res, Judy Richardson, David Rothenberg, Erik Saxon, Adele Shtern, Rachelle Street, Janet Esquirol Sylvan, AC Tower, Terttu Uibopuu, Michael Volonakis** and **Phillip Weisman**.



# BMCC Banking and Finance Club Win First Place in College Fed Challenge



L-R: Kimberly Plata, Mateja Tokic, Jerome Powell, Ambar Peralta, Celia Nightingale, Ioannis Tournas.

A team of students from the BMCC Banking and Finance Club—economics major **Charles Reid**; business administration majors **Kimberly Plata** and **Mateja Tokic**; financial management majors **Celia Nightingale** and **Ambar Peralta**, and business management/CIS major **Jason Guan**—won first place in the Maiden Lane division of the College Fed Challenge competition, November 14 at the Federal Reserve Bank in Lower Manhattan.

Led by Business Management Professors **Ioannis Tournas** and **Julian Schroeder**, the BMCC team analyzed economic conditions and recommended monetary policy during the district competition. Afterwards, they were invited to observe the national competition on November 29 at the Federal Reserve Board in Washington D.C., where they met members of the Board of Governors and Federal Reserve Chair **Jerome Powell**.

# One Student's Pursuit of the American Dream

**Mengjun Yang** (pictured below), who moved to New York from the Henan Province, China in 2010, spent two years learning English and then working in a nail salon—where her English language skills propelled her to the role of manager—before beginning her studies at the Manhattan Employment Opportunity Center (MEOC), on 125<sup>th</sup> Street in East Harlem.

“I never forgot why I came to this country and my American Dream of better opportunity, personal growth

and a successful career,” says Yang, who first earned her High School Equivalency or HSE, then completed the Certified Nursing Assistant (CNA) program.

“Mengjun is very ambitious and tenacious,” says **Tanya Brown**, Director of Academic Affairs at MEOC. The CNA program involved 90 hours of classroom instruction, and 30 hours clinical study; the latter of which Yang completed at the Isabella Geriatric Center in Manhattan. Her interest in helping individuals with medical needs was heightened by watching a neighbor struggle with chemotherapy, and supporting her mother through the challenges of diabetes.

“We learned in the CNA program about systems of the human body and basic nursing skills like checking the patient’s blood pressure, pulse and body temperature,” says Yang. “We also studied the legal and ethical issues in long-term care, and how to observe and report pain levels.”

Yang took and passed the CNA certification test in December 2018. Eventually she wants to enter the associate degree in nursing program at BMCC, and become a registered nurse (RN). “I see myself as a positive person in the medical environment,” Yang says. “I am thankful for having that opportunity.”



# League's Best Named CUNY All Stars

**Jahvaughnie Johnson** (pictured above) and **Adrian Santos**, both business administration majors and members of the BMCC men’s soccer team, were named 2018 CUNY Athletic Conference Community College All Stars award winners. Selected by the league’s head coaches, Johnson was named Player of the Year while Santos won the Rookie of the Year award. Also, BMCC’s **Modou Seck** was named Coach of the Year.

# Milestones

Theatre major **Daniel Pena** and public health major **Akeema “Keemz”** were among a cast of 11 professional writers and actors who participated in the Fall 2018 Writers in Performance workshop hosted by the BMCC Tribeca Performing Arts Center. The 12-week program culminated with *Longing*, an ensemble performance of monologues and short scenes crafted by the participants at BMCC’s Theater 2 in December 2018.

The BMCC student concert choir was selected by representatives from the retailer Uniqlo to perform at the company’s Fifth Avenue flagship location during the 2018 holiday season. The choir is led by Music and Art Chairperson, **Eugenia Oi Yan Yu**.



**Ytsel Flores Cristiansen** (Business Administration, '16), found support at the BMCC

Center for Career Development, which helped her realize her passion for public relations and event planning. Cristiansen earned her associate degree with honors and now attends Baruch College, CUNY, majoring in business communications and psychology. A video telling her story and that of other students who got their professional and academic start at BMCC can be found by visiting YouTube and searching for “CUNYBMCC.”



The winners of the BMCC semi-annual student film festival held December 13 include: **Isaiah Black**, Best Screenplay; **Gabriel Chiriboga**, Best Narrative Film; **Andrew Davenport**, Best Documentary; **Seiya Kudo**, Best Editing; **Janae Laster**, The Michael Vincent Rosen-Pipitone Rising Star Award; **Jefrey Lewis Jr.**, Best Director; **Thomas James Ludena**, Best Sound; **Victoria Martinez**, Best PEM (PSA/Experimental/Music Video); **Nanako Senda**, Best Animation; **Dajoir Thomas**, Best Acting, and **Shiu Tszyue**, Best Cinematography.



# BMCC Hosts Summit on Remediation Reform

On October 26, BMCC hosted the annual CUNY English Summit in the Fiterman Hall Conference Center. CUNY Interim Chancellor **Vita C. Rabinowitz** joined BMCC Interim President Karrin E. Wilks to welcome attendees from BMCC, across CUNY and community colleges around the country. The daylong event examined strategies proven to close the achievement gap in reading and writing courses. Speakers also shared insights on how to scale up—apply successful strategies to a larger segment of students—and implement remediation reform across college systems, and with different groups of students.

The summit opened with a panel on the national perspective of remediation reform, facilitated by **David Crook**, Associate University Provost, CUNY. Speakers included **Maria Cornier** of the Community College Research Center (CCRC) at Teachers College, Columbia University. Other panels included, “The Case for Change: What CUNY Data Tell Us,” featured **Michael Guy**, University Associate Dean of Undergraduate Studies, CUNY, and



BMCC professors shared strategies for closing achievement gaps in reading and writing at CUNY English Summit.

**Sarah Truelsch**, Director of Policy Research, CUNY. Implementing co-requisite instruction—classes in which developmental and credit-bearing content is blended, in order to move students more effectively through remediation—was the subject of a panel facilitated by

**Caroline Pari-Pfisterer**, an intensive writing coordinator at BMCC.

BMCC Acting Provost **Erwin Wong** delivered closing remarks. “Regardless of where we come from, we have a common theme—our commitment to student success. If you have just two or three significant takeaways from

today’s sessions, that is what might make a difference to the percentage of students in your classes who are not doing as well as they could be,” he said. “Whatever approach is used, we have to connect with our students. Once they know you care, they will work very hard to reach their goals.”



Panther Partner mentor Precious Sellars-Mulhern meets with mentee Garey Santano.

## Panther Partners Program Supports Students in Their Journey

**Precious Sellars-Mulhern**, a BMCC professor and counselor is one of 66 mentors matched with 165 students through the BMCC Panther Partners Program. Developed by the Office of New Student Programs and the Office of Student Affairs, the program provides students who are first in their family to attend college, with a Panther Coach who offers support and encouragement at BMCC. “The Panther Partners program gives students a connection that makes them feel welcome in the college environment,” says Sellars-Mulhern, whose mentee is science for health professions major **Garey Santano**. “Sharing my college

experiences with Garey lets him know he is not the first to have concerns about belonging or having the ability to succeed,” says Sellars-Mulhern. “More importantly, he is not alone in this journey.”

Santano says the Panther Partners program has shown him “the campus and all it has to offer, and sent me to workshops to help me get to know what I want out of college and my future career.” Inspired by Sellars-Mulhern, he says he has learned “new and interesting ways to manage my stress and schedules. With someone to walk me through it, I was more prepared and positive about my first semester.”

## Social Studies for Secondary Education Major Meets Growing Demand

Starting Fall 2019, BMCC students will have the option of earning an Associate in Arts degree in Social Studies for Secondary Education through the Teacher Education department. The new program meets a need within BMCC and New York City itself. “Urban schools often have difficulty recruiting and retaining high-quality teachers, especially those whose racial and ethnic

backgrounds reflect that of the students served,” says **Cara Kronen**, a professor and coordinator of the secondary education program. Also, she says, 65 percent of 434 BMCC students surveyed in 2015 by the teacher education department said they would consider a program in Social Studies for Secondary Education if it had been available when they enrolled at BMCC.

## BMCC Ranks Third Nationwide in Raising Student Mobility

BMCC ranks third among two-year public institutions nationwide in enabling students whose parents are in the bottom 20 percent of income levels, to reach the top 20 percent for individual earnings. These findings are based a new report, “Highest

Student-Mobility Rates, 2014,” compiled by the *Chronicle of Higher Education* and drawn from a Stanford University study that tracked students from nearly every U.S. college through millions of anonymous tax filings and financial-aid records.



# Founders of the BMCC Asia Society Establish Scholarship

Forty-year BMCC alumni **Hugh** (梁漢雲) and **Linda Leung** have created the Hugh and Linda Leung Family Scholarship Fund. In 1978, Hugh Leung founded the BMCC Asia Society, now known as the Chinese Culture Club, and met Linda Leung through that group. In August 2018, the Leungs hosted the 40<sup>th</sup> BMCC Asia Society Reunion, and invited the college’s current Chinese Culture Club, to whom they gifted \$800, for further activities. They also committed to



Hugh and Linda Leung circa 1979.

award a total of \$10,000 in scholarship funds over the next five years; four \$500 scholarships a year to students with a 3.0 or higher GPA who are involved in Asian culture on campus or the Chinese Culture Club. The Leungs, whose gift will be honored with an entry on the BMCC Donor Wall in Fiterman Hall, have expressed gratitude to BMCC for paving their way to success. Hugh Leung, a Senior Vice President at Citibank, has enjoyed a long career in IT and Computer Programming, and Linda Leung has built a career in project management at Verizon.



Professor Charles McGill shared his techniques with student artists.

## Charles McGill Scholarship Fund Carries on His Legacy

BMCC Professor of Art **Charles McGill** made a deep impression on his students—and on the fine arts world—before passing away in 2017. In his honor, his family has created the Charles McGill Endowed Scholarship Fund with a \$25,000 gift. “From humble beginnings, Charles McGill was instilled with experiences that allowed him to internalize, embody and exude the meaning of character, integrity, passion, love and talent,” says his sister, **Carmen McGill**. “It was these

traits that drove Charles to greatness as a loving son, brother and friend; and as an artist, educator and mentor. He left us with a legacy of the passionate pursuit of personal growth in all. Professor McGill’s greatest joy was the experience of seeing the light in a student’s eyes when they ‘got it!’ Charles was a celebration of life and our hope is that the recipients of this scholarship will realize their full potential and one day be revered in the same way.”

## Trinity Church Wall Street Supports Justice-Involved Students

Thanks to a \$26,500 gift from Trinity Church Wall Street, a May 3, 2019 symposium, “Pedagogy, Programs and Policies that Support and Sustain Justice-Involved CUNY Students,” will be held at BMCC and co-sponsored by BMCC and the University Faculty Senate. The conference theme, “justice involvement,” refers to individuals who are leaving prison, as well as millions of

formerly incarcerated youth. The City University of New York—which has always been a portal of opportunity for New Yorkers—has emerged as a national leader in educating justice-involved students, and the symposium will help eradicate barriers to their educational equity and inclusion. For more information, contact Human Services Professor **Lisa Hale Rose**, (212) 220-1227.

## Milestones

BMCC surpassed its goal and collected more than \$8,500 in scholarship donations on CUNY Tuesday, a CUNY-wide day of giving.



**Roberto Jimenez** (Accounting, ’03), a structured oil trader at Merrill Lynch, and

**Jose Alejandro Quiroz** (Business Management, ’03), a LATAM trader at UBS, presented in the BMCC Business Leaders on Campus program at the Fiterman Conference Center, November 7.



Former BMCC Kaplan scholar **Norbesida Bagabila** (Science, ’17), who is now on

a full scholarship at Brown University, was named to the 2018 cohort of the Royce Fellowship, which supports Brown undergraduates engaged in independent research projects in locations across the United States and around the world. Bagabila, a biomedical engineering and public health major, is investigating the beneficial use of plant-based medicines combining traditional African medicine and western technology.

### Stay in touch with BMCC!

BMCC alumni, share your recent achievements, learn about BMCC’s Alumni Council and other activities: [alumni@bmcc.cuny.edu](mailto:alumni@bmcc.cuny.edu).

## Donation from Citi Community Development Expands Free Tax Prep Services

With support including a \$65,000 gift from Citi Community Development, BMCC will launch its Free Tax Prep Expansion Project to provide no-cost income tax preparation for members of the BMCC community whose annual income is below \$54,000. The program will be offered January through April at BMCC’s Single Stop program, and is being coordinated

by Vice President **Marva Craig** and Single Stop Director **Deborah Harte**. In 2018, the Single Stop free tax prep services prepared taxes for 1,354 individuals and returned more than \$2 million in refunds, including close to \$340,000 in savings from filing fees. With Citi Community Development’s support, the program will expand its

hours in 2019, and train and certify up to 40 Citi volunteers to prepare returns. “Citi has been one of BMCC’s most loyal and generous corporate supporters,” says **Brian Haller**, BMCC director of foundation and corporate relations. “For more than 15 years, they have contributed to programs and initiatives at BMCC that support student financial literacy and independence.”





**What is your role at BMCC?**

As the director of the Academic Advisement and Transfer Center (AATC), I am responsible for coordinating the college's academic advisement efforts and providing direction for transfer-related activities. I also serve as the college's DegreeWorks coordinator to ensure that the system is kept up to date.

**What do you really do at BMCC?**

I support student success across the many dimensions it encompasses! I collaborate with academic departments and other key areas to improve advisement services. I work with other institutions to develop transfer programs

to ensure our students have opportunities to complete their undergraduate education. I also support the professional development of the AATC staff so they can continue to hone their skills to best serve our students.

**What are some of your proudest accomplishments in your current role?**

When I started working at BMCC in 2003, the AATC consisted of the director, four professional staff members and about eight part-time college assistants. Today, the staff has grown to include 45 professional advisors. I am proud to have had a role in the direction of that growth, which is due in large part to BMCC's

and CUNY's commitment to student success and seeing that advisement is a key component in improved student engagement.

**What is one thing you've noticed about the BMCC community, as you have worked with faculty and staff in your current role?**

In the past 15 years, there have been many new faces and personalities; however, the one thing that remains is everyone's commitment to our students. The college is a very student-focused institution and I love working with a team of passionate professionals whose focus is supporting student success at BMCC and beyond.

**Tell us something about yourself we might not know, but has an impact on the good work you do, at BMCC.**

Both of my parents graduated from CUNY colleges! They each graduated from City College (though decades apart) and my mother later worked at City College; first in the Dean of Social Sciences Office and then for the Institute for Research on the African Diaspora. She served in an advising capacity for many years, and I think she greatly influenced my decision to pursue a career in higher education.

## Then and Now



**2001**



**2018**

Just before September 11, 2001, BMCC offered 22 associate degree programs and served about 15,500 students. Today, more than 26,000 students are enrolled in 48 academic programs. These new majors reflect the industries and careers that have risen to prominence while One World Trade Center, also known as the Freedom Tower, rose in the view from Washington Market Park, in front of BMCC.