



Borough of Manhattan Community College • The City University of New York

A Journal of Award-Winning Students and Mentors

2010-2011





### A Journal of Award-Winning Students and Mentors 2010-2011

**I**t is my pleasure to welcome you to this second edition of *Marks of Excellence*, our annual journal of outstanding academic achievement at BMCC.

The 13 students whose stories you will read in these pages represent a wide array of majors and interests—in the arts, the sciences and the humanities. These are individuals motivated by an intense intellectual curiosity, boundless creative energy, and, not infrequently, personal courage. Nine are currently enrolled in BMCC; four have graduated. While their academic diversity defies easy generalization, they have this in common: All benefited from the support and encouragement of dedicated faculty and staff mentors.

“When I needed counseling, tutoring and special help from my teachers, they gave it to me unstintingly,” says BMCC alum Brian Olson, who will begin work on a doctorate in biochemistry this fall. “I wouldn’t have gotten as far as I have without them.” Of course, a mentor’s impact invariably goes beyond the academic sphere. “Throughout my professional life, I’ve used what I learned in Professor Wiseman’s class,” says Nohoum Traore, now at Harvard working on his second master’s degree, of Cynthia Wiseman, a professor in the Developmental Skills Department. “It was from her that I learned how to organize my thoughts, write a good sentence and communicate with people.”

Importantly, for Traore and others, BMCC represents less a destination than a point of embarkation—a real-life demonstration of BMCC’s slogan,

“Start here. Go anywhere.” Virtually all of the students profiled here have either gone on to earn bachelor’s degrees or are planning to do so; many will continue their studies at the graduate and postgraduate level. But in a way, their future plans are beside the point: *Marks of Excellence* is a celebration of tangible successes and dreams fulfilled.

Needless to say, producing a journal of this type is deeply rewarding, though not without its challenges. Because of space constraints, many outstanding students could not be featured. But their absence in these pages in no way detracts from their accomplishments.

It is widely acknowledged that the nation’s 1,200 community colleges have evolved into a powerful driver of workforce development and economic growth. But what is also increasingly evident is that any academic gap between community colleges and senior institutions is fast disappearing.

I cannot think of an institution of higher education anywhere in the nation that would not take deep pride in students like those featured in this edition of *Marks of Excellence*. Their success is truly inspiring.

Antonio Pérez  
President, Borough of Manhattan Community College  
The City University of New York



# From Five Alarms, to Triage

For firefighter James Gerber, BMCC's Nursing program is part of the continuum of saving lives.

James Gerber, a nursing major and Lieutenant in the New York City Fire Department, wants to work in a major trauma center someday. "I'm a certified EMT; I've been to the scene, 'packaged' people for the ambulance," he says, "and now I want to be part of the next step, the part that happens once patients arrive at a hospital or trauma facility."

Gerber balances his nursing classes at BMCC—and internships in some of New York's busiest hospitals—with eight 24-hour shifts a month at Engine 279, Ladder 131 in Red Hook, Brooklyn. The schedule will mesh well, he says, with a nurse's week of three 12-hour shifts. Not only that, the skill sets overlap: applying protocol when life hangs in the balance.

Gerber and his fellow fire fighters have received two unit citations, so far. "A construction worker fell into the netting, 40 stories up," he says. In another emergency, they pulled the driver from a car overhanging a cliff. When 9-11 struck, "We were in the debris, searching for people, and I was assigned there for three months," he says.

Elected president of his nursing class, Gerber volunteers with a student project collecting toys for Lincoln Medical Center's Pediatric Unit in the South Bronx. He won the nursing department's Lincoln Fund scholarship, and received third place in the David A. Garfinkel Essay Competition sponsored by The Historical Society of the Courts of the State of New York, for his paper on the Triangle Shirtwaist Factory fire.

Gerber earned a bachelor's degree at Boston University before attending BMCC, where he describes Susan Brillhart and Dorothy Grasso as "the two best instructors I have had, anywhere....Often you will see these professors put down their lunch, just to speak to a student." Department Chair Jacqueline Nichols places high value on student support. "We want faculty with experience in their fields," she says, "but also, we want instructors who have a talent for recognizing and working with different learning styles and cultural backgrounds."

Eventually, Gerber wants to enter a master's degree program, in nursing or another medical field, and retire from the FDNY. "The environment of a well functioning unit in a hospital is very similar to that of the firehouse," he says. "Teamwork is critical in providing the best patient care—in both jobs, reliance on your fellow workers is important. They become your second family."



**Professor Susan Brillhart  
and Nursing Chair  
Jacqueline Nichols**



# Concerto for Pringles and Drywall

Theatre major Donghyuk Chang is named top inventor for his unexpected array of musical instruments.

Not long ago, an evaluator for the Kennedy Center American College Theater Festival attended a performance of *Woyzeck* at the BMCC Theatre Program, and nominated sound designer, and BMCC theatre major Donghyuk Chang for northeast regional awards. But there was a minor glitch.

"There wasn't an actual prize category for Chang," says Alkis Papoutsis, the play's director and a lecturer in the Department of Speech, Communications and Theatre Arts. "He didn't fit into the standard descriptions of musical director, conductor, or sound designer because what he did went so much further."

In fact, Chang not only produced the music for *Woyzeck*, he invented and built the instruments on which it was played, scavenging materials from junk heaps and the Theatre Department's scenery shop.

"Although *Woyzeck* was written in Germany in the 19th century, this adaptation by Elizabeth Chaney was set in the American South during the Great Depression of the 1930s," Chang says. "Money was scarce, so people made banjos, guitars and other instruments out of found materials like cans and cigar boxes. I found that very inspiring."

At the Kennedy Center Festival held at Fitchburg State College in Massachusetts, Chang regaled judges with jazzy, percussive riffs on an

array of ingenious instruments—a xylophone made from scraps of drywall, horns fashioned from cardboard tubes, a maraca built from a rice-filled Pringles canister, and assorted flutes, clarinets, marimbas and dulcimers.

For his efforts, he received First Prize for Achievement in Innovation and Technology, beating out entrants from Yale, NYU, the University of Massachusetts and Emerson College. He was also invited to apply to the Professional Immersion Program at the California Shakespeare Theater.

Before coming to the U.S. in 2008, the Korean-born Chang taught music to, and made instruments with kindergartners and seniors. "Basically, I've always been involved in making noise," he says. Working closely with BMCC adjunct professor Christopher Peifer in an Audio Production and Sound Design Practicum, he spent over 2,000 hours researching, designing and building instruments for *Woyzeck*. "If I'd considered it work, I never would have been able to do it," he says. "For me, this was play. This was my joy."

**Adjunct Professor Christopher Peifer:** "We worked side-by-side, creating music and conceiving sound design, collecting and creating sound effects...and realizing the final design, score and performance. This was challenging work, to which Donghyuk committed completely, with hands, head, heart and soul."



# Career in Economic Development

Malian-born BMCC alum Nohoum Traore fulfills a commitment to give back by attending Harvard.

Nohoum Traore arrived in New York City in 2003. A native of the West African nation of Mali, he was fluent in French and a few Malian tribal dialects, as well as his native language, Bambara—none of which would help him earn a degree in the United States. So his first step was to enroll in a language school, where he says, “I learned English in three months.”

Traore’s next step was to enroll at BMCC, where he graduated in three semesters while also taking courses at Hunter College, eventually earning both a bachelor’s and master’s degree in economics. Diplomas in hand, he was hired as a project coordinator by Innovations for Poverty Action (IPA), a non-profit group that evaluates economic aid programs for the world’s poor.

As part of IPA, Traore flew back to West Africa, where he would spend the next two and a half years. Now back in New York, he is working on a second master’s degree, this time at Harvard, where he will study public policy, with a concentration in developmental economics.

“My experience at BMCC enabled me to do what I did in the IPA,” he says. “Now I want to give back.” At BMCC, Traore’s anchor and main resource was Cynthia Wiseman, an assistant professor in the Developmental Skills Department, who taught an ESL class he attended.

“My English was still weak,” says Traore, “But she made a point of reminding us that ‘ESL’ stands for ‘English as a Second Language’—meaning that we were already fluent in at least one other language. It went a long way toward making us comfortable and boosting our self-esteem.”

Traore still sees Wiseman as his mentor. “Throughout my academic and professional life, I’ve used what I learned in her class—how to organize my thoughts, write a good sentence, and communicate with people,” he says.

Eventually, Traore plans to return to the developing world, where he feels he can contribute the most. “I’d prefer to go to Mali, but the important thing is to be useful and to learn,” he says. “I will go anywhere I feel I can add value.”



**Professor Cynthia Wiseman:** “Nohoum is a special person—extremely focused, hard-working and adept at breaking down a complicated task into parts and getting it done.”



# Star Scholar

**Student astronomer Chaele Nicholson uses computer science to explore distant galaxies.**

For BMCC astronomer Chaele Nicholson, the sky is no limit. “I started out as a Computer Information Systems major, largely on the advice of my parents,” he says. “But in my first semester, I took Professor Saavik Ford’s astronomy course and everything changed.”

Ford picks up the story: “This was an introductory course for non-science majors,” she says. “But after a few weeks, I noticed Chaele was asking extremely insightful questions, so I asked if he’d like to work with me and Professor Barry McKernan on an astrophysics research project.”

That project, sponsored in part by, and held at the American Museum of Natural History, involved looking into the heart of distant galaxies. Nicholson jumped at the offer, but was concerned about adding activities that would delay his graduation. “My parents were helping me with tuition, but I needed to work at McDonalds to make ends meet,” he says. “I knew I had to find some sort of financial aid if I were to continue my coursework.”

That aid came in the form of a BMCC Foundation Scholarship and stipends from the Louis Stokes Alliance for Minority Participation (LSAMP) program. Eventually, when Nicholson was averaging 10 to 15 hours a week on his research at the Museum, Ford and McKernan proposed another bold idea: Would he consider changing his major from computer information to computer science?

His answer was ‘Yes’. “Astrophysics had become incredibly interesting to me,” says Nicholson. “And now I’d be able to combine it with another passion—computer science.” That combination led to his “Most Outstanding Presenter” award in the Environmental Science and Ecology category at the 2011 Urban University Series’ Einsteins in the City Conference. His investigation of x-ray and infrared radiation in black holes and active galactic nuclei “beat out some 75 other recipients from across the nation and Austria,” says McKernan, “including many from prestigious senior colleges. We are very proud of him.”

Now, Nicholson is looking ahead to senior college, a doctorate, and a career in aerospace engineering. “It’s hard to put into words my appreciation for what Professors Ford and McKernan did for me,” he says. “I’ve been blessed with incredible mentors. They not only taught me about astronomy and astrophysics, they provided a sympathetic ear and pushed me to achieve my dream.”



**Professors  
K. E. Saavik Ford and  
Barry McKernan**



# Flower Power

Lisa Bloodgood wins the Udall Scholarship for her studies of plants that detoxify soil.

“‘Phyto’ is Greek for ‘plant’, and remediation has to do with cleaning,” explains BMCC science major Lisa Bloodgood, whose focus is phytoremediation.

A lot of plants, she says, “evolved alongside an iron seam, or an environment where there’s nickel, naturally.” Today, these plants are used to help clean metals from polluted soil and water, and she gave the example of sunflowers, built into rafts to help clean the ponds near Chernobyl’s nuclear power plant disaster in the Ukraine.

“These sunflowers were pulling uranium, sequestering this very toxic metal into their shoots and stems,” says Bloodgood. “Knowing the potential to revitalize ecosystems in such a beautiful way is magnetic. It has been my greatest epiphany.”

At BMCC, she has worked closely with science faculty to create a course of study on phytoremediation, looking at lead’s impact on plant germination, and examining plants’ beneficial oils, “their use in biofuels, and how these applications may be made more economically viable.”

The Morris K. Udall and Stewart L. Udall Foundation recently awarded Bloodgood their maximum \$5,000 scholarship, and she feels her community work, as well as special opportunities at BMCC helped distinguish her from over 500 other applicants, most of whom were from 4-year colleges.

At PS 123, a Brooklyn elementary school, she’s helping to create a student garden; she also co-founded a sustainability club at BMCC.

“At BMCC, I feel I’m very lucky,” says Bloodgood, who completed a C-STEP internship on microbiology and forensics, directed by science professor Lalitha Jayant. Science professor Sarah Salm has been her academic and sustainability club advisor; professors Catarina Mata and Adolfina Koroch have been her research mentors, and science professor Edith Robbins, she says, “feeds me a steady stream of amazing articles on really interesting work that’s being done in the biological fields.”

“All of these women have helped me incredibly,” says Bloodgood. “I can’t thank them enough.” After graduating from BMCC, she plans to attend the College of Environmental Science and Forestry at the State University of New York, Syracuse.

“I believe I’m the first Udall Scholar from BMCC,” Bloodgood says, but she doesn’t think she’ll be the last. “I am committed to this idea,” she says, “and want nothing more than to make it spread, like wildflowers.”



Professors  
Lalitha Jayant,  
Sarah Salm, and  
Catarina Mata



# Cinderella Man

History scholar Michael Hattem looks back to BMCC, the start of an amazing journey.

At 31, Michael Hattem was supporting his family by working at whatever menial jobs he could find. “It was 2007 and our son Lucien had just been born,” he recalls. “I realized I had to provide a better future for him, and going back to school seemed the best way to accomplish that.”

Four years later, Hattem is graduating from CUNY’s Baccalaureate Program for Unique and Interdisciplinary Studies with a bachelor’s degree in history, and set to begin graduate studies at Yale University—where he’s been awarded a 5-year, tuition-free fellowship plus a \$26,500-a-year stipend.

At BMCC, Hattem’s first mentor was Jacob Kramer, his professor for early and modern American history. “He was particularly interested in the history of the American labor movement,” Kramer recalls. “He really wanted to do something above and beyond the scope and substance of our class assignments.”

Writing that research paper inspired Hattem to become a historian, and enroll in the CUNY Baccalaureate program, where students design their own curricula. His major was history, with a focus on colonial America, and he applied to graduate schools to continue those studies.

“I’m not surprised that Yale offered him a fellowship,” Kramer says.

“There are some people who are just good at historical research. Michael is one of them.” Yale not only offered full tuition remission plus stipend for five years, but healthcare coverage for Hattem, his wife, and their two young sons.

“I’m not naturally a confident person,” says Hattem. “But the feeling that I could do this has been slowly building for a while. Of course, if it hadn’t been for mentors like Professor Kramer, I wouldn’t even have applied to these places...They boosted my confidence in myself and took time to help me outside of class—meeting me for coffee, inviting me to their homes, writing letters on my behalf.”



**Professor Jacob Kramer: “Michael’s level of comprehension, analytical abilities and intellectual sophistication clearly stood out. He was always keyed into class discussions and always prepared to comment.”**



# The Tango, Bollywood— and a Career in Math

Two BMCC alums take their love of math to a new level.

BMCC student Yin Pak Cheng and alum Manya Patel each just received a \$1,000 scholarship from the New York State Mathematics Association of Two-Year Colleges; Cheng won the Past President's Scholarship for Excellence in Mathematics, and Patel won the Helen Siner Memorial Scholarship for Excellence in Mathematics.

The two friends share a love of math matched only by their willingness to apply it. In his Honors Project with math professor Margaret Dean, Cheng is examining the Butterfly Effect, a part of chaos theory. Cheng, who enjoys video games and street festivals, grew up in Hong Kong and moved to Brooklyn at age 16, enrolling right away at BMCC. Secretary of the school's honor society, Phi Theta Kappa, he attended the organization's convention in Seattle, and enjoyed conference events including ballroom dancing.

"I used to be in the dance club at BMCC," he says. "I really like the Tango." He also enjoys playing the piano, learning languages—"I took three semesters of Spanish, and now I'm taking French"—and is continuing to explore chaos theory, through a STEM project with BMCC math professor Jorge Maciel.

Cheng's friend and fellow mathematician, Manya Patel grew up in England, and moved to South India at age 9. "I started modeling saris at age 14," she says, having dropped out of school to help support her mother and sister, when her father passed away. One of Manya's billboards drew

a film director's attention, and the rest is cinematic history—she went on to star in over 40 Bollywood films. She eventually moved to New York, earned her GED at BMCC, and enrolled as a math major.

She met math professor Alla Morgulis at orientation. "She was basically like a mother to me," says Patel, who completed four STEM projects under Morgulis' guidance; one in economics, two in physics, and one on fractals, or irregular shapes found in nature such as in snowflakes.

This semester, Patel enrolled in a dual degree program at Columbia University. Concurrent with earning a bachelor's degree in math statistics—minoring in quantitative finance—she's pursuing an MBA. "I want to work as an investment banker, in mergers and acquisitions," she says. "I'd like to work in the entertainment industry, maybe even in Bollywood."

**Professor Marcos Zyman: "Since he learns mostly through understanding, rather than raw memorization, Yin Pak is able to 'think on his feet'."**



**Professor Alla Morgulis: "Manya constantly wanted to go beyond her classroom experience. I was happy to guide her through this journey, as she engaged in STEM projects on fractals and other subjects."**



# Breathing Easy

Respiratory Therapy student Barton Campbell receives a coveted Allied Health scholarship.

When Barton Campbell suffered an asthma attack in 1999, a Respiratory Therapist saved his life. “I literally felt near death,” he recalls, and notes how impressed he was with the first responder’s skill and reassuring manner. Soon after that experience, a doctor friend—aware of Campbell’s interest in science, as well as his enthusiastic but not overly profitable career as a bass guitarist—suggested he consider becoming a Respiratory Therapist, himself.

Campbell agreed. Now enrolled in BMCC’s Department of Allied Health, he attends classes on physiology and theory, while undergoing hands-on training at hospitals throughout New York City. He serves as Vice President of BMCC’s Respiratory Therapy Club, maintains a 4.0 grade point average, and tutors fellow students. He even writes and distributes on campus, a newsletter of health science news and breakthroughs.

Having returned to school as an older student—supporting his wife and daughter not just as a musician but by working in department stores, for a moving company and installing dry wall for a building contractor—Campbell has perspective on the opportunities an Allied Health degree provides. At BMCC, he says, he’s gaining technical skills and knowledge, but also feels he has the empathy needed to calm patients in respiratory distress. He credits Lauren Goodwyn, Deputy Chair of BMCC’s Science Department, for motivating him to develop the spectrum of skills expected of an Allied Health professional.

“She deviates from the normal style of classroom presentation to invent such interesting, engaging and, honestly, fun ways to learn,” he says. “For one lab on muscles, she had us tape pantyhose to a skeleton where a series of muscle would normally go. The pantyhose had just the right elasticity, so that the interaction of the pantyhose and skeleton really gave the illusion of muscle behavior.”

Recently, Campbell received a Lanza Foundation Scholarship at BMCC. Spearheaded by health education advocate Patricia Lanza, The Lanza Family Foundation has provided more than a quarter of a million dollars to BMCC for Nursing and Allied Health scholarships. “Though the money is, of course, a much-needed and appreciated addition to my family’s budget,” Campbell says, “I cannot help but admit that being recognized as a scholar thrills me to no end.”

Professor Lauren Goodwyn: “Anatomy and Physiology is a very demanding subject and students must do a lot of studying outside of class. Barton was always well prepared for class and his participation enlivened the class. He’s also a musician—I play Barton’s CDs all the time!”



# Poetry's Celebrities

The new CUP Awards celebrate outstanding student poets, CUNY-wide.

You could say a third of CUNY's best writers attend BMCC—two of the six winners of the inaugural CUNY Undergraduate Poetry (CUP) Awards are BMCC students Shara Concepcion and Ricci Niles.

The first annual CUP award competition, an initiative of the Office of BMCC President Antonio Pérez, was open to undergraduate writers, CUNY-wide. "Poetry is one of those activities students do on their own," says English professor, poet and CUP co-founder James Tolan. "We have very few outlets affirming their work, so I think this is huge."

Shara Concepcion also just won a Kaplan Scholarship—up to \$20,000 per year for tuition in a four-year college, once she graduates from BMCC, and plans to become a clinical psychologist. "I took time off from BMCC to be an Americorps member, and did disaster relief in Texas, after Hurricane Ike in 2009," she says. "I realized then, how devastating disasters can be, to people's mental health...and that's where poetry comes from, experience, struggle and triumph."

Concepcion grew up in the Bronx and wrote her first poem at age 7; recent inspiration comes from BMCC English professor Robert Lapides. "He tells us to go into the deep water with our writing," she says. "For me, that meant putting my poems forward for scrutiny, stepping outside my comfort zone."

Ricci Niles, who is considering a career in law or journalism and wrote the award-winning poem, "Up South," grew up in Manhattan, but feels influenced by the literature and history of the American South. "On my mother's side," she says, "my roots hail from Texas. Any great writer, they're also prodigious readers. The history and words of what you read stay with you, until they come out as your own."

Her family, she says, has always supported her writing. "Our mom made being a professional artist seem like a viable thing," Niles says. "That myth of the starving artist—she made it seem like a myth."

**Professor Robert Lapides:** "Shara was a courageous, wonderfully penetrating writer; a sensitive, deeply intelligent reader, and an honest, generously responsive classmate."



**Professor Cheryl Fish:** "Ricci stood out in my English 121 class for her engagement with the work, her maturity, enthusiasm and diligence...she lyrically reminds us of the beauty in desolation, the hope in despair, as she documents the impact of nature and the urban, of place and our embodying of it."



# With a Little Help From Her Friends

With the support of a dedicated mentor and others,  
Ayania Wellington looks ahead to a bright future.

“Even at a young age, I knew there was another way to live,” says BMCC Kaplan Scholar Ayania Wellington, whose struggles began at the age of 3, she says, “when my father was murdered, leaving my mother to raise four children on her own.”

In the following years, circumstances continued to weigh on Ayania and her family. “In high school, I knew people who were shot, stabbed, and even murdered,” she says. “I saw kids getting pregnant, going to jail...I knew there had to be something more.”

Ayania was right—there was something more. She just completed her first year as a Liberal Arts major at BMCC with a 3.79 grade point average, and was named one of seven CUNY community college students—two from BMCC—to receive a prestigious Kaplan Scholarship from the Kaplan Educational Foundation’s Leadership Program.

The Kaplan Foundation, in fact, is not the first to put its faith in Ayania. As a middle-school student, she set out in search of extra help and found Jennifer Coppel, a “big sister” from the Boys & Girls Clubs of America. Jennifer pushed her young charge to stay in school and eventually helped her find a paid internship and enroll at BMCC.

Eventually, Ayania even moved in with Jennifer and her husband Chris, finding “the structure, discipline and understanding” she needed to stay focused on school—where she found another mentor, BMCC Professor Hollis Glaser of the Department of Speech, Communications, and Theatre Arts.

Glaser taught Ayania’s mass media class, and helped her improve her writing skills. She also wrote references for Ayania, and encouraged her broadcast journalism aspirations. “From the first day of class,” Ayania says, “I wanted to model myself after her—the way she talked, wrote and presented herself.”

Last summer, Ayania completed coursework at both BMCC and Vassar College. As a Kaplan Scholar, she’ll receive \$3,000 while she completes her studies at BMCC, and \$20,000 a year once she transfers to a 4-year college. She’ll also receive tutoring and mentoring support on the way to her goal: A career in broadcast journalism.

What it all means, she says, is that “there are people who believe in me and my dreams and want to help me succeed. Now it’s up to me to believe in myself as much as they do.”



**Professor Hollis Glaser: “I found Ayania to be smart and determined with a strong sense of herself.”**



# From GED to PhD

With the support of dedicated mentors, Brian Olsen sets out on a career in science.

Brian Olson didn't exactly fit the image of an academic superstar when he entered BMCC in 2002. "I had just earned a GED and was ineligible for a senior college," he says. "I tested into remedial math."

With a vague notion that he wanted to study science "and learn what humans are made out of," Olson enrolled in basic chemistry and biology. "He wasn't quite prepared for the rigors of Chemistry 202," recalls Professor Shanti Rywkin. Not only did Olson stick with it, though, he completed an Associate degree in Science with Honors, and transferred to Hunter College, where he's just completing a bachelor's degree in Chemistry. And in the fall, he'll begin work on a PhD in Biochemistry at the CUNY Graduate Center.

At BMCC, Olson's zeal to learn was matched by his teachers' willingness to help. In addition to Rywkin, there was Patricia Deleon, Nanette Van Loon, Carlos Alva and Brahmadeo Dewprashad, who calmly talked an overwhelmed Olson out of dropping out of organic chemistry.

To this day, Olson says, he gauges the performance of his teachers against Dewprashad. "But all of my teachers...consistently went out of their way to accommodate my needs and stood by me through tough times," he says.

Patricia Deleon was the first to reach out to him, enlisting Olson's help in cleaning out an unused storage room and turning it into a lab—an unusual role for a freshman. Together, with donated equipment, they conducted experiments with tumor-suppressant proteins. "This was a total collaboration," Deleon says. "Brian was with me every step of the way."

At Hunter, Olson is currently working on a green energy research project, and as he sees it, the credit belongs to the BMCC science faculty overall. "If I had it to do over, I would start at BMCC again," he says. "When I needed counseling, tutoring and special help from my teachers, they gave it to me unstintingly. I wouldn't have gotten as far as I have without them."

**Professor Patricia Deleon:** "Brian was a freshman and I was also new to the school. I could see that he was bright and determined and that he wanted to make a difference."

**Professor Shanti Rywkin:** "This isn't someone who just observes and passively takes notes. Brian was always asking questions and wanting to know why and how. His willingness to do whatever it took to find the answers was what set him apart as a researcher."



Antonio Pérez  
*President*

Sadie C. Bragg  
*Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs/Provost*

Erwin J. Wong  
*Dean for Academic Programs and Instruction*

Michael Gillespie  
*Associate Dean of Academic Affairs*

Robert Diaz  
*Vice President of Legal Affairs and Faculty and Staff Relations*

G. Scott Anderson  
*Vice President for Administration and Planning*

Elena Samuels  
*Assistant Vice President for Finance*

Marva Craig  
*Vice President for Student Affairs*

Michael Hutmaker  
*Dean of Student Affairs*

Sunil B. Gupta  
*Dean of the Center for Continuing Education and Workforce Development*

Jane Lee Delgado  
*Dean for Institutional Effectiveness and Strategic Planning*

John Montanez  
*Dean for Grants and Development*

Barry Rosen  
*Executive Director of Public and External Affairs*

*Marks of Excellence* is a publication of the Office of Public Affairs, Borough of Manhattan Community College.  
To learn more about these and other BMCC students, go to [www.bmcc.cuny.edu](http://www.bmcc.cuny.edu).





BOROUGH OF MANHATTAN COMMUNITY COLLEGE

THE CITY UNIVERSITY OF NEW YORK

[WWW.BMCC.CUNY.EDU](http://WWW.BMCC.CUNY.EDU)

199 CHAMBERS STREET

NEW YORK

