This biennial report captures the excitement, energy, and excellence of Queens College. It demonstrates in tangible ways how we have remained true to our mission of offering the finest education to people from every economic and ethnic background, thereby positively transforming lives.

In these pages, you’ll read about professors from each of the college’s academic divisions; as dedicated educators, researchers and leaders in their fields, they are representative of a world-class faculty that has won highly competitive awards at every conceivable level. You will see profiles of current students and recent graduates—highly talented and accomplished young women and men. They personify the Queens College motto, “We learn so that we may serve.” I am deeply proud of our wonderfully diverse student body.

Our historic commitment to academic quality, an affordable education, and community service shines brightly through the report’s pages. The light was first lit 81 years ago, when “The College of the Future” was founded in Queens County. Our institutional objectives for the next few years are set out in the 2015–2020 Strategic Plan, www.qc.cuny.edu/about/strategic-plan/Pages/default.aspx. This plan prepared the college for evaluation by the Middle States Commission on Higher Education, which reaffirmed QC’s accreditation on June 22, 2018. (The full Middle States report can be found on the provost’s webpage, qc.cuny.edu/provost.)

In keeping with the Strategic Plan, we are facilitating student success at the undergraduate and graduate level. Among our innovations are QC in 4, which helps undergraduates earn bachelor’s degrees within four years, and accelerated graduate options, which enable qualified undergraduates to take graduate-level courses that count toward both their bachelor’s degree and the master’s or certificate program of their choice. Strategic Plan priorities for the current academic year include supporting faculty and staff excellence; promoting diversity; weaving campus, community, and global connections; and strengthening operational capacity and infrastructure.

Meanwhile, many vital projects are enhancing the educational environment at our 80-acre campus, thanks to the generous support of elected officials, alumni, and the Queens College Foundation. This report documents upgrades to existing facilities, such as labs, lecture halls, and the swimming pool; others are slated for renovation. In addition, the college is in the process of creating entirely new facilities, from collaborative learning spaces in the library, to a digital film theater in Queens Hall. All of this work has one overriding goal: to enable students to receive a top-quality education, now and in the future.

It is a privilege and a pleasure to showcase Queens College in this impressive format. I hope you enjoy reviewing the results.

Sincerely,

President Félix V. Matos Rodríguez
E nvisioned at its founding as the college of the future, Queens College, now in its ninth decade, provides the exciting academic options and upgraded facilities that are essential to a forward-facing institution. Indeed, the college is in the middle of so many campus improvement projects that they are covered in a separate section (please see pages 39–46).

Collectively, the four academic divisions have more than 60 undergraduate programs. With more computer science majors than any other college in New York City, and signature offerings such as TIME2000, which prepares secondary-school math teachers, QC is a leader in science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM) education. (More New York City public school superintendents, principals, teachers, and counselors graduate from Queens College than from any other college; with Queens South Field Support Center, a $1.6 million grant was obtained to promote diversity in the teaching profession.) Projects with the other CUNY schools in the borough—York College, LaGuardia Community College, and Queensborough Community College—encourage people from underrepresented groups and low-income backgrounds to earn the four-year STEM degrees that are sought by employers. Through CUNY’s partnership with tech training and placement company Revature, alumni may attend a boot camp in coding without tuition.

But there is much more that distinguishes this senior college of The City University of New York. QC’s Aaron Copland School of Music is celebrated worldwide for combining conservatory-style training with a well-rounded liberal arts curriculum. The college is the only CUNY school that participates in Division II sports. Victory Media, a veteran-owned publisher, cites QC as a top Military Friendly® School, and it is rated highly by both the Military Advanced Education & Transition Guide to Colleges & Universities and Military Times Best: Colleges 2018. The Chronicle of Higher Education ranks Queens College in the top one percent of all U.S. colleges for helping students from low-income households achieve significant upward economic mobility.

The college’s 2015–2020 Strategic Plan committed QC to facilitating student success, and recent initiatives are designed to do just that. Nationally, many undergraduate students need extra years to graduate, or drop out entirely. In response, the college launched QC in 4 in 2017. Through this program—the only one of its kind in New York City—students receive the guidance and support that enable them to complete a bachelor’s degree in four years, saving substantial time and money. New accelerated graduate programs allow high-performing undergraduates to earn up to 12 graduate credits, apply them toward a bachelor’s degree, and simultaneously get a jump-start on a certificate or master’s degree.

Speaking of graduate programs, more than 100 master’s degrees and certificates are offered in disciplines ranging from special education to data analytics, risk management, and photonics—fields with tremendous growth potential. Queens is one of the only colleges in the nation that has a literary translation track within a creative writing MFA; programs in social practice art encourage students to develop exciting projects that have community impact.

Since its doors opened in 1937, Queens College has served men and women from immigrant and working-class families. The college community takes enormous pride in the diversity of our students, who speak 87 languages, trace their heritage to 145 countries, and represent all of the world’s major religions. A new partnership, coordinated by Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs Elizabeth Hendrey, with Navitas, a leader in international education, will encourage more foreign-born students to enroll at QC. (Strategic Plan goals include promoting diversity and international connections.) The college proudly accommodates students with disabilities and welcomes members of the LGBTQ community. No one leaves Queens College without getting to know classmates from different backgrounds—an experience that makes alumni better citizens and prepares them to enter the global economy.

The faculty is increasingly diverse. In the last three years, 37 percent of the new hires have been Asian, Black, Hispanic, or Native American. Whatever their identity, our faculty have one trait in common: They’re experts in their fields; 75 percent of full-time faculty hold a PhD. They win prestigious awards, from Guggenheim and Fulbright fellowships to funding from the National Institutes of Health. Their books and publications receive major honors. Their commitment to teaching and research gives our campus its exceptional educational climate, providing numerous opportunities for the budding scholars of the student body.

The Chronicle of Higher Education ranks Queens College in the top 1% of all U.S. colleges for upward social and economic mobility.

“The Chronicle of Higher Education ranks Queens College in the top 1% of all U.S. colleges for upward social and economic mobility.”

Félix V. Matos Rodríguez, President

“The Chronicle of Higher Education ranks Queens College in the top 1% of all U.S. colleges for upward social and economic mobility.”

Elizabeth Hendrey, Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs

“With a campus located in America’s most ethnically diverse county and students in attendance from more than 150 nations, we are looking forward to beginning a partnership with Navitas. We are eager to work together to increase the global perspective of our college community and provide students worldwide with greater access to a high-quality Queens College education.”

Elizabeth Hendrey, Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs
From Student Association president, to campus outreach coordinator for the Center for Ethnic, Racial, and Religious Understanding, to manager of the women’s basketball team and A LOT in between, senior Carmine Couloute is one of Queens College’s most active students.

Couloute saw QC’s campus through the window while attending neighboring John Bowne High School. “I applied to QC because it’s affordable, and I could escape from home without being too far from home,” she says. At John Bowne she learned about the Percy E. Sutton SEEK Program, a state-funded initiative for economically disadvantaged or academically underprepared students. The program introduced her to college life—and a world she never knew existed.

Through SEEK (an acronym for Search for Education, Elevation, and Knowledge), Couloute helped to organize several campus events, piquing her interest in QC’s student government. Eventually, she ran for its highest office. “I wanted to have a role to combine everything I’ve been a part of,” she explains. As Student Association president, she allocates budgets, plans programs, and chooses policies for the semester. Her work has included making the library more accessible to students, promoting sustainable development, and organizing and promoting the school’s food pantry.

In addition to leading the Student Association, Couloute keeps the campus connected to CERRU events and maintains the scorebook for the women’s basketball team. She works part-time for the New York Racing Association. Somehow, she manages to pursue a triple major in political science, sociology, and economics.

Couloute didn’t even take a summer break before her senior year. Through the CUNY Service Corps, she went to Puerto Rico for two weeks to help repair homes damaged by Hurricanes Irma and Maria. A Haitian-born immigrant who came to Queens at age five, she felt compelled to assist after seeing the devastation wrought in her homeland by the 2010 earthquake. Her heritage also inspired her to spend two weeks in Haiti, studying its two-tiered citizenship and informal class system. She presented her research on campus at the Mellon Foundation Faculty Diversity Conference in November.

“Both experiences highlighted the importance of being a global citizen, of giving back, and truly immersing oneself in another culture,” comments Couloute, who plans to enter a graduate program in international relations and ultimately work for the State Department as a diplomat.

“Queens College has given me many opportunities to make mistakes and to grow from them. Because of Queens College, I am able to learn to be myself.”

Carmine Couloute
Maybe destiny brought Khaleel Anderson to Queens College. Displaced from his Far Rockaway home by Hurricane Sandy, he and his family had sheltered at Queens College for several months. “When I wasn’t back in the Rockaways helping out with the relief effort, I was wandering around the QC campus,” he recalls, concluding, “It was a pretty cool place.”

Poised to graduate in May 2019 from Queens College’s five-year Accelerated Master’s Program in Urban Affairs, Anderson quite literally was born to be a community organizer. His father was a union member leader for his 1199 Service Employee’s International Union local, and his mother was an organizer for ACORN, The Association of Community Organizations for Reform Now.

So, it’s not surprising to learn that for the past two years Anderson has been a member of the New York Police Department 101st Precinct Community Council and Community Board 14, the latter an appointment by District 31 Councilman Donovan Richards. In addition, Anderson’s on the board of directors of the Rockaway Youth Task Force; a nonprofit organized in 2011, it works on youth empowerment, civic engagement, and environmental and transportation justice. “That’s kind of how I built my name in the community,” he says. “I was organizing with them for five or six years.”

Probably his most far-reaching effort with the greatest impact for the greatest number of people was a transportation issue in his native Far Rockaway. He spent two to three years lobbying to get the Q52 bus that runs to Woodside in mainland Queens to make stops farther east in Far Rockaway, closer to more densely populated public housing and more people of color. “That bus is phenomenal as it relates to getting people to jobs,” Anderson says.

“We did petitions, advertising campaigns, rallies and demonstrations,” he reports. “They finally listened to us and extended the line an extra ten to twelve blocks.” The MTA also made it a Select Bus Service line, placed it in a dedicated bus lane, and consolidated some bus stops—changes that substantially shorten transit times.

Undecided as to a specific career objective, Anderson says, “I only know that whatever it is, it will have an advocacy background.” He does note, however, that he takes inspiration from one community organizer who made it all the way to the White House.
Achievements in Academics

In October, Charusmita Madan (front and center) organized a Queens College hackathon that attracted over 400 students from all across CUNY for 24 hours of high-tech challenge and fun.

CHARUSMITA MADAN

Charusmita Madan was first exposed to computer coding in sixth grade in her native Delhi. “All I remember is that when I wrote something, something moved on the screen,” she recalls. “It was like pure magic. I continued to progress with it in middle school and early high school.”

High school found her newly arrived with her family in Elmhurst. In her senior year at Information Technology High School in Long Island City, she took advantage of CUNY’s College Now program to take college-level courses, Pre-Calculus and Calculus 1, at Queens College where she subsequently became a full-time student. In May 2019, Madan will graduate boasting an impressive resume of tech field skills and accomplishments that have won her several employment offers, not to mention the gratitude of many on the QC campus who have benefited from her coding skills and her willingness to employ them to advance a cause.

Almost from the outset, Madan recognized that women were significantly underrepresented in computer sciences, both in education and industry. Significantly, there were no female role models for young female coders such as herself. She sought to address this imbalance in September 2017 by founding wementor, which uses a computer algorithm to match college students with mentors from the tech industry; the goal is to build a pipeline between existing talent and upcoming talent, especially for minority groups and women.

Additionally, with Ying Zhou, executive director of QC’s Tech Incubator, Madan conceived the idea of Women in Tech, a club that rapidly became a magnet for other female students with a strong interest in tech. “At our first meeting in Spring 2018, we had about 15, 20 women,” recalls Madan. “At our first meeting in Fall 2018, we had about 60 or 70 women!”

Madan has organized and raised funding for two hackathons. The first, an all-female, 12-hour event, attracted over 150 participants from QC, other CUNY campuses, and surrounding high schools. The second drew more than 400 students from various CUNY campuses. She sees great value in hackathons, which allow people to refine their skills.

Madan will be accepting a position in the global technology analyst program at Bank of America, working on technical and business strategy-related projects.

“Technology changes really quickly and no curriculum can keep up with the changes. Hackathons complement what you’re learning in school.”

Charusmita Madan

Queens College’s computer science students enjoy tremendous opportunities thanks to the collaborative efforts of (left to right) Zhigang Xiang, chair of the Computer Science Department; Peter Patch, a Tech Incubator mentor; and Ying Zhou, the incubator’s executive director.
By pursuing higher education close to home, Queens College Macaulay Honors graduate and Fulbright English Teaching Assistant Kathryn Cox has been able to help many young students here and overseas.

Raised in Glendale, Cox chose QC over other CUNY schools because she loved the campus. “I had been to some other CUNY campuses, but they were too urban,” she says. “I liked that Queens College had a quad that you could go to when it was sunny.”

Learning about the Macaulay Honors College—a highly selective college within CUNY—she applied and was accepted. The program opened up a lot of opportunities for her that would not have been available otherwise. Thanks to funding from Macaulay, she was able to study in Spain and spend six weeks teaching English in Peru.

Cox was just about to graduate with degrees in both mathematics and elementary education when her advisor suggested she apply for a Fulbright program in which she would teach English in Cyprus for a full academic year. She was reluctant to stay in an unfamiliar country for that length of time, but her professor encouraged her, and to Cox’s surprise, she was accepted.

Fall 2015 found her in Nicosia, Cyprus, teaching English to elementary school students. On top of acclimating to a new culture, she faced numerous challenges in the classroom; she knew very little Greek and had to come up with creative ways to communicate with the students. But Cox adjusted as the year went on, and she and her students gained confidence and learned from each other. She used visuals, exaggerated her body language, and sang many songs to help her students understand her teachings.

Upon returning from Cyprus, Cox decided to further her education by getting a master’s degree in literacy education. Since she enjoyed her time at Queens College so much, it was an easy decision to return to QC for graduate school. She completed her master’s in December 2018.

During her two years in grad school, Cox was also teaching elementary school in Queens. Eventually, she plans to become a literacy specialist who will work with students struggling to read. Her long-term goal is to get an educational leadership degree and go into school administration.

“Consistently ranked a Princeton Review "Best College" for 27 years in a row.

KATHRYN COX

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CARLOS CHEDIEK

Carlos Chediek exemplifies a cosmopolitan outlook and the intellectual perspective gained from a liberal arts education. The son of an official with the United Nations Development Programme who moved frequently, he is proficient in English, Turkish, Spanish, and Portuguese, and has met the presidents of Peru, Nicaragua, and Brazil. However, he credits a United States president, Barack Obama, for spurring him to activism.

Listening to the broadcast of Obama’s last State of the Union address, “I got truly inspired to be an agent of change in my community,” Chediek recalls. “I felt energized, ready to make a difference.” Joining NYPIRG’s voter registration drive, he signed up more than 1,700 students in 2016. That led to his current role as Queens College ambassador for the Andrew Goodman Foundation and its nonpartisan Vote Everywhere project, for which QC has the main campus chapter. Chediek is proud of the foundation’s legacy and the importance of its work, noting that Andrew Goodman’s killers “stiffed not only his voice, but also the voices of those he could potentially have registered that year.”

Ambassadorial responsibilities take Chediek from classrooms to student spaces and included hosting a midterm watch party for 30 students. In addition, as a political science major, he has been a teaching and research assistant for Michael Krasner. For a comparative course on the ascent of the political right, Chediek examined how Brazilian celebrities had risen to public office; facilitating conditions across otherwise different countries included “high degrees of political instability, a very negative outlook from the population toward the government, and a polarizing or celebrity-like figure joining the government and being seen as a savior, just by not having that much political experience.”

Further diversifying his background, Chediek chose to minor in Business and Liberal Arts because, he explains, “everything’s related in life. Being aware of what’s going on in business will give you a very good baseline with which you’ll be a more effective worker, communicator, and leader.” After graduation, he wants to work as a paralegal in order to take the first steps in becoming a lawyer.

“When your government is not working, the gap between expectations and reality is eventually going to become so vast that disgust and anger will occur in the population. How do you fix issues like that? If you have a more civically engaged populace, if you’re able to be an active citizen and be aware of what’s going on in your local community, you’ll be able to voice your concerns more effectively.”

Carlos Chediek
Kimiko Hahn

Author of nine books of poetry, CUNY Distinguished Professor Kimiko Hahn has touched many lives with her work in and out of the classroom, for more than 25 years. In that period, she has accumulated numerous honors, including the PEN/Voelcker Award for Poetry, the American Book Award, and the Shelley Memorial Award from the Poetry Society of America, as well as fellowships from the New York Foundation for the Arts, the Guggenheim Foundation, and the National Endowment for the Arts.

Hahn grew up in a bicultural household. Her parents—a Japanese-American woman from Hawaii, and a German-American man from Milwaukee—met at art school. Their heritage and sensibilities would prove hugely influential.

“My mother would read stories to me in Japanese,” recalls Hahn. “Even though I couldn’t understand what she was reading, the musicality of the language—hearing words and seeing the pictures and putting that together—inspired me from a young age.”

Growing up in a family of visual artists, Hahn was encouraged to express herself, and poetry gave her a platform to speak up and be heard. She draws inspiration from poets Adrienne Rich and Louise Gluck, as well as poets from classical Japanese literature, which she studied in graduate school.

Hahn’s writing often addresses difficult topics such as jealousy, betrayal, and rivalry. One of her early books, The Unbearable Heart—which is Hahn’s personal favorite—focuses on the loss of her mother, who died in a tragic accident more than 25 years ago. In her last two books, Toxic Flora and Brain Fever, she combines the world of science with her personal experiences.

Since 1993, Hahn has been a member of the Queens College English department, where she teaches literature and creative writing. She has inspired many students, including recent QC graduate Rajiv Mohabir, who has already published two books of poetry.

Despite all her success, Hahn has new goals to achieve, such as publishing a book of creative nonfiction. She has no imminent plans to retire from Queens College because she loves the challenge of teaching.
Lenwood Gibson, associate professor of special education (Educational and Community Programs), is trying to make a difference in New York City’s often fractious classrooms. He trains graduate students in using applied behavioral analysis (ABA) to help young urban children—especially children from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds and those who manifest behavioral disorders—succeed academically.

The stakes are high, particularly in special education. By third grade, Gibson says, inability to read at grade level may lead to “more and more school failure. A lot of the behavioral issues are masking not wanting to be in the classroom. Students think ‘If I act up, I’m going to get sent out. That’s happening to a number of my peers, and where we get sent out to might end up becoming fun.’”

Gibson’s research is aimed at improving the core academic skills that students need to become proficient readers and learners. He promotes the use of culturally relevant pedagogies in urban classrooms. The ABA techniques that he teaches involve proven strategies for changing behavior, such as positive reinforcement.

Gibson came to QC with extensive experience in his field. He completed a BA in child psychology at Eastern Connecticut State University, an MS in applied behavior analysis at Northeastern University, and a PhD in special education at Ohio State University. He taught at City College before joining the Queens College faculty in 2014. Here, he coordinates the Board Certified Behavioral Analyst track for master’s students, which he greatly expanded, and enjoys being part of a department with four lively programs. “They’re all interrelated because they’re all working to help kids who really need it,” he explains.

“A Best Value College for Teaching Degrees
–Best Value Schools 2018

The problems are complicated, he adds. Schools expect children to arrive “school-ready,” not always possible if they are from immigrant families dealing with a language barrier, or households where parents hold multiple jobs. Hard-pressed teachers and administrators may adopt an “us versus them mentality,” making them less attuned to students’ needs.

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“I tell the candidates in my class to do this: if a student who is having problems has a good day, call the parents. Tell the parents he had a good day. Let them know when they’re doing positive things.”

Lenwood Gibson
Cecilia McHugh

Cecilia McHugh (School of Earth and Environmental Sciences) travels the world studying ancient sediment and mapping sea floors to learn more about past earthquakes and, possibly, anticipate future natural disasters. “By going back in time, we can predict how frequently earthquakes strike in a particular region,” she says.

In 2017, McHugh and some of her students documented an 8.5-magnitude earthquake that occurred in Bangladesh in 1762. In addition, the team collected evidence of a possible tsunami during that time. Today, in a country with a population of 160 million, an earthquake of this magnitude could be ruinous, which is why McHugh’s research is so important: What she learns can help governments understand and prepare for future risks.

McHugh examined sediment samples in Haiti in 2010 and Japan in 2011 following the devastating earthquake and tsunami that hit each area. She led the study in Haiti just a few weeks after the earthquake; the team discovered unmapped faults. Their work was cited by the Obama White House. Last fall, in recognition of her scientific contributions, McHugh was elected a fellow of the Geological Society of America. As part of the International Ocean Discovery Program, she will lead—together with collaborators from Austria and Japan—a team of scientists in drilling in the Japan Trench at a depth of eight kilometers.

McHugh’s teaching has inspired many students who have gone on to successful careers of their own. “It’s most rewarding to see them do well, whatever their goals are, whether it’s to pursue a PhD, work for an environmental company, or teach,” she observes.

McHugh couldn’t imagine teaching anywhere else. “The diversity, by far, is what I like most about Queens College,” she says. “It is amazing. I went to my laboratory the other day and saw four students working—one from India, one from Nepal, one from Greece, and another from Taiwan.”

Her background allows her to connect on a deeper level with QC’s diverse population. Born in Argentina, McHugh came to the United States after high school and did not speak English. She eventually learned the language and went on to earn a PhD, all while raising two young sons. She sees many of her students struggling with similar challenges and encourages them: She succeeded, and they can, too.

“I’m not just doing this because it’s interesting. I’m doing this because it has a purpose. It has so much meaning, knowing you can make a difference. You can save lives. It’s a huge deal.”

Cecilia McHugh

CECILIA MCHUGH

Cecilia McHugh stands before sediment cores, which contain clues as to when and where great earthquakes and tsunami occurred—and when they might happen again.

Cecilia McHugh
In just the last year, research by Francesc Ortega, captured in action in Powdermaker Hall, was cited by The Hill, “PBS NewsHour,” and the New York City Comptroller.

FRANCESC ORTEGA

Francesc Ortega, the Dina Axelrad Perry Professor of Economics, is a prolific scholar of both immigration and climate change, two topics very close to home for New Yorkers. Describing himself as pragmatic and data-driven, he analyzes big data sets that can illuminate real-world patterns and, by extension, paths for public policy.

By exploring what undocumented workers added to the U.S. economy, Ortega was able to quantify their workforce contribution at “about 3% of GDP, which is not a small chunk.” In debates over DACA and the DREAM Act, he saw a need for cost-benefit analysis. Research by Ortega and his collaborators (including Amy Hsin in Sociology and Ryan Edwards at University of California, San Francisco) has shown that by offering legal work, DACA raised Dreamers’ annual economic contribution to society by $7,000, but also distorted their life decisions: Because their earnings are crucial to their families’ financial survival, these young people chose temporarily legal jobs over college. He estimates that passage of the DREAM Act would instead encourage them to finish college, which would have a lasting positive effect on their careers and roughly double their economic contribution to society.

Ortega has also become interested in climate change or more precisely, the economic impacts and policy implications of sea-level rise for coastal cities, especially New York. Since Hurricane Sandy, he and Süleyman Taspinar (Economics) have determined that homes in affected areas have lost value—indications that today’s housing market reveals growing awareness of climate change. Ortega’s current research concerns the National Flood Insurance Program, which has “contributed to getting too many people to choose to live too close to the water.” He is studying businesses in flood zones, too.

A native of Spain, Ortega completed his BA at the University of Barcelona, MA at the Autonomous University of Barcelona, and PhD at New York University. A Queens College faculty member since 2012, he is intent on not only teaching his students the discipline, but also helping them develop a core competence of their own, with a research portfolio to show graduate schools and employers. “If you’ve developed your own research and you’ve spent a semester working with a professor here on that topic, you’re going to know more about that than the person interviewing you,” he observes. “That’s going to look very good.”

“We encourage students to enroll in our department’s honors seminar and write an original thesis. By working closely with our faculty in a small setting we are able to help students get started in conducting rigorous quantitative research.”

Francesc Ortega
ENDURING VALUES
In keeping with the Queens College motto—Discimus ut serviamus: We learn so that we may serve—QC works toward the betterment of our borough and the rest of New York City. One way the college does that is by creating and transmitting knowledge. QC’s centers and institutes explore the many ethnic communities of Queens, facilitate thoughtful discourse on the issues of the day, and document the connections between the environment and public health. For example, a $40.5 million award from the U.S. Department of Energy to QC’s Barry Commoner Center supports a program that monitors nuclear-weapons workers for job-related illness. The Center for Ethnic, Racial and Religious Understanding hosts events that encourage students from diverse backgrounds to work together and discover common ground.

The college’s Kupferberg Center is the borough’s top arts destination, attracting audiences from all over the city as well as Long Island. Kupferberg’s extraordinary calendar of events encompasses music, theater, and dance performances, readings by celebrated writers, and exhibitions drawing on the holdings of the Godwin-Ternbach Museum, a teaching institution with a collection of over 6,000 objects from antiquity to the present. Many schoolchildren see their first art show or concert or play on this campus.

The college also address the needs of New York’s diverse population. QC’s English Language Institute, the second-oldest English school in the United States, helps people learn to speak and write well enough to pursue employment or higher education. A free program offered by the Asian/American Center translates documents from English into Chinese, Korean, or Spanish. The college’s Speech-Language-Hearing Center and Psychological Center provide culturally responsive, professional services to the public. QC’s Psychology Department is known for its research into drug-free interventions for children with attention-deficit hyperactivity disorder, and the Division of Education offers extensive teacher training in areas such as special education, bilingual education, and applied behavioral analysis.

QC students are, of course, critically involved in the college’s initiatives. Graduate students in psychology and speech pathology work directly with clients, under the supervision of professors. Accounting majors have donated their time to a clinic that prepares tax returns for low- and middle-income wage earners, and art history majors have helped curate shows at the Godwin-Ternbach. Student volunteers cleaned up homes and buildings damaged by Hurricane Sandy and, through the CUNY Service Corps, participated in similar projects on Puerto Rico after Hurricane Maria. Through the college’s Big Buddy Program, children from homeless families are paired up with QC students, who act as companions and mentors. Sadly, homelessness and food insecurity afflict some students, but predictably, their classmates took action: Last fall, Queens College undergraduates played a significant role in opening an on-campus food pantry as part of Governor Andrew Cuomo’s No Student Goes Hungry Program.

Wherever they go and whatever they do, QC alums perpetuate this heritage of service. In their careers and their communities, our alums improve the world by applying the values they learned here.
“It ain’t worth spit,” goes the old expression meant to suggest something’s utter lack of value.

As it turns out, spit—or more properly, saliva—can be extremely valuable. Ask Olivier Noel, a 2011 graduate of Queens College who has conceived a novel way to make saliva an invaluable commodity for researchers seeking cures to some of mankind’s most vexing diseases.

In the summer of 2015, just a few years into his MD/PhD studies at Pennsylvania State College of Medicine, Noel founded DNAsimple, an online bank providing medical researchers access to DNA samples derived from the saliva of people all over the world who have different diseases. His innovation earned him an opportunity to pitch it as an investment opportunity to the panel of millionaire investors on television’s hit show, “Shark Tank.” He ultimately accepted an offer from Mark Cuban who outbid Richard Branson, pledging to invest $200,000 in return for a 15 percent stake in Noel’s company.

A native of Port-au-Prince, Haiti, Noel was an outstanding student at Queens who regularly made the dean’s list and received awards in biology and chemistry. More recently, he has garnered attention from several media outlets and is in demand for speaking engagements (all cataloged at www.olivierfnoel.com). He gave the inaugural Louise M. Slaughter National DNA Day Lecture at the National Institutes of Health, honoring the microbiologist and longtime member of Congress who was a strong advocate for genomics research and for protecting Americans from discrimination based on genetic information with respect to health insurance and employment.

Noel has obtained his PhD but has taken two years off from MD studies to focus on his growing company, which he reports now has more than 160,000 DNA donors whose samples are facilitating research into prostate cancer, diabetes, and a number of rare diseases.
QUEENS COLLEGE BIENNIAL REPORT

Daniel Baruch sits in front of the Bloomberg terminals in Powdermaker Hall as he considers his next move in a volatile market.

DANIEL BARUCH

Queens College student Daniel Baruch and two of his classmates turned $500,000 of virtual money into $2.6 million in just four weeks to win the 2017 TD Ameritrade’s thinkorswim Challenge, besting more than 930 teams from across the country.

Baruch and his teammates used an event-based investment strategy, which attempts to take advantage of temporary stock mispricing that can occur before or after a market-moving event. The strategy paid off. The trio led for nearly the entire four weeks of competition, falling behind only briefly on the penultimate day; a flurry of day trades on the final day put them well ahead of the second-place team. They finished with a 427 percent return on their investment and they each earned $3,000 and an iPad Pro as a reward.

Baruch took a circuitous route to get to this point, changing majors like he was trading stocks. He started out as an applied physics major and experimented with meteorology. Then, through the CUNY BA Program—which allows students to design their own major—Baruch created one he called public markets and global conflicts.

He came to Queens College because he thought a liberal arts college would help to give him a broader understanding of the world. “At QC, you’re not just surrounded by a diverse population, but you’re also surrounded by a diversity of knowledge,” he says. “You have everyone from drama and graphic design majors to applied physics students. That’s a strength of the school.” He also credits the accessibility of QC professors with helping his team to win the competition.

Since the contest, Baruch has leveraged his success into managing real accounts for other people. He hopes to eventually start a wider hedge fund or to continue trading and develop it into something greater than himself.

“The professors here were able to answer some questions I had about the competition. All the professors here are very approachable. They all have office hours. I can always send them an email and I’ll always get an email back. You have very accessible knowledge here at Queens.”

Daniel Baruch

“Best Value College”

–Center for World Universal Rankings
JOSEPHINE COOKE

When Josephine Cooke moved from Fordham University to Queens College in the fall of 2016 under the auspices of the college’s Transfer Honors Program, she made what to some may have appeared to be an unusual change in the direction of her studies: A former dance major, she intended to study neuroscience. “I've always been interested in the brain. I used to want to be a neurosurgeon, actually,” she says.

Fall 2018 found Cooke settling into PhD studies at Imperial College in London, a circumstance made possible by her receipt of a prestigious Marshall Scholarship. She is one of 43 students nationwide to be so honored and the third in the history of Queens College. Her intention is to continue pursuing neuroscience research related to the work she began at Queens. “I'm still planning on looking at the use of dance as a rehabilitative tool, particularly for those with balance disorders, as well as investigating how dance contributes to plasticity in the brain,” she says. “And I still hope to integrate dance and other arts therapy into occupational therapy and physical rehabilitation for those with neurological/psychiatric disorders in the future.”

These studies will build upon the skills and insights she developed at Queens College in the behavioral neuroscience lab of Jeff Beeler, where she examined how neural activity changes over the course of learning.

Cooke was awarded the 2017 Raphell Sims Lakowitz Undergraduate Research Fellowship and with Beeler’s assistance applied to the CUNY Louis Stokes Alliance for Minority Participation Program, which helps fund and provide research opportunities for minorities in STEM fields.

She was also one of 20 of 800 applicants selected for the 10-week National Science Foundation-funded Research Experience for Undergraduates program at the prestigious Cold Spring Harbor Laboratory.

“Under Dr. Beeler’s mentorship I really began to flourish as a researcher,” observes Cooke.
To offer students a world-class education, Queens College must constantly update and improve its facilities. Some projects have been completed already and others will take place in the near future. The college expresses its deepest appreciation for the enduring support of Governor Andrew Cuomo, Queens Borough President Melinda Katz, New York State Legislature, the City Council, CUNY’s Office of Facilities Planning, Construction and Management, the City University Construction Fund, the CUNY Board of Trustees, and the New York State Dormitory Authority for making all these projects possible.

In addition, the college recognizes the many contributions of the women and men in QC’s offices of Campus Planning, Design, and Construction; Environmental Health and Safety; and Buildings and Grounds, who keep the campus safe, efficient and welcoming for tens of thousands of yearly visitors.

NEW SCIENCE LABS
Science Building B301, B303, B309, D223, D223A, D345, and D345A; Razran Hall RZ245 and RZ287
Spanning two buildings, this project entailed comprehensive reconstruction of three instructional labs for biochemistry, two labs for core facilities, and two labs for neurophysiology. The scope of the work covered HVAC (heating, ventilation and air conditioning), electrical, and plumbing upgrades; new interior finishes; and purchase of specialized scientific equipment and systems.

COMPLETION DATE: 2017
FUNDING: $4.8 million from New York City and New York State capital funds

SPEECH AND HEARING LEARNING CENTER
Upgraded facilities will contain conference areas, student lounges, a library, therapy rooms, research laboratories, faculty offices, and augmentative communication and preschool language units, as well as areas for clinical training and treatment. The center will be equipped with modern communication devices, providing students with hands-on experience.

COMPLETION DATE: 2022
FUNDING: $4.5 million from the New York City Council’s Queens delegation, Council Member and QC alumnus Rory Lancman, and Queens Borough President Melinda Katz

ROSENTHAL LIBRARY PHASE 2
To promote collaborative learning, new spaces will be created in the first floor of Benjamin Rosenthal Library. The interior improvements, which encompass architectural, structural, mechanical, plumbing, and electrical elements, as well as information technology and signage, will comply with building codes and meet ADA requirements.

COMPLETION DATE: 2021
FUNDING: $2 million from Queens Borough President Melinda Katz

“We are proud to host Queens County’s first technology incubator, which provides early-stage ventures the resources to become successful companies and in turn, expand job opportunities in the borough and beyond. The incubator is also a hub for student development and technical internships, preparing our students to meet the critical demands of New York City’s technology sector.”

William Keller, Vice President for Finance and Administration

Named a Best College
—Military Times Best Colleges 2018
ATHLETIC RUNNING TRACK REPLACEMENT

The college's outdoor running track will be upgraded and maintained in good condition for use by the college; its neighbors, John Bowne and Townsend Harris High Schools; and members of the local community.

COMPLETION DATE: 2020
FUNDING: $500,000 state facility grant arranged by Assembly Member Nily Rozic.

LOUIS ARMSTRONG HOUSE MUSEUM VISITOR CENTER
34-49 107th Street, Corona, New York

Now under construction across the street from the Louis Armstrong House Museum, the LAHM Visitor Center will comprise an art gallery, a 68-seat jazz club, a museum store, and a state-of-the-art repository for the Louis Armstrong Archives, currently held in the library of Queens College.

COMPLETION DATE: 2020
FUNDING: $23 million total from Queens Borough President Melinda Katz, former New York City Council Member Julissa Ferreras-Copeland, Dormitory Authority of the State of New York bonded funds, New York City Department of Cultural Affairs.

TECH INCUBATOR CEP 2

Existing space was completely renovated, modernized, and subdivided, yielding flexible office configurations, as well as a conference room, a classroom, and other common areas. Today, the incubator houses tech-based startup firms, provides internship opportunities for Queens College students, and hosts workshops and clubs.

COMPLETION DATE: 2017
FUNDING: $1 million from City Council Speaker Corey Johnson, the New York City Council, and the Committee on Technology.

VETERANS LOUNGE Student Union, Room 209

This project created a welcoming space where student veterans can relax and socialize with each other. The lounge is designed to accommodate events, training sessions, and other services.

COMPLETION DATE: 2017
FUNDING: $8,887 from the Student Veterans of America, Home Depot’s Vet Center Initiative.
QC HUB
Jefferson Hall
Envisioned as the evolution of the college’s One Stop Service Center, the QC Hub will combine the enrollment functions of the Registrar, Financial Aid, and the Bursar. Counselors cross-trained in all three areas will act as single points of contact for students and their families, providing accurate, student-focused, technology-supported services. The Hub’s workflow requires a reorganization of Jefferson Hall, with a refit and updating of interior finishes, acoustics, mechanical and electrical infrastructure, lighting, and audiovisual systems.

COMPLETION DATE: 2021
FUNDING: $11.3 million in New York State and New York City capital funds

MUSIC RECORDING STUDIO
Aaron Copland School of Music
Standards and technology have changed dramatically since ACSM’s existing recording studio was built in the 1980s. A renovated studio will provide experience not only for performance majors, but also for students interested in all aspects of audio engineering. Recordings produced in this space may reach larger audiences through distribution of CDs and MP3s.

COMPLETION DATE: 2021
FUNDING: $1 million from Queens Borough President Melinda Katz

LECTURE HALL UPGRADE
Science Building C201
A makeover of Science Building C201—a lecture hall with seating for more than 100 students—included replacement of its floor finishes, energy-efficient improvements to its lighting systems, and enhancements to ADA compliance. Audiovisual and presentation systems received a technological overhaul.

COMPLETION DATE: 2017
FUNDING: $220,000 from a Consolidated Edison grant

ADA COMPLIANCE
The Summit Apartments
The Summit was constructed with wheelchair-accessible units on the first floor. These units will be enhanced with modified showers, strobe light alarms for hearing-impaired residents, bed shakers for visually and/or hearing-impaired residents, adjustable kitchen countertops, and additional annunciator alarms in hallways, with increased sound output.

COMPLETION DATE: 2020
FUNDING: $125,000 from state facility grant

DIGITAL FILM THEATER
Queens Hall
Large, outmoded lecture space in Queens Hall will be reconfigured as a digital film theater for media arts and film instruction. In addition, the theater will allow the college to host film-related events, such as cinema festivals, presentations by visiting directors, and screenings of work by alums.

COMPLETION DATE: 2021
FUNDING: $2 million from the New York City Council’s Queens delegation

QUEENS SHINES SOLAR AND STORAGE PROJECT
The Summit Apartments, rooftop
As part of a program supported by the U.S. Department of Energy, the college will work with the New York Power Authority and Electric Power Research Institute to demonstrate the value of a photovoltaic system with electric energy storage. Once it’s installed on the roof of the Summit and charged, the system can fill a number of functions, such as providing emergency power in the event of a blackout, or reducing system-wide peak demands on a utility.

COMPLETION DATE: 2019
FUNDING: $1.6 million from NYSERDA (New York State Energy Research and Development Authority) and NYPA (New York Power Authority)
SWIMMING POOL FACILITY UPGRADES
FitzGerald Gymnasium
This comprehensive renovation of the swimming pool extends from regrouting the pool tiles and resurfacing the deck to upgrading HVAC and exhaust systems. Locker and shower room facilities have been overhauled to enhance privacy, meet ADA requirements, and comply with laws concerning gender identification. The project also provided for the purchase of new starting blocks, timing system, benches, exercise equipment and mandated informational signage and swim instruction equipment.
COMPLETION DATE: 2019
FUNDING: $1 million gift from alumna and former swim team captain Dina Axelrad Perry

TELEVISION STUDIO
King Hall
The first phase of this project gave the college a modernized TV soundstage with a master control room, audio booth, and post-production suite equipped with an advanced graphics and audio lab, as well as a conference room and presentation room. The ADA-compliant access elevator makes facilities available to all. The next phase will implement further design improvements.
COMPLETION DATE: 2019
FUNDING: $3.5 million from the Queens delegation

SUSTAINABILITY AND ENERGY EFFICIENCY INITIATIVES
Sensors installed in Remsen Hall, Remsen Annex, Klapper Hall, and the Dining Hall by SyncIoT—a company based at the Tech Incubator—track temperature, humidity, and light levels in real time. With this data, the college can make informed decisions about energy use. Other projects include retrofitting inefficient outdoor lighting to bright and efficient LED bulbs, replacement of hundreds of steam traps, installation of security cameras to all public spaces and at main campus entrances to increase safety, and a partnership with the Department of Environmental Protection to create a fourth rain garden on campus to decrease the amount of rain runoff in surrounding community.

WI-FI
In support of our students, Information Technology Services is engaged in network infrastructure improvements across campus. Wi-Fi is a major focus of these efforts due to its importance in the quality of campus life for our students. To date, the work has included upgrades to Wi-Fi in the Student Union and the Rosenthal Library. Upcoming grant funding from our local state representatives and student tech fees will allow us to make even more extensive improvements in the coming months.
QUEENS COLLEGE FOUNDATION OFFERS STUDENT AND FACULTY SUPPORT

The Queens College Foundation (QCF), chartered in 1980 by the New York State Education Department, is a nonprofit organization established to ensure that private and corporate contributions remain separate from state funds. The foundation also develops and increases the college’s resources for the benefit of faculty and students. QCF receives gifts and grants that are used to finance faculty research. In addition, it annually awards and administers a growing number of student scholarships and fellowships.

QCF is governed by a board of trustees comprising prominent business, artistic, and intellectual leaders—many of them alumni—from New York and across the nation. They provide exemplary service to Queens College, and ensure that the college is able to offer a first-class liberal arts education at an affordable cost. Our board members are listed on page 52.

CHARITABLE GIVING IN SUPPORT OF QUEENS COLLEGE

“Although the world has changed dramatically over the years, Queens College continues to transform lives. It was there for us in our time of need, and we share a responsibility to ensure that it remains accessible for future generations. Our students represent the talented professionals, esteemed scholars, and inspiring change-makers of the future.”

Lee Fensterstock, Chairman & CEO, Fensterstock Associates and Chair, Queens College Foundation

Top School, 2018
–Military Advanced Education & Transition Guide to Colleges and Universities

SUPPORTING STUDENT SUCCESS

Scholarships provided by the Queens College Foundation enabled the students and alumni on this page to pursue their education.

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Victoria Fernandez
Stephen Hinz
Mahnoor Mirza
Mikhael Kolber
Orosmar Cuevas
Matthew Townsell
Wallace P. Sarah Garcia
Victoria Fernandez
Mahnoor Mirza
Ducia Rossetti
Matthew Townsell
Valerie Wallace
P. Sarah Garcia

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