



Spring 2021

Business
&
Liberal Arts

ALUMNI Newsletter

Dear BALA alumni,

In appreciation of your successful completion of the Business & Liberal Arts (BALA) program at Queens College, we strive to keep you informed of our latest news, events, and progress. As you may or may not know, last year saw the retirement of our founder and long-time director, Ms. Barbara Sandler. Although we miss her presence daily, we take great pride in maintaining the integrity of scholarship that she laid out thirty years ago. And despite changes to, and the evolution of BALA, her vision for the program remains constant: To bridge academics with leadership, business, and professional skill development for undergraduate students majoring in any discipline. BALA promotes critical thinking, problem solving, teamwork, communication, and intercultural fluency in the workplace--skills valued in any career path. In the wake of Barbara Sandler's retirement, we would like to announce the appointment of our new director, Dr. Schiro Withanachchi, who is committed to sustaining the success of BALA. Please see her attached profile, which was published in The QView, #93.

In keeping up with the demands of an ever-changing business environment, we are forging relationships with academic departments outside BALA to offer our students a broad-based, more diversified field of study. These additions to our curriculum allow our students to plan a course schedule that best suits their needs. Two such recent additions are **Introduction to Marketing**, taught by Jill Carvajal from Media Studies, and **Managing Organizations**, offered by Gary Heaehlen from the Sociology department. These courses have been a wonderful and essential complement to the core classes you all know so well.

In an effort to foster community and intercommunication within BALA, we are focusing our efforts on growth outside of curriculum. In the spring 2020 semester, we initiated our Peer Mentor program whereby qualified students were selected through an application process to make themselves available to fellow BALA students for discussion, support, and advice. Peer Mentors not only earn college credit, but have the opportunity to implement the communication and leadership skills that are integral to the BALA program. We are also working to expand our Internship program under the direction of Arda Nazerian. These internships provide valuable real-world experience to our students and strengthen relationships between BALA and the world beyond Queens College. If you are interested in offering an internship through your organization, please contact us at bala.department@qc.cuny.edu.

Additionally, if you would like to be a guest speaker or attend a webinar at our BALA events, please let us know. Mark your calendar for BALA student pitch fests on May 6th, 11th, and 13th, beginning at 9:15AM, and a Financial Literacy Workshop (TBD). If you are interested in attending, please RSVP to the above BALA email address and we will send you the Zoom link.

We would be remiss in not acknowledging the dedication with which our entire BALA faculty and staff have exhibited in the face of the COVID pandemic. As all our classes are now online, we transitioned to distance learning seamlessly and successfully. Although everyone misses the personal interaction of in-class learning, the faculty have worked diligently to create a remote environment that both challenges and nurtures.

Whether you graduated twenty years ago, or just last semester, we would like you to know that every one of you contributed to our unique program and helped BALA become the comprehensive, rewarding, and highly relevant program that it is today. Send a message letting us know how you are or stop by anytime when campus re-opens!

Your BALA family