**What’s News**

**QC Is Tops in CUNY in Partnering with MWBEs**

Queens College is proving to be a leader in the hiring of minority- and women-owned business enterprises (MWBE).

New York State’s Division of Minority and Women’s Business Development Division was created to promote equal economic opportunities for MWBEs. The MWBE certification campaign encourages minority and women business owners to certify with New York State and take advantage of current and upcoming state procurement opportunities. In 2019, Governor Andrew Cuomo extended the program for five more years, while also expanding it to further encourage the use of MWBEs. Since 2011, over $13 billion in state contracts has been awarded to MWBEs.

Also in 2019, CUNY Chancellor Félix V. Matos Rodríguez announced a strategic plan for increasing CUNY’s engagement with MWBEs beyond the thresholds set by Cuomo.

Since the chancellor’s announcement, QC has been the leader among CUNY schools in the hiring of MWBEs. In 2019, 52.57 percent of vendors hired by the college were from certified MWBEs, up from 35.72 percent in 2018. Last year, in recognition of those efforts, QC was awarded the CUNY MWBE...
Participation Award after having the highest percentage of MWBE-hired vendors in the university.

Some of the recent projects and services around campus that use MWBEs include the campus WiFi network installation, maintenance of HVAC systems, office and custodial supplies, and promotional items.

Under the leadership of Surinder Virk (Procurement, Property and Fleet Management), the college continues to look to grow its use of MWBEs, with the goal of reaching 60 percent in the future.

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**Athletics Debuts Virtual Fitness Classes**

The QC Athletics Department is happy to announce the debut of its virtual fitness classes for the Fall 2020 semester.

Beginning Monday, September 14, fitness and recreation staff will be leading virtual classes five days a week (Monday through Friday) for QC students, faculty, and staff. There will be live classes on Zoom and pre-recorded instructional videos on QC Athletics’ YouTube channel (QCKnights). Classes will include a variety of workouts such as cardio, yoga, high intensity interval training (HIIT), strength training, stretching, and recovery, as well as nutrition.

“Due to COVID and classes being online, we were thinking outside of the box on ways to serve our students,” said Director of Athletics and Recreation Rob Twible. “Without being open, we had to come up with some new ideas.”

QC Athletics is also starting a running club. To join, download the Nike Run Club app on your phone (available for iOS and Android). Then go visit the Runner’s Club page on QC Athletics’ website for further instructions. With the Run Club app, participants can track progress, take part in challenges, compare and compete with friends, and encourage each other to stay motivated. The first challenge is already under way!

“We will track mileage and have a leaderboard [on the Run Club App]. We hope that will get some people’s competitive juices flowing,” added Twible.

For the schedule of classes in September and October and Zoom access information, [click here](#). For any additional questions on virtual fitness, please email Jason Posser at [Jason.Posser@qc.cuny.edu](mailto: Jason.Posser@qc.cuny.edu).

In addition, QC will be starting an esports league for the Fall 2020 semester. The games will include *EA FIFA ’21*, *EA Madden ’21*, and *NBA 2K21*. Separate leagues will be formed for Xbox One and PlayStation 4. If you are interested in participating, email [Matthew.Collier@qc.cuny.edu](mailto: Matthew.Collier@qc.cuny.edu). In your email of interest, please provide name, school email, and Queens College ID number. The esports league is open to all QC students, staff, and faculty.
The Student Association’s 9/11 Remembrance Ceremony enabled the QC community to gather on Zoom to mark the 19th anniversary of the attacks that killed nearly 3000 people. The program was introduced by SA Vice President Shanice Anderson. QC President Frank H. Wu, and Vice President for Student Affairs Adam Rockman made brief remarks, as did Student Association President Zaire Couloute, who introduced a video from the 9/11 Memorial and Museum. At 8:46 am, when American Airlines Flight 11 crashed into the north tower of the World Trade Center, Couloute led a moment of silence; participants could hear the Chaney-Goodman-Schwerner Clock Tower bells tolling in real time. Then the video resumed, showing the names of the fallen. The bells rang again at 9:03 am, when United Airlines Flight 175 crashed into the south tower of the World Trade Center, and at 9:37 am, when American Airlines Flight 77 crashed into the Pentagon.

The college is grateful for the collective efforts of the people who produced the ceremony: Zaire Couloute, Shanice Anderson, Andre Benjamin, Luis Villa, and Christie Laferriere/@Vibrant_keys from the Student Association; JC Carlson, Office of Student Development & Leadership; and the Offices of Public Safety, Information Technology Services, and Communications and Marketing.
QC President Frank H. Wu, Vice President for Enrollment and Student Retention Richard Alvarez, Dean of Faculty of Arts and Humanities William McClure, SA President Zaire Couloute, Baruch College Professor and Director of CUNY Citizenship Now Allan Wernick (Baruch College) fielded questions about financial aid, employment, and other topics during QC’s Town Hall for international students, held on Wednesday, September 9. The event, a QC first, was so successful that it might be offered again. College and university officials emphasized their ongoing availability to assist QC’s international students.

Facts to Brag About

Because QC will celebrate its 83rd birthday this October 11, the college is revisiting the list of Wow Points, first compiled in 2017, for the college’s 80th anniversary. The new list, to be called Wow Now, will be assembled with the help of crowdsourcing: QView encourages readers to send Vice President for Communications and Marketing and Senior Advisor to the President Jay Hershenson Jay.Hershenson@qc.cuny.edu an email about achievements associated with the college or its faculty, staff, students, and alumni. Please start wowing us now.

Deadline Extended for Video Contest

There’s still time for students to enter the Health & Safety First Video Contest: The submission deadline has been extended to Wednesday, September 25 at 5 pm. Amazon gift cards for $250 and $100 will be awarded for first and second place, respectively.

The contest’s objective is to reinforce the importance of basic COVID-19
prevention steps, such as wearing a mask, practicing social distancing, and washing hands thoroughly with soap and water. To enter, create a short video about safety measures and submit it to Beethoven.Bong@qc.cuny.edu via the file sharing site, WeTransfer (https://wetransfer.com/) with the subject headline “Health & Safety First Video Contest.” (On WeTransfer, you can upload files up to 2GB for free without needing a subscription. The site provides instructions for its use.)

The QC Student Association will review the entries and select the best two.

Register To Vote (and Request an Absentee Ballot)

This story bears repeating: U.S. citizens residing in New York have only a few more weeks to register to vote and request an absentee ballot.

In New York State, the voter registration deadline is October 9. U.S. citizens who will be 18 by the election date—November 3 this year—and have lived in New York City or their county for at least 30 days before that date are eligible to register.

Because of the coronavirus pandemic, all registered New York State voters may apply for absentee ballots. On the form, check the box for "temporary Illness," which has been expanded to include “a risk of contracting or spreading a disease” such as COVID-19. The official application deadline is October 27, but the effective deadline is October 12. The post office has advised that it cannot guarantee delivery of ballots applied for less than 15 days before the election.

For more information about both voter registration and absentee ballot applications, go to https://www.cuny.edu/register-to-vote/.

Peer Support Service Holds Open House

For nearly 50 years, QC’s peer counselors have been helping their fellow students clarify their options by learning more about themselves, the college, and its offerings. Peer counselors enjoy the satisfaction of assisting others and gaining new skills while earning college credit. Students interested in becoming peer counselors can learn about the Peer Support Services Program at virtual open house sessions on Monday, September 21, at 12 noon and 5 pm.

Aspiring counselors must be sophomores or above, have a 2.5 cumulative GPA, and be ready to make a two-semester commitment is required. The application process is explained here.
The open house sessions will be held on Zoom.

**Monday, September 21 at 12 noon**
https://zoom.us/j/99583954986  
Meeting ID: 995 8395 4986  
One tap mobile  
+16468769923,,99583954986# US (New York)

**Monday, September 21 at 5 pm**
https://zoom.us/j/93465443274  
Meeting ID: 934 6544 3274  
One tap mobile  
+16468769923,,93465443274# US (New York)
ACSM Alum Launches Sunday Serenades

This past June, ACSM alumnus David Valbuena ’16 and fellow clarinetist Jackie Gillette decided to do something about the sudden unemployment of musicians during the COVID crisis. With everything from clubs to concert halls shut down, musicians found themselves unexpectedly scrambling for work.

Valbuena and Gillette are themselves experienced musicians and teachers who were actively performing in this country and abroad. “Up until the week of the lockdown, everything was looking pretty good, and then everything just kind of collapsed,” recalls Valbuena. As Gillette adds, “Probably all the freelance musicians had to go on unemployment; people were worried about friends. We were like, what could we do?” Their brainchild—Sunday Serenades, a virtual concert series on Facebook with a fundraising link to GoFundMe—has proved a successful experiment in bringing performing musicians together to help each other through the pandemic.

While other musicians have taken to livestreaming their performances and reaching out to existing audiences, Valbuena and Gillette decided to attempt a different model. The Sunday Serenades series combines different musical traditions, such as opera with bluegrass, in each concert—with the idea of musicians helping musicians expand their audience and, they hope, introducing new listeners to music they wouldn’t usually choose. “We figured we would do it as an ongoing fundraiser,” says Gillette. “We would book people in groups of four. We all would promote the concert, advertise, and raise money, and at the end of the month everyone split whatever was on the GoFundMe.”

Gillette’s prior experience with programming helped them over the hurdle of organizing such demanding concerts.

Valbuena had trained with Charles Neidich both at QC and for his master’s at the Manhattan School of Music. “I’ve been really lucky to have graduated from Queens because from the moment I finished, they were always supporting me. My professors were always calling me back for concerts or gigs.” Sunday Serenades was launched initially with performances by QC graduates—a clarinet performance by Valbuena and Gillette, a concert by Linda Collazo ’18, a mezzo soprano, and another by Markus Kaitila ’17, a pianist. “At first it was just our friends and people we’d worked with,” says Valbuena. “We tried to find people who really needed that extra boost economically and who we know are going to make a big hype about it. With this kind of thing, we started to realize, the individual artist needs a strong social media presence and needs to be willing to put themselves out there and promote their own concert to, again, bring their audience together with the other audiences.”

Valbuena is grateful to Ed Smaldone ’78 (ACSM) for helping Sunday Serenades take off. “At the beginning it was a lot of friends and family who were supporting us. The concert that changed that
the most was Ed Smaldone’s. He was able to make a lot of noise for us and promoted the series a lot. He was so nice: he donated his entire share that he made by his performance. He brought a lot of people who wouldn’t have heard about us otherwise.”

Since the launch of Sunday Serenades in New York, Valbuena and Gillette have moved on to spotlight musicians from around the country, and they’re eyeing the international scene for future concerts. As Gillette says, “Honestly, the money is great. But people are happy just to be performing for other people again.” Despite sometimes dire predictions for the music industry, their experience gives them reason to be hopeful. For Valbuena, “I hear a lot of people say we’re never going to get out of this, but I think we will. Eventually things are going to pan out. Optimism is what’s going to bring us through it.”

In Memoriam

Florence Howe, internationally recognized as a leader of the modern feminist movement, passed away on Friday, September 11, at age 91. Howe was the founder of The Feminist Press of The City University of New York, providing more opportunities for women authors to be published than anyone anywhere. A professor, historian and author considered the mother of women’s studies nationwide, she taught at QC and CCNY and was the first female president of the Modern Language Association, which promotes the study of language and literature. Howe was a Hunter College alumna.

Read the NY Times obituary.

Heard Around the Virtual Campus
John Andrejack (Student Advocacy and Appeals) co-authored a review, "What People with Parkinson’s Disease Want," published in the Journal of Parkinson’s Disease . . . . John Dennehy (Biology) has received two grants to study COVID-19 in metropolitan areas. NSF’s Division of Environmental Biology awarded Dennehy $200,000 for “Metapopulation Modeling to Develop Strategies to Reduce COVID-19 Transmission in Public Spaces.” He also received $357,255 for a NYC Department of Environmental Protection Project called “Phylogenomic and Socioeconomic Correlates of COVID-19 Transmission in NYC” . . . . Alicia Melendez (Biology) was among the faculty who received 2020 Mentoring and Teaching Awards from The Graduate Center, CUNY, recognizing “long-term commitment to students at all stages of graduate research” . . . . Nuria Rodriguez-Planas (Economics) recently published “Hitting Where It Hurst Most: COVID-19 and Low-Income Urban College Students,” IZA Institute of Labor Economics Discussion Paper No. 13644. Rodriguez-Planas surveyed QC students this summer . . . . President Frank H. Wu made the City & State list of the top 50 higher education leaders in New York State.

The Q View is produced by the Office of Communications and Marketing.

Comments and suggestions for future news items are welcome. Send them to jay.hershenson@qc.cuny.edu.