What’s News

Marking a holiday that many will celebrate virtually this year, President Frank H. Wu extended Thanksgiving Day greetings to members of the QC community. For those who are planning to travel, the Ad Hoc Working Group on Reopening shared a few health and safety reminders. Happy Thanksgiving to all, wherever and however you spend it.

QC Among Top Schools in National Social Mobility Index

QC ranks eighth in the seventh annual nationwide Social Mobility Index released by CollegeNET. Public institutions from CUNY and California dominate the top 25 on the index, a data-driven analysis of how effectively four-year colleges and universities in the United States enroll economically disadvantaged students—defined as those with family income below the national
median—and graduate them into well-paying jobs.

CollegeNET—a Portland, Oregon, company that provides web-based, on-demand technologies to colleges, universities, and nonprofits—prepares the National Social Mobility Index using data from third parties. These sources include the U.S. Department of Education’s College Scorecard and the Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System compiled by the National Center for Education Statistics.

“It comes as no surprise that when it comes to economic mobility, Queens College—now in its eighty-third year of serving the people of New York—is making a larger impact than virtually every other college in the country,” says Queens College President Frank H. Wu. “When our students—rich in ambition, talent, and creativity—are given the advantage of a high-quality, world-class faculty, they become the backbone of our city and state workforce.”

Warm Up to Winter

To rewrite Shelley, if fall comes, can winter be far behind? QC’s 2021 Winter Session, running from January 4 to 25, will allow students to earn up to 4 credits in three weeks. Anthropology, the arts, computer science, foreign languages, music, nutrition, philosophy, political science, psychology, and sociology are among the areas represented in the more than 70 undergraduate and graduate courses that will be offered; all are conducted online. Some classes satisfy Pathways general education requirements.

For the complete listing and a step-by-step guide of how to register, click here. Pathways courses being offered this winter are listed here. If you have questions about Winter Session, please contact admissions@qc.cuny.edu.

William Keller To Retire

After nearly seven and a half years at QC, Vice President for Finance and Administration William Keller is stepping down, effective December 31, 2020.

Serving under five presidents—James Muyskens, Evangelos Gizis, Félix V. Matos Rodríguez, William Tramontano, and Frank H. Wu—Keller had a big impact on the
college and its operations. Among his achievements, he hired top managers to run key finance and administrative departments; worked with the Student Association and the Office of Student Affairs to launch the shuttle bus; refinanced the bonds for The Summit Apartments; managed the Tech Incubator; recommended that the college create its transfer honors program; managed investments in major capital improvements and preventive maintenance; and implemented upgrades in information technology. Most recently, he developed the Budget 101 Briefings to help educate the campus community about financial issues facing QC and CUNY.

“I can’t thank Bill enough for all his exemplary contributions to Queens College over the years, and for the valuable advice he’s given me since my appointment,” says President Wu. “Fortunately for all of us, he will remain an active member of the QC community.”

Keller’s background uniquely equipped him for his job at QC. He came to this campus after more than eight years as VP for Finance and Administration at Kingsborough Community College. His previous experience encompassed positions in teaching, technology, health care, and finance, in both the private and public sectors.

Among Keller’s strongest memories of QC are “how great the students, faculty, and staff are. I enjoyed working with all of them over the years. I consider many people on campus as friends as well as colleagues. The campus is amazingly beautiful, too.”

Teamwork Matters

With regard to the challenges looming ahead for QC and all of CUNY, Keller draws lessons from the way New York City recovered from the financial crisis of the mid-1970s—which happens to be the topic of his MBA thesis. “The only way that we’re going to survive and prosper in this environment is by teamwork,” he says. “Departments need to work with each other to develop programs and QC has to enhance its ties with the other CUNY schools both in Queens and citywide. We also have to expand our relationships with local businesses and community groups. In addition, QC should not think that its territory ends at the Queens border. We have a lot of students and alumni from Long Island. There are people on Long Island who would benefit from Queens College degrees.”

In retirement, Keller hopes to see more of his three children, ages 31, 27, and 19. He looks forward to traveling with his wife; in April, due to the pandemic, they canceled plans to celebrate their 20th anniversary in the Caribbean. “I won’t lack for things to do,” observes Keller, who is on the board of the Port Washington Public Library and is co-president of the alumni association for his class at the University of Pennsylvania. He’ll remain involved with QC, too. “I plan to keep working with the Tech Incubator and with a program to expand service-learning opportunities,” he promises.

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**Finals Preparation**

With exams around the corner, many students are stressed at the prospect of tests. Fortunately, the Learning Commons—which includes the Academic Support Center, HSI STEM, and the Writing Center—can help. The Learning
Commons offers free virtual tutoring and peer mentoring support services for QC undergraduate and graduate students. All are welcome! Visit once or regularly, according to your needs and schedule. To make a Zoom appointment, start by clicking here. For more information, click here, email LCommons@qc.cuny.edu, or call 718-997-5670.

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**A Week for Student Wellness**

Mind, Body, and Soul—a package of wellness and self-care programs to be offered virtually next week—is designed to help QC students during the final weeks of the fall semester. Register for any or all of the events described below.

**Guided Art Meditation and Yoga**

Monday, November 30, 12:15-1:15 pm

Indulge in midday relaxation through a guided art meditation and yoga practice.

**Spirituality and Wellness**

Monday, November 30, 5-6 pm

What does spirituality have to do with wellness? Explore this topic through a discussion of various religious practices and wellness.

**Spa Morning: Making Face Masks**

Tuesday, December 1, 12:15-1:15 pm

Learn how to use household items to make an organic banana mask, a breakfast mask, and a honey citrus mask.

**Healthy Eating**

Wednesday, December 2, 12:15-1:15 pm

Recipes and physical exercises will be offered as part of a discussion about the benefits of healthy eating and physical activity. Also, the Student Association will announce the grand prize winner of the QC Miles 4 Week Challenge. The first-place winner will receive an Apple watch; the runner-up will also receive a prize. Find out who won and how to enter the next challenge!

**Stress Management Workshop**

Wednesday, December 2, 6-7 pm
Take a break, talk to peers about what is stressing you out, and learn ways to de-stress mentally during finals.

**Draw It Out: Relaxation through Art**

Thursday, December 3, 6-7:30 pm

Jan Arzooman will share techniques for calming your mind. Bring paper, pencil, and a fine-point marker or a smooth-flowing pen of any kind; Arzooman will show you how to let go of the stress. No previous experience is necessary.

**Sound Bath Experience**

Friday, December 4, 11 am-12 noon

Greg Prasker from Wolfpack Ascension will take you on a sound healing journey as he channels divine energy to help you remove obstacles and manifest spiritual wellness.

This wellness week is presented by the Queens College Hillel, Counseling Services, the Godwin-Ternbach Museum, the Office of Student Development and Leadership, the Student Association, the FNES Department, the UJA Federation, and The Center for Ethnic, Racial and Religious Understanding at Queens College.

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**Stipends Spring Up for Unpaid Internships**

The Center for Career Engagement and Internships is offering a limited number of Dr. Félix V. Matos Rodríguez Stipends for the Spring 2021 semester. Students participating in an unpaid internship, research, or teaching in that semester may apply for the $2,400 stipends. The application deadline is January 8, 2021. (For students to receive the stipend, the details of their internship must be secured from their employer in writing by February 10, 2021.) If you have questions about the Matos Rodríguez Spring 2021 stipends, email stipend@qc.cuny.edu.

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**In Memoriam: Peter Mattson**

The QC community mourns Professor Emeritus Peter Mattson, who passed away on Monday, November 9, at the age of 88, from complications following a heart attack.
Mattson earned his bachelor’s degree from Oberlin College and PhD from Princeton University, then a U.S. center of research leading to the plate tectonic revolution. He served seven years in the U.S. Geological Survey based in Puerto Rico, conducting research in Caribbean tectonics and publishing several papers and geologic maps of that island, as well as classified reports for the U.S. Army military geology division. During that time, he also taught at the Catholic University of Puerto Rico.

Mattson came to Queens in 1964 as a founding member of the Department of Geology and served twice as its chair. In his first term (1965-1968), he supervised its growth from 5 to 13 faculty members and to more than 50 majors; he later played important roles in designing our first master’s program and the CUNY consortial PhD in Earth and Environmental Sciences. He most commonly taught Structural Geology and Earthquakes, Volcanoes, and Moving Continents, which he created and remains a popular course today. His broad background and field experience also enabled him to teach field geology (in Puerto Rico and Montana), Mineralogy, Natural Disasters, and Physical Geology at Queens, and Engineering Geology at the University of Leeds (UK).

Mattson’s research focused on Caribbean tectonics and petrology but included studies in seismology and paleomagnetism. He conducted field work in 20 states and over 15 countries, including Canada, Cuba, the Dominican Republic, Haiti, Mexico, and Venezuela. He was proud to have been the first geologist since Darwin to set foot on the isolated St. Peter and St. Paul’s Rocks in the south Atlantic, and regaled colleagues and students with tales of being rescued by Brazilian sailors when he slipped off those rocks into shark-infested waters. His work led to two research volumes, scores of articles and conference presentations, three geologic maps, and several unpublished reports.

After retiring in 1998, Mattson shifted his attention from digging up rocks and fossils to unearthing his family’s ancestors. He surprised himself and the department when he discovered that he shared an ancestor who lived at the time of Charlemagne with a Geology colleague.

Mattson is survived by his wife of 66 years, Leila (Ott), three children—Andrew, Sarah, and Julia—and seven grandchildren, with whom he shared his love of learning and research in not only geology but also science in general, and then genealogy. His children fondly remember field trips to Puerto Rico, Venezuela, Montana, and Wyoming, and many impromptu roadside geology lessons. His geologic children went on to impressive careers in industry, academia, and government agencies.

Maaza Mengiste (English) was shortlisted for the Booker Prize, becoming the first writer from Ethiopia to attain that distinction. See more Queens College Wow Points.
Zoe Beloff (Media Studies) has a new work, “Signals,” on display in a group show in St. Petersburg, Russia. Her installation “Emotions Go to Work” was presented at the Ulrich Museum in Wichita, Kansas, from January through March and is now at the Museum of Surgical Sciences, Chicago . . . . Emily Gorbach ’18 (MLS) has been appointed youth services librarian at Five Corners, the busiest regional branch library in the Jersey City Free Public Library system . . . . the late William Helmreich had a book published posthumously by Princeton University Press. The Queens Nobody Knows: An Urban Walking Guide is based on his 1,012-mile, block-by-block tour on foot of New York City’s largest borough . . . . Richard Vetere (Media Studies) recently published a novel, I, Human, with Amazin Whodunit Press. The short film he wrote about the pandemic, The Curfew, is screening on the Hudson Theatre Works’ virtual festival.

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.