What’s News

Cupid on Campus

Daniela Leto and Mike Molina, whose love story was featured in last week’s issue, are celebrating Valentine’s Day with a surprise proposal for their fellow students and staff. The couple, who have been together for two years, arranged a surprise Valentine’s Day event on campus with decorations and balloons.

Ash Sage
Romance was documented earlier this month in QView and on social media, are not the only QC alumni who found love on campus. Here are pictures and comments posted by others who met their partner at Queens College.

My fiancé Andrew Pfeffer and I met in 2013 in Professor O'Brien’s Alexander the Great graduate history class. We were assigned to the same group for our final presentation. We were supposed to be married last summer, but postponed due to the pandemic.

Jessica Hardial

Also met my wife at QC. We were in the Peer Counseling program. It feels like just yesterday she walked into Powdermaker Hall. ...9 years later.

Sayma Sharif

Transferred in 2018, married in 2019, graduated in 2020. We celebrated our 2nd anniversary on Feb 16th we miss our loving campus❤.

Did you meet your one and only at QC? Send an email with your story to jay.hershenson@qc.cuny.edu.

Collaborative Kessler Effort

QC President Frank H. Wu was the emcee when the Kessler Scholarship Collaborative—an initiative dedicated to supporting first-generation students—made its virtual debut on Friday, February 19. Bestselling author, combat veteran, and social entrepreneur Wes Moore, chief executive of the Robin Hood Foundation, gave the keynote. The event brought together more than 300 students from the six institutions in the collaborative, which comprises Cornell University, Johns Hopkins University, Queens College, St. Francis College, Syracuse University, and University of Michigan. QC freshman Yelena Isnora (right) was among the students who posed questions during the Q&A session with Moore.

Former New York Mets majority owner Fred Wilpon and his wife Judy Wilpon launched the Kessler Scholarship at University of Michigan,
their alma mater, in 2007. They participated in the virtual event and shared encouragement to the student attendees.

Last year, the Kessler program was extended to Queens College, which became the consortium’s only public college in New York.

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**Final Week of Black History Month**

Black History Month concludes this week with virtual events devoted to science, the arts, and much, much more. Today—Tuesday, February 23, at 11 am—HSI-STEM Bridges Across Eastern Queens and the MARC program are hosting a Black STEM Professionals Panel; register [here](#). ACSM faculty and students will present works by African American and BIPOC composers on Wednesday, February 24, at 12:15 pm, in a special Black history QClass streaming [live on YouTube](#).

**Literature to Life**, a performance-based literacy program, will stage its one-actor adaptation of Richard Wright’s *Black Boy* on Thursday, February 25, at 11:30 am. The event can be accessed [here](#). On Friday, join NYC Men Teach in “A Hip Hop Cypher” on Friday, February 26, at 6 pm, featuring celebrated poet Nikki Giovanni and other special guests. Students and fans of hip hop and poetry are welcome to perform; [RSVP](#).

For QC’s complete Black History Month calendar, [click here](#).

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**Food Pantry Takes to the Road**

Once again, the [Knights Table Food Pantry](#) is Turning the Table on Hunger. The mobile food distribution program, supported by the Student Association, Student Affairs, and the Queens College administration, will resume operations next month to help feed QC and CUNY students.

On Tuesday, March 9, from 10 am to 1 pm, Turning the Table will be based at Roosevelt Avenue and 61st Street, near the Woodside 7 line subway/LIRR station. Students will have to
register in advance and wear masks and practice social distancing while picking up food.

The college has identified other locations, in Queens and surrounding counties, to serve as distribution sites this semester. Schedules and locations will be announced to students via email.

The Knights Table Food Pantry is sponsored by generous grants from the Carrol and Milton Petrie Foundation and the Queens College Foundation.

What’s the Big Idea?

“Big Ideas,” an online video series highlighting innovative research by QC faculty, will visit Yoko Nomura (Psychology) on Thursday, February 25, at 7 pm, for a discussion of how a mother’s health affects the health of her children, as well as how racial and socioeconomic disparities are seen in the health of pregnant women infected with COVID-19. Subsequent episodes will air on Thursdays at 7 pm through May 6—with the exception of April 1—on the college’s YouTube channel and Facebook page.

Livestreaming the State of the College

President Frank H. Wu will deliver his first State of the College address in an event to be livestreamed on Wednesday, March 10, from 11 am to noon on YouTube. He will also pay tribute to QC staff who have been working diligently to maintain the campus over the past year. As explained in a message distributed on Monday, February 22, members of the campus community are urged to RSVP. Registrants will receive a link before the event.

Incubator Assists Emergency Preppers in Rockaway

The peninsula communities known as Rockaway (or The Rockaways) were devastated in 2012 by Superstorm Sandy, leading many of its citizens to complain they were insufficiently informed or equipped to adequately prepare for the magnitude of the disaster.

In the time-honored tradition of citizen activists, Edward Williams responded by founding Regional Ready Rockway (RRR), a community-based organization which uses social media and a website to provide the people of Rockaway with news of impending severe weather and other threats that may adversely impact their community, such as Covid-19. RRR emphasizes disaster and emergency preparedness and facilitates access to resources available to train individuals in how to safeguard themselves. Hoping to better facilitate these outreach efforts, RRR is working with the Tech Incubator at Queens College (TIQC).
"Regional Ready Rockaway is a group of trained Emergency Preparedness professionals and community leaders understanding the need to plan and galvanize this community for emergencies," says TIQC Executive Director Ying Zhou.

“The Rockaway community is among the hardest hit by the Covid pandemic,” she notes. “TIQC is partnering with RRR to help its community better prepare for natural disasters—specifically, help them to assess the emergency preparedness training effectiveness. We have mobilized Queens College faculty and a group of Queens College students to help RRR to maintain and develop their capabilities to re-build their digital platforms, develop digital assets, and to promote the organization through digital marketing and social media.”

As Zhou describes, the Department of Urban Studies has included RRR on its list of community partners to match up interns to work with them. Additionally, a graduate student (TIQC Resident Data Analyst) from the Sociology Department is planning a pilot assessment project with them. TIQC is helping RRR to rebuild their website and to set up and manage their social media accounts. It’s also helping RRR to set up a pilot program for a TIQC member company, SolarSeed, to further test its solar-powered product for emergency use. TIQC is in discussion to set up an entrepreneurship program and flexible work-space for RRR and invited entrepreneurs from RRR’s district to participate in the TIQC entrepreneurship and mentoring programs.

**Recover and Rebuild the Rockaways**

“Our goal,” Zhou continues, “is to jointly develop an ecosystem of local entrepreneurs and bring all the resources to support them. This ecosystem will be peer-supported and self-sustaining. It will be the catalyst to accelerate the economic development of the Rockaway community, helping Rockaway recover from the pandemic, rebuild their community, and make it more resilient to withstand future disasters. TIQC and RRR are collaborating with two complex systems researchers and consultants, Alistair Brett and Denise Easton, and planning to offer an Ecosystem Builders Workshop. This workshop is designed for entrepreneurs, start-up founders, community-based incubator directors (ecosystem-builders), and business owners who are interested in building new skills for understanding, designing, and operating in a framework that recognizes the impact of complexity in every work and life environment.”

“In response to our collaboration/partnership and the work of TIQC thus far, we are seeing the benefit of communities coming together to help their own and collaborate to fill the gaps in communication with traditional groups who can positively impact response and coordination,” says Williams.

The RRR project, explains Zhou, is consistent with TIQC's mission “to accelerate economic development in Queens, New York City, and beyond by building a collaborative and sustainable ecosystem that educates, engages, and inspires entrepreneurs to turn their ideas into ventures.”

“Specific to this fiscal year,” she says, “we aim to help early-stage entrepreneurs and small businesses owners who have been hit the hardest by the pandemic to launch, re-pivot, and grow their businesses.”

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**Open to Analysis**

In conjunction with **NYC Open Data Week**, taking
place this year from March 6 to 14, data analytics students at QC will present a pair of public workshops.

Curious about the ways in which raw data can be beautified in graphic elements? The Data Visualization Workshop, on March 9, from noon to 1 pm, will demonstrate how to make attractive charts and diagrams that illustrate statistics related to life in New York City. In addition to promoting data analytics skills, this session will help participants become judicious consumers who can understand and identify misleading visualization. To attend, RSVP.

Machine learning (ML)—computer programming that improves in response to experience, rather than human intervention—is key to artificial intelligence, a booming area of data analytics. Using New York City open-source data, the Machine Learning Workshop, on March 10, from noon to 1 pm, will explore the importance and role of ML in gaining knowledge about New York City. RSVP here.

NYC Open Data Week, an annual event, celebrates the so-called Open Data Law, signed by Mayor Michael Bloomberg in March 2012. The legislation mandated the city to create a website providing free public access to “any comprehensive collection of data that is maintained on a computer system by or on behalf of a city agency,” as explained on a website devoted to the law.

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**Research Fellowships in Dominican Studies**

The CUNY Dominican Studies Institute (DSI) is now accepting applications for its 2021 Research Fellowships program. Five $10,000 positions are available for fellows who will contribute to current DSI research projects; write about collections found in the institute’s archives and library; or explore the institute’s quantitative survey data for research purposes. (Should CUNY DSI continue to be remote for the rest of 2021, award winners should be prepared to work remotely with the archives and library, under the understanding that a limited amount of resources may be accessed online.)

College and university faculty of any rank, established independent scholars, and doctoral students are welcome to apply. International applicants are eligible, provided they will not request a letter of support from CUNY to obtain authorization to travel to the United States to complete the research associated with this grant.

For details of the program and the application form, click here. The deadline is Wednesday, March 31, 2021. Applicants will be notified of the decision by email on Monday, April 19, 2021.
Mike Papapavlou ’15 won Guitar World Magazine’s Guitar Teacher of the Year for 2020. Through “patience, persistence and perseverance, . . . anyone can play, do and accomplish anything on guitar, in their musical career or in life,” says Papapavlou, who will be a freelance contributor to the magazine this year . . . . Edward Smaldone (ACSM) was interviewed on an NPR show that aired earlier this month. Fanfare Magazine’s January-February 2021 issue included three reviews of his CDs. The “Once and Again” CD features performances by six of Smaldone’s ACSM colleagues . . . . President Frank H. Wu represented Queens College on Monday, February 22, at a press conference organized by Queens Borough President Donovan Richards to denounce recent anti-Asian-American and anti-Semitic incidents in the county.

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.