



THE QView



Discimus ut serviamus: **We learn so that we may serve.**

#97

What's News

ACSM Family Garners Grammys



Arturo O'Farrill



JoAnn Falletta



Eric Davis

Three members of the Aaron Copland School of Music family were winners at the 63rd Annual Grammy Awards on Sunday, March 14. The event recognized recordings released from September 1, 2019, through August 31, 2020.

Arturo O’Farrill, who earned his MA at QC, picked up his seventh Grammy when his *Four Questions* was chosen as Best Latin Jazz Album. JoAnn Falletta, another master’s degree recipient from ACSM, collected her second statue this year; she conducted Richard Danielpour’s *The Passion of Jeshua* with the Buffalo Philharmonic, a recording chosen as the Best Choral Performance in the Classical category. Falletta won her first Grammy two years ago for conducting the London Symphony Orchestra in an album of works by Kenneth Fuchs that was selected as Best Classical Compendium. Eric Davis (Music Education) shared in the honors for Best Musical Theater Album, awarded to *Jagged Little Pill*; he played guitar for the recording.

“I am so happy and grateful for the three musicians from the Aaron Copland School of Music community who received Grammy Awards for their work in our field,” said ACSM Chair Michael Lipsey. “All three are exceptional talents!”

Since 1980, Queens College faculty and alumni have been nominated for or won more than 100 Grammy Awards—an accomplishment noted in the [college’s 83 Wow Points](#). To hear from female ACSM graduates, watch a [panel discussion presented Thursday, March 25, at 5 pm](#), in connection with Women’s History Month.

Interfaith Panel Reflects on Past Year


Four campus religious leaders—Dr. Ali Mermer of the Muslim Student Association, Father Jeremy Canna of the Newman Center, Anna Lian of the Vine, and Rabbi Sara Zacharia from Hillel—will share their perspectives on 2020 during Faith and the Pandemic on Thursday, March 25 at 1:30 pm. Interfaith interns will facilitate the panel discussion. To attend, register [here](#).


NYC Men Teach Celebrates Women’s Herstory Month

In honor of Women’s Herstory Month, NYC Men Teach is holding an event on Thursday, March 25, at 4 pm to recognize the importance, impact, and influence of Black women in education. The program features the Dope Black Women’s Collective, Danette Howard (Senior Vice President and Chief Policy Officer of the Lumina Foundation), and musical performances by recording artists Keyondra Lockett and Natalie Imani. To attend, [RSVP here](#).

A College Video for Everyone

A Special Message from
Queens College President
Frank H. Wu

Play video 



"Queens College Is Here for You," a new video that the Office of Communications and Marketing prepared for prospective and accepted students, lasts less than two and a half minutes. But the film still manages to cover the QC in 4 program, the college's outstanding record with regard to social mobility, the impressive faculty and alumni associated with the campus, and of course, the variety of activities open to students.

Study.com Reports Positive Results for QC

The latest endorsement of QC programs comes from [Study.com](https://www.study.com), an online learning platform that gave top rankings to the college's undergraduate programs in Economics **#6 on Best Bachelor's Degrees in Economics** and Psychology **#9 on Best Bachelor's Degrees in Psychology**. Study.com compiles its lists after reviewing hundreds of universities across the country for their academic and career resources, the quality of education, faculty, and other considerations. Over 40 million visitors per month use Study.com to research potential schools, degrees, and careers.



Documenting Pandemic's Impact on City Street Vendors

Several QC students were part of a research team that studied the effect of the COVID-19 pandemic on street vendors in New York City, hoping to raise awareness for the need to have social and legal protection for informal workers.

The research project was

coordinated by Sari Kisilevsky (Philosophy), who sits on the advisory board for The Street Vendor Project (SVP), a grassroots membership organization of New York City street vendors whose mission is to defend and expand vendors' rights and improve their working conditions. For the study, SVP collaborated with Women in Informal Employment: Globalizing and Organizing (WIEGO), a global network focused on empowering the working poor—especially women—in the informal economy to secure their livelihoods.



Students to the Streets

Kisilevsky hired QC students, led by Talia Salas, to conduct surveys and in-depth interviews of New York City street vendors in the summer of 2020. Other students involved with research were Irlanda Zea Marino, Luo Guannan, Husam Zaid, and Nasif Mia. The students' findings uncovered the pandemic's devastating effects on street vendors.

in April 2020, 98 percent of survey respondents had zero earnings and by June they were earning an average of just 20 percent of pre-COVID revenues, with 79 percent of respondents still earning nothing. In addition, 26 percent received no government financial relief and 63 percent received no government food assistance; many street vendors are undocumented and therefore are excluded from local, state, and national small business assistance programs. Respondents also described struggles with COVID-19 illness, illness and deaths of family members, and inaccessibility of medical care. Poor mental health and anxiety were also affecting many street vendors. Just over three-quarters—76 percent—of respondents have borrowed money; drawn down savings; sought financial help from family, friends or neighbors; or sold or pawned assets as a response to the crisis. Many have been unable to make rent payments, and more than half of respondents expressed the need for assistance to meet basic needs.

Permit Problem

The problem was compounded due to a shortage of permits for New York City street vendors, which has created a black market over the years. Permits are often resold at exorbitant rates—a permit that normally costs \$200 to renew every two years can go for more than \$20,000 on the black market. Many street vendors were on the hook to pay for permits even as revenues declined to almost nothing.

Salas, a childhood education/psychology double major, was the lead researcher for the project because of the personal nature of the study. She grew up helping her mother, a street vendor, sell fruit and popcorn at Flushing Meadows Park.

"My little brother and I used to sell in the street with my mother," noted Salas. "It inspired me when I saw how many mothers went out with their little children to sell on a cold or hot day."

During the beginning of the pandemic, Salas' mother lost many of her clients and contracted COVID, which spread throughout her household. "Both my parents stopped working for two weeks," added Salas. "They were backed up with rent and bills. Selling out of the house brought a little bit of income but nowhere near where they were before the pandemic."

Recently, New York City street vendors received some good news: Newly passed legislation will more than double the amount of permits available over the next ten years. The legislation will also require permit holders to be present at their stands, a move designed to quash the underground market that has developed. In addition, a separate law enforcement unit will be established to oversee the street vending community, ending the longstanding practice of a variety of agencies enforcing rules and levying fines on street vendors.

Although there is still progress to be made, Salas feels the new legislation is a step in the right direction.

“There’s so much competition right now. The question is who is going to get the permits first?” added Salas. “I think it’s a first step to a change because people were waiting for this for a long time. They just needed a little bit of hope.”

Volunteers Support Quest for Vaccinations

Past and present QC staff are helping New Yorkers get shots at better health.

Rebekah Hanousek-Monge '07—director of both MS Human Resource Management and MS Organizational Leadership at Mercy College, where she is an assistant professor; formerly assistant director of admissions at Queens College—hasn’t seen QC Director of Undergraduate Admissions Chelsea Lavington for about 15 years. But they’ve kept in touch through Facebook, and in January, that’s where they found themselves discussing their struggle to schedule vaccinations for eligible people in their circles.



Chelsea Lavington



Tony Ko

As soon as appointments appeared online, they were filled. Making matters worse, New York State, New York City, hospitals, and pharmacies maintain separate systems, forcing users to jump back and forth among multiple websites. “The process was so convoluted and complicated,” observes Hanousek-Monge, who nonetheless prevailed. “If there’s a challenge out there, I’ll master it,” she adds. “In helping my parents and my dad’s cousin get the vaccine, I learned to navigate the system.”

Lavington experienced a similar learning curve. To share their knowledge, the women created a Facebook group, [Helping NYC Get Vaccinated](#), on January 12. “The group is completely nonpolitical,” says Lavington. “We just want to help people get vaccinated. As more vaccine was being dispensed to New York, people searched and joined us, and the group started to grow.”

Right away, they heard from Tony Ko, a SharePoint administrator in the Manhattan district attorney's office, and previously a system administrator and architect in the IT network and server group at QC. Ko set up appointments for his wife, who had resumed her commute to lower Manhattan, and his parents. Then he became the group's third administrator, alongside its founders. "QC is the connection among all of us," comments Ko, who is in other Facebook groups with Lavington, but has yet to meet Hanousek-Monge in person.

Help is On the Way

All three devote endless hours to Helping NYC Get Vaccinated, rewarded only by the knowledge that they are making a big difference in people's lives. "Once in a blue moon, someone comes back to the page to thank us," says Hanousek-Monge. "That brings us joy. We just want to work to eradicate a broken system." In recognition of their public service, WCBS Newsradio 880 named their group one of its [Difference Makers](#).

The public can visit the group's Facebook page, which includes FAQs, a PDF with pre-screening information to determine eligibility for vaccinations, and even a print-it-yourself flyer with a phone number that non-tech types can call for help making an appointment. (The various systems presume that people have electronic devices and the ability to use the internet.) Members post appointments as they become available, report on vaccination side effects or lack thereof, and occasionally, in response to queries, direct non-New Yorkers to resources closer to their respective homes.

Unable to get a date to roll up your sleeves? Channel the aggressive inner self required for metropolitan area residency. "You have to be persistent and keep trying," says Ko. "People cancel and appointments open up."

There's no way to tally how many individuals have been immunized through Helping NYC Get Vaccinated. But its size—more than 7000 members, among them a considerable number affiliated in some way with QC—attests to the group's reach. So can the author of this piece. She and her husband got their first shots last week, with Ko's guidance.

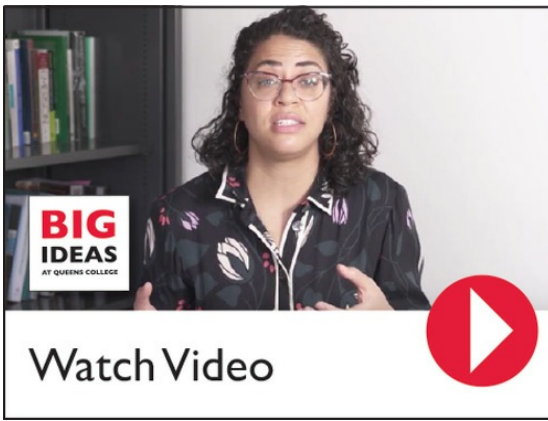
Stay on Course This Summer

Here's a hot tip: by enrolling in summer session at QC, undergraduate and graduate students can make progress toward their degree without having to commute to campus. All classes will be taught remotely. It's already possible to enroll in nearly 500 courses; faculty are working to develop additional offerings. With four sessions to choose from, lasting four, six, or ten weeks, students are able to design schedules that meet their needs. Registration is now open. For complete details, [click here](#).



Big Ideas March On

The next episode of "Big Ideas," debuting on Thursday, March 25, focuses on Natalie Bump Vena (Urban Studies), who examines the city's aging infrastructure and how it disproportionately affects people of color. An online video series created by the Office of Communications and Marketing, "Big Ideas" highlights cutting-edge research conducted by Queens College faculty. The series can be seen on the college's [YouTube channel](#) and [Facebook page](#).



Natalie Bump Vena



Current Episodes of Big Ideas

Heard Around the Virtual Campus



Peter Archer



Betty Diamond



Fred Gardaphe

Peter Archer '85 remains in the spotlight as *Soul*, the animated movie about a music teacher, was nominated for **three Oscars**. **CUNY TV did its own story on Archer**. A retired band teacher at Nathaniel Hawthorne Middle School 74 in Bayside, he served as a consultant for the film **Timothy Benseman** (Physics) received an NSF Career Award of \$500,000 for "Continuous-wave Terahertz Laser Employing High Temperature Superconducting Josephson Junctions." The terahertz sources he plans to develop will demonstrate record

power level and frequency range, with applications in telecommunications and medical imaging **Cliff (Yung-Chi) Chen** (ECP) just had an article about COVID-19's impact on families with school-aged children published in the *Journal of Family Issues* **Betty Diamond** '67, a Wisconsin resident for decades, sent the Queens Public Library a book she had borrowed more than 63 years ago, along with a check for \$500. As the *New York Times* reported, Diamond earned a PhD in English from the University of Wisconsin-Madison, and went on to teach literature at the University of Wisconsin-Whitewater **Fred Gardaphe** (English) was awarded a Quarry Farm Fellowship for a research and writing residency at the Center for *Mark Twain Studies* **Tito Muñoz**, a conductor who studied at ACSM with Maurice Peress, and fellow music school alumnus Jeffrey Sultanoff are mentioned in a recent *New York Times* article about pianist, arranger, and composer Mary Lou Williams **Shareah Taleghani** (Classical, Middle Eastern and Asian Languages and Cultures), author of *Readings in Syrian Prison Literature: The Poetics of Human Rights*, was cited in "Collective Witnessing," an article in the *Los Angeles Review of Books* about Middle Eastern prison literature and film **President Frank H. Wu** was quoted in articles published by *Axios*, *Reuters*, and *USA Today* about attacks on Asian Americans. On Friday, March 19, President Wu participated on *WYNC's "Brian Lehrer Show,"* discussing hate crimes and discrimination against Asians and Asian Americans, as well as how QC has been operating during the pandemic. "The Other Pandemic: Anti-Asian Hate in the Wake of COVID-19," the CUNY TV Town Hall in which the president appeared, can be viewed [here](#).

**The Q View is produced by the
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**Comments and suggestions for future news items are welcome.
Send them to jay.hershenson@qc.cuny.edu.**