

# HCCC Happenings

A publication of the Communications Department



## HUDSON COUNTY COMMUNITY COLLEGE HOLDS RIBBON-CUTTING CEREMONY FOR NEW CAR-PARKING STACKER SYSTEM



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## From the Editor's Desk

HCCC Happenings is on  
the College's website at  
<http://www.hccc.edu>

Items for the May newsletter are  
due by Friday, April 11, 2025.

Please send your news items, comments  
and suggestions to:

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[communications@hccc.edu](mailto:communications@hccc.edu)

### PLEASE NOTE:

Digital photos must be high resolution  
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## HUDSON COUNTY COMMUNITY COLLEGE HOLDS RIBBON-CUTTING CEREMONY FOR NEW CAR-PARKING STACKER SYSTEM

Hudson County Community College marked completing the construction of a new car-parking stacker system with a ribbon-cutting ceremony on Thursday morning, March 6, 2025. The stackers – a mechanical system designed to allow several vehicles to be parked in a relatively small space – will accommodate 104 faculty, staff and student vehicles.



**ON THE COVER:** Among others on-hand for the event (pictured center from left to right) were HCCC Board of Trustees Chair Jeanette Peña (holding scissors), President Dr. Christopher M. Reber, New Jersey State Senator Raj Mukherji, and Vice President for External Affairs and Strategic Initiatives, and Senior Counsel to the President Dr. Nicholas Chiaravalloti.

## APRIL IS COMMUNITY COLLEGE MONTH



April is a time to celebrate the invaluable role community colleges play in shaping the educational landscape and empowering individuals from diverse backgrounds. As we mark Community College Month, we honor these institutions as hubs of opportunity, innovation, and accessibility. From providing affordable education and vocational training to fostering a supportive environment for non-traditional students, community colleges serve as catalysts for social mobility and economic growth. Join us in recognizing the profound impact of community colleges and their unwavering commitment to creating pathways to success for all members of our communities.

## ATD COACHES VISIT HCCC



Dr. Rene Garcia, Data Coach (left) and Dr. Mary Fifield, Leadership Coach (third from left) met with HCCC students during their visit on Tuesday, March 4. The College has been a member of Achieving the Dream (ATD) - a national initiative to remove barriers to education and help community college students succeed – since 2019.



Join us for The Center for  
Student Success Topping Out

Thursday, April 17, 2025  
11:00 a.m.

2 Enos Place  
Jersey City, New Jersey  
- Enter on Jones Street



### Event Schedule:

11:00 a.m.

Sign the structural beam with  
your name and well wishes!

12:30 p.m.

Official Topping-Out Ceremony Begins!

1:00 p.m.

Beam Lifting

12:00 p.m. – 2:00 p.m.

Join HCCC for this celebration  
with food, music and activities!

## HUDSON COUNTY COMMUNITY COLLEGE HOSTS FOURTH ANNUAL TEACHING AND LEARNING SYMPOSIUM ON SOCIAL JUSTICE IN HIGHER EDUCATION



*Hudson County Community College (HCCC) held its fourth annual weeklong Teaching and Learning Symposium on Social Justice in Higher Education, February 24-28, 2025. Pictured here at the opening day ceremonies: Dr. Antonio Flores, President, Hispanic Association of Colleges and Universities; Steven M. Fulop, Mayor of Jersey City, New Jersey; Dr. Paula Roberson, Director, HCCC Center for Teaching, Learning, and Innovation; and Dr. Christopher M. Reber, HCCC President.*

College is not a one-size-fits-all route to a better future. From science and technology to the arts and humanities, academic programs reflect rapidly evolving industries where students of all backgrounds can thrive and improve their communities and regional economies. High quality, dedicated learning environments and dynamic approaches reinvigorate today's leaders and prepare tomorrow's leaders to access opportunities and prosper.

Hudson County Community College (HCCC) welcomed educators, business and civic leaders, community groups, and students as presenters and participants in the HCCC 2025 Teaching and Learning Symposium on Social Justice in Higher Education. Presentations were held February 24-28, 2025. Each day, elected officials and renowned education experts, attorneys, scientists, clergy, community advocates, and thought leaders from

countries attended virtual synchronous sessions this year.

The symposium began on Monday, February 24, with opening remarks from Dr. Paula Roberson, Director of the HCCC Center for Teaching, Learning, and Innovation and the driving force behind the symposium. Dr. Darryl Jones, HCCC Vice President for Academic Affairs, introduced Newark Mayor Ras J. Baraka, U.S. Senator Cory A. Booker delivered the Symposium Charge, and Dr. Christopher Reber, HCCC President, introduced the symposium keynote speaker, Dr. Larry D. Johnson, Jr., President of Guttman Community College of the City University of New York (CUNY).

### Opening-day presentations also included:

- The "Cost" of Leadership in Higher Education, Dr. Larry Johnson, Jr. with session host Dr. Paula Roberson;

throughout the United States provided expertise and exchanged ideas in hour-long presentations.

Now in its fourth year, the HCCC Teaching and Learning Symposium on Social Justice in Higher Education is a national model featuring acclaimed guest speakers, workshops, and panels, and is the first of its kind offered by a New Jersey higher education institution. Nearly 1,800 thought leaders, educators, and activists from 30 states and several

• Hispanic Association of Colleges and Universities (HACU) featuring Dr. Antonio Flores, HACU President and CEO, with Dr. Reber, and HCCC Vice President for Institutional Engagement and Excellence Dr. Yeurys Pujols;

• The Pursuit of Happiness: Awareness, Advocacy, and Inclusion of People with Intellectual Disabilities in Higher Education featuring Dr. Kenne Evans, Registrar/Admissions & Registrar, Tarrant County Community College, Texas; and Danielle Lopez, HCCC Director of DEI for Accessibility Services; and

• We Are Still Here: On Native Identity and Activism with Megan Red Shirt-Shaw, Director of Native Student Services, University of South Dakota; and Denise Knapp, HCCC Coordinator/Associate Professor of Human Services.

**Topics covered in sessions throughout the week included:** Justice is a Bridge: Community-centered Approaches to Governance; Howard University Students: Social Justice Studies; Immigrant Justice; Course & Curriculum Reform Across STEM Disciplines; The Black Woman Leader; Words on Fire: The Power of Incendiary Language; Disability Advocacy in Higher Education; Governor Murphy's Clemency Initiative; New Jersey Reparations Council; College and University Presidents' Panel; League of Women Voters: Your Voice = Your Vote; Faith Leaders' Panel; Operationalizing Love; Social Justice in the Constitution; WE ACT for Environmental Justice; The Haitian Immigrant Injustice Experience; Immigration in the News; HCCC Student Reflections; Expungement Information Session; and Clean-up of the Passaic River.



Hudson County Community College's Communications Department needs your help in identifying unique and exceptional graduate student stories to use in publicity for the upcoming Commencement ceremony as well as future marketing materials.

HCCC's Communications Department will be pitching these stories to media during the Commencement season and would be pleased to hear from students willing to be interviewed. Some past noteworthy stories covered by media included students who:

- Began studying at HCCC later in life
- Have relatives on HCCC staff or of HCCC alumni
- Are family members graduating together
- "Beat the odds" (earned a degree despite an obstacle, disability, etc.)
- First in the family to earn a degree

For more information, please contact:  
Communications Dept. at: (201) 360-4060  
[communications@hccc.edu](mailto:communications@hccc.edu)  
or <https://tinyurl.com/HCCCYourStory>



SCAN  
CODE

**#TellUsYourStory**  
**#HCCCGRADS2025**



## MILESTONES

*Congratulations to the following  
on their anniversaries with  
Hudson County Community College!*

### FULL-TIME EMPLOYEES

Five Years  
Amaalah Ogburn

20 Years  
TaraLyn Dugan

### PART-TIME EMPLOYEES

One Year  
Mariana Abdelmalak  
Arnoush Abedian  
Zurisadai Aguirre  
Ivan Garcia Jr.  
Gabriel Hoffman  
Giovanna Machado-Requena  
Joanne Rivera  
Destiny Roca  
Jose Sanchez  
Sawsan Sider  
Norman Smart  
Sidney Soogrim  
Rene Sorto

Five Years  
Thomas Larson

10 Years  
Andrea Siegel

## EMPLOYEE PERKS

### Employee Assistance Program

<https://eap.ndbh.com/>  
(company code: HCCC)

### National Institute for Staff and Organizational Development

<https://www.nisod.org/>

### LinkedIn Learning

<https://library.hccc.edu/linkedinlearning>

## SAVE THE DATE

### Wednesday, April 23

Administrative Professionals Day  
12 p.m. - 2 p.m. (By Invitation)

### Thursday, April 24

Take Our Daughters and Sons to Work Day  
(TODAS) (All Day) (Open to All)

### Tuesday, April 29 (Tentative)

Virtual Professional Development Day  
10 a.m. - 4 p.m. (Online) (Open to All)

### Wednesday, April 30

STARS Luncheon  
12 p.m. - 2 p.m. (By Invitation)

## NEWLY TENURED FACULTY

Criteria for tenure include excellence in teaching, excellence in scholarly achievement, excellence in service to the College, and excellence in community fulfillment of professional responsibilities. The following faculty were recommended and approved for tenure at the rank of Assistant Professor effective Academic Year 2025-26:

Inez Cruz, Assistant Professor, Radiography  
Daniel Ondieki, Assistant Professor, Mathematics



## APPOINTMENT OF FULL-TIME STAFF

Nancy Ackerman, Academic Counselor, Secaucus  
Center - Effective March 27, 2025

Anna Zielinski, Assistant Director, Au Pair  
Programs - Effective March 17, 2025

## APPOINTMENT OF TEMPORARY FULL-TIME STAFF

Aires Gomes, Facilities Worker  
Effective March 12, 2025 - March 11, 2026

## APPROVAL OF FACULTY TENURE

The following faculty are recommended for  
tenure effective Academic Year 2025-26.

Inez Cruz, Assistant Professor, Tenured

Daniel Ondieki, Assistant Professor, Tenured

## SUMMER HOURS

This year, the summer four-day week will begin Monday, May 19, with the first Friday off scheduled for Friday, May 23. The five-day schedule will resume on Monday, August 18.

The daily hours of operation during the summer four-day weeks will be 8:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m., Mondays through Thursdays, and the College will not be open for regular business on Fridays. Employees are asked to reduce their lunch breaks to 30 minutes to help compensate for the shorter hours of operation during the week. College activities on Fridays, Saturdays, and Sundays during this period will be minimized to reduce energy and other operating costs.

Should you have any questions about this schedule, please contact the Office of Human Resources or your supervisor.

## MODIFICATIONS TO STAFFING TABLE

Sabrina Bullock, Enrollment Support Assistant to  
International Student Assistant  
Effective March 12, 2025

Lisa Ciekiewicz, Admissions and Recruitment  
Coordinator, Nursing Program to Manager, Admissions and Recruitment, Nursing Program  
Effective March 12, 2025

Malcolm Kornegay, Senior Support Analyst  
to Junior Systems Administrator  
Effective March 12, 2025

Danielle Lopez, Director of Diversity, Equity and  
Inclusion for Accessibility Services to Director of  
Accessibility Services - Effective March 12, 2025

Willie Malone, Enrollment Support Assistant  
to Veterans Affairs Assistant  
Effective March 12, 2025

Kenneth Melewski, Help Desk Manager to  
Information Technology Project Manager  
Effective March 12, 2025

Diana Perez, Academic Lab Manager to User  
Services Manager - Effective March 12, 2025

Yeurys Pujols, Vice President for Diversity, Equity  
and Inclusion to Vice President for Institutional  
Engagement and Excellence - Effective March 12,  
2025

Mirta Sanchez, Executive Administrative  
Assistant, Office of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion  
to Executive Administrative Assistant, Office of  
Institutional Engagement and Excellence  
Effective March 12, 2025

Michelle Vitale, Director of Diversity, Equity,  
and Inclusion for Cultural Affairs to Director of  
Cultural Affairs - Effective March 12, 2025

Richard Walker, Associate Director of DEI Training  
to Associate Director of Institutional Engagement  
and Excellence Training - Effective March 12, 2025

## HCCC CELEBRATES WOMEN'S HISTORY MONTH WITH WOMEN IN BUSINESS DISCUSSION FEATURING TRUSTEE STACY GEMMA



*Trustee Gemma (right) converses with attendees at the presentation.*

On Wednesday, March 5, Hudson County Community College's School of Business, Culinary Arts and Hospitality Management commemorated Women's History Month with an inspiring "Women in Business" discussion featuring HCCC Trustee Stacy Gemma.

Ms. Gemma, who joined the Board in June 2024, shared insights from her multifaceted career as a successful retail store owner, fashion consultant, and commercial realtor with Donovan Realty Group in Jersey City. She emphasized the importance of resilience, networking, and adaptability in today's business landscape.

Beyond her professional accomplishments, Ms. Gemma has been deeply involved in community service, contributing to organizations such as the Hudson County Chamber of Commerce, Jersey City Jewish Association, Jersey City Youth Foundation, Hudson Pride, and the Jersey City Theater Company. She has also supported health and wellness initiatives through the Cancer Support Community of Monmouth County and Monmouth Medical Center Women's Council.

The event provided attendees with valuable perspectives on entrepreneurship, leadership, and the impact of women in business. HCCC is proud to celebrate the achievements of women like Trustee Gemma, who continue to inspire and empower future generations.

## HUDSON COUNTY COMMUNITY COLLEGE HOSTS INSPIRING WOMEN IN STEM DISCUSSION FEATURING DR. NADIA DOB

To honor Women's History Month, Hudson County Community College's (HCCC) School of Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) hosted a Women in STEM Discussion featuring distinguished alumna Dr. Nadia Dob. The event celebrated women's achievements in STEM and aimed to inspire the next generation—making Dr. Dob a perfect role model for the occasion.

The well-attended event, sponsored by Phi Theta Kappa Honor Society, the American Chemical Society, the President's Advisory Council on Institutional Engagement and Excellence, and Girls Who Code, welcomed 125 in-person and virtual attendees.

An HCCC alumna, Dr. Dob shared her remarkable journey from Algiers, Algeria, to earning her Doctor of Pharmacy degree from Rutgers University's Ernest Mario School of Pharmacy, and currently completing her residency at Virtua Health to becoming a clinical pharmacist.

Dr. Dob's path to success began when she enrolled in English as a Second Language (ESL) courses at HCCC after emigrating to the United States. Despite the challenges of learning English as her third language—after French and Arabic—her passion for science and dedication to education propelled her forward. She earned an associate degree in Biology from HCCC, laying the foundation for her transfer to Rutgers University. In May 2024, she reached a major milestone by attaining her Doctor of Pharmacy degree. According to Instructor Raffi Manjikian, who coordinated the event,

"It was inspirational for HCCC students to see one of their own come back to tell her story, discuss the challenges she overcame, and show them that they, too, can succeed in STEM careers."

Dr. Dob offered valuable advice to current HCCC students, emphasizing the importance of utilizing available resources, engaging in mentorship and leadership opportunities, and building relationships with professors. She highlighted the necessity of perseverance, stating that success in STEM requires sacrifices, but that the reward of a fulfilling career is worth it in the end.

Reflecting on her budding career, Dr. Dob expressed her passion for helping others, stating that, to her, the most rewarding aspects of being a pharmacist are when patients thank her and when she sees her patients get better.

Dr. Dob hopes to pursue a second year of residency with a focus on oncology. She is passionate about optimizing chemotherapy management and alleviating treatment side effects to ensure the highest standard of patient care.

Dr. Burl Yearwood, Dean of HCCC's School of STEM, emphasized the importance of inspiring more women to participate in STEM. He stated, "Encouraging and supporting



*Dr. Nadia Dob pictured with members of HCCC's faculty. Dr. Dob delivered an inspiring message to a full house at HCCC's Women in STEM Discussion.*

women in STEM is essential for fostering innovation, promoting equality, and driving progress in science and technology. Women bring unique perspectives and experiences that can lead to innovative solutions. Diversity in thought is crucial for tackling complex problems, developing unique solutions, and advancing knowledge. An often overlooked advantage is the economic impact. Increasing women's participation in STEM can boost economic growth. Women represent a significant portion of the talent pool, and their inclusion in STEM fields can help meet the growing demand for skilled workers."

HCCC President Dr. Chrsitopher Reber added, "Dr. Dob is an excellent role model for women pursuing STEM degrees and for all students. By showcasing inspiring role models like Dr. Nadia Dob at events such as the Women in STEM Discussion, HCCC reaffirms its commitment to empowering the next generation of students."



# Foundation Art Collection

The Hudson County Community College Foundation Art Collection of 2,000+ works is installed in the public areas of campus buildings. The entire College is an educational art museum. This Collection reveals aspects of America's and New Jersey's rich artistic and cultural history from the Hudson River School period to today. In recent years, the College's acquisition efforts have focused on strengthening its American and New Jersey modern and contemporary collections.

Each month, this page in *HCCC Happenings* provides updates on artists whose works are in the Collection, and new additions to the Collection.

## Donor Acknowledgment

Thank you to **Joan Snyder** for the donation of six wonderful photographic prints by Larry Fink, and for the donation of 31 art books and catalogs. Paintings and prints by Joan Snyder can be seen on the fifth and sixth floors of the Gabert Library at 71 Sip Avenue, and in the lounge of the Nursing program at 870 Bergen Avenue. A photographic work by **Larry Fink** can be seen on the 4th floor of the Gabert Library.

Thank you to Janet Rudolph for donating a book by **Sister Mary of the Compassion, OP**, "An Artist's Notebook." Many works by this local artist can be seen on the seventh floor of the North Hudson Campus.

## Artist News

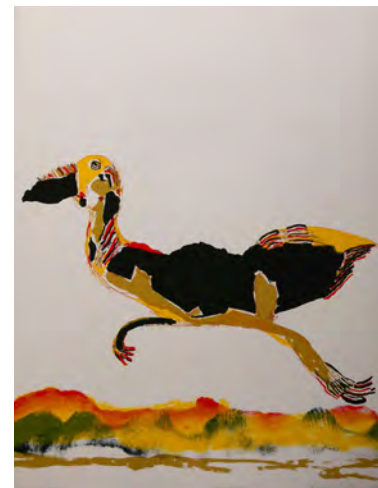
**Jaune Quick-To-See Smith's** work can be seen on the third floor of the Gabert library. Another print from our edition is now on view at Rutgers. Before her recent passing, the artist curated a show at the Zimmerli Art Museum at Rutgers University in New Brunswick. The exhibit is called, "Indigenous Identities: Here, Now & Always" and it will be on view through December 21, 2025. The show also includes work by 97 artists who represent over 74 Indigenous nations and communities across North America. Among them are **Terran Last Gun** and **Melanie Yazzie**, whose art also can be seen on the Gabert Library third floor. Quick-to-See Smith said, "Perhaps the preeminent issue in the Indian world is plain survival. Beyond that it means retaining our own cultures, governments, languages, religions, and ceremonies...I am telling stories about hope with humor. We wouldn't be here if we didn't have hope."

The exhibit "**Mickalene Thomas: All About Love**" can be seen at the Hayward Gallery in London through May 5, 2025. The artist says: "My gaze is the gaze of a Black woman unapologetically loving other Black women." Works by Thomas are in the collections of numerous

institutions including the Museum of Modern Art, New York; Whitney Museum of American Art, New York; Brooklyn Museum; Studio Museum of Harlem, New York; and Hudson County Community College Foundation. You can see two print works by the artist on the first floor of the Gabert Library. In this case, her gaze is turned upon her fabulous dachshund, Priscilla.

The recently published book, *A Handbook of Latinx Art*, edited by Rocío Aranda-Alvarado and Deborah Cullen-Morales, includes a chapter by artist Juan Sánchez: "The Puerto Rican Equation: Art as Plebiscite for Survival, Struggle, and Sovereignty" (1998). "This book is a curated selection of key texts and artists' voices exploring US Latinx art and art history from the 1960s to the present, [and] ... is the first anthology to explore the rich, deep, and often overlooked contributions that Latinx artists have made to art in the United States." You can see works by **Juan Sanchez** on the third floor of the Gabert Library.

We are disappointed we won't be able to see **Elizabeth Catlett's** work in the major exhibit called "Before The Americas" at the Art Museum of the Americas in Washington, DC, because the show of works by Afro-Latino, Caribbean, and African American artists had to be cancelled after the new Presidential administration labeled the exhibition as a "DEI program and event" and withdrew funding earmarked by the previous administration. The cancelled exhibit, curated by Cheryl D. Edwards, was four years in the making, and was slated to open on March 21. The curator told *Hyperallergic*, "This is an issue of silencing DEI visual voices ... and discrimination based upon race, caste, and class." Some who use the DEI acronym (short for Diversity, Equity and Inclusion), add a fourth element, Belonging. So, the acronym becomes DEIB. Educator Mac McGregor points out, "At its core, DEIB is about ensuring that all people—regardless of identity, background, or experience—have the



**Benny Andrews, Moving On (1980), Lithograph in Color, 30" x 22.5".** Thank you to Nancy Stein and Edward McDermott for the generous donation of this work.

opportunity to thrive. It's not about exclusion or replacement; it's about recognizing talent, valuing different perspectives, and removing systemic barriers that have historically favored some while disadvantaging others." The show was to include 40 works exploring migration, colonial challenges, and interconnectivity in the African diaspora in the Americas. These included works by Mexican-American sculptor Elizabeth Catlett, whose prints you can see here at HCCC on the first floor of 870 Bergen in the Nursing program, on the third floor of the Gabert Library, and on the fourth floor of 71 Sip Avenue in the Academic Affairs area.

At the American Alliance of Museums conference in Los Angeles in May, Elizabeth Merritt, the Vice President of Strategic Foresight and the Founding Director of Center for the Future of Museums will present a workshop on, "How to Face the Future, Cultivate Optimism, and Defy Dystopia" which will address "how we can use foresight to envision positive change, cultivate resilience, resist apathy, and identify plausible options in difficult times." She recommends the book: *Imaginable: How to See the Future Coming and Feel Ready for Anything, Even Things that Seem Impossible Today* (2021) by Dr. Jane McGonigal, which "draws on the latest scientific research in psychology and neuroscience" to "build our collective imagination so that we can dive into the future ... and access urgent optimism, an unstoppable force within each of us." Encouraging us to look at the big picture, what

*Continued on page 7*

**We welcome anecdotes and information about how the Foundation Art Collection benefits our community. If you have enjoyed using the Art Collection in your teaching, your studies, or your everyday life, please let us know! Contact [ASiegel@hccc.edu](mailto:ASiegel@hccc.edu) and tell us the story of how the Art Collection works for you.**

To make a monetary gift in support of the Foundation Art Collection, please contact Nicole Bouknight Johnson at (201) 360-4069 or [nicolebjohnson@hccc.edu](mailto:nicolebjohnson@hccc.edu).

To donate artwork, find detailed information here: [www.hccc.edu/community/arts/foundation-art-collection/index.html](http://www.hccc.edu/community/arts/foundation-art-collection/index.html).

Explore the Foundation Art Collection using our new online searchable tools! Go to [www.hccc.edu/community/arts/foundation-art-collection/category-collection-search.html](http://www.hccc.edu/community/arts/foundation-art-collection/category-collection-search.html).

## OFFICE OF CULTURAL AFFAIRS presents

### HUDSON COUNTY COMMUNITY COLLEGE CELEBRATES THE ARTS WITH JC FRIDAYS STUDENT POP-UP SHOW

Hudson County Community College (HCCC) proudly participated in the citywide JC Fridays arts festival by hosting a dynamic Student Pop-Up Show on Friday, March 7, at the Gabert Library Atrium. This exciting event showcased the creativity and talent of HCCC students, adding to the vibrant cultural scene in Jersey City.

JC Fridays, presented by Art House Productions, is a free arts festival held four times a year at the start of each season. It offers an opportunity for local artists, performers, and creatives to share their work with the community. If you missed the March event, be sure to mark your calendar for the next JC Fridays on June 6 and experience another round of inspiring artistic expression!

### Follow Us

For more information, email:

[mvitale@hccc.edu](mailto:mvitale@hccc.edu)

or visit

[www.hccc.edu/community/arts/doca-culture.html](http://www.hccc.edu/community/arts/doca-culture.html)

Facebook:

[www.facebook.com/dineenhullartgalleryhccc](https://www.facebook.com/dineenhullartgalleryhccc)

Instagram:

[www.instagram.com/dineenhullgallery](https://www.instagram.com/dineenhullgallery)

### HIP HOP TAKES CENTER STAGE AT NORTH HUDSON CAMPUS



The rhythm and energy of hip hop will come alive at Hudson County Community College's North Hudson Campus on Thursday, April 10, with a series of engaging events. The day kicks off at 9:30 a.m. with an inclusive dance workshop that explores the connections between hip hop, disabilities, mental health, and healing. Open to all abilities, this workshop is designed to promote self-expression and movement in a welcoming space.

Later in the morning, at 11:30 a.m., renowned artist Sherwin Banfield will lead an inspiring artist talk, providing insights into his creative process and the impact of hip hop culture on the arts. To top off the day, the Office of Student Life and Leadership will host a breakfast reception, offering attendees a chance to connect and reflect on the power of hip hop as a cultural and artistic movement.

Don't miss this exciting day of music, movement, and meaningful discussions—come be part of the celebration!

### FOUNDATION ART COLLECTION

*Continued from page 6*

we want to happen in the next 10 years, she offers exercises to give "our imagination space to expand, and enables us to envision change that may seem almost impossible over the short term." Likewise, Elizabeth's second suggestion: *The Good Ancestor: How to Think Long Term in a Short-Term World*, (2020) by Roman Krznaric, celebrates those he calls "time rebels" who are thinking ahead to explore how they can be good ancestors to future generations. He says the time rebels are "reinventing democracy, culture and economics so that we all have the chance to become good ancestors and create a better tomorrow." For a quick summary, you can watch his 2020 TED talk. (Forgive the lugubrious delivery and focus on his message.) *Roman Krznaric: How to be a good ancestor* | TED Talk [https://www.ted.com/talks/roman\\_krznaric\\_how\\_to\\_be\\_a\\_good\\_ancestor?language=en](https://www.ted.com/talks/roman_krznaric_how_to_be_a_good_ancestor?language=en) With these tools, we are thinking ahead about

our own HCCC Foundation Art Collection and other topics.

Three of **Benny Andrews'** prints are on the third floor of the Gabert Library. A recent exhibit of his work was called: *Benny Andrews: Trouble*. The title comes from Andrews's studio journal entries dated 1965–72. "Trouble," he says, "is an expression of being alive. To be in trouble is to embrace the struggle and vulnerability of the process." The exhibit was at the Ruth Foundation for the Arts in Milwaukee, Wisconsin. This exhibition title reminds us of the late Congressman John Lewis's idea of "good trouble." The Brookings Institute website details what Lewis meant by this. They start by quoting him, "Get in good trouble, necessary trouble, and redeem the soul of America." And then the site reminds us that "John Lewis made this statement on the Edmund Pettus

Bridge in Selma, Alabama on March 1, 2020 commemorating the tragic events of Bloody Sunday. Bloody Sunday occurred on March 7, 1965 as peaceful protesters were beaten by law enforcement officers for crossing the bridge" in a demonstration to bring attention to the fact that Black Americans overwhelmingly were denied the right to vote. "Lewis and others like Amelia Boynton Robinson were beaten so badly they were hospitalized." That brought Federal effort to support the protestors exercising their First Amendment right to protest, and to the Civil Rights movement. For more information, go to: [Five things John Lewis taught us about getting in "good trouble"] (<https://www.brookings.edu/articles/five-things-john-lewis-taught-us-about-getting-in-good-trouble/>)



## PHI THETA KAPPA HONOR SOCIETY NEWS



*Lidia Khayrulina was named a semifinalist of the Jack Kent Cooke Undergraduate Transfer Scholarship.*

### HCCC Student Lidia Khayrulina Named One of 467 Semifinalists for Undergraduate Transfer Scholarship

Congratulations to Lidia Khayrulina on being named by the Jack Kent Cooke Foundation as one of 467 community college students – and one of 21 from New Jersey – as a semifinalist for its highly competitive Cooke Undergraduate Transfer Scholarship. This transformative scholarship empowers exceptional community college students with financial need to transfer to the nation's top four-year institutions while avoiding the burden of student debt. The award, which is last dollar funding after all institutional aid, can provide as much as \$55,000 per year for two to three years to complete a bachelor's degree at any accredited four-year undergraduate institution in the U.S.



*Officers and members of Beta Alpha Phi traveled to Somerset, NJ for the Middle States Regional Convention.*

### Middle States Convention

Phi Theta Kappa's 38th Middle States Regional Convention – MSR Constellation: The Story of Our Stars – was held March 7-9 at the Double-Tree by Hilton Somerset Hotel and Conference Center in Somerset. Congratulations to Beta Alpha Phi Chapter for receiving the following awards:

- Five Star Chapter
- Middle States Region Star Chapter
- Sonam Dorji, Lidia Khayrulina, and Marolla Youakim were named to the New Jersey All-State Academic Team and were formally recognized by the Middle States Region.

## Phi Theta Kappa International Honor Society

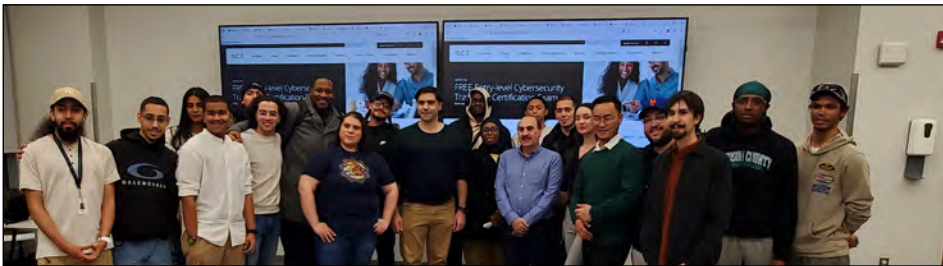
### Beta Alpha Phi Chapter Spring Induction Ceremony



**Sunday, April 27, 2025  
2:00 p.m.**

**Culinary Conference Center  
161 Newkirk Street  
Jersey City, NJ**

## CYBERSECURITY ALUMNI AND CURRENT STUDENTS GATHERING



*Alumni from HCCC's Cybersecurity Program returned in February to mentor current students, sharing insights and guidance for future success.*

In alignment with HCCC's deliverables for the \$600,000 NSF Grant (Award Number: 2400895) under the project "Empowering the Next Generation of Cybersecurity Professionals with a Focus on Women," HCCC hosted a mentoring and alumni gathering on February 25, 2025 fulfilling key goals and objectives of the grant.

### Purpose of the Event:

- Celebrate the achievements and success stories of our alumni, including women in cybersecurity.
- Strengthen connections between mentors and mentees through in-person engagement.
- Increase student participation in the mentoring program.

The event opened with a warm welcome from Professor Faisal Aljamal, followed by a recorded message from Dr. Burl Yearwood, Dean

of STEM. Professor Yanuz Gunner then shared key highlights of the mentorship program.

**Mentors in Attendance:** Notable alumni who returned as mentors included: Asma Daif Allah, Raida Al Hattab, Alexandra Velez.

**Alumni Spotlights:** Several alumni shared their experiences at HCCC and their current journeys in the cybersecurity field—whether in the workforce or pursuing master's degrees. These included: Nicolas Peccerelli, Stephen Cronin, and Sebastian Zapata Alena Liakhava. Additionally, the event introduced Atim Oton, the Alumni Relations Coordinator.

### Key Takeaways:

- Encouraged current students to join the mentoring program.
- Invited more alumni to participate as mentors.

- This event was a meaningful step in fostering a strong cybersecurity community at HCCC, with a special emphasis on empowering women in the field.

**Goal I** of the grant is to increase the percentage of women cybersecurity professionals in the Hudson County area. The goal is also to recruit, maintain, and graduate more women in the HCCC Cybersecurity Program.

**Goal II** is to better prepare students to be successful in the cybersecurity field. Proposed objectives and activities include a comprehensive approach to prepare students graduating in the cybersecurity field. By decreasing barriers to skill acquisition, providing hands-on experience, fostering student retention, and promoting workforce diversity, we aim to create a talent pool of cybersecurity professionals equipped to face the challenges of the ever-evolving digital landscape.

Among our many activities is creating a peer mentoring program and bringing alumni as guest speakers to speak to current students. More than 40 students, alumni, staff and faculty participated. Special thanks to Ronny Canales who took care of the planning and preparation for this event.



## CONFERENCE COVERAGE



### ▲ Achieving the Dream (ATD) DREAM Conference

Leaders from Hudson County Community College joined delegates from other Achieving the Dream institutions at DREAM 2025 in Philadelphia, PA (Feb. 18-21). ATD's annual flagship event, DREAM, convenes thousands of practitioners from hundreds of institutions to exchange evidence-based strategies for advancing student success and equity.



### ▲ Harvard National Model United Nations (HNMUN)

From Thursday, Feb. 20 to Sunday, Feb. 23, a delegation of students from Hudson County Community College attended the 71st Annual Session of the Harvard National Model United Nations at Harvard University in Cambridge, MA. Throughout the four-day simulation, delegates gained insight into the workings of the United Nations by actively participating in the resolution of important global issues.



### ▲ League of Innovation

*Pictured from left: Dr. Heather DeVries, Associate Vice President, Academic Affairs and Assessment; Lori Margolin, Associate Vice President, Continuing Education and Workforce Development; and Anita Belle, Assistant Vice President, Continuing Education & Workforce Development, presenting "Promoting Equitable Outcomes for Incarcerated and Reentry Students" at the League for Innovation in the Community College Innovations Conference in San Antonio, Texas. The College's Justice-Involved Undergraduate Success and Training Program received a 2023-2024 Innovation of the Year Award.*

### ◀ NASPA, Student Affairs Administrators in Higher Education

*Pictured from left: Joycelyn Wong-Castellano, Nicholas Mangal, Josh Mariscal and Dr. Christopher Conzen attending the NASPA Community College Institute (March 15-19) in New Orleans, LA.*



Are you experiencing stress, depression, or anxiety?

Difficulty adjusting to the College environment?

Dealing with mental health and wellness?

**Hudson County Community College**  
cares about you and  
wants to help.



Please complete the General Concern Form  
click here: <https://tinyurl.com/HCCC-Care>  
or scan the QR code.

The form is **NOT** monitored 24/7. A member of the CARE team will respond to your request during regular business hours.

If you need immediate help call  
or text 988 or visit  
<https://988lifeline.org>



Join us for Spring 2025  
**OPEN HOUSE**

**SATURDAY,  
APRIL 26**

**10 a.m - 1 p.m.**

**North Hudson Campus**

4800 Kennedy Blvd.,

Union City, NJ

### Join us to:

- Receive a tour of our campus
- Complete an Admissions application
- Engage with different academic programs
- Speak with students, faculty, and staff
- Meet with Financial Aid and find out if you are eligible for free tuition



**Registration is required!**

Scan the QR code or go to

[www.hccc.edu/openhouse](http://www.hccc.edu/openhouse) to register!



## PIZZA WITH THE PRESIDENT



President Dr. Christopher Reber joined HCCC students for a lively discussion over pizza at the Student Center in March.

## ASTRONOMY CLASS GOES TO PLANETARIUM AT THE LIBERTY SCIENCE CENTER



Spring 2025 Introduction to Astronomy students visited Liberty Science Center's Jennifer Chalsty Planetarium, the largest planetarium in the United States.

On March 12, 2025, HCCC's inaugural Introduction to Astronomy class blasted off on an unforgettable tour of the Liberty Science Center's Jennifer Chalsty Planetarium in Jersey City, New Jersey. Accompanied by Instructor Raffi Manjikian, the 24 students enjoyed visiting the largest and most advanced planetarium in the United States. They embarked on a trip that took them deep into space: to infinity and beyond. Their excursion included awe-inspiring stops through the magnificent rings of Saturn and a captivating exploration of distant galaxies, culminating in a breathtaking view of the edge of the known universe.

The experience left the students with a sense of wonder and appreciation for the vastness of space, making it a truly educational and enriching adventure. In addition to their journey through the stars, the students observed the Science on a Sphere exhibit, located just outside of the Planetarium. This six-foot spherical globe provides a stunning visualization of high-resolution images and animations of Earth, the moon, planets, and the sun, immersing visitors in dynamic and vibrant depictions of our planet and the cosmos. The visit to the Liberty Science Center offered students a unique and hands-on opportunity to engage with space science in a way that deepened their understanding and sparked their curiosity about the universe.

**Hudson County Community College**  
invites you to enjoy the newest  
segment of our video series,  
**Hudson Headliners!**

### HUDSON HEADLINERS!

Now Featuring

#### Construction Management

The Hudson County Community College Center for Construction Management offers nationally recognized and industry-recognized degree and certificate studies to meet the specific career goals of recent high school graduates, seasoned construction workers, and those transitioning into the industry.

In our newest episode of "Hudson Headliners," you'll learn about our Construction Management academic offerings as well as networking and internship opportunities.

Tune into –

<https://www.hccc.edu/news-media/headliners/index.html>

**Watch for news about the next Hudson Headliners!**

### New Host Venue for 2025!

The Hudson County Community College Foundation is excited to announce that the **23rd Annual Golf Outing** will take place at the Brooklake Country Club on Monday, June 23.

Set upon 150 beautiful acres, Brooklake's championship, USGA rated course offers a traditional, challenging course with undulating greens.

**Brooklake Country Club**  
Florham Park, NJ  
Monday, June 23  
10:00 a.m. Shotgun Start



Any questions,  
please contact:  
[foundation@hccc.edu](mailto:foundation@hccc.edu)





## AMERICAN CHEMICAL SOCIETY BLUE RIBBON PANEL: 2YC RECOGNITION



The American Chemical Society (ACS) gathered a distinguished group of two-year community college Chemistry professors from across the nation in Washington D.C. for an important blue-ribbon panel discussion on the role of associate degrees in Chemistry education. Among those selected to participate was HCCC's ACS advisor, Instructor Raffi Manjikian, who was honored to contribute his expertise to the panel. The panel focused on developing standards, criteria, and guidelines for future recognition and accreditation of

Chemistry associate degree (A.S.) programs. Throughout the sessions, the panel discussed curriculum and student skills, student support services, program evaluation, partnerships, experiential learning, and professional success. The establishment of these standards is a step forward in elevating the quality of community college Chemistry programs, ensuring that students across the country are well-prepared for their academic and professional futures in the field of Chemistry.

## HCCC HONORS FALL 2024 DEAN'S LIST ACHIEVERS



*Hudson County Community College honored its Fall 2024 Dean's List students at a celebratory reception on March 13.*

Hudson County Community College (HCCC) proudly announces that 884 students earned a spot on the Dean's List for Fall 2024, recognizing their outstanding academic achievements. This honor is awarded to full-time students completing at least 12 college-level credits with a semester GPA of 3.5 or higher and part-time students meeting the same criteria within a calendar year. ESL courses are excluded, and an F grade disqualifies eligibility.

Dean's List recipients come from all HCCC schools, including Business, Culinary Arts, Humanities, Nursing and Health Sciences,

STEM, and Social Sciences. To celebrate their dedication, a special reception was held on Thursday, March 13, where deans commended students for their perseverance.

Dr. Darryl Jones, Vice President for Academic Affairs, encouraged students to keep pushing forward, saying, "If this is your first Dean's List, don't let it be your last." HCCC President Dr. Christopher Reber praised their hard work, stating, "Your achievements reflect persistence and excellence, inspiring us all." Congratulations to all honorees for their dedication to academic success!

Get  
**Connect-ED**  
with HCCC!



**Hudson County Community College has implemented Connect-ED, a text- and voice-messaging emergency-alert system in the event of a crisis or emergency that poses an immediate and life-threatening danger to the College community.**

### Free and Confidential

HCCC provides this emergency service free of charge to students and employees – there is no charge to sign up. However, mobile service providers may charge a fee for incoming messages depending on an individual's plan.

Personal information entered into the Connect-ED system will be kept confidential and will not be used for any other purpose.

*Stay informed  
and get  
Connect-ED today!*



SCAN QR FOR DETAILS

**Please join HCCC President  
Dr. Chris Reber for a**

**HCCC TOWN HALL**

**Monday, April 7  
at 12 p.m.**

*Lunch will be served.*

### In-person at:

North Hudson Campus  
4800 Kennedy Blvd., Multi-purpose Room  
Union City, NJ

**Virtual at:** <https://tinyurl.com/TH-APRIL2025>



*Learn about important updates  
and have your questions  
answered in real time.*

## HCCC ALUM COMES HOME



**H**CCC Culinary Arts students had a special visit on Friday, March 14! HCCC alum Eduardo Salazar (Hospitality Management – Hotel and Restaurant Management, Class of 2012) returned to share his journey—from student to successful restaurant owner. His inspiring story and industry insights made for an unforgettable experience!

*HCCC alum Eduardo Salazar (right), Hospitality Management shared memories during his time at the College and his experiences in successfully owning and operating a restaurant.*

## CULINARY ARTS INSTITUTE HOSTS ALUMNAE PANEL

**O**n March 25, 2025, three alumnae of the HCCC Culinary Arts Institute (CAI) participated in a panel regarding their experiences at the university level. Deborah Bradley, AAS Culinary Arts-Baking and Pastry Option Alumna of 2019, spoke of her experiences as a student at Montclair State University. Layla Soto, AAS Culinary Arts-Baking and Pastry Option Alumna of 2022, spoke of her studies at Fairleigh Dickinson University (FDU). Deliah Torres, AAS Culinary Arts Alumna of 2019, discussed her experiences of leaving New Jersey to study at Johnson & Wales University. Emma Dooley, AAS Culinary Arts Baking and Pastry Alumna Class of 2021 and graduate of FDU, was also in attendance. Diana Sanchez, Career and Transfer Coach from HCCC's Career and Transfer Pathways, discussed her department's offerings regarding the process of transferring to a university.

This panel was organized and moderated by Table Service Faculty of the CAI, Ms. Marissa Lontoc. All three alumnae expressed their gratitude for the rigorous studies and preparations they experienced #HereAtTheCAI. They served as reminders that current students can take advantage of the transferability of their degree from HCCC to the university level.



## HCCC Student Golf Clinic

### ***HCCC students: learn how to play golf!***

Lessons are at Skyway Golf Course in Jersey City and transportation to and from HCCC is provided for all participants.

All classes will take place from 2 p.m. - 3 p.m. on the following days:

Wednesday, May 28  
Thursday, May 29  
Wednesday, June 4  
Wednesday, June 11  
Wednesday, June 18

*Interested golfers must attend all classes listed above as well as HCCC's Golf Outing on Monday, June 23 at the Brooklake Country Club.*

*\* Only 15 slots available*



**SCAN to REGISTER:**

<https://www.hccc.edu/community/foundation/events/golf-outing.html>

**ANY QUESTIONS?**

Please contact [tstokes@hccc.edu](mailto:tstokes@hccc.edu).





## HUDSON COUNTY COMMUNITY COLLEGE ROLLS OUT THE WELCOME MAT FOR LOCAL HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS



On Thursday, March 20, students from Hudson Catholic High School in Jersey City visited HCCC for an on-campus pep rally and college tour. Recently, students from other Jersey City high schools, including University Academy Charter High School, also visited HCCC for similar events.



## 2025 COMMENCEMENT

Wednesday, May 21, 2025

at 10 a.m.

Sports Illustrated Stadium  
600 Cape May Street,  
Harrison, NJ 07029



## PROFESSIONAL NOTES



This past December, **Jani Decena-White**, Assistant Professor of Humanities and Speech, had the honor of serving as producer for the Broadway play *When My Soul Speaks*. Created by the renowned Lisa Nichols — one of the most sought-after motivational speakers in the world—the production was a powerful testament to the impact of storytelling and personal expression.

For Decena-White, this experience was more than just a professional milestone; it was a perfect extension of her lifelong commitment to helping individuals develop confidence, presence, and leadership through the power of their voices. Her work on *When My Soul Speaks* exemplifies her passion for empowering others and highlights the incredible influence of the spoken word.

“Participating in the La Hermandad (Hispanic Heritage Special Edition) panel last fall was a powerful reminder of how much talent exists within our faculty and staff,” she says. “Meeting my fellow panelists, brilliant women in leadership roles, and engaging in conversations about leadership, identity, and professional growth reinforced my belief that Hudson County Community College is moving in the right direction by empowering more voices - voices that deserve to be heard and elevated yet are sometimes hidden due to situations we can better address.”

## Virtual Professional Development Day

INNOVATE  
INSPIRE  
IMPACT

TUESDAY

4.29.25

10 a.m. to 3 p.m.



Scan QR to access  
General Meeting

Focus on fostering creativity and innovation in teaching, learning, and leadership. Encourage faculty and staff to be inspired by new ideas and explore ways to have a lasting impact on students and the campus community.

*Watch your email for  
updates on speakers!*

## CONTINUING EDUCATION & WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT NEWS

### CEWD Solar Installation Training Program

Hudson County Community College, in partnership with Dimension Energy and Solar One, offers a Solar Installation Training Program providing 15 students with a valuable opportunity in the renewable energy sector. Since March 17, participants have actively engaged in OSHA 30 training, construction fundamentals, and job readiness preparation. In the second week, students gained hands-on experience in solar installation and exposure to other career paths. Upon completing the program on April 7, participants will be equipped to pursue employment.

### Gateway to Innovation: Empowering Students for Career Success

The Gateway to Innovation (GTI) program at Hudson County Community College bridges the gap between education and industry by delivering career-focused training, professional development, and experiential learning. GTI equips students with in-demand skills, industry credentials, and professional connections to thrive in today's workforce.

This spring, GTI will introduce new initiatives to enhance career readiness. On April 3, GTI will host a LinkedIn 101 Workshop to help students build professional profiles and expand their networks. Beginning April

1, a new Money Mentorship partnership with M&T Bank will provide financial literacy training, including topics such as banking basics, budgeting, home ownership, and credit scores. GTI is also expanding its certification programs, offering industry-recognized credentials such as CompTIA A+, CompTIA Data+, and the Associate Professional in Human Resources (aPHR) certification from HRCI (HR Certification Institute®).

GTI continues to grow, offering students the tools and resources needed to succeed in high-demand industries. Additional updates and upcoming events will be announced soon.

### New Jersey Film Academy at Hudson County Community College

The New Jersey Film Academy at Hudson County Community College empowers aspiring filmmakers and television professionals through immersive, career-oriented educational programs. Designed to prepare students for entry-level positions in the film and television industry, the academy blends technical training with industry insight to support creative and professional development.

Participants gain foundational knowledge, practical skills, and valuable networking opportunities within the world of film and television. The curriculum covers essential aspects of the industry and prepares students for success in a fast-paced, competitive

environment. The program transforms passion for visual storytelling into tangible career opportunities.

For more information about the New Jersey Film Academy, contact Karina Arango at (201) 360-5463 or [HCCCFilmAcademy@hccc.edu](mailto:HCCCFilmAcademy@hccc.edu).

## CONTINUING EDUCATION Upcoming Programs

### BASIC FRENCH LEVEL 1 (ONLINE)

Wednesdays | April 9, 2025, through May 7, 2025

6:00 p.m. - 8:00 p.m. | Price: \$125

Instructor: Georgette Batubenge

<https://www.eventbrite.com/e/basic-french-level-i-online-course-registration-1081078818849?aff=oddttdtcreator>

### WELCOME TO COMPUTER BASICS (IN-PERSON)

Saturdays (7 Sessions) | April 12, 2025, through May 31, 2025

9:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m. | Price: \$150

Instructor: Corazon Lacsamana

<https://www.eventbrite.com/e/welcome-to-computer-basics-spring-2025-registration-1225137712879?aff=oddttdtcreator>

### BASIC LIFE SUPPORT (IN-PERSON)

Friday, April 25, 2025 | 9:30 a.m. - 2:00 p.m. | Price: \$77

<https://www.eventbrite.com/e/basic-life-support-bls-certification-spring-2025-dates-tickets-1256827738599?aff=oddttdtcreator>

### ATI TEAS TEST PREPARATION WORKSHOP SPRING 2025 (ONLINE)

All Portions of Test Prep

Date: Saturdays, April 26 - June 28, 2025

9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. | Price: \$289

<https://www.eventbrite.com/e/ati-teas-test-preparation-workshop-spring-2025-online-tickets-1256827447729?aff=oddttdtcreator>

### English/Language Usage & Reading Prep Only

Date: Saturdays, April 26 - May 24, 2025

9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. | Price: \$143

<https://www.eventbrite.com/e/ati-teas-test-preparation-workshop-spring-2025-online-tickets-1256827447729?aff=oddttdtcreator>

### Science/Math Prep Only

Date: Saturdays, May 31 - June 28, 2025

9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. | Price: \$143

<https://www.eventbrite.com/e/ati-teas-test-preparation-workshop-spring-2025-online-tickets-1256827447729?aff=oddttdtcreator>

### FOR MORE INFORMATION, CONTACT:

School of Continuing Education and Workforce Development  
161 Newkirk Street, Room E504, Jersey City, NJ 07306  
(201) 360-4224 | [CE@hccc.edu](mailto:CE@hccc.edu)

HCCC Department of Continuing Education

## SUMMER YOUTH & TEEN PROGRAMS

July 7 – August 22

Ages 9 - 15

Choose from any of our  
Culinary Arts programs,  
SAT Test Prep classes, CPR,  
and Photography offerings.

Both middle school and high school students experience a variety of engaging and enriching programs at **Continuing Education's Summer Youth & Teen Programs**.

Our unique one- and two-week, hands-on programs are offered in partnership with the College's Culinary Arts Institute. Programs emphasize self-discovery, cognitive reasoning, and cooperative thinking using a hands-on approach.

All Summer Youth Programs take place on our main campus at Journal Square.



DIGITAL PHOTOGRAPHY



CPR & FIRST AID FOR TEENS



SAT PREP  
Math Prep/Language Arts Prep



CULINARY PROGRAM



TO REGISTER:

<https://tinyurl.com/SUMMERatHCCC>

QUESTIONS?

Contact (201) 360-4224  
or Carmen Guerra at [cguerra@hccc.edu](mailto:cguerra@hccc.edu)



## ALUMNI CORNER

### Darius Gilmore

A.A. General Liberal Arts, HCCC Class of 2018

Darius is an art curator, musician, and aspiring writer. After his time at HCCC, he graduated from NJCU with a degree in music business.



#### What led you to attend HCCC?

Cost control. Attending a two-year college was a bit more affordable than attending a four-year college. I was accepted into quite a few four-year colleges but HCCC was more cost-effective and it was local so it was easy to get to by bus. I went to Snyder High School and knew people who were attending so there were some familiar faces here.

#### Where did you go after HCCC?

After graduating from HCCC, I went to NJCU for all of the same reasons – affordability and location. It's right by my house. I majored in music business, which is a hybrid between regular music classes and business classes so that you can learn the ins and outs of the music industry.

#### How did you become interested in pursuing music?

I became interested in music in high school. I was in the media arts program at Snyder. One of my teachers, Mr. Diaz, put me on to a lot of good music. From there I thought 'this is something I really want to do.' It even inspired me to pick up an instrument. I eventually saved up my money to buy my first bass guitar, a Kramer, at a pawn shop. I've kept it to this day despite the fact that I have three bass guitars now.

#### What kind of music are you interested in?

I have an eclectic ear. I'm willing to listen to anything, even something obscure. I'm open-minded. I try not to judge music anymore. I try to appreciate everything. I like music that enlightens me even if it's a bit odd – I listen to polka, I've even warmed up to country. I play a lot of hardcore and punk rock, and even some thrash. I write the music myself and with my bandmates in my band, Mindless Generation. We had our first concert of the year in January. In a few weeks I'll be traveling to Philadelphia to record a live studio session with the band.

#### How did you learn how to play bass?

Just by picking up my first bass – I didn't know anything about it. I went with the James Brown philosophy of music – if it sounds good, play it! I got a big reality check when I auditioned for the music business program at NJCU. The program director said I sounded bad and my instrument was out of tune. They worked with me, and I started with the business classes first. I passed those and then enrolled in a music

class the following semester. I took a pop and R&B class and a former student spent a lot of time teaching me how to play – I learned a lot from him and if it wasn't for him, I probably wouldn't be where I am now.

At the same time, I also learned to read music. At first, you're just picking up an instrument, you're excited to play, and you don't really know how much you don't know. It takes a lot of perseverance and time.

#### Tell us about your involvement with the HCCC Foundation Art Collection.

We have over 2,000 works and we've been building it up for years. I've done a lot of the work to give the Collection an online presence, like adding captions and descriptions to the artwork on the website. Our Collection archive is the first thing that comes up when you Google many of the artists.

During my time working for the Foundation Art Collection, I've enjoyed learning more about art in general, appraising, and sourcing art. I had the honor and privilege of curating a whole floor of the North Hudson Campus. We received many photographs from artists for the Museum Project, (a philanthropic initiative to donate pieces from notable American photographers as a way of expressing gratitude towards museums that support the photographic art form) and I had the opportunity to select which ones we wanted donated to us.

#### What's your vision for yourself in the near-term future?

I want to keep going with my band. I'm also in the middle of writing my own manga (a Japanese-style graphic novel), and I'm working with an illustrator I hired. Right now, I'm in the midst of my hopes and dreams with the band and the manga.

#### What advice would you give to current HCCC students?

Calm down, relax, and remember that patience is everything.

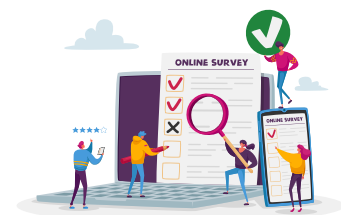
I know that the music field is very crowded, so it's up to you to stand out in the most meaningful way possible to you. Put yourself out there.

## Alumni Events

Events at the College for Alumni to Attend

Tuesday, April 8, 5 p.m. - 6 p.m.

Meeting of the Hudson County Community College Board of Trustees,  
70 Sip Avenue, Mary T. Norton Room,  
or virtually; join at Zoom Passcode: 980112



## Alumni Survey:

As we kick off HCCC's 50th Anniversary celebration, we want to hear from you! Share your experiences and insights by completing our survey today: [https://hccc.co1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV\\_77111q1ENrf4heu](https://hccc.co1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_77111q1ENrf4heu). **Your voice matters, and we appreciate your input!**

## What's New?

**Updated Alumni Web Pages:** We're thrilled to share that the Alumni section of HCCC's website has been significantly enhanced! You'll find new features, including alumni spotlights, an expanded events calendar, and direct links to our Alumni LinkedIn group and HCCC merchandise. Explore the updates and stay connected—visit the pages here: <https://www.hccc.edu/community/alumni-services/index.html>

**50th Anniversary:** Beginning August 2025 through September 2026, we will celebrate the 50th Anniversary of Hudson County Community College. This year-long celebration will include Homecoming, an Alumni Reunion, and Networking events. If you are interested in participating, please update your email with us at [alumni@hccc.edu](mailto:alumni@hccc.edu)

**Alumni Association Meeting:** Join us for the next meeting on May 6, 2025, from 5:30 p.m. to 7 p.m. The Rise and Voices of Alumni is on May 8, 2025, from 6:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. In-person alumni meetings take place at the HCCC Student Center on 81 Sip Avenue, Jersey City. You can attend virtually at: <https://hudsonccc.webex.com/meet/alumni> Password: 28707199608  
**We look forward to seeing you there!**

*Continued on page 16*

## Hudson County Community College Board of Trustees

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## JOURNAL SQUARE CAMPUS

70 Sip Avenue  
 Jersey City, NJ 07306  
 Phone (201) 714-7100

## NORTH HUDSON CAMPUS

4800 Kennedy Boulevard  
 Union City, NJ 07087  
 Phone (201) 360-4600

## SECAUCUS CENTER

Located at the Frank J. Gargiulo Campus of the  
 Hudson County Schools of Technology  
 One High Tech Way  
 Secaucus, NJ 07094  
 Phone (201) 360-4388

## FOLLOW US ON:



[myhudson.hccc.edu](http://myhudson.hccc.edu)

[www.hccc.edu](http://www.hccc.edu)

# ALUMNI CORNER

*Continued from page 15*

**Alumni Benefits:** HCCC offers a range of services to support Alumni including computer lab and library access and participation in Student Life programs. With an Alumni Card, you can take advantage of these exclusive benefits and stay connected to the HCCC community! Details here: <https://www.hccc.edu/community/alumni-services/index.html>

**Alumni Giving:** HCCC offers meaningful ways for alumni to give back and support the college and its students. You can sponsor events, students, or classes, or make an annual contribution at a level that works for you. Every gift, no matter the size, makes a difference. Giving is easy—visit <https://www.hccc.edu/community/foundation/index.html#ways-to-give> to make your impact today!

## Alumni Workplace Facts

Here are the top five organizations that hire most of our Alumni:

This month, we feature the top five organizations that hire most of our Alumni.

- Hudson County Community College
- Amazon
- United States Postal Service
- Walmart
- City of Jersey City

*Alumni Relations and Services compile this information from LinkedIn data.*

## Alumni Stats

Most of our Alumni transfer to these five colleges to complete a four-year degree:

- New Jersey City University (NJCU)
- Rutgers University
- St. Peter's University
- New Jersey Institute of Technology (NJIT)
- Montclair State University

*Each month, Alumni Relations and Services will share alumni statistics based on data from HCCC's Institutional Research and Planning.*

## Alumni Success

Here is what some of our alumni are doing after leaving Hudson County Community College.

- Michael McCarthy, General Manager, Addison Reserve County Club in Palm Beach
- Amaka Amakwe, D.M.D., M.D., Oral Surgeon at Bowling Green and Wauseon in Ohio
- Khushbu Janani, Doctor of Osteopathic Medicine (DO), Hartford Medical Group
- Aishia Martinez, Senior Training Center Manager at Paris Baguette, finalist on the Food Network's *Holiday Baking Championship*

# HCCC Alumni: Get Involved!

*Did you enjoy your experience at HCCC? Are you willing to contribute time? Do you want to inspire others with your success stories? Are you looking for career support?*

**If so join, socialize, and network!**

For information about the College's Alumni Association and membership benefits, please email [alumni@hccc.edu](mailto:alumni@hccc.edu).

**Invest in the education  
of an HCCC student by  
making your gift of any  
amount today.**



## COLLEGE EVENTS CALENDAR

For the most up-to-date information, please visit <https://www.hccc.edu/calendar>.

Hudson County Community College reserves the right to modify the calendar as necessary.

