

HCCC Happenings

A publication of the Communications Department



HUDSON COUNTY COMMUNITY COLLEGE ANNOUNCES APPOINTMENT OF INTERIM PRESIDENT



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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 August newsletter are due by Friday, July 10, 2026

Please send your news items, comments and suggestions to:

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communications@hccc.edu

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HUDSON COUNTY COMMUNITY COLLEGE ANNOUNCES APPOINTMENT OF INTERIM PRESIDENT

Hudson County Community College (HCCC) Board of Trustees Chair Jeanette Peña announced that Dr. Lisa Dougherty, HCCC Senior Vice President for Student Affairs and Enrollment, was appointed Interim President at the Board's June 9, 2026 meeting. She will lead the College while the Board conducts a national search for HCCC's next President.

Dr. Dougherty succeeds Dr. Christopher Reber, who resigned in April to become President of Harrisburg University of Science and Technology in Pennsylvania.

"It is our pleasure to appoint Dr. Dougherty to this position," said Chair Peña. "During her decade at HCCC, she has remained focused on student success and strengthening the support services our students rely on. As a first-generation college student herself, she understands the challenges many students face and has worked tirelessly to help them achieve their educational goals."

"We are delighted to welcome Dr. Dougherty into this role as we enter a time of transition at the College," said Hudson County Executive Craig Guy. "With the support of my Administration, the Board of Trustees, the Unions, and faculty, we know she will continue to ensure that HCCC students have access to the opportunities and support they have come to expect."

Dr. Dougherty joined HCCC in 2016 as Dean of Enrollment and was promoted to Senior Vice President for Student Affairs and Enrollment in 2019. She has partnered across the College



and throughout the community to develop and expand transformative student support initiatives, including the Hudson Helps Resource Center, Hudson Scholars, the Mental Health Counseling and Wellness Center, and Generation Hope's FamilyU program for student parents.

Before joining HCCC, Dr. Dougherty held leadership positions with Ross University School of Medicine and Veterinary Medicine, DeVry University, and Keller Graduate School of Management. She earned a Doctor of Education in Educational Leadership from Rowan University, a Master of Human Resources Management from Keller Graduate School of Management, and a Bachelor of Business Administration from Loyola University Maryland. A 2019–2020 Aspen Rising Presidents Fellow, she received Phi Theta Kappa's Distinguished College Administrator Award this spring and received the New Jersey Council of County Colleges' 2026 Dr. Lawrence A. Nespoli Leadership Award on June 10.

ON THE COVER: *Dr. Lisa Dougherty (third from left) was appointed Interim President of the College on June 9. She is pictured with, from left, Trustee Dr. Frances Teabout; Board Chair Jeanette Peña; Board Vice Chair Edward DeFazio; Board Secretary/Treasurer Stacy Gemma; Trustee Roberta Kenny; and Trustee Lissa Santiago.*



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.

HUDSON COUNTY COMMUNITY COLLEGE NEW BASKETBALL TEAMS TO BEGIN COMPETITION THIS FALL

Hudson County Community College (HCCC) will launch a new chapter in its 50-year history this fall with the introduction of men's and women's basketball as part of a new intercollegiate athletics program. The College will compete in the National Junior College Athletic Association (NJCAA) Region 15 Division III, which includes community colleges from New York, Long Island, and New Jersey. HCCC plans to add men's and women's volleyball in Fall 2027, with additional varsity sports to follow in the coming years.

HCCC was officially welcomed into the NJCAA during the Association's April 2026 Convention in Kansas City, following a comprehensive membership review process.

"Membership in the NJCAA and the inauguration of our athletics program is

a dream come true," said former HCCC President Dr. Christopher Reber. "This is a giant step forward for the College, one the entire community will enjoy and benefit from."

"The NJCAA is excited to welcome Hudson County Community College to our membership," said NJCAA Vice President for Championships, Membership, and Sports Governance Dr. Brett Monaghan. "It was clear throughout the membership process that HCCC is committed to supporting collegiate athletics, and we look forward to helping the College build opportunities for its student-athletes."

The athletics program will be headquartered in HCCC's new Center for Student Success, a 153,186-square-foot facility currently under construction on the Journal Square Campus and scheduled to open this fall. The building will include a



HCCC Athletic Director Jonathan Sisk (right) was welcomed by NJCAA Vice President of Championship, Membership, and Sports Governance Dr. Brett Monaghan. HCCC will hold men's and women's basketball games beginning this fall.

full-size NCAA gymnasium, fitness center, walking track, athletic training facility, classrooms, student services, health science labs, and other academic and community spaces. Until construction is

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NEWS FROM HUDSON COUNTY EXECUTIVE CRAIG GUY

Hudson County Executive Craig Guy Announces Over \$12 Million in Parks and Green Space Upgrades Through 2026 Open Space Trust Fund Recommendations

It's summertime once again, and that means families will take advantage of the warm weather by exploring parks and recreation areas throughout Hudson County. And Hudson County Executive Craig Guy is committed to investing in these green spaces.

On June 8, County Executive Guy announced the 2026 Hudson County Open Space, Recreation, and Historic Preservation Trust Fund award recommendations, proposing more than \$12.4 million in funding for projects that will create and improve parks, recreational facilities, and historic sites throughout Hudson County.

The 2026 Open Space Trust Fund award recommendations will be voted on for approval by the Hudson County Board of Commissioners later this year. The recommendations include 19 projects across Hudson County municipalities. Recommended funding includes two brand-new park developments, improvements to 13 parks, two recreation facilities, one land

acquisition, and one historic preservation project.

"The Hudson County Open Space, Recreation, and Historic Preservation Trust Fund represents the County's commitment to improving quality of life in every municipality we serve," said Craig Guy, Hudson County Executive. "Even during challenging times, investing in parks, recreation, and open space remains essential. These projects create safe places for children to play, families to gather, and residents to enjoy the outdoors while strengthening the communities they call home."

Additional recommended projects for 2026 include new athletic fields, upgraded playgrounds, recreation facility improvements, and historic preservation initiatives throughout Hudson County.

Since its inception, the Open Space Trust Fund has awarded approximately \$125 million for projects throughout Hudson County, helping municipalities create

new parks, upgrade playgrounds and recreational facilities,

preserve historic sites, and expand access to open space for residents.

Parks and recreation improvement projects included in the recommendations:

- City of Bayonne - Improvements to W. 24th Street Playground
- Borough of East Newark - Veterans Playground & Water Park
- Town of Guttenberg - Veteran's Park Improvement Project
- Town of Harrison - William Street Public Park Project
- City of Hoboken - Church Square Park Phase II
- City of Hoboken - Stevens Park Improvement Project
- City of Jersey City - LaPointe Park Improvements
- City of Jersey City - Leonard Gordon Park Improvements Phase II



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MILESTONES

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

FULL-TIME EMPLOYEES

One Year

Aires Gomes
Zachary Forrest
Mariam Amer
Melanie Lopez
Harshkumar Patel
Josefa Flores
Samantha Ramirez

Five Years

Nicholas Mangal
Katherine Morales

10 Years

Veronica Gerosimo
Priscilla Ochoa

PART-TIME EMPLOYEES

One Year

Anuvhuti Bisht
Dale Chandler
Kaysan Deodat
Aaron Garcia
Nour El Houda Hadjimi
Angela Lopez-Siguenza
Yadhira Moranchel
Javier Paz
Jennifer Perez
Emmanuel Rodriguez
Bryan Rondon
Samuel Said

Five Years

Anthony Jenkins
Djadjji Sylla-Samassa

10 Years

Asia Abazeid



Hudson is Home!

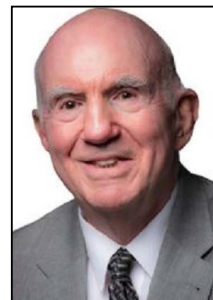
**For Recruitment and
Job Opportunities visit:**
<https://schooljobs.com/careers/hccc>

IN MEMORIAM: TRUSTEE FRANK J. GARGIULO

The Hudson County Community College community mourns the passing of Trustee Frank J. Gargiulo, who joined the College's Board of Trustees in April 2022. A lifelong educator and public servant, Frank served as Superintendent of the Hudson County Schools of Technology for nearly 30 years, as a North Bergen Township Commissioner for 38 years, and as a member of the New Jersey General Assembly.

Trustee Gargiulo brought invaluable experience, leadership, and dedication

to student success to the HCCC Board of Trustees. We extend our deepest condolences to his family, friends, and colleagues. His legacy of service to education and the people of Hudson County will be remembered with gratitude and respect.



EMPLOYEE PERKS

National Institute for Staff and Organizational Development

<https://www.nisod.org>

Did you know our EAP assists with Disaster Preparedness?

Employee Assistance Program

<https://eap.ndbh.com>

(company code: HCCC)

Did you know EAP assists with Family & Lifestyle? Healthy body, healthy mind

<https://eap.lucethhealth.com/topic/family-lifestyle/physical-health/>

Working Advantage

<https://hccc.savings.workingadvantage.com/home>



THE HUDSON IS HOME WELLNESS SPOTLIGHT

Skin Smart, Water Ready: Healthy Habits for Sun, Sand, and Summer Fun

July brings long days, bright sun, and plenty of opportunities to enjoy the outdoors making it the perfect moment to focus on simple habits that keep your skin protected and your body safe all season long. Whether you're heading to the beach, relaxing by the pool, or spending time in the backyard, summer wellness starts with awareness: understanding how the sun affects your skin, staying hydrated, and preparing for safe fun in and around the water.

This month, we encourage everyone to be intentional about sun protection and summer safety. That might mean applying (and reapplying) sunscreen, choosing UV-protective clothing, drinking more water, or brushing up on water-safety basics. Small, consistent choices help prevent sunburn, dehydration, and long-term skin damage and they make

summer activities more enjoyable for everyone.

Throughout July, let's embrace the season with confidence by staying informed, staying protected, and making smart choices that support healthy skin and safe summer adventures.

Sun Safety Facts

<https://www.cdc.gov/skin-cancer/sun-safety/index.html>

Summer Swim Safety

<https://www.cdc.gov/drowning/prevention/summer-swim-safety.html>

Practice Safe Sun

<https://www.aad.org/public/everyday-care/sun-protection/shade-clothing-sunscreen/practice-safe-sun>

THANK YOU, DR. REBER: CELEBRATING A LEGACY OF LEADERSHIP



Dr. Christopher Reber (right) celebrates with family members during his farewell reception on June 18. The event brought together colleagues, friends, and loved ones to honor his leadership and lasting impact on Hudson County Community College.



Dr. Christopher Reber (center) poses with members of the College's leadership team, including Interim President Dr. Lisa Dougherty, during his farewell reception. The gathering provided an opportunity to reflect on his transformative leadership and lasting contributions to the HCCC community.

RETIREMENT:

Gary Bensky, Assistant Professor

RESIGNATIONS:

Dan Brookes, Associate Director - Gateway to Innovation

Josh Mariscal, Academic Counselor

APPOINTMENT OF FULL-TIME STAFF:

Ghaida Abdoalmogni, Admissions Advisor

Joshua Jones, Facilities Worker

APPOINTMENT OF INTERIM PRESIDENT:

Dr. Lisa Dougherty, Interim President

ADJUNCT FACULTY:

Melissa Eder, Humanities and Social Sciences

Elisabeth Marchand, Humanities and Social Sciences

TEMPORARY FULL-TIME STAFF:

Marian Betancourt, Student Success Coach

Gabriel Cisneros, Patient Care Technician Training Specialist

Farimah Mazzotta, Visual Arts, Design Equipment and Labs Manager

Mark McCarthy, Coordinator - Academic Support Services

Natalie Mejia, Financial Aid Assistant

Maritza Reyes, Director - Center for Adult Transition

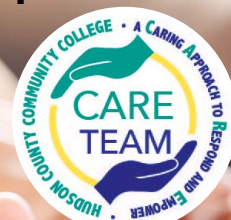
STAFFING TABLE MODIFICATIONS:

Dr. Christopher Conzen, Acting Vice President for Student Affairs and Enrollment

Dr. Cristhian Altamirano, Acting Director - Early College Program

Alexa Yacker, Associate Director

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



Are you experiencing stress, depression, or anxiety?

Difficulty adjusting to the College Environment?

Dealing with mental health and wellness?



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>

Foundation Art Collection

The Hudson County Community College Foundation Art Collection of 2,200+ 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.

DONATIONS

Thank you to artist Jack Knight for donating three wonderful mixed-media constructions. Thank you to Norma Feldman Nathan for the generous donation of the three Henredon display cabinets for the recently-donated antique-silver servingware given to us by the Klarsfeld family. We look forward to installing these serving pieces in Culinary to support culinary-history education. Asparagus tongs, anyone?

ARTIST NEWS

According to a recent article in *The Guardian*, "art – from painting to theatre – has a measurable impact on our health." When Prof. **Daisy Fancourt's** daughter Daphne was born prematurely, Prof. Fancourt sang lullabies to her baby in the incubator. Studies show singing to babies in ICU reduces heart rate, improves breathing, and encourages eating. A professor of psychobiology and epidemiology at University College London, Fancourt researches how social connections and behaviors affect our health. Her research shows, "creative engagement, offered alongside conventional treatment, can have significant effects: reducing stress and pain, improving balance and coordination in Parkinson's disease; helping patients on ventilators to breathe on their own. Different practices work through different pathways, from boosting self-esteem to triggering gene expression. By stimulating the vagus nerve, for example, art reaches the heart, facial muscles and gut, working simultaneously, 'as a form of beta blocker, Botox and antispasmodic.'" Fancourt finds

that, "The key in each case... is broadening the medical focus from 'What's the matter with them?' to 'What matters to them.'" She further says that we need, "a collective recognition that arts deprivation carries major consequences for public health." She explores this in her new book, *Art Cure: The Science of How the Arts Transform Our Health*.

In an exhibit called, "Migrants," work by **Benny Andrews** is on view at Michael Rosenfeld Gallery on 100 Eleventh Avenue at 19th Street in New York City through August 7. Closer to home, you can see three prints by Benny Andrews on the third floor of Gabert Library.

Valeri Larko's painting can be seen on the fourth floor of the STEM building. Through July 29, you can also see three of her newer oil paintings at the Bronx Council on the Arts at 2700 East Tremont Avenue, Bronx, New York, in the exhibit, *Landscape as Witness: Lived Experience in the Bronx*. For more information: <https://www.bronxarts.org/>

While our print of "Here Come Moses" by **Faith Ringgold** is at the framer, you can see another print from the same edition if you happen to be in Stamford, Connecticut, where the *Where Printmaking and the Unconventional Pathways of African American Artists* show is on view at the Stamford Museum & Nature Center through September 6. Curated by Dr. Curlee Raven Holton (whose art can be seen on the first floor of the Nursing Program at 870 Bergen Avenue), the exhibit of African

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Blindspot II by Curlee Raven Holton (2003)
Etching, Relief, and Screen Print, 22" x 15"
on the first floor of the Nursing program,
870 Bergen Avenue.



Turtle Dove, by Benny Andrews (1980),
Lithograph in Color, 30" x 22.5" on the third
floor of the Gabert Library, 71 Sip Avenue.

A collection of this scale requires ongoing conservation, archival storage and framing, expert art handling, and professional stewardship to ensure the works remain accessible and preserved for future generations. To support this work, the HCCC Foundation is building an endowment for the Foundation Art Collection and seeking philanthropic support to help preserve, interpret, and share these works with students and the community for years to come.

Please consider supporting the Foundation Art Collection financially by making a gift at <https://www.hccc.edu/community/foundation/index.html> or emailing foundation@hccc.edu for more information on how you can help.

Office of
**Institutional Engagement
and Excellence**
presents

Celebrating and Remembering the Life and Legacy of Artist David Acker

The Hudson County Community College Foundation Art Collection has long celebrated artists from underrepresented communities, including LGBTQ artists, while preserving stories that might otherwise fade from memory. Among them is David Acker, whose vibrant work and promising career were cut short by the AIDS epidemic.

Born in Lima, Peru, in 1954 and raised in Connecticut, Acker studied Biology and Art at Earlham College before apprenticing with artist Nell Blaine. After moving to New York City in 1975, he attended the New York Studio School and became part



"Two Figures" by David Acker, 1980, Oil pastel, 25.75" x 39.5".

of the city's downtown art scene. Friends remembered him as an intensely dedicated yet generous artist who encouraged fellow

creatives and embraced his identity as a gay man during a period of widespread stigma.

Acker's bold, expressive paintings earned growing recognition through exhibitions, residencies, and his membership in the Prince Street Gallery. But as the AIDS crisis devastated the artistic community, Acker became ill and died in 1986 at just 31 years old.

Today, nearly forty years later, the HCCC Foundation Art Collection preserves eleven of Acker's works in its archive, ensuring that his artistry, warmth, and legacy continue to inspire new generations.

HUDSON COUNTY COMMUNITY COLLEGE HOSTS ANNUAL JUNETEENTH CELEBRATION



The University Academy Charter High School student performers take a bow, joined by members of HCCC's Office of Institutional Engagement and Excellence and African American Outreach Committee.

On Wednesday, June 17, Hudson County Community College's Office of Institutional Engagement and Excellence and the African American Outreach Committee hosted "Juneteenth: Celebrating Our Future." The 2026 Juneteenth event included inspirational

entertainment provided by the students of University Academy Charter High School and directed by Samantha Minor.

Observed each year on June 19, Juneteenth marks the day in 1865 when enslaved people in Texas learned they were



Pictured from left: Samantha Minor, event director, University Academy Charter High School; Anthony L. Romano Jr., Chairperson, Board of Hudson County Commissioners; Dr. Lisa Dougherty, Interim HCCC President; and Dr. Yeurys Pujols, Vice President for Institutional Engagement and Excellence.

free, symbolizing the end of slavery in the United States.

Save
the
Date

Hudson County Community College Foundation
29th Annual
Gala

Thursday, December 3, 2026 | 6 p.m.
Culinary Conference Center
161 Newkirk Street, Jersey City, NJ 07306
Details to follow!

HUDSON COUNTY COMMUNITY COLLEGE HONORED WITH 2026 'MOST PROMISING PLACES TO WORK IN COMMUNITY COLLEGES' AWARD

Hudson County Community College (HCCC) has earned the 2026 "Most Promising Places to Work in Community Colleges" Award from the National Institute for Staff and Organizational Development (NISOD) and The EDULedger.

The national award recognizes community and technical colleges that foster working environments prioritizing staff diversity, inclusive learning, and robust recruitment and retention practices. The College was selected following a comprehensive review of its workplace policies, including family-friendly practices, professional development opportunities, and creating an environment where faculty and staff thrive.

The award specifically acknowledges how Hudson County Community College amplifies voices from all walks of life; works diligently to close achievement gaps among traditionally underrepresented groups;

develops culturally relevant curricula; offers training to improve engagement; understanding and respecting differences; supports a Children on Campus Policy; offers generous family and medical leave provisions; allocates up to \$9,000 per year for tuition reimbursement for every full-time employee; and utilizes a new and innovative orientation program for incoming faculty and staff.

"We thank NISOD and The EDULedger for this honor," said former HCCC President Dr. Christopher Reber. "This recognition speaks to the culture we have built, prioritizing a supportive environment that encourages our faculty and staff to do their best work on behalf of our students and community."

"This distinction highlights our ongoing dedication to building a culture that



HCCC has been recognized with the NISOD and The EDULedger's "Most Promising Places to Work in Community Colleges" Award. Pictured here, HCCC faculty and staff participated as models in the College's "Steve Madden Presents the 2026 Career Closet Fashion Show: Your Runway to Success."

empowers individuals while promoting authentic collaboration," said HCCC Vice President for Human Resources Robert DiMartino.

NISOD and The EDULedger presented the "Most Promising Places to Work in Community Colleges" awards during the 48th Annual NISOD Conference: Advancing Community College Student Engagement (ACCSE), May 23-26 in Austin, Texas.

DRIVING STUDENT SUCCESS, ON THE COURSE AND BEYOND: THE HCCC FOUNDATION'S 24TH ANNUAL GOLF OUTING

The Hudson County Community College (HCCC) Foundation invited community members, business leaders, alumni, and friends of the College to participate in the 24th Annual Philip Johnston Memorial Golf Outing on Monday, June 22, at Brooklake Country Club in Florham Park, New Jersey.

One of the Foundation's signature fundraising events, the Golf Outing raises critical scholarship funds that help HCCC students overcome financial barriers and achieve their academic and career goals.

The outing also highlighted the success of the HCCC Student Golf Clinic, a five-week program at Skyway Golf in Jersey City made possible through the support of Horizon Blue Cross Blue Shield of New Jersey. The clinic introduced students to golf while building confidence, communication skills, and professional networking opportunities.

Among its success stories is recent HCCC graduate Mariano Mejias, who discovered a passion for golf through the program and plans to try out for the golf team at Kean University this fall. Student participants showcased their skills during the outing, demonstrating how access to experiences like golf can help build valuable social capital and open doors to future opportunities.

"Every dollar raised through the Foundation Golf Outing creates opportunities for our students," said former HCCC President Dr. Christopher Reber. "We thank all of the golfers and sponsors whose participation and generosity make this support possible each year."

Participants enjoyed a day of golf, hospitality, networking, contests, and prizes while supporting student success.



LABRAKE HIGHLIGHTS HCCC'S AI INNOVATION EFFORTS AT NJ PATHWAYS SUMMIT

Associate Vice President for Digital Learning, AI, and Emerging Technologies, Matthew LaBrake, participated in a featured panel discussion at the NJ Pathways Summit titled "AI in Action: Building New Jersey's Innovation Economy," alongside David Cole, Chief Innovation Officer at the New Jersey Innovation Authority, and Liat Krawczyk, Executive Director of the NJ AI Hub.

The discussion focused on the impact of AI on workforce development, economic growth, and education, highlighting the critical role community colleges play in preparing learners for an AI-enabled workforce through AI literacy, faculty development, responsible AI governance, and workforce-aligned innovation.



Matthew LaBrake (right), HCCC's AVP for Digital Learning, AI, and Emerging Technologies, joined state and industry leaders for a featured panel discussion on the future of artificial intelligence in New Jersey.

The panel provided an opportunity to highlight Hudson County Community College's work in AI adoption and contributed to a broader statewide

conversation on preparing New Jersey's learners and workers for the future of work.

HCCC STUDENTS REACH NATIONAL INNOVATION CHALLENGE FINALS WITH AI SUSTAINABILITY PROJECT



Pictured from left: Elizabeth Maravillas, Dr. Clive Li, and Fatima Ibrahim.



HCCC finalists attend a reception during the Community College Innovation Challenge (CCIC) Boot Camp.

HCCC students Fatima Ibrahim and Elizabeth Maravillas, under the mentorship of Dr. Clive Li, developed a project titled "Hybrid Immersion Cooling for Long-Term AI Sustainability." Their team was selected as one of only 12 finalist teams nationwide in the Community College Innovation Challenge (CCIC), a prestigious competition co-sponsored by the National Science Foundation (NSF) and the American Association of Community Colleges (AACC).

As finalists, the team was invited to Washington, D.C., to participate in an intensive innovation boot camp and

compete for the top three awards. During their visit, they presented their project at the Cannon House Office Building on Capitol Hill.

Congressman Rob Menendez had arranged to meet with the team on June 9. However, due to an unexpected scheduling conflict, he was unable to attend. In his place, Seth Friedman, Director of Operations, and Samantha Crane, Press Secretary, met with the team on behalf of the Congressman.

The team's travel expenses, including transportation, lodging, and meals, were fully funded by the NSF and AACC.



REGISTER NOW
for Summer and Fall 2026 classes!

HCCC Offers Classes in Multiple Modalities
On-Campus, Online, Remote, Hybrid (On-Campus/Online), Hybrid (Remote/Online), and Immersive Telepresence Video (ITV)

Students must register at least one day prior to the first class meeting.

SESSIONS BEGIN:

Summer II - Online B	Monday, July 13, 2026
Summer II	Wednesday, July 15, 2026
Fall 2026 - 15 week	Friday, August 28, 2026
Fall 2026 - Online A	Friday, August 28, 2026
Fall 2026 - 7WK1	Monday, August 31, 2026
Fall 2026 - Quick Term	Friday, September 18, 2026
Fall 2026 - Online B	Tuesday, October 27, 2026
Fall 2026 - 7WK2	Wednesday, October 28, 2026

APPLY NOW for Fall and Summer classes
at www.hccc.edu/apply!

View course schedules at www.hccc.edu/schedule!

For important dates and information, view our Enrollment Guide at www.hccc.edu/enrollmentguide.

For more information, contact: admissions@hccc.edu
text (732) 509-4222 | call (201) 714-7200

MICROHISTORIES FELLOWSHIP PANEL SHOWCASES COMMUNITY STORIES AND VOICES

The Hudson Oral History Project hosted its Microhistories Fellowship Panel on May 18 in the STEM Building, bringing together community members, students, and scholars for an evening of storytelling and discussion. The event featured presentations from the recipients of the Microhistories Fellowship, who shared excerpts from their interview-based projects exploring the experiences, histories, and perspectives of diverse communities.

Wendy de Armas Dominquez presented “What We Carry,” a project that documented the stories of immigrants and examined the people, places, and possessions they left behind, as well as the challenges they faced after arriving in the United States.

Rose Marie Shields shared “Stories Between the Pages,” a project that fostered conversations among BIPOC* readers, librarians, and authors. Through a series of events and interviews, the project highlighted the role literature plays in building community, preserving culture, and encouraging dialogue. (*Black, Indigenous, and People of Color)



Associate Professor Antonio Acevedo, co-founder of the Hudson Oral History Project, delivers greetings to forum attendees.

Jaya Jones presented “Building for Ourselves,” which explored the experiences of local Black business owners through interviews that examined both the challenges they encountered and the successes they achieved while building their enterprises.

The panel demonstrated the power of oral history to preserve lived experiences and strengthen community connections. Through their work, the fellows documented important local stories while



Rose Marie Shields presents “Stories Between the Pages,” a series of events and conversations with BIPOC readers, librarians, and authors highlighting how literature builds a community.

creating opportunities for reflection, understanding, and engagement.

A grant from the New Jersey State Historical Commission and administered by the Hudson County Office of Cultural & Heritage Affairs/Tourism Development provided funding for the Microhistories Fellowship Program.

HCCC CELEBRATES EARLY COLLEGE CULINARY PATHWAY STUDENTS



On Friday, May 15, the Early College Program and the School of Business, Culinary Arts, and Hospitality Management honored students at Abraham Lincoln High School, Harrison High School, Irvington High School, and Union City High School during a special Culinary Luncheon Celebration. The credits these students earned are fully transferable into a Culinary Arts degree or certificate program at the College.



Top Left:
Dr. Christopher Conzen, Acting Vice President for Student Affairs and Enrollment, commemorating the event.

Top Right:
Students from Harrison High School.

Bottom Right: *Students from Irvington High School.*

HCCC CELEBRATES LATEST HUDSON B.E.S.T. COHORT



HCCC celebrated the newest Hudson B.E.S.T. cohort, recognizing students who completed the program's series of mentoring, networking, and professional development experiences designed to prepare them for success in the business world.

On Wednesday, May 6, HCCC celebrated the most recent cohort of Hudson B.E.S.T. (Business Education Supplemental Training). Launched in Fall 2024, the program connects Business, Accounting, and Hospitality Management students with industry leaders through seminars, site visits, mentoring, and networking. Students earned resume-boosting badges, built valuable connections, and gained real-world insight into the business community.

HCCC AND COUNTY PREP HONOR EARLY COLLEGE GRADUATES AT SPECIAL CEREMONY



One day prior to receiving their associate degrees, HCCC's Early College Program and County Prep High School recognized graduating students at a special ceremony.

NEWS FROM HUDSON COUNTY EXECUTIVE CRAIG GUY

Continued from page 3

- City of Jersey City - Martyniak-Enright Park Improvements Ph 2
- City of Jersey City - Terrace Avenue Park Improvements
- Town of Kearny - Kearny Crew House Improvement Project
- Township of North Bergen - Stan Newman Field Improvements
- City of Union City - Ellsworth Park Improvements, Ph 2
- City of Union City - Turfing at Washington Little League Field
- Township of Weehawken - Jefferson Street Playground
- Town of West New York - West New York Recreation Center, Indoor Track
- Hudson County Parks - Lincoln Park Track Multi-Use Turf

Land Acquisition Projects include:

- Town of Secaucus - 236 Meadow Lane Acquisition Project

Historic Preservation Projects include:

Hudson County Parks - Lincoln Park Historic Fountain Improvements

HUDSON COUNTY COMMUNITY COLLEGE HISTORY PROFESSOR NAMED BUSINESS-HIGHER EDUCATION FORUM FACULTY INNOVATION FELLOW

Hudson County Community College (HCCC) Assistant Professor of History Dr. Christopher Cody has been selected for the 2026 Business-Higher Education Forum (BHEF) Faculty Innovation Fellowship, a competitive national program that brings together faculty leaders from across the United States to drive innovation in higher education.

Dr. Cody joins a cohort of 22 fellows representing 20 colleges and universities in 15 states. Through the fellowship, participants develop capstone projects designed to strengthen student pathways, align academic programs with workforce needs, and create meaningful institutional change. The program provides expert mentorship, peer collaboration, and support for launching high-impact initiatives that enhance

student success and career readiness.

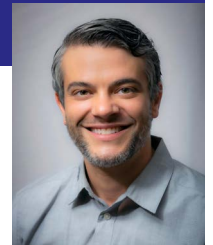
"We are very proud to see Dr. Cody recognized at the national level and look forward to the impact this fellowship will have on our students and community," said former HCCC President Dr. Christopher Reber. "Whether providing local context at the Hamilton-Burr duel site in Weehawken or leading students through learning experiences at the Holocaust Museum and Princeton University, Dr. Cody brings history to life and inspires students to connect the past to the present through critical thinking and analysis."

Dr. Cody joined HCCC in 2019 as an Adjunct Instructor and has distinguished himself through his commitment to student engagement, equity, and academic excellence.

His honors include the National Institute for Staff and Organizational Development Excellence Award, the

League for Innovation Excellence Award, and the Excellence in Teaching Award from HCCC's chapter of the National Society of Leadership and Success. He also served as Chair of the All-College Council, where he helped advance initiatives supporting student parents and academic integrity.

Dr. Cody earned his Ph.D. from St. John's University, a Master of Arts from Northeastern University, and a Bachelor of Arts from the University of Vermont.



PHI THETA KAPPA HONOR SOCIETY NEWS

Friends of Liberty State Park

The Friends of Liberty State Park recognized Beta Alpha Phi for its years of volunteering in the park and at park-related events. HCCC and Phi Theta Kappa alumnae Qian Xie, Ana Estefany Slattery and Melanie Slattery (Ana's daughter) – all of whom have volunteered at Liberty State Park for years – attended the ceremony with Professor Ted Lai and Elaine Foster, Professor Emerita, English.

Phi Theta Kappa Scholarship Opportunities Open July 28

Phi Theta Kappa members are encouraged to apply for three prestigious scholarship programs through PTK's Fall Common Application: the All-USA Academic Team, Guistwhite Scholarship, and Hites Transfer Scholarship. These awards recog-



Samara Bashore (right) volunteered in the gardening program at Liberty State Park on May 23.

nize outstanding academic achievement, leadership, service, and community engagement, with scholarships ranging from \$2,500 to \$7,500. The application period runs July 28 through Dec. 2. Eligible students may apply through the Fall Common Application at www.ptk.org.

Jack Kent Cooke Undergraduate Transfer Scholarship

The Jack Kent Cooke Undergraduate Transfer Scholarship application will open on Aug. 19.

HCCC's most recent valedictorian, Marlon Peña Crespo, was one of only 60 high-achieving community college students selected in 2026 from 1,300 applicants across the nation to receive the highly competitive national scholarship. The award provides last-dollar funding to assist students in completing their baccalaureate studies with as little debt as possible. Recipients may be provided with as much as \$55,000 a year for up to three years to complete their bachelor's degrees.

ALUMNI IN 'UNDER 30 UNDER PRESSURE' SHOW

HCCC alumni **Leo da Silva** and **Mariana Flor** were selected for "Under 30 Under Pressure," a juried exhibition at The Painting Center in New York City. Leo recently earned his BFA from Rutgers University–Newark and will begin his MFA work at Parsons School of Design this fall. Mariana, an HCCC Spring 2026 graduate, plans to pursue further studies at the Mason Gross School of the Arts. The exhibition is open through July 18.

Here is a link to the exhibition: <https://www.thepaintingcenter.org/under-30-under-pressure>

Foundation Art Collection

Continued from Page 6

American prints addresses the fact that, "The traditional Western European path to artistic success: elite academies and access to wealthy patrons, was long denied to artists of color. Excluded from these networks, many African American artists forged their own paths, creating work rooted in lived experience, rich in history, culture, and collaboration." Printmaking was one way for African American artists to build "distinguished careers through innovation in printmaking using it as a primary medium, a tool for collaboration, and a democratic way to share their art... The exhibition traces their journeys and challenges us to rethink the rules that once excluded them." If you happen to get to Stamford, you might also want to catch the nature exhibit on the shy tarantula spider.

Congratulations to our very own HCCC Director of Cultural Affairs, Michelle Vitale, who has been accepted into the prestigious Fulbright Specialist program for Cultural Affairs! The program is a unique opportunity for United States Academics and established professionals to engage in two- to six-week, project-based exchanges at institutions across the globe. Ms. Vitale hopes to work in the cultural heritage sector to foster community engagement. Here she is being interviewed by Jersey City artist Nathalie Kalbach for her Sidewalk Stories podcast: <https://www.natkalbach.com/podcast/episode-321-an-act-of-love-with-woolpunk> Here's a brief excerpt: <https://www.instagram.com/reel/DW6Ra1HkurM/embed/?autoplay=1>



2026 Start-Up Events

COLLEGE SERVICE DAY Tuesday, August 25, 2026
ALL COLLEGE ADJUNCT FACULTY ORIENTATION
 Wednesday, August 26, 2026
CONVOCATION Thursday, August 27, 2026

Culinary Conference Center, 161 Newkirk Street, Jersey City, NJ
Classes begin Friday, August 28

CONFERENCE COVERAGE

Hudson County Community College Leaders Receive Awards from New Jersey Council of County Colleges

A Hudson County Community College (HCCC) administrator and faculty member received honors from the New Jersey Council of County Colleges (NJCCC) at its Awards Dinner on June 10, 2026, in Atlantic City, New Jersey.

Interim President Dr. Lisa Dougherty received the NJCCC Dr. Lawrence A. Nespoli Leadership Award for her significant contributions to New Jersey's community colleges and student success. Dr. Dougherty has championed innovative initiatives that improve student retention and persistence, including the nationally recognized Hudson Scholars program, the Hudson Helps Resource Center, and Generation Hope's FamilyU program for student parents. She also led the creation of the HCCC Mental Health Counseling and Wellness Center and the Hudson CARE(S) Team, which provide comprehensive support services that address students' academic, personal, and wellness needs.

A first-generation college student, Dr. Dougherty recently received the 2026 Phi Theta Kappa Distinguished College



Hudson County Community College (HCCC) Interim President Dr. Lisa Dougherty, and Associate Professor and Coordinator of History, Political Science and American Studies Antonio Acevedo accepted awards from New Jersey Council of County Colleges (NJCCC) on June 10. Dr. Dougherty was presented with the Dr. Lawrence A. Nespoli Leadership Award, and Professor Acevedo with the Distinguished Faculty Award.

Administrator Award and previously served as an Aspen Institute Rising Presidents Fellow.

Associate Professor and Coordinator of History, Political Science, and American Studies Antonio Acevedo received the NJCCC Distinguished Faculty Award for his exceptional impact on students both inside and outside the classroom. Known for engaging students in critical thinking and civic engagement, Professor Acevedo co-founded the Hudson Oral History Project, which documents the history and transformation of Jersey City's Journal Square community. The project earned the 2026 *Insight Into Academia* Civic Engagement and Community Service

Award.

Professor Acevedo also helped establish HCCC's Department of Cultural Affairs, expanding access to arts and cultural programming throughout Hudson County. A first-generation college student, he is completing a Ph.D. in World History at St. John's University and is a recipient of the 2020 American Association of Community Colleges Dale P. Parnell Distinguished Faculty Award.

"The entire HCCC community is proud of Lisa and Antonio," said former HCCC President Dr. Christopher Reber. "These honors are well deserved."

HCCC FACULTY EXPLORE NEW BLOOMBERG CERTIFICATIONS AND RESOURCES

Professor Peter Cronrath and Instructor Sharon Daughtry were invited to attend the Bloomberg Academic Forum at Bloomberg Headquarters in NYC on June 4, 2026. They participated in faculty discussions with other college and university faculty that maintain Bloomberg Finance Labs. At the event, Bloomberg introduced new certificates that students can achieve as well as a faculty portal to share academic lessons between college programs.

If you are interested in learning more about Finance or using the Bloomberg Lab, please email us at sdaughtry@hccc.edu or pcronrath@hccc.edu.



Sharon Daughtry, Instructor, Business (left) and Dr. Peter Cronrath, Professor, Business attending the Bloomberg Academic Forum at Bloomberg's New York headquarters.

NEW BASKETBALL TEAMS

Continued from Page 3

complete, HCCC basketball teams will play at Hudson County High Tech High School in Secaucus.

In preparation for the inaugural season, HCCC hired Head Men's Basketball Coach Ethan Nardone and Head Women's Basketball Coach Carlos Cueto, both experienced leaders focused on student-athlete development and academic success.

"The community has been waiting for an opportunity to support athletics at HCCC," said Athletic Director Jonathan Sisk. "The NJCAA provides the perfect platform for our student-athletes and our community to grow together."

HUDSON COUNTY COMMUNITY COLLEGE TO RECEIVE INSTITUTE OF INTERNATIONAL EDUCATION AMERICAN PASSPORT GRANT

Hudson County Community College (HCCC) has been selected to receive a grant from the Institute of International Education (IIE) American Passport Project, helping up to 25 students obtain their first U.S. passports and opening the door to global learning opportunities.

The grant will remove a significant financial barrier for students, covering the cost of passport applications for Pell-eligible participants. In addition, some students will use their passports through a new HCCC study-abroad program in Spring 2027, traveling to the United Kingdom to study Culinary Arts.

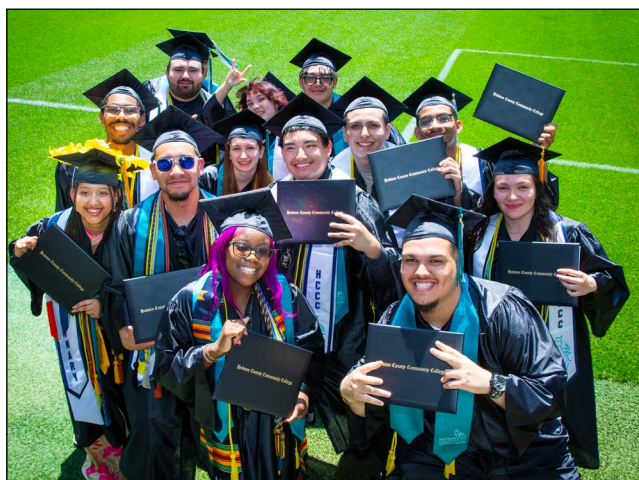
"This funding will empower HCCC students to pursue once-in-a-lifetime opportunities that impact their academic and career paths," said HCCC Interim President Dr. Lisa Dougherty. "Study-abroad experiences help students build confidence, develop global perspectives, and gain skills valued by future employers."

Now in its sixth year, the IIE American Passport Project is awarding grants to 40

colleges and universities nationwide, supporting approximately 1,000 Pell-eligible students. The initiative aims to expand access to international education, particularly for students from low-income backgrounds, first-year students, and those who have never traveled abroad as adults or in an educational setting.

The Institute of International Education fosters global connections among higher education institutions, faculty, and students through programs that promote cultural exchange, research collaboration, and international learning opportunities. The American Passport Project is a key initiative of the IIE Center for International Opportunities.

Since its launch, the project has awarded more than 260 grants to



Hudson County Community College is the recipient of a grant from the International Education (IIE) American Passport Project that will help up to 25 students obtain their first U.S. passports.

institutions in 42 states and the District of Columbia, helping thousands of students take their first step toward studying abroad.

HCCC JOINS STATEWIDE PARTNERS TO HIGHLIGHT WORKFORCE TRAINING AND SECOND-CHANCE OPPORTUNITIES



HCCC proudly joined the New Jersey Reentry Corporation and the New Jersey Council of County Colleges to kick off the 2026 Summer Training Institute, which offers career-focused certifications in various subject areas to enhance skills and employment to court-involved persons.

Hudson County Community College joined leaders from the New Jersey Reentry Corporation (NJRC) and the New Jersey Council of County Colleges at the 2026 Summer Training

Institute to celebrate workforce training, youth engagement, and second-chance opportunities. The event highlighted the transformative impact of education, job training, and community partnerships,

while showcasing inspiring success stories from NJRC graduates who are building brighter futures for themselves and their families.

ALUMNI CORNER

Jose Bustillo

A.A., Liberal Arts and Sciences/Liberal Studies,
HCCC Class of 2014

Jose is the VP of Global Delivery at SpendHQ.



What brought you to HCCC?

I moved to the U.S. from Honduras when I was 19. At the time, I didn't speak English at all. After spending a few months in L.A., I moved to Jersey City to live with my aunt. Like many immigrants, I worked wherever I could. I started in a warehouse in Kearny, worked at a hotel cleaning rooms and bathrooms, and later worked on a cruise line in Hawaii. Throughout that time, I always wanted to attend college, but I didn't know where to start. No one in my family had experience navigating the U.S. higher education system.

Some people told me college was unrealistic. "You can't afford it," "It's too expensive," or "You don't speak English."

One day, I went to HCCC's Journal Square campus with my cousin's wife looking for guidance on how to enroll in the ESL program. That decision changed my life. I'm always grateful that she took me to HCCC that day.

I joined the ESL program, became involved with PTK, and graduated with honors with an Associate Degree in Liberal Arts before transferring to Saint Peter's University through one of the partnership programs available to HCCC students and received a partial scholarship. I graduated with a Bachelor's Degree in Communications and a minor in Economics.

What made HCCC the right choice for you?

HCCC was close to where I lived and worked. During my ESL program, I attended classes in the evenings, and while pursuing my associate degree, I attended classes during the day while working nights as a waiter.

More importantly, I felt welcomed. I was surrounded by people from different cultures who all shared the same goal: building a better future. The smaller class sizes made learning easier, and the counselors, professors, and staff were incredibly supportive. I always had the resources and encouragement I needed to succeed, making

HCCC the perfect choice for me.

What got you interested in procurement?

It happened by accident. My dream was to become a broadcaster. I had never heard of procurement until I entered the corporate world after graduation. My first corporate role was with a boutique fashion company in NYC. There, I developed skills and experiences that sparked my interest in business operations. Later, I had the incredible opportunity to join Bulgari as one of its first procurement hires for the Americas. Ironically, I had to Google the word "procurement" before accepting the role. Years later, I can say that I love what I do.

Procurement has given me opportunities I never imagined, allowing me to travel the world, work with global organizations, and build relationships with remarkable people who have helped shape my career and life. At its core, procurement is about people, relationships, problem-solving, and helping organizations make better decisions.

I serve as VP of Global Delivery at SpendHQ, a leading procurement intelligence provider. We help organizations transform procurement and spend data into meaningful insights that drive better decisions, improve operational efficiency, strengthen supplier management, and support procurement excellence.

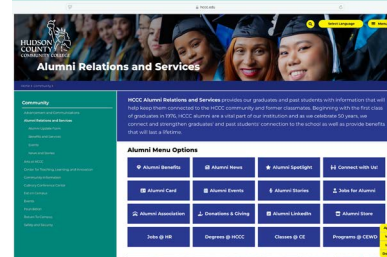
I lead our global delivery organization across North America and Europe, Middle East and Africa (EMEA). I work closely with our teams, clients, and partners to ensure successful implementations, drive user adoption, and help organizations realize the value of their investment. My work centers on people, change management, and building scalable delivery processes that create exceptional customer experiences.

Tell us about your group, SOMOS.

I started SOMOS with a simple mission: to elevate the profile of procurement and inspire the next generation of professionals. I realized that many students and young professionals have never heard of procure-

Continued on page 16

What's New?



Updated Alumni Web Pages:

Explore the updates and stay connected—visit the pages here: <https://www.hccc.edu/community/alumni-services/index.html>

Alumni Benefits:



With an Alumni Card, you can take advantage of exclusive benefits and stay connected to the HCCC community! Details here: <https://www.hccc.edu/community/alumni-services/index.html>

Alumni Giving:



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!



The Alumni Association has launched its new Instagram page!

Follow us at
[@hccc_alumni](https://www.instagram.com/hccc_alumni)

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



ALUMNI CORNER

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ment, and don't understand the opportunities it can provide. Procurement changed my life, and I wanted to create a platform where I could share that story, highlight career opportunities, and connect people with others in the industry.

We focus on mentorship, storytelling, content creation, and community building. We showcase the human side of procurement—the people, the journeys, the lessons learned, and the impact procurement professionals have worldwide.

The name SOMOS, which means “we are” in Spanish, reflects the spirit of the initiative. It's about belonging, representation, and reminding people that success is rarely achieved alone. We're stronger when we learn from one another, support one another, and create opportunities for those coming after us.

SOMOS has grown into a platform that allows me to connect with professionals, students, and future leaders across the globe. If SOMOS can help one person discover a new opportunity, believe in themselves, or pursue a path they never considered, I consider it a success.

Any favorite memories of HCCC?

I have many, but one that stands out is my time in the ESL Honors program. I remember how much I enjoyed writing essays and challenging myself to improve my English. I remember Professor Lai, who was incredibly supportive and encouraging throughout my journey.

But my favorite memory will always be graduation day. Seeing my mother sitting in the audience waiting for my name to be called is a moment I'll never forget. She sacrificed so much for me, and graduating with honors felt like a way of honoring her sacrifices. I did it for her.

50 FACES OF ALUMNI

As part of the 50th Anniversary of Hudson County Community College, we introduce and celebrate our *50 Faces of Alumni: Fifty and Forward*. This campaign focuses on the importance of Alumni to the College, the workforce, and community by highlighting 50 Alumni in various fields, levels of achievement, and from different backgrounds who have studied at the College. “50 Faces” can be seen online at <https://www.hccc.edu/community/alumni-services/50-faces/index.html>

Alumni Association 2026 Meetings

- Tuesday, July 7, 6:30 p.m. to 7:30 p.m.
- Tuesday, September 15, 6:30 p.m. to 7:30 p.m.

All meetings are held at 81 Sip Avenue, Multipurpose Room, Jersey City or virtually.

Alumni Association Events:

If you are interested in attending these events, please email us at alumni@hccc.edu

50 Faces of Alumni

“There have been so many people that have contributed to my success. From all the professors at HCCC to my mentor at Le Cirque to working for Danny Meyers.”

Gustavo Gutierrez
Owner and Chef at Cubita Cafe
A.A.S. Culinary Arts, Class of 2011

