

President's Monthly Update
October 2025

Dear College Community,

Once upon a time, I had to turn all the clocks in my home back, now my watch, cable box, all automatically turn themselves back. But even as time took a step back, and I embraced the crisp air of November, I was reminded that while time may fall behind, York College continues to move boldly forward. This season of reflection and renewal inspires us to recommit to our mission of empowering students, strengthening our community, and shaping a brighter future.

As such, I start my update for with an appeal so our students can continue to have a bright present and future. As you know after Congress failed to pass appropriations legislations for 2026, the federal government entered a shutdown which put many services at risk for millions across the country. One such service, Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program SNAP which is critical for many families and affects many of our students was paused on November 1. Thankfully, New York State begun issuing SNAP benefits to all eligible households. Even prior to the shutdown (August 1- October 1), the York College Food Pantry experienced almost a 100% increase in visitors. Our Food Pantry is always in need of donations to support our students especially now. Many of our students and their families. To this end, the Division of Student Affairs will be holding a **Food Drive** this week (November 11-13, 2025). Drop offs can be made at each of the college entrances (Guy R. Brewer, Liberty Avenue and 160th Street). Please see the flyer (attached/below) for more information about what is being requested. For more information about CUNY food pantries as well as community-based organizations that provide food assistance and support, go to:

<https://www.cuny.edu/about/administration/offices/student-affairs/programs-services/snap/>

The following is an update of our financial recovery plan activities:

As I shared in my last monthly update, due to our status as a college of high concern, we have paused hiring except for positions that affect health and safety and those that are revenue generating. However, we received a directive regarding the need to start searches for staff who are part of the Executive Compensation Plan (ECP). We have a few staff members who fall into this category and currently have interim status: CIO, Dean of Health Sciences and Professional Programs,

Dean of Business and Information Systems, Associate Provost and Chief of Staff.
Per our directive, we will commence searches for these positions.

Increasing enrollment and retention

- Registration opened in early October which is earlier than in previous years. As of November 8, we have 1453 students registered compared to 1,136 last year at this time.
- In October we launched V-READY (redesigned Virtual Registration, Enrollment and ADvisement session). This differs from what has been done in the past, as ancillary offices such as admissions, financial aid, registrar, bursar, IT and health services will also be available in breakout rooms. To ensure students leave the session registered, there is also a breakout room assist students in getting registered.
- Shout out to our IT and Marketing and Communications teams for their efforts in refreshing our website which will help in attracting students and improves the user experience for both students and our campus community. The site has a more modern look. It continues to be a work in progress but where we are going is closer than what we are coming from.
- To improve the user experience, we also updated our external calendar to be more user-friendly. <https://www.york.cuny.edu/events>

Grow Auxiliary Enterprises

Sandra Velez has been working to improve operations with regards to room reservations; clarifying and establishing policies and Improving event operations and increasing auxiliary opportunities. For more information check out the Special Events Office webpage at: <https://www.york.cuny.edu/administrative/office-of-facilities-and-planning/special-events>.

Increase fundraising revenue to provide adequate funding for student scholarships, academic programs operations and supplement our existing budget

This year we are going to be fundraising and fun raising for CUNYTuesday. Our goal is \$150,000. In addition to our regular appeal for donations from you our foundation board, alumni, consistent donors, partners, friends of York, we are asking each member of the college community to donate as well. The request is for \$20 or more if you are inclined. But \$20 will solidify your participation in Game Day, a campus-wide series of games (checkers, Jenga, bid whist, 3x3 basketball, dominoes, uno to name a few) that build camaraderie, spark friendly competition, and grow our culture of giving. And speaking of competition, I am so

competitive that you should know that I have challenged CSI to see who can raise the most dollars and donors. I am asking for your support in helping York to not only beat (I mean surpass) CSI in the amount we raise, but the number of donors who contribute. Our CUNYTuesday page will go live on November 11th.

I also want take this opportunity to thank Nyisha and the Institutional Advancement team for coordinating, in partnership with Northwell Health-LIJFH, Postpartum Resource Center of New York, Resorts World NYC, Greater Jamaica Development Corporation and the WMCA of Greater New York- Jamaica Branch, the Queens premiere of Behind the Joy, an international award-winning film that explores postpartum depression and opens an important conversation on maternal mental health. Northwell Health also donated 500 scrubs to our Nursing Department.

Reestablish continuing education/ workforce development programming

Please join me in welcoming Dina Zagari, our interim director of workforce development and continuing education. It's been said that I walked in running, but if I walked in running, Dina certainly walked in flying. Since starting three weeks ago, she developed a new branding and program framework for Workforce Development/ Continuing Education. The framework allows prospective students to easily identify where they fit and what outcomes they can expect. It also positions York College as a responsive, community-centered institution that meets people where they are, whether they need a job now, want to grow professionally, or are simply exploring new interests.

Dina will be convening a meeting to solicit ideas from the college community regarding potential CE course ideas. You can also feel free to email her at dzagarilimandri@york.cuny.edu or call her at 718 262 7266.

Relatedly, on October 30 Chancellor Matos-Rodriguez held his annual State of the University Address at Hostos Community College. A central theme of his address centered on career development, wage growth for students and economic mobility. He shared that over the next five years; CUNY Beyond will be scaled up to all senior and community colleges. CUNY Beyond is an initiative that is centered on the integration of career development into the undergraduate experience.

As part of the larger career-focused effort, the University in partnership with the NYC CEO Jobs Council launched Career Discovery Week (November 3– 7) where first- and second-year students had the opportunity to visit the offices of several NYC-based Fortune 500 companies. At last count, 16 York College students

signed up to participate. I fortunate to meet and gift six of them with York business SWAG in preparation for their visits.

Earlier this month, the Office of Academic Affairs launched the York Internship Repository to collect information about student engagement in career-related and readiness experiences such as internships, field, work practicums, clinical experiences, and summer research. The Repository will help us not only track York student activities but help us to build our employer network. Students can share their internship and other career-related activities here:

<https://www.york.cuny.edu/forms/internship>. Thank you to the IT team, Dr. Theresa Williams and Interim Associate Provost Paglione for your efforts in developing this critical tool.

Congratulations to the members of our Student Government Association who were officially sworn in by Judge Valerie Brathwaite and took their oath of office pledging to represent the student body with integrity and dedication.

We are over the moon that effective November 1, Akkeem Polack our current president of the York Student Government Association and University Student Senate (USS) Vice Chair of Legislative Affairs took office as the Chairperson of the USS and a seat as the university's newest member of the CUNY Board of Trustees. Not only does he represent the 250k students across the university, but he is a representation of the magnificent student body that call York College their academic home.

Speaking about home, a special thank you to the Office of Student Activities under the leadership of Dr. Phelps for an exciting Homecoming Week filled with activities for students and alumni.

Institutional Effectiveness/ Assessment

If you have not already done so, please take the Strategic Planning Survey. It takes less than 5 minutes to complete.

https://yorkcuny.iad1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_0IM45iwftglWOuW

They say good things come in threes, that's at least one of the reasons why we are currently undertaking the development of our 2026-2031 Strategic Plan, our inaugural Academic Master Plan, and our MSCHE Self Study. Another reason for this work is that these plans are incredibly important to the work that we do to ensure optimal student and institutional outcomes. In their presentation at the October CUNY MSCHE-focused convening, [Heather Robinson](#), [James Salnave](#),

[Ed.D., Lidia Gonzalez](#) and [Lori Hoeffner, PhD](#) provided insight into this work with their presentation Synergies: Building Institutional Planning into the Self Study Process.

Last month I also had the opportunity to attend the college's first General Education Assessment Committee (GEAC) Symposium. Thank you to Prof. Phebe Kirkham (English) our GEAC Chair for her leadership and for Profs Virginia Thompson (Mathematics & Computer Science); Raquel Coy (English) and Carly Gieseler (Performing & Fine Arts) presenting on how they made use of GRAC findings in their disciplines and how results can be used at the program level. The marriage between General Education and Assessment will continue to be an important as it informs teaching practices and helps us to improve student outcomes.

Shared Governance

As you know, per our Charter committees shall report to the Senate at least once a semester; committees may also ask to be placed on the agenda. Thank you to the Curriculum, Library and Technology, and Instruction and Professional Development Committees for their presentations at the October Senate meeting. Once particular issue/concern that was shared by the Instruction and Professional Development Committee report was low number of students completing Student Evaluations of Teaching at the end of the semester. It was noted that there was more participation when it was a paper process. However, once it transitioned to an online process, there are less students completing the evaluations. I have asked the Office of Communications and Marketing to work with committee to develop a plan for outreach/communication.

Information Technology

I wish to extend a special thank you to Greg Vega, our interim CIO for facilitating a hands-on presentation on Copilot. Co-pilot is an AI-powered tool that helps to increase productivity, analyze data and assist with routine tasks. As you know the University will soon transition from CUNYFirst to Workday, an enterprise platform for HR, finance and other areas that is AI enriched as well. So, it is important to increase our AI IQ. As we prepare for Workday, as well as increase our AI IQ and skills, we will be hosting more professional development sessions for faculty and staff. More information will be forthcoming.

Our Loaner Laptop program for students is in full swing. Students can reserve laptops on a daily, weekly and monthly basis. For more information visit:

<https://www.york.cuny.edu/it/service-delivery-unit?activeAccordion=a50f27bd-978a-4047-907b-5b76eff256e0>

If February is the shortest month of the year, certainly October must be the longest, how else could we possibly fit all the events, activities and happenings included (and not included) in this monthly update. We even found time to come together for the worthy cause of raising awareness for Breast Cancer Awareness Month. What was to be a walk around the track was moved indoors due to the weather. But it was evident from the throng of walkers, and joy they brought to our hallways, that neither the rainy weather that day, nor a change in venue could dampen the York spirit. Thank you to Michelle Hardy for organizing the walk.

Halloween at York was all treats and no tricks. From the Mask to Andy from Toy Story to four Freda Kahlo look-alikes, our colleagues were feeling the holiday spirit. A special 'thank you' as well to Nichelle Jones from the Registrar's Office for her suggestion to hold a Pumpkin Decorating contest. The competition between 18 entries was tight, but a winner (Nilsa Watson) prevailed. I can't wait to see what next year brings.

For now, I look forward to seeing everyone at the State of the College Address on Thursday, November 13, 2025, at noon in 3D01.

JOIN OUR FOOD DRIVE

Be part of our campus effort to fight hunger and help make a difference for those affected by food insecurity on campus

What You Can Donate



Canned Goods:

Vegetables & beans, fruits, soup, canned meats (tuna, chicken, salmon, SPAM), canned pasta (ravioli or spaghetti), tomato sauce & paste.



Dry Goods: Rice, pasta, lentils and dried beans, instant mashed potatoes, stuffing mix and mac & cheese.



Baking & Breakfast Items:

Oatmeal, cereal, pancake mix & syrup, flour & sugar, cornbread or muffin mix, granola bars or breakfast bars.



Protein & Snacks: Peanut butter, trail mix, nuts & seeds, cracker

NOVEMBER 11-13, 2025

Contact info Nichole Acevedo
nacevedo@york.cuny.edu

Drop-off Points:

- 94 - 20 Guy R. Brewer Blvd entrance
- Liberty Ave entrance
- 160th Street entrance

Please participate in our donation programs at
<https://www.york.cuny.edu/mens-center/mens-center-calendar/canned-food-drive>