

Dear College Community,

It is said that when the roots are deep, there is no reason to fear the wind. And right now, there is indeed a serious wind blowing across this country. If you read the headlines from the past year, it often feels like the eye of the storm is hovering directly over higher education. But here at York, our roots are strong. This year, we proudly celebrate our 60th anniversary—six decades as a cornerstone of community revitalization and uplift in Southeast Queens. And not only has much happened over those 60 years; much has happened since my last monthly update to the college community.

Let me begin with a few quick announcements and appeals:

- Please come out and support your colleagues by attending the **Spring Faculty Forum**, where nursing faculty (Profs. Patricia Burke, Margarete Alexandre, and Stephanie Store) will discuss their work on Black women and health, past and present. March 5, 2026; 12:15 p.m.–1:45 p.m. AC-2M04
- We are fortunate to have a Charter that gives voice to our student body. Join them at the Student Government Association's **Monthly Town Hall**:  
**In-person:** March 5, 2026, from 12:00 PM–2:00 PM at the Atrium  
**Hybrid:** March 10, 2026, from 4:00 PM–6:00 PM in Room 1G04 and on Zoom (link to follow)
- Communications and Marketing is seeking the next star of the **Faculty in Motion** series, an Academic Affairs initiative highlighting the scholarly work of our faculty. Professor Julian Dean served as our inaugural feature, sharing his love for tragedy and sad movies. Watch his episode here: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3N\\_Cw3U4XFE](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3N_Cw3U4XFE).
- If you are interested in being featured, contact Stephannia at [sleaton@york.cuny.edu](mailto:sleaton@york.cuny.edu).
- **Save the Dates:**
  - Let's celebrate our scholars! **Dean's List Reception:** March 24, 2026 at 4 PM (Atrium)
  - Like the Emmys only better because we are recognizing our outstanding faculty! **YEmmy Awards:** April 30, 2026 at 6 PM (FDR)
  - Get ready to board the time machine! **Years of Service Employee Recognition:** May 6, 2026 at 3 PM (3D01)

### ***Five-Point Financial Recovery Plan Updates***

As you know, due to our status as a college of high concern, we have paused hiring except for positions that impact health, safety, or revenue generation. However, we

received a directive to begin searches for staff who fall under the Executive Compensation Plan (ECP). We currently have several interim staff in these roles, including the CIO, Dean of Health Sciences and Professional Programs, Dean of Business and Information Systems, Associate Provost, and Chief of Staff. Searches have begun for many of these positions. A search for a Director of Grants is also underway. We will also launch a search for our Director of Counseling.

### ***Increasing Enrollment and Retention***

Registration for Spring 2026 launched earlier than usual, giving us an opportunity to build early momentum. As of Friday, February 27, 2026, and with FORM A nearing finalization, we have 6,279 students enrolled—compared to 5,964 last year at this time. This represents a 5.5% increase. Thank you to every office across Enrollment Management and Retention, faculty and staff advisors, and the Division of Student Affairs.

After City College, we have demonstrated the largest enrollment increase among senior colleges, and our largest Spring increase since 2023. Continuing student enrollment remained slightly below last year's numbers, but we saw increases in Transfers, Readmits, New Graduates, Graduate Readmits, SEEK, and High School students (largest increase). We experienced a 19% decline in freshmen, making it clear that we must do more in that space and increase efforts to enroll degree-seeking students. Also we need to do more to convert high school students to matriculated degree seeking students.

Over the coming weeks, IT—in partnership with Communications & Marketing—will refresh and improve user experience across several prospective and current student webpages. VP Rivera and her team are also meeting with department chairs and faculty advisors to address advisement needs as we approach a new registration season.

We have launched the York Community College Partnership Program (YCCPP), a collaboration between York College and all CUNY community colleges as well as Nassau Community College. Through this partnership, York admissions advisors serve in residence on partner campuses, speaking to students individually or in groups. Liaisons are assigned to each college to ensure consistency and typically visit twice a week for about four hours. They work closely with Transfer Coordinators to promote our presence, advertise programs, and support seamless transfer pathways.

Just in time for registration, the Division of Enrollment and Retention will launch Advisorgram, a publication that will provide faculty advisors with updates on new courses, curricular changes, and similar items.

This past week we also hosted a York Opportunity Network (YON) Breakfast. Representatives from five of the seven ASAP and College Discovery programs attended. Thank you to SEEK and ASAP leadership, students, and our deans for outstanding presentations and robust conversation.

We continue to operate our virtual registration and advisement platform, VREADY, launched this past fall to increase accessibility for students.

- Number of sessions offered: 24
- Students seen: 1,914 (1,367 unduplicated)
- Students registered: 1,064 (77.83%)

Although survey response rates were low, the vast majority of students rated their experience as “excellent.”

VREADY is up and running for Fall 2026 registration and over the past week they have seen a solid presence of students interested in transferring to York. For Spring dates check out: <https://www.york.cuny.edu/enrollment-retention-management/events> or the college calendar at <https://www.york.cuny.edu/events>.

As a reminder: **Fall registration opens March 2** for priority groups (such as CCSD and athletes) and **March 3** for all others.

### ***Grow Auxiliary Enterprises***

Sandra Velez continues to improve operations related to room reservations, ensure policy adherence, and pursue auxiliary opportunities. With the reopening of our Performing Arts Center (PAC) slated for early 2027, we are developing a staffing plan that includes a director/manager, technical staff, custodial staff, and event personnel. Sandra and VP Rios are consulting with other campuses that have performing arts centers to help guide our planning.

### ***Increase Fundraising Revenue***

Fundraising directly supports student scholarships, academic programs, and budget needs. On CUNYTuesday and throughout FY26, we raised **\$119,099**—a significant increase from prior years:

- FY23: \$39,785
- FY24: \$86,929
- FY25: \$97,169

As of December 31, 2025, our overall CUNYTuesday fundraising totaled **\$262,111**, with 241 gifts from 293 donors—120 of them first-time donors. My sincere thanks to our Institutional Advancement and Communications & Marketing teams and to all who donated.

***Hot off the Presses!*** We announced 30 full-tuition scholarships for students pursuing graduate degrees in Aviation Management. These scholarships are funded by the Port Authority of NY & NJ and the private Terminal developers at JFK. The application is available at <https://www.york.cuny.edu/scholarshp/jfkr>.

### ***Relaunching Workforce Development / Continuing Education***

Under the leadership of Dina Zagari-Limandri, we have advanced efforts to launch courses through our redesigned Workforce Development / Continuing Education program, YorkNOW. Classes are expected to begin in late March or early April.

### ***Governmental Relations and Advocacy***

In January, we hosted our Annual Legislative Breakfast, attended by key elected officials. We shared updates on priorities including the Academic Village, academic program development, Strategic and Academic Master Planning, and preparation for Middle States Reaccreditation in 2027. It was inspiring to see our SGA Vice President, Faith Ibeh, serve as emcee. The following week, we joined fellow CUNY institutions at LaGuardia Community College for the Queens Legislative Breakfast.

In February, more than 15 students and chaperones traveled to Albany for the Black, Hispanic, and Asian Legislative Caucus. I also attended a private dinner with the Governor at her residence and sat on a panel sponsored by Senator Leroy Comrie and Assemblywoman Alicia Hyndman focused on the Gaming Industry. I spoke about York's role in the development of the Introduction to Gaming 101 course for Resorts World and the value of industry partnerships in expanding career pathways for our students.

You would have been incredibly proud of our student attendees—truly. They engaged elected officials, attended workshops, and networked with CUNY peers. Our SGA President, Akkeem Polack, represented us beautifully as University Student Trustee and Chair of the University Student Senate. Additionally, SEEK students Natasha and Michael were selected to speak about their experiences at the CUNY Luncheon. This year also marks the SEEK program's 60th anniversary. York will host its own celebration later this spring.

This past week, I testified at the Queens Borough hearing. Our FY27 requests include funding for:

- a Professional Stock Trading Room
- a Healthcare Professional Simulation and Training Center
- an Immersive Language Lab

I also requested discretionary support to relaunch the York Presidential Lecture Series.

We have also applied to participate in the second wave of the CUNY Beyond program. Career Development now reports to Interim Associate Provost Tim Paglione, and we have begun systematizing the collection of internship placement data.

Thanks to Congressman Meeks, we secured \$2.1 million in federal funding to prepare the next generation of STEM environmental researchers and empower underrepresented students through tech-based STEM education.

Another exciting development: Senator Comrie and Assemblywoman Hyndman have introduced a bill to rename Jamaica Station to include York College. Special kudos to Professor Hsu, who first proposed the idea at a Senate meeting in 2024. In addition, the Jamaica Neighborhood Plan—supported by community advocates and spearheaded by NYC Council Deputy Speaker Dr. Nantasha Williams—will revitalize Southeast Queens with York firmly at its center. And the Reimagined (and co named) Jamaica Station will bring the city to our doorstep—literally.

## **Additional Updates**

### **Facilities and Campus Environment**

We continue to make improvements across campus, working toward a physical environment we can all be proud of. Painters, laborers, tradespeople, and custodians are hard at work refreshing ceiling tiles and hallways in the academic core.

The Admissions Office has moved to the 2nd floor near the Welcome Center, and the Advisement Center has moved to the 1st floor—completing a student business hub that offers seamless movement between Financial Aid, the Registrar, the Bursar, and Advisement.

The Bathroom Project is underway. Final touches are being added to our new stand-alone food pantry, which will relieve some of the demand on the Women's

Center, as well as to the clothing closet—championed by our Student Government Association—that will provide students with free professional attire.

Our long-awaited Performing Arts Center (opening Spring 2027) will feature a 1,315-seat theater and an intimate 150-seat theater. In January, I had the opportunity to give chairpersons and elected officials a guided tour following the legislative breakfast.

We understand your concerns regarding pedestrian and vehicular safety. The NYC Department of Transportation has installed speed cameras and electronic marquees on Guy R. Brewer Blvd. We will continue advocating for additional safety measures around campus.

**Hot off the Presses!** The NYC Committee on Educational Policy voted to relocate the Queens High School for the Sciences at York to a new site in Queens. This presents us with opportunities to strengthen our programs, expand offerings, and increase enrollment.

### **Governance / Charter**

Information about upcoming Senate meeting dates and materials is available at: <https://www.york.cuny.edu/senate>. Please be reminded that Charter/Governance committees are expected to provide at least one report to the Senate this academic year. If you did not present in the fall, please be prepared to present in the coming weeks.

Our February Senate meeting was held virtually. Per the Open Meetings Law (NY Public Officers Law, Section 7), public bodies may not conduct official business remotely except under very narrow circumstances that do not apply here. As a result, the meeting was solely for information-sharing; no deliberation or voting occurred.

In addition to reports from the Faculty Caucus Chair, Student Caucus Chair, and myself, VP Hoeffner presented our new Mission, Vision, and Values; and VP Rios provided updates on our financial status, NYCFC expenditures, and facilities projects. More information can be found here:

<https://www.york.cuny.edu/administrative/financial-planning-and-budget/budget>.

There was a brief discussion on CUNY Body-Worn Camera initiative by Chief Assman. We will be scheduling special Friday-virtual meeting to discuss the new initiative and provide the college community with an opportunity to ask questions

in the coming weeks. In the interim, a FAQ can be found at :  
<https://www.cuny.edu/about/administration/offices/publicsafety/body-worn-cameras/>.

While I am here, thank you to Chief Assman and his entire team for making the rounds to departments to do customized safety trainings.

### **Institutional Effectiveness**

Our assessment and planning efforts remain critical to York's future. This month, the Strategic Planning Committee hosted multiple forums with faculty, staff, and students, followed by a final college-wide session. Thank you to our tri-chairs—Prof. Heather Robinson, Dean James Salnave, and Prof. Lidia Gonzalez—for their leadership, and thank you to all who participated. Your feedback is invaluable and will directly shape our Strategic Plan. In the coming weeks, the plan will be refined based on this input, and we will ask you to vote on the final Strategic Plan title.

Thank you as well for the robust participation in the MSCHE Self-Study Process and for the strong engagement in the Academic Master Planning (AMP) process. AMP will align our academic programs with employment, enrollment, and educational trends and guide decision-making over the next five years. It will also strengthen our case to revitalize the Academic Village. I look forward to continuing this transparent, collaborative, and data-informed work—marked by the spirited dialogue that defines York College.

**Hot Off the Presses!** Our focus on workforce development and student outcomes is right on time. This week, MSCHE announced a collaboration with the Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities (NWCCU), the WASC Senior College and University Commission (WSCUC), and the National Accreditation Commission (NAC). Together, they will deploy NAC's AIHub platform to align educational programs with labor market demand, streamline Workforce Pell eligibility reviews, and coordinate more effectively with state agencies. Leaders from the accrediting bodies note that this collaboration will help institutions respond more quickly to workforce needs while maintaining quality.

The full article is available here:

<https://www.msche.org/2026/02/27/four-national-accreditors-unite-to-accelerate-support-for-workforce-education-and-state-economic-development/>

Finally, as we leave Black History Month and enter Women's History Month, I leave you with the words of Audre Lorde:

“Sometimes we are blessed with being able to choose the time,  
and the arena, and the manner of our revolution,  
but more usually we must do battle where we are standing.”

May we continue to stand for, next to, and because of our students.

President Schrader