Celebrating the Class of 2022
Mayor Michelle Wu delivers Commencement Address

ALSO IN THIS ISSUE
Breaking Barriers
HOPE Initiative empowers Black males and Latinos at BHCC
BHCC Breaks Ground on New Student Success Center

The College’s first new building in a decade expands student services and learning commons with a climate-responsive design.

Read more on page 17.
Dear Bunker Hill Community College Friends and Partners,

In the past three years, it has become almost cliché to refer to our times as “like no other.” Yet as we reflect on the 2021-22 academic year, it was unlike any that have come before. As we inched back toward normalcy in the fall, the pandemic reasserted itself yet again in the form of the Omicron variant in the winter. Thanks to the lessons we learned in the first year of the pandemic, and the hard work of so many, including our Transition Team, we were able to adapt. We masked, we tested, we vaccinated, and we moved forward, together.

This spring, we took another step toward normalcy: BHCC hosted its first in-person commencement in three years with Boston Mayor Michelle Wu as our Commencement Speaker. I am so proud of all our graduates and eager to see the mark they will make on the world.

The world needs community colleges more than ever at this moment to empower students to surmount the real challenges they face. Mayor Wu reminded us in her commencement address that the founding mission statement of BHCC in 1973 stated “the College exists for its students and its community.” Whether it is an associate degree student entering the workforce or transferring to a four-year institution, an aspiring small business owner taking a course at our new Entrepreneurship center, or a high school student gaining college credits through Early College, that original mission remains fundamental.

On behalf of the BHCC community, I am grateful for your continued support of our mission.

With optimism and gratitude,

Pam

Pam Y. Eddinger, Ph.D.
President

U.S. Secretary of Labor Walsh Appoints President Eddinger as Chairperson to the Advisory Committee on Apprenticeship

The U.S. Department of Labor (DOL) announced the appointments of 29 members to serve on the Advisory Committee on Apprenticeship, and provide advice and recommendations related to its Registered Apprenticeship Program. Registered Apprenticeships are proven models of apprenticeship that has been validated by the DOL or a State Apprenticeship Agency. Secretary of Labor Marty Walsh appointed President Eddinger to chair the committee.

The advisory committee promotes greater awareness of the benefits of apprenticeship, fosters increased alignment between apprenticeship opportunities and workforce and education systems, expands apprenticeship into new industries and occupations, and ensures equity for underrepresented populations.

“The Advisory Committee on Apprenticeship represents the combined expertise of leaders across industry and the workforce sector. They will use their collective voices to inspire innovative apprenticeship and training strategies to boost our economy and build an equitable workforce,” said Secretary Walsh. “The advisory committee’s members will work to generate expansion opportunities for Registered Apprenticeship and to guide efforts to deliver a system that is accessible to all, including Black and brown Americans, immigrants and women.”

“Apprenticeships are a proven learn-while-you-earn method for equipping workers with the skills and knowledge they need to compete and succeed in a growing economy,” said President Eddinger. “While working with Secretary Walsh and the members of the National Advisory Committee on Apprenticeship, we can amplify the merits of Registered Apprenticeships and highlight how they can strengthen our nation’s workforce and ensure that underrepresented populations share in our country’s prosperity.”

The committee comprises leaders from across the Registered Apprenticeship system including employers, labor management organizations, community colleges, and other institutions. Members serve two- or three-year terms to advise the Secretary on ways to promote greater awareness on the benefits of Registered Apprenticeship, increase their alignment with workforce and education systems, expand Registered Apprenticeship into new industries and occupations, and expand equity for underrepresented populations.

Apprenticeships must come with a pathway for advancement and be good for our communities of color and lift our communities from poverty. —President Eddinger

With gratitude,

Pam

Pam Y. Eddinger, Ph.D.
President
Movement Makers
President Pam Eddinger was named among the Power 50 “Movement Makers” by the Boston Business Journal.

The Boston Business Journal (BBJ) Power 50 recognizes extraordinary individuals within the Greater Boston business community who are taking a stand, creating change, and taking actionable steps to work together to help Boston grow and be a place for equity, inclusion and diverse point of views.

“It is an honor to be recognized among this distinguished group of professionals,” said Pam Eddinger. “My role as president of BHCC is to think more strategically about how we make our institutions hubs for equitable change that best serve our students and our communities.”

The 2021 Movement Makers highlighted not only those holding positions of traditional power but also those leading from the pack itself, effecting change in communities across the Greater Boston economy and building a better, more prosperous equal area for all.

“Each of the people on this list is a force in our community and an example of the power that comes from the incredible and diverse talent throughout the region,” said Carolyn M. Jones, BBJ market president and publisher.

Women & Power
The Commonwealth Institute (TCI) in partnership with the Boston Globe Magazine ranked Bunker Hill Community College number 38 among the Top 100 Women-Led Businesses in Massachusetts.

President Pam Eddinger was listed among women power players driving the Massachusetts economy. Honorees included leaders from various industries including healthcare, education, financial institutions, non-profits and construction.

In an interview with Globe Magazine, President Eddinger shared how she has built and supported successful teams, even amid crises, by focusing on the people who work there. When asked “How do you build resilience into the core of your company?” President Eddinger promoted the importance of formalizing family-friendly policies.

“For the longest time we have said, ‘Oh, we want to be a family-friendly workplace.’ We’ve actually put some of those things on paper so that is not just talk, right? So that when we implement it, we would have some form of uniformity of policy that everybody can count on. This time it would be real. It wouldn’t be just like at the list of whether your supervisor is nice or not.”

Bunker Hill Community College Offers Workforce Training Through “Be Mass Competitive” Initiative

BHCC joined Roxbury Community College (RCC) in taking part in the new “Be Mass Competitive” workforce training initiative. The program is a joint effort from the Massachusetts Association of Community Colleges (MACC) and the Massachusetts Competitive Partnership (MACP), a non-profit coalition of chief executive officers representing the Commonwealth’s largest employers, including Bank of America, Boston Scientific, Eversource, John Hancock, The Kraft Group, Liberty Mutual, Mass General Brigham, Pfizer Investments, Rapid7, State Street Corporation, Suffolk, Vertex Pharmaceuticals, and Wayfair.

The initiative seeks to support and advance the successes of persons of color by providing pathways at MACP companies committed to building a diverse workforce. Candidates receive specialized training and career placement services leading to upwardly mobile employment opportunities at some of the Commonwealth’s largest employers.

BHCC and RCC offered up to 12 weeks of Customer Service or General Professional Administrative training at no cost to participants. Participants received a professional job coaching throughout their training and into employment, and upon completion of the program earned full-time job offers at MACP employers.

Removing Barriers for Foreign-Trained Healthcare Professionals

The Welcome Back Center at BHCC is the state’s only career navigation program for foreign-trained healthcare professionals. The Center has worked with nurses trained in 25 countries since its opening in 2012. In 2020, the Center responded to the COVID-19 pandemic by moving services and courses online and offered a Skills Refresher Class for Welcome Back Center Nurses.

By offering remote support, BHCC’s Welcome Back Center is positioned to better address the acute shortages in nursing professionals seen at hospitals across the state, particularly those in Central and Western Massachusetts.

“The COVID-19 pandemic motivated people to want to work in healthcare,” says Cohn. “There is so much movement within the field right now that has allowed us to expand our services, and has made it simpler for internationally trained nurses living in all areas of Massachusetts to access our services.”
Chiharu Nakata
Accounting and Data Analytics major

Chiharu Nakata found the opportunity to practice her English, and gain a greater understanding of American society through her work at the DISH Food Pantry. Born and raised in China, Nakata studied sociology in Japan. She worked in business development and translation services for Japanese companies for over a decade before coming to Boston in 2019 as an English program student. Recognizing the value and quality of a BHCC education, Nakata enrolled at BHCC the next year, double majoring in accounting and data analytics.

“When I first came to Boston and BHCC, I was surprised by the diversity I found within the community,” says Nakata. “This was very different from my experiences working and living in Tokyo, and I was looking for a work opportunity that would allow me to meet different people.”

Nakata was impressed that the College pantry delivered food to students during the pandemic, and reached out to DISH Coordinator Molly Hansen about opportunities available.

“My work at the DISH may seem simple, but for me, helping students gain energy and strength so they can focus on their studies is very meaningful,” says Nakata.

She’s also enjoyed working and learning the views of people with different backgrounds and cultures than her own.

“I will always remember my first day working at the DISH, and how innovative it is in meeting the diverse needs of its students,” says Nakata. “The DISH is a warm and friendly place—just like home.”

In the spring of 2022, 15,277 pounds were donated, 258 new students directly to their homes. While on-campus pickups for DISH users have resumed, the DISH continues to serve over 200 students through a delivery service.

"Some students prefer to pick up their orders if they are on campus for classes, or if they live outside of our 10-mile delivery radius,” says Hansen. “For others, it may be an emergency situation where the student needs products from the pantry, but there is no delivery option available that week. In some cases, we may have multiple users from the same household who choose to pick up their orders together.”

Always committed to providing a safe and dignified response to food insecurity, the DISH obtained funding this spring for the purchase and installation of refrigerated smart lockers from commercial automation company Quadient. The new lockers have been named DISH & Dash Lockers, and allow users to pick up their orders outside of the DISH’s operating hours including weekends.

Providing flexibility in on-campus pickups allows for delivery spots to be available for students who cannot come to campus and for the DISH to serve more students. In just the first two months following the installation of the DISH & Dash lockers, 177 students used the lockers to schedule on-campus pickups.

While similar lockers are used by many educational institutions for mail and delivery services, the DISH at BHCC is among the first college pantries to use such lockers for pantry orders. Locker pickup is integrated into the DISH’s SmartChoice ordering system. The experience is similar to a grocery store pickup for the student, where they provide a code to pick up their order and can share that code with a friend or family member if they prefer.

In order to succeed, you need to eat well,” says Kathleen O’Neill, Director, Single Stop. "We have found that stigma is the number one reason people do not ask for help when needed..."

The DISH also offers holiday items, Thanksgiving meal essentials, and Passover kits featuring matzohball soup and crackers.

In addition to food items, the DISH offers other products of daily living. “Cleaning products are extraordinarily popular at the DISH,” says Hansen, who developed a Spring Cleaning kit for students in April. “These include sponges, dish detergent, laundry, dishwasher pods, and other expensive cleaning products.”

Other popular items are baby food and feminine hygiene products, such as pads and tampons.

Throughout the pandemic in 2021 and 2022, the DISH continued its partnership with New England-based staffing agency SnapChef to deliver orders to BHCC students directly to their homes. While on-campus pickups for DISH students do not ask for help when needed..."
JPMorgan Chase Invests $500K in Student Career Success

To establish a baseline of student and service needs in the first year, the BHCC Workforce and Economic Development Division, with support from the Harvard Project of Workforce research and fellowship program, conducted interviews with more than 75 students, over 30 faculty and staff, 15 employer partners, alumni focus groups and six partner institutions. The research also included 287 assessments from students receiving career counseling from BHCC. The project’s overarching goal is to prepare students for equitable workforce entry and success by making career planning an integral part of the student experience. CPIP’s role in the "Ethnography of Work" (EoW) expansion focuses on faculty training, direct faculty/student support, and solidifying an administrative structure to enable long-term growth. Ethnographies of Work originated at Guttmann Community College, which is part of the City University of New York public college system, as a year-long social science course and adapted for community colleges and high schools nationwide. “Bunker Hill Community College is one of the most powerful institutions in Massachusetts and is committed to helping their students, and all community college students, obtain the education, skills, and experiences necessary to succeed in the labor market,” said Rafia Zahir-Uddin, Vice President, global philanthropy, New England, JPMorgan Chase. “We are thrilled to continue our investment in this program and enable more BHCC students to access high-wage, in-demand jobs.” In addition, CPIP 2.0 will deepen connections to the local labor market through increased and leveled employer and community-based organization partnerships, including employer and alumni advisory engagement opportunities.

Congresswoman Pressley Visits BHCC to Deliver $1M in Federal Funding for Boston’s Tuition-Free Community College Program

Congresswoman Ayanna Pressley (MA-07) visited BHCC to celebrate the $1M in federal community project funding she secured to expand the City of Boston’s Tuition-Free Community College program. Rep. Pressley was joined by Boston Mayor Michelle Wu, BHCC President Pam Eddinger, and BHCC students for a campus tour and a press conference to highlight how the funding will help address the college affordability crisis locally as she continues her calls for President Biden to cancel student debt. Pressley secured this federal funding for Boston in the government spending package that passed Congress and was signed into law by President Biden in March. In total, Rep. Pressley secured over $84M for 10 community projects across the MA 7th Congressional District, capping off nearly a year of advocacy by Rep. Pressley and local leaders.

Cummings Foundation Awards $100K Toward Equitable Post-Pandemic Recovery Program

The Cummings Foundation awarded BHCC $100K over the next two years towards funding to contribute to a just and equitable post-pandemic recovery through the Rapid Recovery and Reemployment (R3) program that allows students to study over a shorter period, develop skills in a field and earn an industry-recognized credential, which makes them employable quicker. The R3 Program at BHCC is a unique initiative that allows students or community members impacted by the COVID-19 economic downturn to get back in the game with financially supported training. An Employment Placement Specialist leads this program, and eligible participants gain access to full tuition and materials scholarships, as well as a stipend for successful attendance and completion. Students who are unemployed or demonstrate financial need will be considered first for the R3 program. “With this generous support, we can meet urgent workforce needs by placing trained individuals with local employers in the diverse communities we serve. It is a win-win for students and the local economy,” said Dean of Workforce and Economic Development, Kristen McKenna. The Bunker Hill Community College Foundation, Inc. is one of 140 local nonprofits to receive grants through Cummings Foundation’s $25 Million Grant Program that supports Massachusetts nonprofits based in areas where the Cummings Foundation owns commercial properties. “We aim to help meet the needs of people in all segments of our local community,” said Cummings Foundation executive director Joel Swets. “It is the incredible organizations we fund, however, that do the actual daily work to empower our neighbors, educate our children, fight for equity, and so much more.” BHCC was chosen from a total of 590 applicants during a competitive review process. The college previously received funding from the Cummings Foundation in 2017 to support the C-Town Business Pathways program.

BHCC Wins National Marketing Award

BHCC’s Integrated Marketing and Communications division brought home a Bronze Paragon Award from the National Council for Marketing and Public Relations for the computer-generated illustration “Internship Pipeline Lessens Equity Gap” featured in the Spring/Summer 2021 issue of BHCC Magazine. Paragon Awards recognize outstanding achievement in design and communication at community and technical colleges.

Integrating the study of work throughout the college experience

An ethnographic approach to workforce research

Watch the Ethnographies of Work video at bhcc.edu/magazine

BHCC Foundation thanks the Cummings Foundation. Pictured (l-r) is Kristen McKenna, Dean of Workforce and Economic Development, Certified Nursing Assistant student Vienna Erazo, and Professor Latvia Johnson.

"SWIA is a wonderful organization, helping the community college population break the cycle of family poverty in Massachusetts by promoting pathways to economic independence. BHCC was chosen from a total of 590 applicants during a competitive review process. The college previously received funding from the Cummings Foundation in 2017 to support the C-Town Business Pathways program."
Pao Arts Center Celebrates 5 Years of Creativity and Culture in Chinatown

Pao Arts Center in Boston’s Chinatown celebrated its five-year anniversary in May with an outdoor community block-party-style celebration at Mary Hoo Soo Park on the Rose Kennedy Greenway in Boston. BHCC and the Boston Chinatown Neighborhood Center (BCNC) partnered to create Pao Arts Center in 2017 as the neighborhood’s first community-based arts, cultural, and education center. The anniversary celebration featured the opening of the “YEAR OF THE TIGER” installation by New York-based artist Cheryl Wing-Zi Wong, commissioned by the Greenway Conservancy, and performances by Wah Lum Academy and Jennifer Lin and dancers, and BHCC student and alumni musicians Minhua Chen, Elgin Lee, Ba Pham, Patricia Seun, and Yu Wang, accompanied by Elgin Lee, poet Chen Chen, dancers Chavi Bansal, Il-Chan and Flora Hyoin Kim Han, and musician Anju.

On Thursday, May 26, 2022, BHCC held its first in-person graduation ceremony in three years with Boston Mayor Michelle Wu addressing graduates as keynote speaker and recipient of the College’s Presidential Distinguished Service Award for her advocacy on behalf of Boston students and their access to education and essential services, as well as critical initiatives such as paid parental leave, healthcare equity, and gender equity. The award is given annually to a leader in Greater Boston who exemplifies service to the BHCC community and to the communities it serves.
Bunker Hill is an incredible college—dedicated to creating opportunities, and opening doors, for all its students,” Mayor Wu said to gathered students, faculty, and staff. “But it is an even more incredible community. I have heard from students who came here afraid that their past performance would determine their future opportunities... And in every case, no matter your situation, I know that, here, you were told: Let us know what you need in order to learn. Let us help you accomplish your goals.”

BHCC President Pam Eddinger presided over the ceremony in which 1,299 graduates were awarded an associate degree or certificate. “If you use your power to actualize your own potential, if you use your power to affirm your own dignity, then you can reach across to your neighbor and join your power to theirs,” Eddinger told graduates. “We rise, together.”

Professor of Biology and Chemistry Libby Dunphy gave the faculty address to the graduating class. “Today...you should be proud of yourself. You have earned this,” Dunphy said. “I hope you know that you are an inspiration to me. It is a pleasure to teach students who are hard-working, serious, and above-all curious.”

In addition to Wu, two other awards were presented at the ceremony. This year’s Trustees’ Distinguished Service Award was presented by Board of Trustees Vice Chair B. Kelly Cameron to the co-chairs of the College’s ReOpen Task Force, Transition Team, and Mental Health Commission, each of which were deeply involved in planning and policy-making at the college during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Eddinger also presented College Student Government Association President Chase Baker with the President’s Leadership Award, given annually to a student who exemplifies leadership at the College. “As we face our next challenges, don’t forget that you and you alone—not family, not social expectations—define what constitutes your success,” Baker said. “And don’t be surprised if that changes throughout your career. Whatever the future may hold, now is the time for celebration! You should all be immensely proud of what you have achieved.”

View bhcc.edu/magazine for more Commencement and Ceremony Highlights.

THE BHCC CLASS OF 2022
Bunker Hill Community College is the youngest and the largest of the 15 Community Colleges in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. The College serves nearly 18,000 students per year, including 600 international students from 94 countries, speaking more than 75 languages. The graduating class of 2022 is 1299 strong:
- More than 35% of graduates received Associate of Arts degrees
- Almost 50% of graduates received Associate of Science degrees
- Nearly 15% of graduates received certificates

PHOTO: CITY OF BOSTON/MAYOR’S OFFICE

Above: President Eddinger awards Mayor Wu with the President’s Distinguished Service Award.
Left: Co-Chairs of The COVID-19 Leadership Group Nuri Chandler-Smith, Steve Roller, and Melissa Holter accept the Trustee’s Distinguished Service Award on behalf of their committees.

Right: SGA President Chase Baker receives the President’s Leadership Award at Commencement.

Faculty Speaker Elizabeth Dunphy snaps a photo of graduates from the stage.
Pam Eddinger (PE):
During the campaign and since taking office, you’ve set out a vision that’s changed the way many of us have thought about the meaning of public good in our city, about the social infrastructure that our students and communities rely on to thrive. For example, you’ve proposed a fare-free MBTA, a Green New Deal and rent stabilization. How are you working to accomplish these priorities, and how can our students get involved in making that happen?

Michelle Wu (MW):
While we’ve made great progress in making our city work for everyone, change doesn’t happen overnight. We’ve eliminated fares for two years on three MBTA bus lines, launched a Rent Stabilization Advisory Committee to address Boston’s housing crisis, and launched a Green New Deal for Boston Public Schools.
As someone who never saw myself in government, I would advise students to get involved with whichever social causes and hot-button issues interest them. Listen to the people who will be most impacted by community issues and never be afraid to ask questions.

PE:
Talk about your vision of education. We know you have two boys who are growing up in Boston Public Schools, and you yourself have attended college and graduate school here. What is important to you in your boys’ education, and how does that influence your vision of K12 and higher education for Boston residents?
This interview was conducted prior to the announcement of the MBTA Orange Line shutdown.

PE:

MW: COVID-19 has forever changed our city, and I’m forever grateful for how we all came together in the face of adversity. As we move out of the pandemic, we have a once-in-a-generation opportunity to make transformational investments in the City using American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds. By investing in equity, climate justice, jobs and health, we can improve this city for generations to come.

PM:

The City has a long-standing commitment to fund free community college for qualified Boston Public Schools graduates. We enroll about a third of BPS graduates in an average year. What are other areas of collaboration you see between the City and the College?

MW:

We have a lot of work to do in making higher education affordable for the average Boston resident. In my budget, I’ve proposed $6 million in ARPA funding to expand the tuition-free community college and workforce training programs of the 21st century.

PM:

Early college education is one example of how fruitful city-college collaboration can be. I’d want to focus further on areas that underline the core tenet of community college: creating opportunities and opening doors for students of all backgrounds.

PE:

Across the United States and locally in New England, you are celebrated as a “first”—the first Asian American woman mayor, and city council president—amongst the many accolades. Would you reflect on your journey and tell us what is joyful and what is bitter/sweet? What would you tell our students who are traveling that road of being a “first” now?

MW:

Throughout my time in politics, I’ve heard people saying there’s no way, it’s impossible—whether it’s taking on big policy challenges, or getting elected as a woman, or a person of color, or a younger candidate. It has certainly been difficult at many points in my journey and tell us what is joyful and what is bitter/sweet? What would you tell our students who are traveling that road of being a “first” now? I would say to be true to yourself and you will be representing your entire community to reshape the future.

PM:

The last two years with the COVID pandemic must have been tried by fire for you as a new mayor. With the improving conditions, how do you see the City recovering? Do you have a set of priorities to guide us into brighter times?

MW:

The City government is special because every day is an opportunity to make a difference for our city’s families, in ways big and small. My vision for Boston is that we should be the greenest city in America, a city for everyone where families can thrive.

PM:

Breaking Ground in Charlestown

BHCC broke ground on a new Student Success Center this spring, the first new building in more than a decade and the first of several planned upgrades for the almost 56-year-old Charlestown campus. The building project is part of a statewide effort of the Division of Capital Asset Management and Maintenance (DCAMM) to invest in and renew public higher education infrastructure.

When complete, the Student Success Center will be home to the College Library & Learning Commons, academic advising, the major of whom are students of color and are first generation college students.

The three-story, 56,500-square-foot building will be constructed on the West Lawn of the College’s Charlestown Campus. Based on Passive House principles, the building’s exterior enhances the college’s visual engagement with the community. The building is designed to be Net Zero Energy-ready, integrating a geothermal well field on campus. It is engineered in anticipation of a future photovoltaic array. Additionally, the building uses a highly insulated, high-performing envelope and anticipates projected sea-level change and the rise in base flood elevation by shifting all critical building systems, including the emergency generator, to roof level.

The building’s planning, engineering, and construction are led by DCAMM and BOND Building and Construction. NBIJ is the project architect.
When the COVID-19 pandemic hit in the spring of 2020, small businesses were severely impacted. Even after the initial round of closures, the cost of dealing with wave after wave of the virus, new regulations, adaptation to remote work and new modes of meeting customers, many businesses found themselves unsure of where to turn or how to plan for what comes next. Nowhere was this truer than in the City of Chelsea, Massachusetts: the city’s unemployment rate early in the pandemic was more than 25%. And, while no statistics are available for Chelsea, an estimated 44% of all small businesses closed throughout the adjacent city of Boston.

But even as COVID shuttered Chelsea’s businesses—and those in neighboring communities like East Boston, Everett and Revere—BHCC was already planning for the region’s comeback. This summer, thanks to a $377,000 congressional grant secured with the help of Senator Edward Markey, BHCC will launch the Enterprise Center for Entrepreneurship and Training (ECET) at the College’s Chelsea campus. The first of its kind in Chelsea, the center will provide needed guidance to small businesses in Chelsea, Everett and neighboring communities with an emphasis on Hispanic-owned and operated enterprises. It will provide assistance in multiple languages through online and in-person consultation, and workshops that address talent recruitment, career readiness, business planning, and innovation planning.

“The Enterprise Center for Entrepreneurship and Training represents the kind of workforce development that community colleges like BHCC do best: providing a space that is open to all in the community, from students to workers to small business owners, to learn, to exchange ideas and best practices, and skill up so that they can launch and grow their businesses in their communities,” said BHCC Dean of Workforce and Economic Development Kristen McKenna. “As a federally-designated Hispanic Serving Institution with a long history of partnership with the City of Chelsea, we are uniquely positioned to work with small businesses in the largest Hispanic community in Suffolk County.” Planning for the ECET began in late 2020 when a group formed to complete the Chelsea-Everett Small Business Needs Assessment, a comprehensive study of small business activity and opportunities in those communities. Partners in the group were the Metropolitan Area Planning Council, the cities of Chelsea and Everett and College leadership, including Dean of Workforce and Economic Development Kristen McKenna, Chelsea Campus Associate Provost Alice Murillo, and Dean of Professional Studies Austin Gilliland.

What the group found was a significant base of more than 2,000 small businesses across Everett and Chelsea—in sectors as diverse as restaurants and stores to logistics companies and law firms—with a collective $5 billion in total sales volume. Their research found that what those businesses wanted was access to expertise, training, and advice on best practices, and to a pipeline of skilled, educated and motivated workers. These are exactly what the ECET aims to provide.

When the center launches later this year, it will offer two workshops. One will be an overview of entrepreneurship aimed at individuals who hope to launch their own businesses someday. The other offering will be a crash course in marketing, human resources and planning across industries.

Stay tuned for more information about the ECET, its grand opening later this year, programming and more! Sign up for the Division of Workforce and Economic Development newsletter at bhcc.edu/workforce.
The Halting Oppressive Pathways through Education (HOPE) Initiative at BHCC was launched in 2017 with the goal of examining and eliminating the social, institutional, and academic barriers that prevent males of color from reaching their full potential. The project was started by a group of BHCC faculty, staff, and administrators who were concerned about the empowerment of males of color on campus. Conversations from that group carried into the inaugural Center for Equity and Cultural Wealth Institute that spring and into a series of Think Days that included representatives from across the College community. HOPE has been under the leadership of Interim Director Evans Erilus since Summer 2021 and it has grown into a well-resourced program with 11 full-time staff members, part-time staff member positions, and student leaders.

“So much about being in college is about mattering. We look for opportunities to make students feel connected to the College, and to create that sense of belonging so that the students feel they are part of something.”

–Evans Erilus
By involving students and staff members from across the College, the HOPE Initiative is a model for breaking down institutional silos.”

-Evans Erilus

"The services provided by the HOPE Initiative are grounded in the philosophy of putting student voices and experiences at the forefront. HOPE is an asset-based, student-centered program that concentrates on the gifts of Black and Latino males and the ways in which societal and higher education must shift to better recognize these gifts."

The dedicated faculty, staff, and student ambassadors that run the HOPE Initiative provide resources and networks for students to navigate college both on and off campus, taking a multilayered approach that includes multiple touchpoints with students by both peer mentors and professional staff. “It’s a real labor of love,” says Erilus, who was brought into the discussion on Black and Brown men through the HOPE Think Day series by HOPE Co-Leads Carlos Maynard and Nuri Chandler-Smith, and has been with HOPE every step of the way. “So much about being in college is about mattering. We look for opportunities to make students feel connected to the College, and to create that sense of belonging so that the students feel they are part of something.”

As part of the project in spring 2020, HOPE received a Data4Impact (D4I) grant for the collection and analysis of qualitative and quantitative data to identify and address inequitable systems and structures at the College so Black men and Latinos can thrive. This funding allowed for the pilot of the HOPE Ambassadors program, a student-driven effort to gather and analyze qualitative data, as well as to provide peer mentorship, resiliency guidance, problem-solving support, general (non-academic) assistance, and “safe space conversations” for Black and Latino males at BHCC.

In 2021, the HOPE Initiative partnered with the Boston Private Industry Council (PIC) to launch HOPE Forward, a collaboration between the Opportunity Youth Collaborative and the HOPE Initiative. BHCC has worked with the PIC for over a decade to provide coaching for Boston Public School graduates as part of the Success Boston college completion initiative. Success coaches at BHCC help students succeed academically, balancing their education and work life, and imagining their career paths beyond college.

The HOPE Forward program builds on the Success Boston framework, focusing on outreach and coaching for young men of color, students who have stopped out of college, students attending college late, and students transferring from other colleges. Working with the Opportunity Youth Collaborative and PIC Youth Transitions Director, Kathy Hamilton, Erilus has used student input to develop high-touch strategies to scale up pathways for success and complete college progression taking the student perspective on issues that directly affect their lives.

HOPE Ambassadors are student leaders and recent BHCC alumni who form connections with students, execute first-level advising, and provide resources and direction that eliminate barriers as students navigate their college experience. Ambassadors receive training at the beginning of each semester on these outreach strategies and training on critical resources throughout the term. In the process, they become well versed in navigating BHCC resources, and serve as peer mentors for students, gathering student voices through surveys and focus groups, and bringing their voices to data committee meetings and partner convenings.

Series of Engaging Events

This past fall, the HOPE Initiative created a series of events focused on engaging students throughout their experience at BHCC. These included a Welcome Month series to provide students the opportunity to engage with HOPE staff and peers through open office hours, workshops, dialogue series discussions and dinners. The activities offered an overarching welcome to the start of the new semester and celebrated participants as individuals. The HOPE Initiative provided a host of other programs over the fall and spring semesters including a Student Dialogues series that provided affinity-based spaces for Black and Latino males to share their experiences and for staff to gather qualitative data.

For Erilus, the biggest takeaway from these focus groups is that students need to know, not just feel, that they matter. “They need to see an accurate reflection of themselves in their experiences and feel included,” he says. “This is what leads to persistence and retention and about being a part of something, and in a lot of ways in higher education, we need to break down those institutional inequities and barriers.”

By engaging students in their experience, the HOPE Initiative is building a data-driven and student-centered foundation for responsive (vs. reactive) programming and services. This data collection and programmatic response model has been integrated throughout HOPE.

Additionally, the HOPE Initiative has created faculty-led study group sessions in gateway courses, such as accounting, English, and math, that are designed to promote this affinity-based collaborative learning model. Participants are offered incentives for consistent attendance and engagement.

HOPE also welcomes students to monthly dinner gatherings known as BREAKINGBREAD dinner events. These are held at culturally relevant restaurants in students’ communities and create an opportunity for HOPE Success Scholars and staff to gather outside of the college campus.

Professional Development Key

HOPE acknowledges the importance of professional development that enables faculty, staff, and administrators at the College to be active contributors to the College at all levels. The College believes in continuing the education of its traditional and non-traditional student success. Over the past several years, HOPE has offered faculty and staff the Black Minds Matter course and an Open Yale African American History course that provides theoretical frameworks, research, and best practices on issues facing boys and men of color in education.

And, in the fall of 2021, HOPE rolled out a new paid, semester long fellowship opportunity for faculty and staff to engage in professional development with project-based deliverables facilitated by HOPE Co-Leads Carlos Maynard. HOPE Fellows identified, researched, and developed projects that aligned to their courses or work areas to support HOPE Initiative student outcomes.

“By involving students and staff members from across the College, the HOPE Initiative is a model for breaking down institutional silos,” says Erilus, stressing the importance of cross-training, and staff resources at BHCC to better prepare to serve students. “This model allows for students at the College to have access to staff from the International Center, Veterans Center, Admissions, Dual Enrollment and Early College, and Single Stop.”

The HOPE Initiative serves as a gateway to understanding BHCC students and their experiences, and using this understanding to provide collective and individualized resources for Black and Latino males that helps them feel part of the College community and empowers them to excel at BHCC and beyond.

While the HOPE Initiative launched as an initiative to eliminate barriers keeping males of color from attending college, Erilus hopes the expansion of completing college, Erilus hopes to expand the program to empower women and other students of color at BHCC.
HEALTH IS WEALTH

The HOPE Initiative welcomed rapper, speaker and entrepreneur Styles P to its first Virtual Student Summit in April. The “Health is Wealth” event focused on healthy choices, exercise, mental wellness, and career pathways.

Styles P, a member of The LOX, is the co-owner of juices for Life with Jadakiss, who he grew up rapping alongside. The pair is co-owner of Juices for Life with Jadakiss, who he grew up rapping alongside. The pair is committed to bringing health access to low-income communities through access to healthy food and information. They have opened a chain of juice bars in New York City’s food deserts.

“Health is the key ingredient to whatever you’re trying to achieve in life,” said Styles P, stressing the importance of both physical and mental health in a panel discussion moderated by HOPE Ambassadors. “It’s not a separate conversation. You take care of yourself first to be the best of your ability, then your family and community. If you all take the time to do this, we’ll make the world a better place.”

The Office of Learning Communities welcomed BHCC faculty to participate in a professional development Institute, Deepening Engagement with Community Learning Outcomes Using a Cultural Wealth Framework, just prior to the start of the spring 2022 semester.

In this virtual Learning Community Institute, participants engaged with their colleagues in curriculum development, integration of high-impact practices, and community building using a cultural wealth lens. One of the main goals of the Institute was for the college community to become more familiar with the new outcomes approved for all Learning Communities in the spring of 2021. “These outcomes are transparent in their focus on equity and cultural wealth and bring renewed focus on asset-based and culturally relevant approaches,” said Lindsay Naggie, Interim Director of Learning Communities. “It is important to have a common understanding of these outcomes because the work that we do in Learning Communities is built on collaboration and integration.”

As part of the opening welcome address, Dean of Humanities and Learning Communities Lori Catallozzi provided a brief history of the Learning Communities model and its positive impact on student success and equitable outcomes for students. “We have historical data and context that show that Learning Communities work, and we have opportunities given some of the changes we’ve recently made to strengthen them. Learning Communities is entering the next phase and it’s going to be critical that we involve many departments across campus in this transition.”

Center for Equity and Cultural Wealth Director Lee Santos Silva delivered the Institute Keynote Address, sharing with participants how the Learning Communities Program has championed equity and cultural wealth at the College and is positioned to deepen this work at BHCC moving forward.

“We’re not strangers at BHCC to this work,” he said. “Over the years, a number of our initiatives have centered not only on cultural wealth but equity-minded practices to transform how we do our work.”

Silva went on to share results from Developmental English Reform and ELL Curricular Revisions as powerful examples of the ways in which centering equity-minded practices has impacted how the College serves its students. He also noted examples of BHCC centering cultural wealth through a number of initiatives, citing the College’s HOPE Ambassador program, partnerships spearheaded by the Learning Communities Program with the Museum of African American History and UMass Boston Asian American Studies Program, and the Latino Student Success Initiative collaboration with the Gastón Institute at UMass Boston.

Looking at how Learning Communities is uniquely positioned to continue to contribute to our cultural wealth work at BHCC, “there are advantages that could propel us forward pretty quickly and effectively,” said Silva. “One is considering the reach and scope of Learning Community Seminars and Clusters—the body of students you can reach at once in a way that is aligned through curriculum and practices—positions it as a vehicle to deliver.”

A lot of the core tenets of Learning Communities and cultural wealth align really well, including the emphasis and value on community building; leveraging students’ personal experiences as vehicles for learning in the class; reimagining and repositioning students as co-creators of knowledge, not just passive receptors of knowledge; and the value on active and collaborative learning.”

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Learning Communities outcomes bring renewed focus on asset-based and culturally relevant practices

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Following the keynote presentation, attendees participated in workshops that provided them the opportunity to design outcome-driven assignments, focus on learner-centered pedagogies, and collaborate with their colleagues on culturally sustaining approaches for achieving equitable outcomes for all students.

Learn more about Learning Communities at bhcc.edu/magazine
BHCC continues its longstanding tradition of hosting nationally recognized thought leaders, scholars and artists to engage, challenge and inspire students, faculty, staff and community.

Over the course of the academic year, these special guests partnered with the College to share their experience, research and ideas. Their mediums were a mix of onstage conversations, literary readings, performances, gallery exhibitions and compelling lectures that expanded and challenged the College community’s awareness of contemporary issues.

RECOGNITION AND RECKONING
Empowering Men of Color through Equity and Cultural Wealth

BHCC hosted its 5th Annual Equity and Cultural Wealth Institute in June. This year’s Institute centered and amplified the equity and cultural wealth of men of color and drew over 300 participants, including faculty and staff from BHCC and nine of our sister community colleges, and members of community-based organizations and museums from across New England.

The three-day experience featured nationally renowned scholars, artists, and activists, including National Book Award-winning author and founding Director of the Center for Antiracist Research at Boston University, Dr. Pedro Noguera, sociologist, researcher, and University of Southern California Distinguished Professor of Education, and Dr. J. Luke Wood, creator of the “Black Minds Matter” webinars and distinguished professor of Education at San Diego State University were also featured speakers at the Institute.

Over the course of the three days, participants were asked to analyze and discuss complex and intersectional identities of males of color and the historical, cultural, and/or social factors that impact the experiences of males of color in academic or work settings, share and analyze resources to facilitate outcomes for males of color, and recognize and apply equity-minded perspectives to and strategies to reform institutional systems, structures, and/or policies that impact males of color.

The first two days were held virtually and included breakout sessions, workshops, and critical reflection opportunities. The third day brought attendees together for in-person and virtual opportunities to strategize and implement key takeaways from the Institute.

Learn more about the Center for Equity and Cultural Wealth at bhcc.edu/magazine

Compelling Conversations

Sponsored by the Office of Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion, BHCC’s Compelling Conversations speaker series invites today’s diverse voices, eminent thought leaders, and visionaries from both domestic and international platforms to share local, national, and global perspectives on contemporary and culturally relevant issues of human interest, social justice, and change.

The 2021-22 Speaker Series sought to recognize and give greater visibility to Men of Color and issues of race and gender inequity they often experience in education and employment, family and mentorship, violence and health, civil rights and criminal justice. The series is intended to engage and inspire students, faculty, staff, and our community and to support meaningful discussion inside and outside of the classroom as part of an ongoing college-wide commitment of equity and cultural wealth, resistance, and resilience.

Award-winning poet, author, and educator Jose Olivarez (left) kicked off this year’s series as part of the College’s Hispanic Heritage Month celebration, reading excerpts from his book Citizen Illegal.

The College welcomed Resident Artist Larry Spotted Crow Mann (above) in October for an open dialogue about the state of Indigenous communities across the United States. His invitation to all of us was to look at holidays like Indigenous Peoples Day as an opportunity to make fundamental shifts in education instead of choosing celebration. “Think about the children. Think about the land,” he offered. “It’s a time for reconciliation.”

Philonise Floyd, (below) social changemaker and brother of the late George Floyd, spoke to the BHCC community as part of the series. He focused on the importance of advocacy and using your own voice to effect change, sharing how in the months following his brother’s murder, he turned his grief and sorrow into activism, speaking around the country about police violence.

The series culminated with a presentation from Kenji Yoshino, (below) constitutional law scholar, anti-discrimination advocate, and award-winning author of Covering: The Hidden Assault on Our Civil Rights.
Selections from BHCC's Teaching and Learning Collection, Faculty, Resident, and Visiting Artists were presented at the Mary L. Fifield Art Gallery this winter. The group exhibition illuminated the power and importance of international education and global exchange, and allowed for the opportunity for the College community to experience art that connects cultures, crosses borders, and envisions a bold new future. Featured artists included Robin Chandler, Julio Flores, Gillian Frazier, Dena Galloway, David Goldman, Maddu Huacuja, Renold Laurent, Alberto Lanzano, Yary Livan, Woomin Kim, Proshot Kalami, Jimmy Valdez Osaku, Consuelo Perez, and Wen-It Tsen.
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