

# HCCC Happenings

A publication of the Communications Department



## HCCC TAKES TOP HONORS AT AMERICAN ASSOCIATION OF COMMUNITY COLLEGES CONVENTION



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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 June newsletter are due by Friday, May 10, 2024.

Please send your news items, comments and suggestions to:

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**HCCC TAKES TOP HONORS AT AMERICAN ASSOCIATION OF COMMUNITY COLLEGES CONVENTION**

**T**he American Association of Community Colleges (AACC) held its four-day annual convention in Louisville, KY. At the AACC Convention Gala on Monday, April 8, national awards were presented to outstanding colleges in 11 categories. Hudson County Community College was a finalist in an unprecedented seven of these 11 categories.

**HCCC won three of the 11 2024 AACC Awards of Excellence:**

The AACC Student Success Award of Excellence recognizes a community college that demonstrates, through evidence, a sustained commitment to advancing student success. HCCC’s Hudson Scholars Program is a shining example of the cutting-edge, data-driven approach that HCCC utilized to drive a sustained impact on student success in new and innovative ways. Honored with multiple prestigious awards, the Hudson Scholars Program expands academic access with a holistic approach that combines

proactive student support, financial stipends, high-impact educational experiences, and early academic intervention.

The AACC honored HCCC President Dr. Christopher Reber with the CEO of the Year Award of Excellence. recognizes a leader with a strong track record in effectively participating in shared governance; supporting professional development; implementing results-driven student success initiatives; advocating for the institution and its students; participating in statewide initiatives and national dialogues; serving on local, state, and/or national boards; and demonstrating courage under challenging circumstances.

Dr. Clive Li, Assistant Professor, Engineering Science, took home the prestigious “Faculty Member of the Year” Award of Excellence. The award acknowledges an individual who continuously seeks to integrate evidence-based

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**ON THE COVER:** *Hudson County Community College made its presence known at the American Association of Community Colleges (AACC) in Louisville, KY. At the conference, the College won three Awards of Excellence and Dale P. Parnell Faculty Distinction Recognition, placing as a finalist in four additional Awards of Excellence categories.*

**PRESIDENT DR. CHRIS REBER INVITED TO JOIN UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN DIVERSITY SCHOLARS NETWORK**

**H**udson County Community College President Dr. Christopher Reber joins the University of Michigan’s Diversity Scholars Network (DSN), an interdisciplinary, multi-institutional community of scholars hosted by the National Center for Institutional Diversity (NCID) at the University of Michigan. DSN has over 1,500 members representing more than 200 institutions worldwide, comprised of tenured, tenure-track, clinical, and research faculty, research staff, and postdoctoral fellows. Dr. Reber was selected as a leader of applied research in student success, and diversity, equity and inclusion initiatives and best practices.

DSN is committed to advancing the understanding of historical and contemporary issues related to identity, difference, culture, representation, power, oppression, and inequality, and how they affect individuals, groups, communities, and institutions.

While the organization is comprised heavily of members from Research 1 universities, Dr. Reber’s strong and vocal stance in defense of values like diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) at national academic conferences and meetings

led his peers to nominate him for membership.

As President of HCCC, Dr. Reber is an ideal candidate for an organization like DSN that is working to create a more equitable and inclusive society. The College serves Hudson County, home to a rich tapestry of cultures and one of the most diverse communities in the United States. Fifty-five percent of HCCC students identify as Hispanic, and 88% as non-white. Furthermore, 80% of degree-seeking students qualify for federal financial aid.

Dr. Reber promotes diversity, equity and inclusion in post-secondary education with passion. He stated, “Diversity is more than just a catchphrase at HCCC; it is a priority that is interwoven into everything we do. It’s not just about checking off a box, it’s about promoting acceptance, seeking understanding, and having genuine empathy, respect, and love for the specialness and dignity of every person in our community.” During his time leading the College, HCCC students have coined the phrase “Hudson is Home” because of the inclusive and welcoming environment fostered by Dr. Reber and all members of the HCCC community.

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## GIRLS WHO CODE PRESENT AT THE HCCC GIRLS IN TECHNOLOGY CONFERENCE

The Girls Who Code (GWC) Club presented coding workshops at the Girls in Technology (GIT) conference on Thursday, March 21 from 8 am until 3 pm. GIT gives young girls in both middle school and high school the opportunity to experience different technological panels, speakers, and workshops. The club advisors for the GWC club are Raffi Manjikian and Laura Samuelsen. The club president for GWC is Dalia Poblano.

GWC was delighted to participate, and it is a testament to their hard work, talent, and determination that in one night they put together a fantastic proposal showcasing the basics of coding using Python.

While organizing a comprehensive and engaging Python coding lesson in 24 hours is a challenging task, the motivation behind accepting this challenge came from GWC's mission to inspire young middle school and high school students to pursue tech-related careers in college. With the help of Xena Khan, Vice President of the GWC Club, the GWC student facilitators composed slides that included the basics and principles of Python coding as well as examples to accompany each lesson. Upon arrival at the Culinary building where GIT was held, there was palpable excitement and curiosity in the students' faces. Multiple schools and organizations around the Jersey City area, such as Jose Marti STEM Academy, County Prep High School, and Big Brothers Big Sisters, were in attendance on that very special day.

After enjoying a delicious and nutritious breakfast, students were greeted by the hosts of GIT as well as faculty and staff volunteers. Students were placed in five different groups

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## AMERICAN CULINARY FEDERATION VISITS THE CULINARY ARTS INSTITUTE



Students at the Culinary Arts Institute prepare and present a reception meal during a site visit by the American Culinary Federation Education Foundation. Dr. Ara Karakashian, Dean of HCCC's School of Business, Culinary Arts and Hospitality Management, is pictured at left.

On March 12-14, 2024, the Culinary Arts Institute (CAI) hosted chefs from the American Culinary Federation Education Foundation (ACFEF) for reaccreditation of two associate degrees and two certificate programs. The College hosted Chef George Dennis, C.E.C., C.C.E., A.A.C., from Michigan and Chef Billie DeNunzio, C.C.E., from Florida.

The lavish welcome reception on Tuesday, March 12, attended by students, Board of Trustees, President Reber, Foundation Board of Directors, President's Cabinet, Business, Culinary Arts, & Hospitality Management (BCH) Advisory Board, Alumni, Culinary Arts Institute Faculty, and Guests. Dr. Ara Karakashian, Dean of the School of BCH spoke to attendees, "We are very thankful to continue impacting the lives of community college students: Perhaps it's when we assist high school students as they earn college credits through our Early College program; maybe it's when our Culinary Club prepares fresh meals for the Hudson Helps Resource Center (which has surpassed 20,000 meals since 2020); perhaps it's because students could not afford to purchase a knife kit or even make it to class, and we secured federal Perkins grants to obtain knife kits and Uber rides. Regardless of need, HCCC is always prepared to provide equitable resources to all who are ready to put their trust in our services. Our legacy of providing hands-on, technical education

is over 40 years strong and we will continue to produce successful graduates who will outpace and outshine their industry peers."

The chefs assessed the facilities, quality of instruction, and services provided to students within this program, founded in 1983. The original ACF accreditation began in 1997 and the programs have been accredited, without interruption, since that time.

During the debriefing, the chefs provided suggestions and strengths, without concerns regarding compliance. Some notable compliments included our "Hudson is Home" approach towards all students and employees. Other strengths included dedicated and readily available faculty, students feeling valued, learning in a safe environment, and students feeling confident about the College's ability to address their needs. Additionally, the team commended the broad based community support CAI received for our programs by so many constituents.

The accreditation commission will issue its final assessment in summer 2024.

Dr. Karakashian thanks those who prepared for the self-study and site visit and congratulates the team on a job well done.

## SPRING 2024 OPEN HOUSE HELD AT JOURNAL SQUARE CAMPUS



Gerri Kiefer-Necklen, Practical Nursing Program Director, and Dorante Dawn Richards, Instructor of Nursing, provide a tour of the nursing skills lab to Open House attendees.



Student Isabel Herrador (left) with Imane Zehaf, CTE Career Coach.



Prospective students obtain information from the Office of Student Life and Leadership.

## HCCC CELEBRATES 11<sup>TH</sup> ANNUAL SPECIAL THANKS AND RECOGNITION (STAR) EVENT



**25 Years-** *Mirta Sanchez, Executive Administrative Assistant, Office of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion*



**35 Years-** *Sami Khouzam, Professor, School of Business, Culinary Arts, and Hospitality Management*



**40 Years-** *Kevin O'Malley, Professor, School of Business, Culinary Arts, and Hospitality Management*



**45 Years-** *Daisy Baiza, Administrative Assistant, School of Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM)*

On the auspicious afternoon of Wednesday, April 3, Hudson County Community College illuminated its halls with gratitude during the 11th Annual Special Thanks and Recognition (STAR) event, a cherished tradition dedicated to honoring the remarkable dedication of its employees. This esteemed occasion not only commemorates service milestones but also symbolizes the enduring commitment shared between the College and its staff.

With each passing year, the STAR event serves as a beacon of appreciation, illuminating the collective contributions of individuals whose unwavering dedication has fueled the College's journey of excellence. From marking the initial five-year milestone to applauding a staggering 45 years of service, this year's

celebration was a testament to the enduring spirit and passion that permeates every corner of the HCCC community.

The event was graced by the presence of esteemed members of the HCCC community, underscoring the profound sense of camaraderie and shared purpose that defines the institution. As everyone gathered to reflect on the milestones achieved and the journeys yet to unfold, the atmosphere was charged with reverence and admiration for the exemplary service rendered by colleagues.

In essence, the 11th Annual STAR event not only celebrated the longevity of service

but also reinforced the bonds of fellowship that unite us in our mission to empower lives through education. It was a resounding testament to the collective dedication and unwavering commitment that continues to propel Hudson County Community College to new heights of excellence.

### MODIFICATION TO THE STAFFING TABLE

#### Effective April 16, 2024

*Deliana Acosta, Social Worker to Mental Health Counselor*

*Liliam Hogan, Manager Purchasing to Associate Director, Purchasing*

*Nicole B. Johnson, Vice President for Advancement and Communications to Vice President for Advancement and Communications and Executive Director of HCCC Foundation*

*Ana Moran, Financial Advisor to Assistant Director of Financial Aid*

*Doreen Pontius, Director, Mental Health and Counseling*

*Gretchen Schulthes, Associate Dean, Advisement*

*John Urgola, Director, Institutional Research to Assistant Vice President, Institutional Research and Planning*

### NEW TITLE

*Student Success Coach, Waterworks Utility Program (Grant-funded), Effective April 16, 2024*

### EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE PROGRAM (EAP) WEBINARS

To sign up for upcoming webinars, visit [eap.ndbh.com](http://eap.ndbh.com), enter company code HCCC, and scroll down to the "Check Out Our Webinars" box. Questions? Connect with your EAP account manager, HR department or call 800-624-5544.

## MILESTONES

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

### FULL-TIME EMPLOYEES

#### One Year

*Domonique Callens  
Tayyaba Hafeez*

#### Five Years

*Christopher Conzen*

#### 10 Years

*Robert Kahn*

### PART-TIME EMPLOYEES

#### One Year

*Yaj Barot  
Dina Botros  
Martine Cadet  
Cynthia Elliott  
Carlos Fernandez-Chinchilla*

*Elaf Hussein*

*Paola Leon*

*Deep Patel*

*Elizabeth Santiago*

*Sam Varghese*

#### Five Years

*Keischa Taylor*

### APPOINTMENT OF STAFF

*Reda Agourram, Support Analyst, Effective April 17, 2024*

*Jamilah Moudiab, Director, Diversity, Equity and Inclusion for Veterans Affairs and International Student Services, Effective April 17, 2024*

*Thomas Stokes, Development Manager, Effective May 1, 2024*

### APPOINTMENT OF TEMPORARY FULL TIME STAFF

*Denisse Carrasco, Healthcare Coordinator, Gateway to Innovation (Grant-funded), Effective May 1, 2024 - June 30, 2024*

*Laurice Dukes, Associate Director, Gateway to Innovation (Grant-funded), Effective May 1, 2024 - June 30, 2024*

*Evani Greene, Student Success Coach, Gateway to Innovation (Grant-funded), Effective May 1, 2024 - June 30, 2024*

*Rossella Lopez, Admissions Advisor, Effective April 13, 2024 - June 30, 2024*

*Amanda Lusskin, Coordinator, Effective April 17, 2024 - December 31, 2024*

*Maria Lita Sarmiento, Alumni Manager, Gateway to Innovation (Grant-funded), Effective May 1, 2024 - June 30, 2024*

## HCCC'S STUDENTS SHINE AT CONFERENCES



Hudson County Community College's Model United Nations Club attended the National Model United Nations Conference in New York City. As part of their participation, the HCCC delegation engaged in collaborative sessions alongside students from various countries worldwide. Together, they tackled specific global issues, advocating for Honduras' national interests while interacting with peers representing other nations. On Friday, April 5, Hudson County Community



College business students participated in the 2024 New Jersey County College Case Competition (NJCC), hosted by the Rutgers Business School - Newark Undergraduate Program. Pictured here, the HCCC team is flanked by Elana Winslow, Associate Professor and Coordinator, Business and Sharon Daughtry, Instructor, Business.

## CAI PREPARES IFTAR BUFFET AT BRENNAN COURTHOUSE



Culinary Arts Institute students, under the direction of Chef Kevin O'Malley, prepared over 30 Halal platters of food for the Iftar Buffet at the Brennan Courthouse on Monday, March 18, 2024. Dr. Ara Karakashian accompanied Chef Robert Maurer and 2 volunteer students and helped serve over 150 guests. Attendees were very appreciative of the College's efforts, and recognized the College during the program. A special thank you is also due to Facilities and Security for their assistance with transportation.

## HCCC TAKES TOP HONORS AT AMERICAN ASSOCIATION OF COMMUNITY COLLEGES CONVENTION

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strategies into the classroom and is highly engaged in college committees and organizations dedicated to student success. The Faculty Member of the Year has stellar student evaluations for his or her courses and participates in external student and community activities.

Elana Winslow, Associate Professor | Coordinator, Business, was awarded AACC's Dale P. Parnell Faculty Distinction Recognition. The prestigious award recognizes individuals making a difference in community college classrooms nationwide. Recipients of the faculty distinction

recognition demonstrate passion for students and show a willingness to support them both inside and outside of the classroom. They also participate in college committees and go above and beyond what is required to ensure students succeed academically.

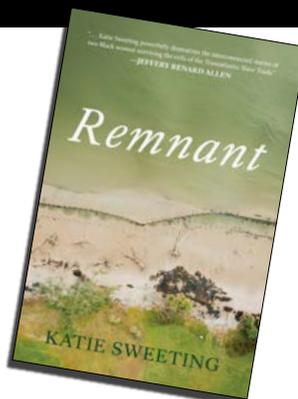
"I thank every member of our beautiful HCCC Family, as it Takes a Village," said President Reber in noting the awards. "These are the outcomes of everyone's efforts and contributions to our students and community! What a great precursor to our upcoming 50th Anniversary celebration!"

## Remnant Book Launch

**Katie Sweeting**  
Professor, English  
Fulbright-Nehru Scholar

Join us on Tuesday, May 7, 2024 at 2:00 p.m.  
North Hudson Campus Library, 3rd Floor,  
4800 Kennedy Blvd., Union City, NJ 0708

- Hear excerpts from *Remnant*
- Q & A Session
- Refreshments
- Signed copies of *Remnant* available for purchase.
- 30% discount
- 35% discount – students
- FREE GIVEAWAYS**



"In *Remnant*, gifted novelist Katie Sweeting powerfully dramatizes the interconnected stories of two Black women surviving the evils of the Transatlantic Slave Trade. We live their struggles. We suffer their setbacks and triumphs. Sweeting's book brings alive a past that some want us to forget. A most welcome achievement"

-JEFFERY RENARD ALLEN, author of *Fat Time and Other Stories*

## OUT of the BOX

PODCAST



Tune in to our monthly podcast for a timely discussion about education, people, programs, events, issues, and solutions that affect those who live and work in Hudson County.

To listen, visit  
[www.hccc.edu/outofthebox](http://www.hccc.edu/outofthebox).

## 2024 COMMENCEMENT



Thursday, May 16, 2024  
at 10:00 a.m.

Red Bull Arena  
600 Cape May Street,  
Harrison, NJ 07029

<https://www.hccc.edu/student-success/graduation.html>

# Foundation Art Collection

The Hudson County Community College Foundation Art Collection of 1,900+ works is installed in the public areas of campus buildings. The entire College is an educational art museum. This Collection reveals aspects of America's and New Jersey's rich artistic and cultural history from the Hudson River School period to today. In recent years, the College's acquisition efforts have focused on strengthening its American and New Jersey modern and contemporary collections.

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

## Donor Acknowledgments

Thank you to the Denison Museum in Granville, Ohio for their generous donation of 6 limited-edition prints.

## Artist News

We recently installed the largest painting in the Collection, *Prince Brickner* by **Robert Natkin**, on the second floor of the Gabert Library. Natkin is a well-known midcentury modern artist. For the artist, who grew up in Chicago in a poor, violent and mentally unhealthy family, painting became a way to make a beautiful home for himself in the world. This picture comes from a group of works he made, called the "Apollo" series, where everything was painted in stripes. If you are interested in this work you might enjoy the documentary made by Peter Fuller of the BBC about Natkin called, "Somewhere Over the Rainbow." It is available for free on YouTube. Natkin's work is in the collections of major art museums including the Metropolitan Museum of Art, the Museum of Modern Art and the Guggenheim Museum in New York City.

Who was Prince Brickner? The writer Richard P. Brickner, a Guggenheim Fellow, was the son of two psychiatrists: Dr. Ruth Pilpel Brickner and Dr. Richard M. Brickner. Robert Natkin's therapist was Dr. Ruth Brickner, and the artist became close friends with the writer. This is likely an abstract portrait of Richard P. Brickner. According to Brickner's obituary in *The New York Times*, Brickner was, "a novelist, memoirist and critic known for his fictional and nonfictional explorations of an automobile accident that left him permanently paralyzed... Mr. Brickner's memoir, *My Second Twenty Years: An Unexpected Life* (Basic Books, 1976),



**Robert Natkin (1930-2010), Prince Brickner (1969) Acrylic on Canvas, 87.5" x 78"**

recounted the aftermath of the accident, which took place shortly after his 20th birthday, when he was a student at Middlebury College. Mr. Brickner, who was paralyzed from the chest down, used a wheelchair for the rest of his life."

Thank you to the Carol Adler Revocable Trust for the recent donation of this work. The Trust also donated another important mid century modern "Op Art" painting by **Richard Anuszkiewicz**, called "The Yellows" (1968), which can be seen, on the second floor of the Gabert Library.

**The Foundation Art Collection's first work featured in an exhibition catalog has been published by the Museum of Modern Art!** The exhibition includes work by the contemporary Mexican designer Clara Porset who designed the butaque chair that the **Francisco Zuniga** model is resting on in the picture above. Porset was a famous midcentury modern designer who took the butaque chair,



**Francisco Zuniga (1912-1998), Evelia en un butaque (1977) Charcoal and Crayon on Paper, 18" x 24.5"**

which had been part of Mexican culture for hundreds of years, and made a new version that was sleek, modern and yet still handmade. That's the version you see in this Zuniga work. We hope you share our excitement about this prestigious moment for the Foundation Art Collection. The exhibition, *Crafting Modernity*, is up at MoMA through September 22. *Crafting Modernity: Design in Latin America, 1940-1980* | <https://www.moma.org/calendar/exhibitions/5657>

A podcast about enriching student life through the arts in Jersey City was recently posted on the Ethical Schools website <https://ethicalschoools.org/2024/04/enriching-student-life-art-for-all/>. Participants included Dr. Andrea Siegel, Foundation Art Collection Coordinator, and Michelle Vitale, Director of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion for Cultural Affairs and Curator of the Benjamin J. Dineen and Dennis C. Hull gallery at HCCC, who discuss ways the college brings art into students' lives.

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

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

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

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

SAVE THE DATE



22<sup>nd</sup> Annual

**GOLF  
OUTING**

**JULY  
15  
2024**

10:00 a.m. SHOTGUN START  
Forest Hill Field Club  
9 Belleville Avenue, Bloomfield, NJ 07003

In Memory of Philip Johnston



A scene from the "From Slavery to Freedom" reception on April 9.

### 'From Slavery to Freedom'

Prof. Dorothy Anderson and several students in her African American History (HIS 130) class -- Aaliyah Clark, Matthew Piscopo, and Paul Saraiva - co-curated the recent exhibit "From Slavery to Freedom." The exhibit presented a historical view of slavery leading to the fight for freedom. The exhibit contained items from Prof. Anderson's personal collection including slave contracts, wills of slave owners, and letters from the 19th century, as well as first edition books of some of that most renowned Black writers of the time.

On Tuesday, April 9, Hudson County Community College's Department of Cultural Affairs held a reception to celebrate the success of the exhibit.



In this archive photo, a Jersey City High School student ponders submissions to the Words-worth "Poetree."

### Jersey City Public Schools Words-Worth Poetry Festival

The Department of Cultural Affairs collaborated with the Jersey City Public Schools to present Words-Worth in April. Words-Worth is a celebration for students during National Poetry Month, which inspires the craft and creativity of poetry as a form of expression. During two days of multi-faceted, hands-on events (Thursday, April 11 and Friday, April 12), students participated in various activities that fostered a love for creative expression. Selected students created and visited the activities at HCCC's Gabert Library on a rotating schedule.



Artwork by Fabricio Suarez at the North Hudson Campus.

### 'What Happens in the Shadows'

On Wednesday, April 24, The Department of Cultural Affairs hosted a breakfast featuring Uruguayan artist Fabricio Suarez, whose artwork is on display at the North Hudson Campus' Art Concourse.

Interested in nature's mystery, Suarez's current studio practice consists of moody paintings rooted in a landscape born of expressionist brushstrokes. Mainly influenced by Old Masters, he distorts European portraits and landscapes with spiritual elements of American savagery.

## PRESIDENT DR. CHRIS REBER INVITED TO JOIN UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN DIVERSITY SCHOLARS NETWORK

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Dr. Reber has devoted his entire 40+ year career to higher education and is a longtime champion for diversity and a pioneering leader who drives change that creates better outcomes for students from traditionally underserved groups. His efforts in this area earned national recognition.

Embracing a data-driven approach toward student success, Dr. Reber spearheaded the creation of the Hudson Scholars Program, which broadens academic access and promotes student retention and completion through an innovative approach combining proactive student support, financial stipends, high-impact educational experiences, and early academic intervention.

The award-winning program recently won the 2024 Bellwether Legacy Award, the highest honor bestowed upon a community college by the Bellwether College Consortium. The Hudson Scholars Program significantly increased student retention and completion, particularly for students from traditionally

underrepresented groups including Hispanic and African American students.

The term-to-term persistence rates of Hispanic and Latino students in the Hudson Scholars Program increased by over 40%, while Black and African American student persistence increased by over 60%. Additionally, the two-year completion rate for traditionally underrepresented Hudson Scholars represents a threefold increase compared to 2018-20.

Students from these groups who participate in the Hudson Scholars Program are significantly more likely to stay in school and graduate on time. Ultimately, Hudson Scholars is giving traditionally underserved students the support they need to stay in school, get to the finish line, and get there faster.

The Hudson Scholars Program is just one example of how HCCC is breaking barriers for students from traditionally underrepresented groups under Dr. Reber's leadership. HCCC is a federally designated Hispanic Serving

Institution (HSI) and received the Hispanic Association of Colleges and Universities' (HACU) "Outstanding Member Institution Award" in 2023 for excellence in promoting success for Hispanic students in higher education. Dr. Reber was honored as the Education Leader of the Year by the Hudson County Latin American Chamber of Commerce in 2023 for his steadfast commitment to HCCC students and his longtime support of Hudson County's Latino community.

On becoming a member of DSN, Dr. Reber stated, "It's an honor to join this esteemed community of scholars dedicated to advancing, understanding and fostering meaningful change in higher education and beyond. I look forward to sharing our best practices for promoting diversity and learning with other institutions, and to learning from and sharing the proven success platforms of others. Together, we can continue to drive progress and create more inclusive environments in which all students can thrive."

## CLUB ADVISOR SPOTLIGHT

Each month in HCCC Happenings, you will meet faculty and staff who serve as advisors to student clubs and organizations at Hudson County Community College. To learn more about student clubs and events, please visit <https://involved.hccc.edu>

### Dr. Clive Li

**Advisor of the Society of Physics (SPS)**  
**Years of Service-1 Year**



**What is the mission and goal of the club you currently advise?**

SPS is a chapter-based society that exists to help students transform themselves into contributing members of the professional community. Traditional coursework develops only one range of skills. Other skills to flourish professionally include effective communication, leadership experience, networking, research, and outreach services. SPS supports students, advisers, and departments to improve the overall community.

**Please share your advising style.**

Be innovative

**Please share your best advice for future HCCC Advisors and student leaders.**

This hands-on involvement allows you to understand better and connect with the students, fostering a more collaborative and supportive environment for the club. Be an active participant!

**Please share an experience with your club or organization of which you are most proud.**

Prepared students for professional conferences.

**What events, gatherings, and activities does the club or organization host that have positively impacted our diverse student populations?**

Rock climbing, student research projects, visiting companies, visiting different mushroom farms, and so many more...

### Karen Hosick

**Health and Medical Sciences Club**  
**Years of Service- 1 Year**



**What is the mission and goal of the club you currently advise?**

The Health and Medical Sciences Club members are committed to improving physical health and wellness for the entire campus and the surrounding community.

**Please share your advising style.**

I like to offer support but let the students lead the club.

**Please share your best advice for future HCCC Advisors and student leaders.**

As this is my first year advising, I'm still determining the best advising style from which the students will benefit.

**Please share an experience with your club or organization of which you are most proud.**

The Diabetes Awareness Event we had in Fall 2023.

**What events, gatherings, and activities does the club or organization host that have positively impacted our diverse student populations?**

We know that healthcare disparities exist among different groups, and we try to highlight these issues at many of our events.

## PROFESSIONAL NOTES



Congratulations to **Laurie Riccadonna**, Professor/Coordinator of Studio Art, to whom the Jersey City Arts Council has awarded one of 10 Elevation Advanced Artist Grants. The Council awards artists who live in Jersey City and have impacted the art community over at least 10 years.

The Art Center Padula ([www.artcenterpadula.com](http://www.artcenterpadula.com)) in Padula, Italy has awarded Prof. Riccadonna an artist residency during the summer of 2024. The Center accepts applications from emerging and mid-career creatives, as well as from those who are established with national and/or international reputations.

The Council for American Overseas Research Centers has selected a cohort including **Meredith Gibson**, Adjunct Instructor, Nursing and Health Professions, to participate in the seminar "Mexico's Indigenous Languages and Culture," Americas Research Network, Mexico this summer. Overseas Faculty Development Seminars are fully-funded programs conducted abroad to assist faculty and administrators from US community colleges and minority-serving institutions in gaining international experience.

# REGISTER NOW

for Summer 2024  
classes at HCCC!



## DISCOVER WHY HUDSON IS HOME!

**Earn up to  
12 credits!**

Save hundreds of dollars as  
you lighten your course load.

Financial Aid is available.



**SUMMER I  
begins on  
Monday, May 20, 2024**

**SUMMER II  
begins on  
Wednesday, July 10, 2024**

View the Enrollment Guide at:  
[www.hccc.edu/enrollmentguide](http://www.hccc.edu/enrollmentguide)

View Course Schedule at [www.hccc.edu/schedule](http://www.hccc.edu/schedule)

APPLY NOW for classes! [www.hccc.edu/apply](http://www.hccc.edu/apply)  
For more information on how to register, go to  
[www.hccc.edu/admissions/register-for-classes](http://www.hccc.edu/admissions/register-for-classes)

For more information contact: [admissions@hccc.edu](mailto:admissions@hccc.edu)  
text (732) 509-4222 or call (201) 714-7200

## PHI THETA KAPPA HONOR SOCIETY NEWS



Scenes from PTK Catalyst, including award presentations, team gatherings, and the Scholar Bowl, a single-elimination style tournament.



Phi Theta Kappa, the international honor society for two-year colleges, held its annual convention, PTK Catalyst, at the Gaylord Palms Resort & Convention Center in Orlando, FL from April 4 to April 6.

Congratulation to HCCC President, Dr. Christopher Reber, who received the Shirley B. Gordon Award of Distinction, Phi Theta Kappa's most prestigious award for community college presidents.

Congratulations to Prof. Ted Lai, whom the Society honored with the Continued Excellence Award for Advisors.

## STUDENT AFFAIRS AND ENROLLMENT DIVISION ENGAGES IN TEAM-BUILDING



On Thursday, March 28, the entirety of Hudson County Community College's Student Affairs and Enrollment Division congregated for a dedicated day of professional growth and development.

## ESL STUDENTS EXPERIENCE ROSETTA STONE CATALYST

On Wednesday, February 28, students in Professor Sonja Rodiger's ESL Level III Reading/Academic Discussion class delved into the latest ESL resource, Rosetta Stone Catalyst. Under the guidance of Kenny Fabara and Omnia Daoud in the Writing Center, students embarked on their language learning journey by completing the program's diagnostic test and immersing themselves in personalized practice across all language domains: listening, speaking, reading, and writing. Encouraged by the overwhelmingly positive feedback from students, a dedicated time slot has been allocated within the class schedule to harness the benefits of this innovative resource.



A heartfelt appreciation goes out to Hudson County Community College for equipping ESL students with such an effective and engaging tool as they progress towards language proficiency.

## FREE SOUP SPONSORED BY HUDSON HELPS RESOURCE CENTER AND THE CULINARY CLUB OF HCCC



In conjunction with the Hudson Helps Resource Center (HHRC), the Culinary Club of HCCC has been preparing hot meals with Chef Anuchit Pukdeedamrongrit (Chef Puk) since July 2020. There have been over 20,000 meals donated to the HCCC community through the food pantries located at the Journal Square and the North Hudson Campuses. From March 16 to April 3, the Culinary Club took on the additional role of providing complimentary hot soup on Wednesdays from the Foundation Subscription Dining Series, in the E building. Over 250 hot soups were distributed to HCCC students. The Culinary Club will continue to serve the College community with pride. They realize giving back to the community supports their success. After all, *Hudson is Home!*



Please join HCCC President Dr. Chris Reber for a **TOWN HALL MEETING** on **Tuesday, May 21** at **12 p.m.**  
*Lunch will be served.*  
**In-person at:**  
 Culinary Conference Center  
 161 Newkirk Street, Scott Ring Room  
 Jersey City, NJ  
**Virtual at:**  
<https://hudsonccc.webex.com/hudsonccc/j.php?MTID=m66ea76ea40bc0e1be371b3143d7f3c92>

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

## CONTINUING EDUCATION & WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT NEWS

### Celebrating Success: The Laughter of Achievement in NJ Reentry Corporation's Hot Food Proficiency Program

In the heart of New Jersey, within the corridors of the NJ Reentry Corporation, a profound transformation is taking place. Laughter echoes through the halls as the 3rd cohort of the Hot Food Proficiency Program celebrates their accomplishments. With a total enrollment of 8 determined individuals, the program stands as a beacon of hope and opportunity for those seeking to rebuild their lives after incarceration.

For the participants of the Hot Food Proficiency Program, this journey is more than just mastering culinary skills; it's about reclaiming dignity, building confidence, and unlocking potential. Each student brings a unique story and background, but they share a common goal: to carve out a brighter future for themselves through hard work and perseverance.

The program has seen a significant expansion, with the curriculum now offering a

pathway for students to earn up to 16 college credits. These credits are not just a testament to culinary proficiency, but serve as stepping stones towards obtaining an associate's degree.

The success of the Hot Food Proficiency Program is not achieved in isolation. It is a result of collaboration and dedication from multiple stakeholders, including the NJ Reentry Corporation and Hudson County Community College. Together, they are breaking down barriers and creating opportunities for individuals who have often been overlooked or marginalized by society.

As the 3rd cohort of the Hot Food Proficiency Program celebrates their achievements, they also look towards the future with optimism and determination. Armed with newfound skills and educational opportunities, they are ready to embark on the next chapter of their lives with renewed hope and ambition.



*New culinary students, clad in crisp uniforms and armed with textbooks, eagerly join Chef Bennett to embark on their hot food proficiency program. Here they are, ready to turn up the heat and hone their culinary skills in the kitchen classroom.*

In conclusion, I wish to express our deepest gratitude to each stakeholder who has played an instrumental role in the remarkable success of our Hot Food Proficiency Program. From the esteemed President of Hudson County Community College, Chris Reber, to the honorable Governor James E. McGreevey, and the esteemed leaders in academia, Dr. Darryl Jones, Heather Devries, Lori Margolin, Ara Karakashian, and Marian Betancourt, your collective dedication, unwavering support, and tireless efforts have propelled us toward unprecedented achievements.

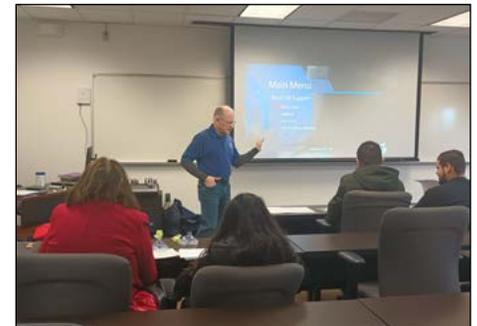
### Empowering ACCESS Students: Paving the Way for Lifelong Learning and Career Exploration

On February 24, 2024, students joined a Basic Life Support (BLS) class with the support of The Center for Adult Transition's, ACCESS Program. This collaboration with Continuing Education and Workforce Development courses not only provided them with vital life skills, but also essential lessons in effective communication during emergencies and offered exposure into career opportunities within the healthcare field.

The BLS certification course offered participants a hands-on learning experience in emergency medical procedures and life-saving techniques. From CPR to first aid administration, students gained knowledge into healthcare practices while using their problem-solving abilities in real-life scenarios. The certification not

only enhances their employability but also instills a sense of responsibility towards community welfare—a foundation of ethical leadership in any profession.

The ACCESS program serves as a platform for career exploration, offering students a glimpse into various industries and professions. Through guest speakers, networking events, and hands-on experiences, participants explore potential career paths and make informed decisions about their academic and professional pathways. Whether they aspire to pursue a career in healthcare, business, or the arts, the program equips them with the tools and resources to pave their own path with confidence.



*Students eagerly learn life-saving skills boosting both their life skills and resume credentials.*

Our next upcoming cohort will begin on June 24, 2024. Organizations seeking partnerships or individuals wishing to enroll as students are encouraged to get in touch by contacting us at [cat@hccc.edu](mailto:cat@hccc.edu) or 201-360-5477.

## CONTINUING EDUCATION **Upcoming Programs**

#### BASIC LIFE SUPPORT (IN-PERSON)

Saturday, May 4, 2024 | 9:30 a.m. - 1:30 p.m. | Price: \$77  
<https://www.eventbrite.com/e/basic-life-support-bls-certification-spring-2024-dates-tickets-877969208537?aff=oddtcreator>

#### BASIC LIFE SUPPORT (IN-PERSON)

Friday, May 10, 2024 | 9:30 a.m. - 2 p.m.  
 Price: \$77  
<https://www.eventbrite.com/e/basic-life-support-bls-certification-spring-2024-dates-tickets-877969208537?aff=oddtcreator>

#### BASIC LIFE SUPPORT (IN-PERSON)

Tuesday, May 28, 2024 | 9:30 a.m. - 2 p.m. | Price: \$77  
<https://www.eventbrite.com/e/basic-life-support-bls-certification-spring-2024-dates-tickets-877969208537?aff=oddtcreator>

#### BASIC LIFE SUPPORT (IN-PERSON)

Friday, May 31, 2024 | 9:30 a.m. - 1:30 p.m. | Price: \$77  
<https://www.eventbrite.com/e/basic-life-support-bls-certification-spring-2024-dates-tickets-877969208537?aff=oddtcreator>

#### MICROSOFT EXCEL INTERMEDIATE LEVEL (ONLINE)

Tuesdays | May 7, 2024 - June 4, 2024 | 6:30 p.m. - 9:30 p.m.  
 Instructor: Johnstone Libutsi | Price: \$145  
<https://www.eventbrite.com/e/microsoft-office-excel-intermediate-level-registration-796140085427?aff=oddtcreator>

#### TOEFL-TEST OF ENGLISH AS A FOREIGN LANGUAGE EXAM PREPARATION

Saturdays | May 18, 2024- June 22, 2024 | 9:00 a.m. - 1 p.m.  
 Price: \$250  
<https://tinyurl.com/j5sp76ux>

#### FOR MORE INFORMATION, CONTACT:

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

#### UPCOMING CONTINUING EDUCATION PROGRAMS AVAILABLE AT:

<https://www.hccc.edu/programs-courses/continuing-education/programs/culinary.html>

## THE ARAB STUDENT ASSOCIATION IFTAR EVENT DELIGHTS STUDENTS, FACULTY, AND STAFF



Current and former students attending the March 21 Iftar event.



Seated from left: Dr. Ismail Alzabi, Adjunct Instructor, STEM; Dr. Sirhan Abdullah, Assistant Professor | Coordinator, Health Services, Medical Assisting and Medical Billing/Coding; and Dr. Christopher Cody, Instructor, History. Standing: Joseph Caniglia, Executive Director, North Hudson Campus.

The Arab Student Association (ASA), building on the success of its March 5 event at the Journal Square Campus, partnered with HCCC Dreamers, the Student Programming Board, Active Minds, and Student Life and Leadership to host its second event at the North Hudson Campus. With March 10 marking the beginning of the month of Ramadan, the club's executive board organized an Iftar aimed at immersing students, faculty, and staff in the Arab and Muslim culture.

On March 21, the North Hudson Multipurpose Room buzzed with activity as attendees indulged in an array of experiences. From engaging in hands-on activities like bead crafting and tile designing to capturing moments at a try-on photo booth, and lining up eagerly for intricate henna designs, there was never a dull moment. These interactive sessions provided a stage for creativity and new skills to be acquired in a lively and supportive atmosphere.

For those curious to delve deeper into cultural aspects, Professor Ismail Alzabi from the School of STEM volunteered addressing questions about the significance of the holy month of Ramadan and led a prayer session. As the sun set, attendees gathered to savor delicious food and refreshing beverages, marking the conclusion of the Iftar event.

The overwhelming turnout and positive feedback from students, faculty, and the Executive Director, Joseph Caniglia, underscored the importance of such gatherings in nurturing a culturally rich and inclusive campus community.

## GIRLS WHO CODE PRESENT AT THE HCCC GIRLS IN TECHNOLOGY CONFERENCE

Continued from page 3

that rotated every thirty minutes around the building to allow them to enjoy all the workshops. During introductions in the Banquet room of the Culinary building, upstairs the two GWC student representatives, Dalia Poblano and Yara Attia, were assisted by the IT crew in preparing the layout of the room and setting up the materials.

Dalia and Yara were joined by Priya Suresh, a global leader of Information Security and Business Enablement, who volunteered to monitor the GWC python coding workshop along with club advisor, Professor Raffi Manjikian. While the GWC team anxiously waited for groups to start coming up, both Ms. Suresh and Professor Manjikian offered Dalia and Yara words of encouragement to relieve any of their nerves.

Students quickly filled the seats and with much curiosity, waited for the workshop to begin. Professor Manjikian introduced Dalia, Yara, and Ms. Suresh, who shared short backgrounds about themselves and engaged with students by asking questions such as: "Who has experience with Python or any other programming language?" Only a few hands

were raised; this demonstrated the dire need for similar events to be hosted to expose younger students to computer science.

Group after group, the GWC team connected with students of different backgrounds and watched as everyone executed their first coding programs! The excitement in the air made the 30-minute sessions fly by. The GWC team squeezed the opportunity out of every minute with the students. Witnessing every young girl's success welled the team members up with pride and hope for a future where they would continue their passion for technology and do great things in this field.

The importance of planning more events like GIT is reflected in the event's high attendance. Perhaps many young girls would not have received exposure to the technology field if it were not for GIT. As students, professors, and administrators, it is our job to facilitate these skills to a younger generation of females to help close the gender gap in tech. That is the goal of GWC and GIT: to witness a higher representation of females in computer science, cybersecurity, data science, and many other technological fields.



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**ALUMNI CORNER**

**Yassine Dribki, HCCC Class of 2016**  
**A.S. Science and Mathematics**



Yassine Dribki is an HCCC graduate who now works in the exciting and growing field of data analysis, as a data analyst at worldwide media, streaming and entertainment giant Paramount Global, the parent company of CBS, Paramount Plus, and more. After graduating from HCCC in 2016 with a degree in science and mathematics, he completed a bachelor's degree in Applied Mathematics from the New Jersey Institute of Technology (NJIT) and then earned his master's in data science from NJIT. He has also worked at Amazon and Lazard Management. We spoke with Yassine to find out more about his time at HCCC, moving on to NJIT, and his advice to students who want to pursue a career in data analysis.

**How did you choose to attend HCCC?**

I chose this school for several good reasons, including its reputation for academic excellence, its campus which offers opportunities for both collaboration and personal growth, and the diversity of the student body.

**What made HCCC the right choice for you?**

It was HCCC's convenient location, flexibility, and affordability that made it the right choice for me.

**Any favorite memories or classes from your time at HCCC?**

My favorite memories of HCCC are taking math and physics classes and engaging in collaborative work to solve problems with my classmates.

**How did you choose NJIT to continue your education? What did you like about NJIT?**

I chose NJIT primarily because of its strong reputation and the cutting-edge research opportunities it offers. I enjoyed doing research at NJIT, such as collaborative work researching slime molds with colleagues from Ohio State University, and appreciated NJIT's diverse and inclusive community.

**You have a master's in data science and you've worked as a data analyst for some high-profile companies like Lazard and Paramount. How did you become interested in data analysis and what inspired you to pursue this field?**

I was drawn to the field through exposure to statistics and math courses, where I discovered the power of quantitative analysis in making informed decisions. I recognized the potential of data analytics to drive innovation, solve complex problems, and improve decision-making processes.

**What advice do you have for HCCC students who want to pursue a career in data analysis?**

My advice is to build a strong foundation in mathematics, statistics, and computer science, as these skills are paramount in data analysis. Additionally, seek internships and projects where you can apply what you've learned in school to a real-world setting.

**What software skills or programs would you recommend students become proficient in?**

Students interested in this area should learn SQL, Python, Tableau, or Power BI.

**What goals are you working towards now?**

I am working on advancing my career by seeking further opportunities to sharpen my skills and tackle more challenges.

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

**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.**

