Hostos, SBOEDC Announce Plans for Permanent Campus

Goal Is To Develop A Major Educational-Commercial Complex

President Candido A. de Leon and Mr. John Patterson, Jr., president of the South Bronx Overall Economic Development Corporation (SBOEDC), announced on March 3 that their institutions were proceeding with plans to develop a major educational and commercial complex on the college's permanent site in the "Hub" sector of the South Bronx.

The cooperative effort between Hostos and the SBOEDC would permit the college to finance its construction costs through land lease rents from the commercial space on the site as well as through loans and grants from the public sector.

The project has received the backing of Michael J. Gill, chairman of the SBOEDC's Board of Directors and Vice-President of Bankers Trust Company.

Mr. Abrams called the project "exactly the kind of innovative thinking we need to begin rebuilding the South Bronx."

"The Hub," he added, "is still an active commercial area in the South Bronx and with this addition it would prosper even more. This project would be good for the borough and good for the entire City."

Mr. Patterson and officials at the SBOEDC estimate that the project would generate thousands of construction jobs as well as more than 3,000 new permanent jobs with a payroll of over $20 million in the commercial and shopping complex.

And, because the financing of the construction of the campus would depend on rents and other public sources, the University would not have to depend on financing by the State Dormitory Authority which has not been able to issue its bonds to finance such projects.

The Hostos-shopping center complex is proposed for the 12-acre site near 149th Street and Third Avenue which was designated in 1972 as the site of the college's permanent campus. The site is part of the Federally designated Bronx Urban Renewal area, which is the second largest commercial center in the Bronx—economically viable. Mr. Patterson's and Mr. Gill's enthusiasm for the project hinges on their assessment that the Hub area—currently the second largest commercial center in the Bronx—is economically viable.

Mr. Patterson "At present, about 40 percent of the area residents do their shopping out of the South Bronx. This project could keep the spending of local consumers in the South Bronx as well as attract the patronage of residents of many other areas in the City."

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De Lectoribus

On Life In Cayey, Puerto Rico

The following contribution by student Maria M. Carrion is excerpted from Upstarts, an Hostos student journal. Professor Linda Hirsch of the English department is excerpted from La Plaza del Recreo.

Hostos Friends ...

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Victor Vazquez, vice-president of the SGO, addresses rally in February demanding, among other things, the acquisition of the Security Mutual Building.

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EL COQUI
March, 1977

Published annually from December through June by the Office of College Relations, Hostos Community College, 247 Grand Concourse, Bronx, New York. Hostos Friends is a student publication. A subscription in Puerto Rico is a piece of land that the government gives to people who don't have a place to live so they can build a house.

Doña Luisa

There is a small town located on the East coast of the island of Puerto Rico called Cayey. In the center of this town we find La Plaza del Recreo. It's a place where the people go to rest. There are trimmed trees. It's as if you were under a big umbrella when you walk on the sidewalks of the plaza. The area is surrounded by old-style houses. Forming a circle around those houses you find meek ioses, in a group called an arcucltura. Then you will find some parrelas. A parrela is a piece of land that the government gives to people who don't have a place to live so they can build a house.

In the majority of the people live in the country. Some of the children there walk without shoes on, sometimes even at all. Even in their poverty, their innocent faces are beautiful to look at. The children laugh and play. When they cry deeply, you feel as if it were your own heart breaking. If you live in this place, you will not know what worries about money. You won't need it. This is the only place where you can think as a human being.

Happiness is there when you look through the window and see the green plants, flowers and white birds. Even the rain is beautiful. When it rains people go out to plant trees. They make fun of the rain thinking that it is a good reason to drink and cook, kill the chickens and prepare a big pot of soup.

Can you imagine a person who has been living this kind of life for seventy years? Dona Elisa is such a person. She is a black Puerto Rican. She is tall enough to reach the ceiling without any effort. She has an excellent sense of humor. She never had any children, so she adopted five from the orphanage. She worked for the Department of Agriculture, Puerto Rico. She was a teacher of domestic economy. She has a sharp tongue, but people love her because they love her way of life.

One day Doña Elisa went to sleep in Puerto Rico, and woke up in New York. It was Christmas. The weather was terrible. About four feet of snow was on the ground. It was windy and cold. Doña Elisa spent the whole day with a coat on. Once in a while she would go into the kitchen to prepare some coffee. In Puerto Rico old people drink black coffee when they are nervous.

Time passed and when my godmother called her sons to have dinner, Doña Elisa was invited, too. But Doña Elisa did not hear her. She was daydreaming. After being called to the dining room a few times, she finally heard and took a seat at the table with the rest of the family. There was white rice and pinto beans with porkchops. But she had been used to cooking red rice and rice on the island, so she did not put the meal on the table. She said that the food here does not taste like the food on the island. She just drank coffee. After dinner was over, she went back to the window, and she started talking about Puerto Rico.

"Poor kids. They cannot play outdoors. On the island they are free like animals closed in a barn. When they go outdoors with all those clothes on looking like a horse for the Kentucky Derby, it is a sad case.

"Now I know why people who return to Puerto Rico from New York look like camels with their humps. For all those things we have in Puerto Rico and that we are missing, we have to go to the island. I want to feel the fresh air on my face. I don't like to close the door as if I were in a jail. Do you think that I have time to be doing and opening the door every time somebody knocks? I leave it open.

"I need to see the trees of my garden. For me, mother nature is the source of the power. Even when I walk in the street I count the trees at your. You find those singing birds in the park. What do you think about the singing birds in the morning? Their songs you feel as if you were in heaven. I miss my country. I can't stay here anymore."

So Doña Elisa went to the travel agency and bought a ticket for Puerto Rico. She lasted just three days in New York. After she arrived in Puerto Rico, she wrote a letter to her godmother. "I got here OK, but the only way I could go to New York again is to build a bridge from Puerto Rico to New York. Otherwise I would not go over there to collect money from the sidewalks."

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The plans for the project envision an Hostos campus comprising some 500,000 square feet of space which would be available for use by community groups. SBOEDC officials estimate that the complex would cost some $50 million.

"There is no question," continued Mr. Patterson, "that the South Bronx desperately needs a project of this size and quality." At present, the 600,000 square feet envisioned in this proposal will unquestionably be commercially viable.''

"The project," explained President de Leon, "offers expanded educational and employment possibilities for our urban residents. The College Board's Talent Roster for single emancipated students at the very least (assuming that they are eligible for the maximum TAP award of $1,500) may be expected to provide part-time employment opportunities and the possibility of work/study programs with nearby businesses."

On the other hand, SBOEDC officials point out that the college would generate significant economic activity for the commercial concerns in the shopping center.

The SBOEDC has engaged Henry K. Neidich, New York State Director of the International Council of Shopping Centers, one of the most respected shopping center developers who have had previous experience in new central city retail development programs.

Permanent Site ...

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In any case, it is difficult to understand how a single emancipated student living in the New York metropolitan area and earning a yearly net taxable income of $5,567 could possibly afford CUNY's community college and lower division tuition of $775 (roughly 14 percent of his or her yearly income). It is equally difficult to understand how an individual earning less than $1,000 (net taxable) a year can be financially independent.

A limitation of TAP payments to students enrolled in associate or master's degree programs to four semester payments. Students enrolled in a special remedial program may be eligible for the entire maximum award when tuition is lower than the maximum TAP entitlement of $1,500 per year. Students enrolled in a special remedial program category are the students with incomes of less than $1,000 who are, in effect, two additional semesters.

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Reduction by $100 of the community college and lower division TAP award when tuition is lower than $500 would be allowed a fifth semester payment. Included in the special remedial program category are the students enrolled in College Discovery programs.

The category, however, does not include those students enrolled in associate or master's degree programs to four semester payments. Students enrolled in a special remedial program may be eligible for the entire maximum award when tuition is lower than the maximum TAP entitlement of $1,500 per year. Students enrolled in a special remedial program category are the students with incomes of less than $1,000 who are, in effect, two additional semesters.

Perhaps more than any other, this recommendation would be most beneficial to Hostos students. For example, a beginning ESL student—and about 50 percent of the Hostos freshmen class is enrolled in the ESL program—takes a first semester program of at least 12 credit-hours. Of these hours, however, only 10 are actually credited toward graduation (assuming the student passes all his or her classes). At the completion of the first semester, the beginning ESL student is already half a semester behind in terms of required credits. It is estimated that the typical ESL student takes six semesters to complete the requirements for the associate degree.

Libra students, and, to varying degrees, Hostos' regular matriculants would also be affected by the four-semester limitation in TAP awards.

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Prof. Victor de Leon of the biology department has been asked to be the associate director of a program on the Molecular Aspects of Development which will be given at the University of Puerto Rico at Ponce this summer. Sponsored by UNESCO and the International Cell Research Organization, the program is for Spanish-speaking graduate and post-doctoral students from all over the world. In addition to his duties as associate director, Prof. de Leon will teach a course entitled "Material Messenger RNA." The course is based on Prof. de Leon's extensive research at Cornell Medical College on how women contribute to the genetic makeup of their children.

Prof. Arthur Clarke, chairman of the mathematics department, recently served on a grant proposal evaluation committee for the State Department of Education. The committee reviewed proposals for local course improvement for undergraduate science education.

Prof. Leslie Ault of the social sciences department recently published a book, The Official Mastermind Handbook (Signet), which delves into Mastermind, a popular and intriguing game of logic. (Among the game's most ardent players are Mohammed Ali and Tom Landry, head coach of football's Dallas Cowboys; the Australian Army uses it as an exercise to sharpen the minds of its officers.) The manufacturers of Mastermind asked Prof. Ault to write the handbook largely because of his reputation as an expert chess and bridge player. (He was the U.S. Intercollegiate Individual Champion in chess in 1959.) Among Prof. Ault's publications are: The Chess Tutor; Elements of Combinations and a twenty-four hour instructional program called "Bridgeveryone." Prof. Ault was also the editor of Bobby Fischer Teaches Chess.

Prof. Harcourt Carrington of the counseling staff was the coordinator and moderator of a seminar on learning held recently at the college. Participating in the seminar were:

Prof. Robert Wheeler (Health Care), Thomas Joyce (Mathematics), Carlos Quiroga (English) and Vernell Blending (English). Each of the participants seemed to stress that the students' self-confidence—confidence to speak out, question and make mistakes—was essential to the learning process.

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The following are news items on Hostos graduates:

Norma Iris Ramos ('72) was awarded a Master of Science degree in bilingual education from City College in 1975. She is presently pursuing another master's degree in social work at Fordham University. Her field placement is at St. Luke's School in the South Bronx.

Raquel Guzmán ('73) has a master's degree in social work, and is working as a remedial assistant for the State Department of Corrections.

Noemi Ortiz ('73) has a B.A. from SUNY at Old Westbury, and is working as a remedial assistant for the Hostos department of Modern Languages.

William Ortiz ('72) also received a B.A. from SUNY at Old Westbury. He is a case worker at the Welfare Department's Bergen center in the South Bronx.

Rafael Losada ('73) has a B.A. from SUNY at Old Westbury. He also received a B.A. from SUNY at Old Westbury. He is a case worker at the Welfare Department's Bergen center in the South Bronx.

Michael Gordon and Luther Freeman ('77) have been coordinating the Hostos Tuition Assistance Program office. Their performance is measured by the fact that Hostos was among the top three CUNY campuses in terms of the percentage of properly processed TAP applications. Both Messrs. Gordon and Freeman are attending City College this spring.

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