Hostos Marks Anniversary; President's Investiture Held

Convocation Includes Dedication of Building

It was billed as a "convocation," and in every sense that is what it was: an assemblage of political and academic leaders, community notables, students, faculty, staff, and all those, who in one way or another, are members of what has come to be known as "the Hostos family."

On February 27, they gathered in Hostos Community College's library to celebrate the College's tenth anniversary, officially dedicate the "500 Building," and witness the investiture of Dr. Flora Mancuso Edwards as Hostos's third president.

It was at once a festive and solemn occasion, a counterpoint of emotions and pronouncements. The dedication of the new facility and investiture of Dr. Mancuso Edwards, for example, bore all the marks of academic practice and tradition. And yet there were moments of levity, and especially after the ceremony, the opportunity to recall victories, both personal and institutional: an opportunity to shake hands, slap backs, and embrace colleagues.

But, if the participants took time out to recall victories and milestones, there was scarcely a hint at the attainment of some sort of historical plateau; they had come to reaffirm the College's purpose and mission.

Ms. Maldonado brings a rich background in personnel management and training to her new job at Hostos. Her appointment is contingent upon the approval of the CUNY Board of Trustees, but she was unanimously recommended for the position by a search committee of faculty and staff who, over a period of about six months, interviewed nearly a score of candidates for the position.

Ms. Maldonado brings a rich background in personnel management and training to her new job at Hostos. Her experience spans both the public and private sectors, and she was once a partner in a personnel management consulting firm. She is thus very much in tune with higher educational opportunities and job market demands, a qualification which should serve her well as the director of a division which spans the academic and working worlds.

Ms. Maldonado has high hopes for Hostos's Division of Community and Continuing Education. As she puts it, "Continuing ed is the up and coming thing at colleges everywhere, and this is due to the fact that the traditional college population is declining greatly everywhere in the country. So there's plenty of need and opportunity to develop a solid program at Hostos."

She is quick to point out, however, that whatever program is developed must be relevant to the College's constituencies. It is true that continuing education offerings in such disparate subjects and activities as swimming, crafts, sculpture, and other leisure and life-enrichment areas are blooming everywhere. But it is obvious that no one program can speak to the needs of the people of the South Bronx and similar communities.
If a movie were made about Hostos, it would reveal a community of learning, of caring, even of love. This movie would show how people overcame colossal obstacles to continue the educational process—how, under conditions which would have defeated and demoralized others less familiar to adversity, we endured.

In the academic year 1975-76, the students, many faculty and staff, and the community carried out a prolonged and militant struggle which saved Hostos.

The infamous movie "Fortress Hostos" portrays the South Bronx as some sort of urban jungle populated by criminals and drug addicts. Perhaps we could expect something better from Hollywood. But if a movie were made about Hostos, it would reveal a community of learning, of caring, even of love. It would show how people overcame obstacles to continue the educational process—how, under conditions which would have defeated and demoralized others less familiar to adversity, we endured.

In the Spring of 1974, the Union and the Student Government Organization organized a massive campaign to obtain the 500—it worked. If a movie were made about Hostos, it would uncover a truth which many throughout this city and country need to know. This truth is—if people persist, if coalitions are formed, if unity is forged—the people can win. Hostos is living proof that:

"We will pass on..."

Site Title

"Fortress Hostos" vs. Fort Apache

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Hostos will be here in this decade, and the one after that, and the ones after that. Hostos is not merely a campus to our children, grandchildren and great-grandchildren. We will pass on to each generation all the lessons which we have learned, and we will pass on the habit of acting, of being actors not subjects, the habit of being free.
Continuing Ed...
(Continued from page 1)

which the College serves.

"You’ve got to understand," explains Ms. Maldonado, "that our programs have never really been consumed of continuing ‘ed’ programs. Part of that is because those programs have been accessible to them, and mostly it’s because they haven’t been relevant and because they aren’t offered in the right language."

Ms. Maldonado maintains that the core of the Hostos continuing education program should be English-as-a-second-language and high school equivalency classes, and that the latter are geared to the language skills of a predominantly Spanish-speaking population. She therefore envisages a transfer in the GED program preceded by intensive language skills classes. Says she: "There’s just no way that you can plunge into a GED program with little or no knowledge of English... You also have to realize that, in many cases, our GED students will have been out of an academic setting for as long as 20 years, so we’ll have to work some study skills development into the program as well." Ms. Maldonado believes that the GED students will require reinforcement through tutorial sessions.

"You’ll find that the most successful programs whether they’re GED programs, or programs for fully matriculated students, address all their needs," says Ms. Maldonado. "Hostos might even explore the possibility of providing child care services for our GED students."

As for the ESL program which Ms. Maldonado proposes to establish, she hopes to see it closely tied to Hostos’s regular ESL program for matriculated students. She points out that the College already has a strong, well-established program and that the ESL faculty has years of experience in that field.

Ms. Maldonado has noted that many corporations have instituted or are interested in career development programs for their employees, and she will begin to make contact with private companies to determine whether the Division of Continuing Education might serve their needs.

"All this, we hope, will provide an atmosphere in which students’ fears towards science and mathematics will be minimized," said Prof. Gallardo. "The remarkable thing is that it's not that difficult at all to create your own lessons," said Mr. Steven Delgado, a liberal arts student. "The equipment we have purchased is pretty sophisticated, but it doesn’t require that much sophistication to use it."

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In addition to the computer, the Science Resource Center houses a collection of science texts, other books, original materials, and an area for tutorials.

"This, all this, will provide an advantage that the students will not have before in their studies towards science and mathematics," said Prof. Gallardo. "The computer drill which students can probably do best on their own and without the fear of making mistakes. The system should also free instructors so that they can concentrate on the classroom and individual attention to students."

Prof. Gallardo also points out that the computer has the ability to keep a record of each student’s progress, which will be invaluable in evaluating students as well as the efficacy of the curriculum. In addition, the center will provide students with the opportunity to acquaint themselves with the use of the computer as a scientific problem solver. And, although the computer is primarily intended for computer-assisted instruction in mathematics and the sciences, faculty and students from other disciplines will have the opportunity to use the facility.

The Science Resource Center is being funded by a grant of $269,252 (over a three year period) under the NSF’s Minority Institutions Science Improvement Program (MISIP) which supports science instruction at colleges and universities serving large numbers of minority students. The Hostos grant was the largest awarded under MISIP last year.

Convocation...
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although the College is clearly committed to serving large numbers of minority students. The Hostos grant was the largest awarded under MISIP last year.

Many other public officials and community leaders, who could not attend the convocation, sent greetings and felicitations. (See texts of their messages in this issue of El Coqui.)

As for the GED program, the College already has a strong, well-established program and that the ESL faculty has years of experience in that field.

The local communities, including the business community, were well represented as well. Those representing Hostos’s constituencies were Mr. Johnny Torres, president of Metro Spanish Grocers Association; Mr. William Aquino, chairman, Bronx Council on the Arts; Ms. Rachel Bettis, education coordinator, Local 1199; Ms. Irma Fleck, director of Brooklyn Services of the Consolidated Edison Company; Mr. Elias Karmon, Bronx Chamber of Commerce; Mr. Martin Kahan, chairman of public affairs for Con Ed; Mr. John Patterson, president of the South Bronx Organization, Inc.; Mr. Anthony Stevens-Arroyo, a local community leader; and Mr. Anthony Stevens-Arroyo, a long-time community activist. In the absence of the community, received a plaque commemorating the community’s contribution to the city. The same plaque on behalf of the student body was Mr. Roberto Lugo.

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Since its inception ten years ago, the graduates of the Hostos program have passed a better than 95 percent pass rate in demanding state and national licensing boards. (In some years, the pass rate has reached 100 percent.) The program has also achieved a 100 percent placement rate of its graduates, many of whom are currently in supervisory positions at some of New York City’s most prestigious hospitals and medical centers, including Beth Israel Hospital, NYU Medical Center, Mount Sinai Medical Center, and others.

In addition, the Hostos program’s faculty includes some of the best practitioners in the field. Professor Geraldine Ruiz, the program’s director, is a former president of the New York City Society of Radiologic Technologists, and she established the first off-campus degree program in her field.

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Scenes of the Tenth Anniversary Convocation

Friends Send Anniversary Greetings and Felicitations

Following are greetings from a number of community leaders and elected officials, most of whom were not able to attend Hostos's Tenth Anniversary Convocation, but who nevertheless wanted to salute the College on that occasion. The College community returns its most heartfelt thanks for their good wishes.

"I wish you and your colleagues every possible success in the fulfillment of the high aspirations and standards of the great man for whom the College is named."

José A. Cabranes
District Judge
U.S. District Court,
District of Connecticut

"... best wishes for a successful and enjoyable day."

Assemblyman John G.A. O'Neill

"Quiero dejar constar que nuestros pensamientos estarán con ustedes ese día, ya que estamos luchando por un mismo fin."

Domingo E. Marrero, Rector, Puerto Rico Junior College

"Es de mi conocimiento la labor extraordinaria que el personal del Colegio y la comunidad puertorriqueña han realizado para hacer posible la adquisición de las facilidades necesarias que faciliten las labores docentes y de servicio al estudiante. Les dejo mucho éxito en los años venideros."

Ismael Almodovar, President, University of Puerto Rico

"As a citizen of Bronx County... I want to be among the first to congratulate you... putting together an advisory council for Hostos Community College... Heartiest congratulations and my very best wishes to you and the rest of the faculty."

Damaso Emeric
Executive Director,
Youth Training Program
Hispanic Labor Committee

"I would like to congratulate you (President Mancuso Edwards) on your investiture... and the opening of your new facility. Your well known dedication to quality education in your community sets a fine example, particularly, during these times when such examples are rare."

Sylvia Hueston
Director of Community Relations
WABC-TV

"Quiero desde el fondo de mi corazón felicitar a cada uno de los estudiantes de Hostos, a la Dra. Flora Mancuso Edwards, la facultad y demás compañeros que en años anteriores lucharon con tanto ahínco, exponiendo hasta sus propias vidas para que el acto que hoy se lleva a cabo fuera una realidad."

Carmen E. Arroyo, President, South Bronx Community Corp.

"Congratulations on your 10th anniversary. May you continue to prosper for many decades to come."

Sister Colette Mahoney
President,
Marymount Manhattan College

Hostos Community College
475 Grand Concourse
Bronx, N.Y. 10451

"Deseo felicitarles por sus esfuerzos y sus logros... Exito."

Norman Maldonado, Rector
University of Puerto Rico Medical College

"It was very proud to be part of such an event... Congratulations to you (President Mancuso Edwards) on your investiture..."

Alma Robinson
Director, Civil Services Div.
Local 144, Hotel, Hospital Nursing Home Services Union

"It was an honor to participate in the... Convocation. It was an occasion on which we could all take pride and comfort, considering the struggle to preserve the independence of Hostos and clear the way for the development of its bilingual program. We are heartened by the growth of Hostos... It is still just the beginning. You (President Mancuso Edwards) are to be commended for the significant role you have played at Hostos in... changing people's lives..."

Stanley Simon
Bronx Borough President

Convocation...
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amalgam of three different ceremonies—the anniversary celebration, the dedication of the 500 facility, and the investiture of President Mancuso Edwards—it flowed smoothly, even gracefully. It was at once solemn and joyous, and there was a connecting link between its three parts: The 500 building is, after all, tangible evidence of Hostos's struggles during the College's first decade of existence, and President Mancuso Edwards had postponed her investiture for two years so that it could be held in the new facility.

The success of the ceremony was due, in large part, to the efforts of the College's Ceremonies Committee, which did a masterful job of planning under the direction of Prof. David Barrie (Visual and Performing Arts). Said Prof. Barrie: "No show of any magnitude... is the work of the director. In theater we believe that, finally, one person must have the responsibility for coordinating a work, but often hundreds of people contribute in various ways both to the making of it and its final success. That, exactly, was the way our Tenth Anniversary Convocation was produced. We did it by working as a team." Indeed, teamwork lies at the core of all of Hostos Community College's successes during the last decade.