WELCOME!

We are here today, to celebrate together, the successes and milestones of this past year.

Our continuing goal is to be the premier Community College in the nation, and with the talented, enthusiastic and motivated students, faculty and staff who have invested their efforts here, we know we are succeeding.

We want to take the time today to highlight some of our many significant accomplishments and confirm our plans for even greater achievements in the future.

We continue to be recognized nationally as an important degree-granting institution that successfully serves our urban population. In 2013, Community College Week ranked BMCC as NUMBER 2 among the all the two-year colleges in the nation for awarding
degrees to African Americans; and NUMBER 4 nationally, in awarding degrees to underrepresented students in general.

When considering the work of our College -- our first Strategic Priority Is Excellence in Teaching, Research and Learning.

Our faculty are world-class scholars and teachers. They care deeply about their students and are committed to helping them succeed through effective and innovative approaches to teaching.

As we have grown, we have increased hiring in both full-time faculty lines and administrative staff. Since last spring, we have added 38 full-time faculty. We now have almost 550 full-time faculty members teaching at BMCC.

We also depend upon a large and qualified pool of adjunct faculty. Each department works hard to make our part-time colleagues feel welcomed, included, and necessary to the success of the college.

We have increased hiring as well for administrative staff to work with students and faculty through our special programs.
The BMCC Mission is to develop and implement academic programs that will “prepare liberal arts and career students for transfer to four-year colleges” as well as prepare them for “career programs for employment and career mobility”. We monitor our programs and curricula in order to ensure that our students are fully prepared to meet their future goals.

In 2013, the American Association of Advertising Agencies: otherwise known as the 4A's, formed a partnership with BMCC, CUNY and the NYC Department of Education, establishing the Manhattan Early College School for Advertising or MEECA. MECA, the first six year program dedicated to pipeline high-potential youth into the industry, will provide graduates with a credential, a high-school diploma, and Associates Degree at no cost.

Here at BMCC our proposed Community Health program has been approved by the CUNY Board of Trustees and we are currently developing more associate degree programs that will address growing workforce demands, including Gerontology, Animation and Motion Graphics, and a certificate program in Health Informatics. To improve student retention in Liberal Arts, the College is also developing associate degree programs in
History, Sociology, and Psychology. Students will be able to make connections with disciplinary faculty earlier in their college careers.

To support faculty scholarship, we have recently hired a new Director of Research, Dr. Alona Bach, who is responsible for coordinating all of the college’s undergraduate research activities and assisting faculty in their efforts to pursue funding for their research.

In keeping with this concept, we have sponsored our second cohort of training under the Presidential Scholars Program. In January of this year, 5 additional BMCC faculty have undergone training and are working with prominent mentors selected from across the university to develop high quality grant proposals aimed at promoting research and growing a community of scholars on the BMCC campus. Congratulations to Professors Sheldon Applewhite, Lesley Rennis, Alice Lum, Abel Navarro and Christine Priano.

The college continues to embrace the use of technology as a means of providing a quality education for our students. This past year, BMCC was one of only five community colleges nation-wide,
invited to serve as an “exemplary campus” under the Excelencia to Education initiative sponsored by the Lumina Foundation and the American Association of College and Universities (AAC&U). Staff from several programs, including ASAP, Freshmen Learning Academies, e-Learning Center and the Office of Academic Advisement are developing an e-Portfolio system as a tool for assessing academic performance and integrating services among first year students. When fully implemented, BMCC will serve as a model campus, working with other community college nationally to implement similar reforms.

Our students and graduates continue to earn regional and NATIONAL recognition.

On February 26, 2013, former student and Theater major Marcus Dargan, now an adjunct professor in Speech, Communication, and Theater Arts, wrote and produced a one-act play entitled, “Her Reflections II” for the BMCC community for African Heritage Month. The play profiled /recounted the lives of black millionaire Madame C.J. Walker and singer/dancer Josephine Baker and was extremely well-received by students, faculty and staff.
The Vassar Exploring Transfer Program provides our students with a stimulating experience that helps them decide if they want to attend a challenging four-year liberal arts college. Over the past two decades, nearly 200 BMCC students have participated in the intensive five-week program, where they take rigorous courses and live on the Vassar College campus. In 2013 BMCC sent seven students to the Vassar Program, one of the largest student delegations from a single college.

Our Second Strategic Priority Is Student Success And Retention.

We lead our colleagues in the CUNY system and nationally with our strategic approach to innovation in academics and basic skills proficiency.

We recognize that many of our students are challenged by the ground they must cover in order to meet their chosen program requirements and accumulate college credit in a timely manner. Several cutting-edge programs have been successfully piloted at BMCC and we are now aggressively scaling up in order to make these programs available to more students as quickly as possible.
Among these high-impact programs are the BMCC Innovation in Reading and Writing Initiative, the Quantway Network in mathematics, and the BMCC Freshman Learning Academies.

In our developmental writing courses we have incorporated grammar diagnostic software that allows faculty to determine students’ specific areas of weakness in mechanics, so that lessons or small group work can be tailored to their specific needs. We have also initiated an accelerated test administration process that allows students two opportunities over the course of the semester to pass the CATW writing exam. The results of these actions have been a significant improvement in the pass rate of the CATW. Prior to these activities, the college’s CATW pass rate was approximately 39% and now it is approximately 62% -- the highest in CUNY.

After a little over three years, BMCC is currently the leading Quantway College in the nation. The Quantway quantitative skills course now provides an alternative to the basic Algebra course for students who need basic skills in math.

The pass rates for the Quantway students were significantly higher than the rates in the traditional algebra courses, with the
spring 2013 pass rates for Quantway students at 53% on average, and the propensity score matched comparison students passing at a 29% rate. In the follow-up study, the Quantway students continue to excel with higher rates of completion of college-level math and higher graduation rates.

BMCC is committed to programs designed to support new students both academically and socially. In addition to our long-standing efforts in College Discovery, Out in Two, and ASAP, we are now in the third year of the BMCC Freshman Learning Academies or F.L.A., for short. The Academies are a joint effort of both Academic Affairs and Student Affairs.

The F.L.A. at BMCC continues to achieve promising student outcomes. Results from spring 2013 supported the positive outcomes from fall 2012 in that the spring students, when compared to a matched group, had a significantly higher pass rates as well as persistence rates in the following semester. This spring Deans Gillespie and Hutmaker will host a conference for the seven community colleges in CUNY to discuss the best practices, challenges, and next steps for their learning communities.
I’d like the BMCC Writing, Quantway and F.L.A. Teams to stand and be recognized! Thank you all.

The college’s Enrollment Management team has faced challenges with enrollment this year, but we are responding and will continue to respond to changing enrollment trends with innovative programming and a heightened focus on retaining the students we have.

One of the ways that we are doing this is by focusing on communications. We formed a Call Center to field incoming calls and provide students with accurate and consistent information. We extended the operating hours of registration related offices, and we also added a weekend registration day. BMCC’s faculty and staff rose to the challenge and extended our services to assist students with registration, and we thank them for their efforts.

BMCC is making a commitment to student success by offering the students the preparation they need to succeed and complete their degree. The College has partnered with The Manhattan Educational Opportunity Center (MEOC) to offer free
developmental instruction on our campus. BMCC has targeted two populations for this kind of instruction: students who applied for admission in the spring 2014 semester, did not attend, and have asked us to hold over their applications; and students who have stopped out for the last three semesters and need to complete a developmental class.

BMCC’s Adult Continuing Education and Workforce Division has also been actively preparing students for college level courses at BMCC through the CUNY START Program. This year the Adult Continuing Education Division, in collaboration with CUNY, will be developing a pilot program called “SUMMER START” to provide students with an intensive math preparatory program over an 8 week period during the summer so they can enter college courses in the fall.

BMCC’s Early Childhood Center continues to provide valuable services to help us retain our student parent population. Their exemplary work has been confirmed by their recent receipt of a federal CCAMPIS grant. Over a quarter of a million dollars was awarded in October to help support the daily operations of our child care center and help ensure the academic success of students who are also parents.
College Discovery is yet another program that provides comprehensive support for our students. Just like our Early Childhood Center, College Discovery continues to grow and innovate to provide students with the best service possible. The program has expanded its use of technology to facilitate meetings with students. The advisement and support they offer, combined with their innovative programming have earned them a unique distinction: College Discovery’s graduation rate exceeds the national average, it exceeds the CUNY average and it exceeds our own BMCC average.

No one can anticipate what life will bring. Even with support services in place, some of our students may face unexpected emergencies that threaten to derail their dream of earning a degree. The BMCC Foundation has provided funding for scholarships and emergency loans and grants to assist students facing financial hardships. We are now able to expand this support thanks to a generous grant of $300,000, over three years, from the Carroll and Milton Petrie Foundation.
Recipients will also receive wraparound services from BMCC’s Single Stop Office. As a whole, the program seeks to assist students so they can continue and complete their education at the College. In addition, Health Services and Single Stop joined together to assist our students in enrolling in healthcare plans in accordance with the Affordable Care Act.

Some students are undocumented, have financial need, but are not eligible for federal or state financial aid. To support undocumented students, BMCC has begun working with THE DREAM US. This fall, BMCC participated in a pilot round of THE DREAM US scholarship, which offers financial assistance as well as advisement and academic support for DREAMers. Only 12 schools in the country have participated in this pilot. A BMCC scholarship recipient was invited to speak at the inaugural launch in Washington DC and was highlighted in the Washington Post.

We have also recognized the importance of supporting students who are continuing their education after serving their country in the armed forces. BMCC has the second largest population of student veterans in CUNY. We have long understood that our student veterans come to the College with a unique set of
experiences and challenges. To meet their needs, a counselor and a Veterans Coordinator have been assigned to assist this population.

We also established the Veterans Resource Center to serve as a space in which Veteran Students are welcomed to the college community. This space serves as a central point of contact for all BMCC Student Veterans and their eligible dependents. We are proud that our veterans have chosen BMCC and we are committed to their academic success.

BMCC continues to innovate in the area of fundraising to support our students. Thanks to the efforts of our new Vice President of Development and her energetic team, BMCC is now a magnet for important philanthropists who want to make a difference by helping students succeed. Last April, the BMCC Foundation sponsored a 50th Anniversary Celebration for the College on the floor of the New York Stock Exchange. That event raised over $800,000 in contribution for the BMCC Foundation Scholarship Fund – nearly double the amount raised in 2011.
Following that success, the Foundation is looking towards the future for this year’s Scholarship Gala. With the theme, “Reaching for the Stars: The Next 50 Years at BMCC,” the event will be held on the 54th floor of the newly opened 4 World Trade Center building. Gala 2014, which will take place on May 13th, continues our tradition of celebrating our history and partnership with the Lower Manhattan community.

I hope many of you will be able to join us at the 2014 Gala and share your enthusiasm for BMCC.

Last September, the BMCC Foundation hosted its first Steinway Soiree in the Shirley Fiterman Art Center featuring guest artists Paul Shaffer, Roberta Flack, Art Garfunkel, Lew Soloff and Peter Cincotti. The event showcased BMCC’s talented music faculty, who also performed, and our art faculty, whose works were displayed in the Center.

The Soiree event featured an “88-key-naming program” through which patrons could name keys on a replica of a keyboard and contribute financially to enhanced excellence at BMCC. The
Steinway piano used at that event, which was on loan from Steinway & Sons, is now a permanent part of our College, and the gift of the piano from Steinway inspired another guest at the event to donate his Steinway piano to BMCC as well!

Thanks to a collaboration between faculty from the Speech, Communications and Theatre Arts Department, the Development team, and the Administration and Planning Division, In December, BMCC received a major gift of $250,000 to establish and name The Derfner Foundation Communication Lab at BMCC. This facility, which is scheduled to open in the fall, will help BMCC students improve their speaking and presentation skills.

These are just some of the ways BMCC develops partnerships and creates opportunities to support our diverse student body, giving them the assistance they need to complete their studies and achieve their personal and professional goals. Beyond scholarships and grants, we support students’ connection to the College through programs that emphasize leadership and service.
In its commitment to training the leaders of tomorrow, the BMCC Student Leadership Program evolved and expanded its reach to varying student populations. Our student leaders learn many valuable leadership skills from dedicated staff members and as such, our Student Affairs team has been working diligently to ensure that we are keeping up with best practices in student support services.

Last fall, BMCC was chosen as one of 73 NASPA member colleges and universities committed to encouraging and highlighting civic engagement in Student Affairs. Being a part of NASPA’s Lead Initiative has given BMCC unique opportunities to secure targeted resources and recognition for work students do to serve the New York community.

BMCC continues to be dedicated to service. Our students have contributed over 260 hours through our off campus volunteer group, BMCC Engaged in Service Together (BEST). The BEST Team provides invaluable volunteer service every month to New York neighborhoods.

In addition, the CUNY Service Corps a new program providing on-the-ground support to a wide range of non-profit and civic endeavors, the CUNY Service Corps will both increase the
availability of valuable services to New Yorkers and enable BMCC students to become more engaged in their communities and throughout the city.

Our students give in multiple ways. Last semester, BMCC was honored by New York Blood Center with an award for a record breaking number of blood donations.

Our Third Strategic Priority Is Organizational Effectiveness And Accountability.

During the last year the College submitted the Periodic Review Report or PRR to the Middle States Commission on Higher Education. This report is due halfway through the accreditation cycle, at the five-year point. The College was reaffirmed for accreditation and “commended for establishing a variety of methods and process for assessing the strategic plan and for using those results to promote institutional renewal.”

At the same time, we were asked to provide more information in a Monitoring Report, due November 1, 2014, about our collaborative efforts in linking planning and budgeting,
strengthening the institution’s finances, and using assessment results to improve teaching and learning. As we make strides in these areas, we welcome the opportunity to present more evidence of our success as well as to educate and engage a new cadre of faculty and staff in the accreditation effort. The Middles States process is constantly evolving and we are determined to take the forefront in response to the new emphasis and the new standards.

As one concrete step toward our goals in instructional assessment, as well as in sustainable practices, we will be implementing a PAPERLESS system for student evaluations of faculty THIS Spring. No more scannable surveys in the classroom. Students will click on a link and will be taken to a page with online surveys for each of their classes. The new system, called SMART-EVALS, provides much more information for our faculty. It depends, however, on everyone working together to achieve high response rates from students. Please stress the importance of responding to the evaluation emails with your students! If you have any questions about the process, please contact your department chair or the Institutional Research Office on the 7th floor.
We have made great progress toward realizing the intent of the BMCC mission and values as well as the BMCC Strategic Plan. As a component of the BMCC Collaborative Improvement Model, the Strategic Plan has become a living, dynamic, ongoing, campus-wide tool for evaluating our direction as a collaborative campus community. Building on the Goals and Objects from the 2008-2013 Strategic Plan, the new 2014 through 2019 BMCC Strategic Plan has been re-characterized as a rolling five-year document, with ANNUAL reviews, updates, and new projects.

We are quite proud of our success in addressing the long-standing facilities issues here at BMCC. The new Fiterman Hall building has become a New York City showcase for college design; it is unlike any community college building anywhere. As Fiterman Hall has become operational, BMCC has refocused resource efforts to address the critical maintenance issues and reprogramming demands of the main campus at 199 Chambers Street. The College has already completed work on the modernization of faculty offices in the facility and is now addressing the service and support space needs to make them more inviting and efficient.
Also, as we addressed the issues of the physical space, it is important to note that BMCC is fully committed to the goal of a sustainable future. We are half-way through the 10-year BMCC Plan for Sustainability which includes ambitious goals for energy conservation; curriculum and education; procurement; waste management, and recycling. We are a CUNY leader in this area. In addition, when the roofing project is completed, BMCC will embark on the installation of a 300+ Kw solar panel array which will be the largest installation in Manhattan. This will greatly reduce the College’s carbon footprint.

You are all invited to the Third Annual BMCC Sustainability Fair, on April 28th, in the Richard Harris Terrace area.

Our Fourth And Last Strategic Priority Is Global Engagement And Economic Development.

Since BMCC began, we have been clear that our mission was to serve the residents of New York City. We are also aware that many of our neighbors are still searching for the job that guarantees a secure foothold in our economic future and must compete globally with up-to-date skills.
We have successfully pursued grant opportunities for projects that link and engage the College, Continuing Education and the economic community in educationally and culturally beneficial endeavors as well as workforce development. The recently funded $3.0 million Health Information Pathways grant from the US Department of Labor will establish the only Health Informatics Specialist Certificate Program in the City of New York. Together with a $2.0 million CUNY TAACCCT grant and the $2.8 million Health Lattice Program from the US Department of Labor, BMCC has become a leader in the field of Health Information Technology.

Finally, the College’s commitment to innovation and planning for a better future means that we support those organizational initiatives that were designed to position our college and our students to be exemplars of future planning, sustainability and global citizenship. BMCC was the first Community College in the United States to have been awarded a “Race to a Job” grant by the Wadhwani Foundation, an international private foundation focused on Workforce Development.
BMCC students arrive from all over New York City and the world. It is our obligation to ensure that the skills, knowledge and competencies that our students build through their experiences at BMCC prepare them for personal and economic success as well as full and responsible participation in the 21st Century global community.