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LatinxCEO Seeks to Shatter Glass Ceiling



Latino entrepreneurs from the Bergen Business Accelerator attended the February 21 LatinxCEO launch event.

According to a recent analysis by USA TODAY, Hispanic men and women account for less than four percent of executives at S&P 100 companies – with women facing especially disproportionate odds. Only two executives among the 533 publicly listed corporate leaders identify as a Hispanic female.

LatinxCEO, a new workforce development initiative at Bergen, seeks to provide students with the resources, skills and experience they need to challenge Hispanic underrepresentation in the workplace.

“We will have the opportunity to model community members who look like us and may have had similar life experiences,” student Josephina Navarro said at the program’s launch event on February 21 on the College’s main campus. “Learning from those who have already achieved success will help us as students understand what it takes to become successful.”

LatinxCEO will empower aspiring Hispanic business professionals by providing students with skills, real-world connections and career exploration opportunities. Among the activities, students will network with regional

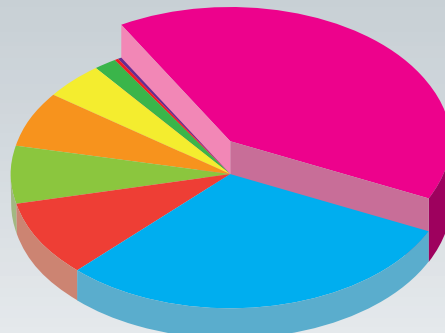
executives, meet entrepreneurs and participate in career shadowing, worksite visits and mock interviews.

The program effectively combines two priorities outlined in the College’s strategic goals: creating new workforce development initiatives and enhancing its approach to diversity, equity and inclusion according to President Eric M. Friedman.

“This must begin to change,” he said at the launch event, commenting on the underrepresentation of Hispanics in leadership roles. “We have the opportunity to help move the needle. Today, as we introduce the LatinxCEO program, we’re making further progress in supporting our diverse community and developing a next generation workforce.”

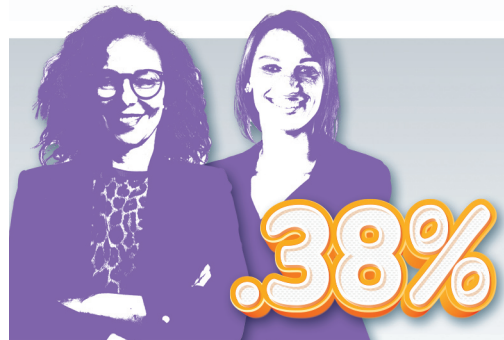
LatinxCEO continues on page 2.

BY THE NUMBERS - Latinos at Bergen and in Business



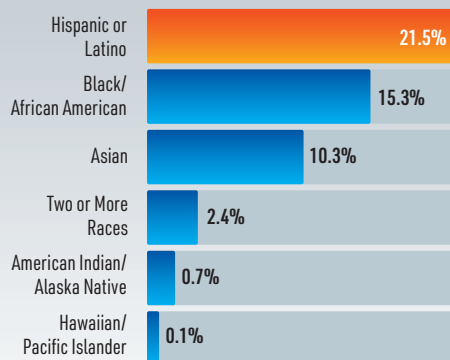
Bergen Enrollment by Race/Ethnicity (Fall 2022)

Institutional Research



Latina Executives at S&P 100 Companies

USA TODAY Analysis



Breakdown of Minority-Owned Businesses in New Jersey

U.S. Census Bureau



Bergen County Commissioner Vice Chair Germaine Ortiz speaks at the LatinxCEO launch.

LatinxCEO - continued from page 1

The official launch event also featured speakers such as Bergen County Board of Commissioners Vice Chair Germaine Ortiz, New Jersey Statewide Hispanic Chamber of Commerce Board of Directors Chair Luis De La Hoz and the stories of a dozen Hispanic entrepreneurs who will serve as mentors for students taking advantage of the initiative. The entrepreneurs work with the College's business accelerator at Bergen Community College at the Meadowlands in Lyndhurst, which provides them with affordable office space, access to memberships and business coaching at the facility. The Hispanic-business-focused incubator specifically targets assisting early-stage entrepreneurs in the region. The New Jersey Statewide Hispanic Chamber of Commerce maintains its headquarters at the Meadowlands site as well.

Bergen for Business Director Linda Caruso worked with Executive Director of Continuing Education and Workforce Development Cinzia

D'lorio to create the partnerships that provided the basis for LatinxCEO. Previous projects emerging from the division include the "small business support specialist" initiative that has seen Bergen students provide accounting, marketing and operations assistance for more than 600 entrepreneurs. That effort remains a joint partnership of the Bergen County Business Resource Network launched by government leaders.

The College's involvement with the Bergen Resource Network represented one of the first major initiatives emerging from President Friedman's economic recovery committee taskforce. The group, which began meeting shortly after he took office in 2021, serves in an advisory capacity to the president, creating and implementing strategies that position the institution as a catalyst for recovery from the pandemic.

For more information on LatinxCEO, or to become a mentor business, email lcaruso1@bergen.edu. ■



Student Spotlight Liangy Gomez

"I chose Bergen because of the opportunities to earn professional certificates, the diversity within the student body and staff, and most importantly, greater flexibility."

With dreams of starting an athletic wear company or women's soccer team, Liangy Gomez has chosen to study business administration, at Bergen as the first step to reaching those goals.

Gomez, who plays soccer and basketball at Bergen, also serves as the president of Bergen Pride and the director of recruitment for Phi Theta Kappa.

"Getting out of my comfort zone has really helped me to evolve into a successful student," Gomez said. "If it wasn't for the times I spoke out, the leadership roles I took on, the events I participated in, and of course, the people who have made this possible - I wouldn't be who I am as of now."

Gomez will graduate with the class of 2023. ■

Snapshotted



Child Development Center Students Walked for Heart-Health



"Jerónimo" Director John Juhn Visited



Professor Dill in the Outdoor Classroom



The First Black Maternal Health Summit



New Talent Emerged at the Adjunct Job Fair

Students Secure Speaking Engagements With Appreciation



Two students have earned prestigious speaking engagements at academic conferences this semester. Yoav Aharon, Bergen's vice president of the Student Government Association

(pictured left), will present at Johns Hopkins' Richard Macksey National Undergraduate Humanities Research Symposium on his research related to the dawn of agriculture as interpreted through the Hebrew Bible. Meanwhile, Kinbo Yu, a philosophy honors student (pictured right), recently presented at the annual American Academy of Religion Mid-Atlantic Conference at the Princeton Theological Institute. Yu offered his analysis of the seminal religious experiences of the Prophet Muhammad and the Buddha. ■

President Eric M. Friedman recognized the extraordinary efforts of selected faculty and staff at the February meeting of the Board of Trustees, including longtime Director of Grants Administration Dr. William Yakowicz, who retired after 40 years at Bergen.

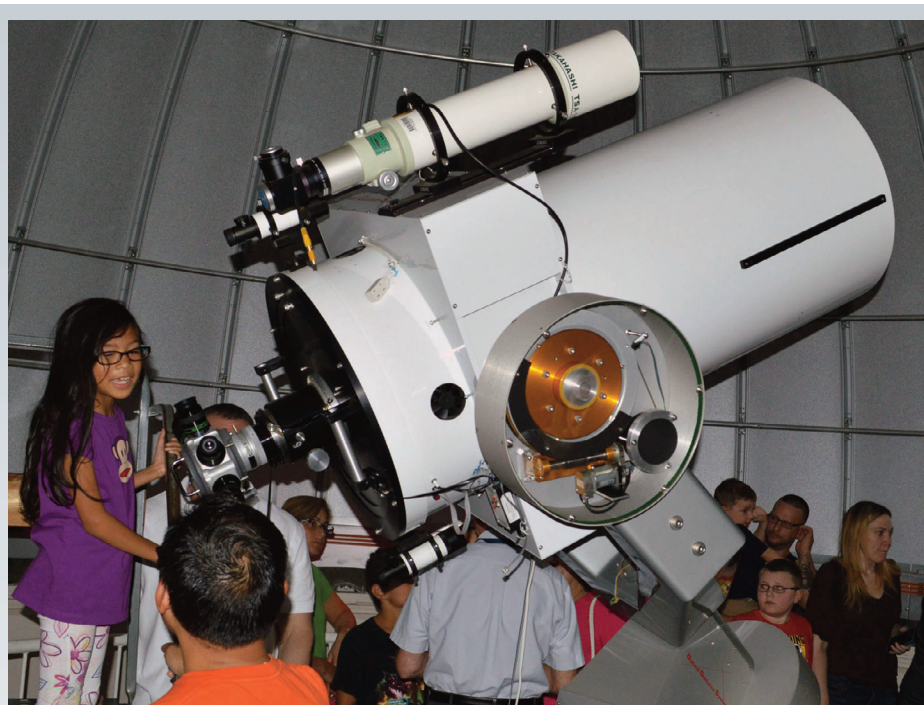


The president also honored leading members of the President's Advisory Council for Diversity Equity and Inclusion with the "Impact Award." Honorees were: Dr. Mi Ahn, Timothy Blunk, Gloria Cevallos, Luis De Abreu, Dr. Maureen Ellis-Davis, Dr. Deborah Manning, Dr. Tonia McKoy and Tracy Rand. ■



SGA Spreads Love

The Office of Student Life and Student Government Association used peanut butter and jelly to spread love for those in need this Valentine's Day. The collection drive supported by students, faculty and staff delivered 136 jars to the Bergen Cares Center pantry. The Cares Center offers food and other emergency services for anyone at the College. Temple University and Wisconsin Hope Lab researchers estimate 42 percent of community college students face hunger or "food insecurity," defined as lacking reliable access to a sufficient quantity of affordable, nutritious food. ■



The Stars Come Out at Bergen

The stars come out at Bergen on Wednesday and Friday evenings ... without a celebrity in sight.

This spring, Bergen invites members of the public for free observations of celestial objects through research-grade telescopes at its Emil Buehler Trust Observatory (College Main Campus, 400 Paramus Road, Paramus) and the William D. McDowell Observatory (Richard W. DeKorte Park, One DeKorte Park Plaza, Lyndhurst). Professor Sean McLearnie leads the observations on Friday evenings from 7 to 9:30 p.m. in Paramus and on Wednesday evenings from 7 to 10 p.m. in Lyndhurst.

Guests can expect to see objects such as the moon, Mars and the Andromeda Galaxy, though viewing conditions vary based on weather. The observatories remain open for regular viewing hours unless clouds or precipitation completely cover the night sky.

Faculty have led public viewings in Paramus since the observatory's 2003 opening; the College assumed the Lyndhurst observatory's operations in 2015 under an agreement with the New Jersey Sports and Exposition Authority.

For more information on the observatories, email smclearie@bergen.edu. ■



Professor Dr. Steven Fischer works with students in the cannabis certificate program.

Seeing Green with Cannabis Careers

Bergen has launched multiple programs that will provide students with the opportunity to gain a foothold in the burgeoning cannabis industry. Financial research firm Morningstar, Inc. identifies cannabis as a \$10 billion industry in the U.S. with the potential to rise exponentially in the coming decades as more states legalize the growth, use and sale of the plant and its derivatives.

The first program, a certificate of achievement in medicinal and industrial cannabis through the biology and horticulture department, focuses on preparing students for careers in clinical research, development and commercialization. Additional certificates, offered through the Division of Continuing Education and Workforce Development in partnership with Green Flower, a cannabis education provider, prepare students for careers in dispensing, cultivation and manufacturing. Students can enroll in both programs now at Bergen.edu.

Combined, the offerings position Bergen as one of the only colleges in the state to sponsor such comprehensive cannabis education opportunities, according to President Eric M. Friedman.

"Community colleges respond to demands of industry, workforce and the local economy," he said. "With our cannabis programs, Bergen can create new pathways to employment in the state of New Jersey."

In the certificate of achievement program developed under the College's biology and horticulture department, students will begin with classes such as Plant Science (HRT-102) and People Plant Relationships (BIO-130), which provide foundational learning in the disciplines. Students will then tackle cannabis-specific coursework in recently approved classes Physiological Action of Cannabinoids in Humans (BIO-250) and Commercial Practices for the Production of Medical and Industrial Cannabis Species (BIO-251). Students can complete the 18-credit program in as few as three semesters. Ultimately, students will graduate from Bergen with the certificate of achievement and will choose to enter a career or transfer the credits to a four-year institution in pursuit of a bachelor's degree.

Meanwhile, eight-week certificate programs through Green Flower ready students for immediate entry into the workforce as dispensary agents, cultivation technicians and manufacturing agents. The self-paced online programs focus on best practices and developing the skills needed in the workplace. Students who complete the programs will not only have the knowledge needed to obtain employment, but they will connect with potential employers through Green Flower's exclusive network reserved for the program's students. Students interested in the program should call (201) 447-7488 or email continuing@bergen.edu. ■

Student-Athlete Scores Award

Three-sport student-athlete Melody Peralta represented the College at the New Jersey Association for Intercollegiate Athletics for Women "National Girls and Women in Sports Day" celebration, earning Bergen's "Woman of the Year Award." The honor recognizes her contributions to Bergen athletics as a leader, teammate and student. Seton Hall University hosted the 37th annual installment last month, which featured Peralta and 13 other student-athletes from the Garden State Athletic Conference.

"I wasn't expecting it," she said. "I was very honored."

Peralta lettered in three sports in high school – volleyball, basketball and softball – before graduating and entering Bergen. She continues to play all three sports at the College.

The award-winner said she draws inspiration from her "hard-working parents" and four-year-old sister. She plans to transfer to a four-year university after graduating from Bergen and hopes to one day work for the New York Mets. ■



PTK Accolades for Academic VP



Vice President of Academic Affairs Dr. Brock Fisher has earned the "Distinguished College Administrator" award from Phi Theta Kappa, the international honor society of two-year colleges. Students from Bergen's award-winning Alpha Epsilon Phi chapter nominated Fisher for the honor.

"While you were nominated for this award by the highest-achieving students on your campus, this award is really about your commitment to the success of all students," PTK President and CEO Dr. Lynn Tincher-Ladner said in a letter to Fisher. "They know you are working hard to provide them more opportunities and stronger pathways to completion, transfer and employment. They know you support their learning both inside and outside the classroom, and as a result, they have had a better college experience because of you."

Fisher will receive the award at PTK's annual convention, Catalyst, which will take place in

April in Columbus, Ohio. Bergen student and PTK president Kim Gastelu said Fisher earned the honor based on his unwavering commitment to helping students succeed.

"Our entire PTK chapter is so elated with the recent announcement of Dr. Fisher being named the recipient of the Distinguished College Administrator award," Gastelu said. "Dr. Fisher is one of our biggest champions and he is always supportive of all of PTK's endeavors. We send our warmest congratulations to Dr. Fisher on being recognized for this most deserving award and we look forward to celebrating with him at Catalyst in April."

As the College's top academic officer, Fisher provides strategic direction for curricula, instruction and student learning while leading the institution's faculty. He joined Bergen in 2019 after teaching and serving as an administrator at colleges throughout the U.S. He earned a B.A. from the University of Central Missouri, majoring in theatre and psychology, an M.A. from the University of Missouri, Columbia in theatre, and a Ph.D. from the University of Missouri, Columbia in theatre. ■



Taking a Turn(ing Point) in the Kitchen

Members of the College's Turning Point Program for intellectually disabled adults recently had the opportunity to work in the Bergen-run kitchen at Volvo Car USA as part of a shared

learning experience. College faculty and students operate all hospitality services for the North American headquarters of the global automobile manufacturer. ■

Middle States Matters

News and Notes



- With the visit of Middle States Commission on Higher Education Vice President of Institutional Field Relations Dr. Paul Starkey complete, the College has begun working on his suggested revisions to the Self-Study Design Document.
- Meanwhile, the seven Standard subcommittees continue to meet and review the "lines of inquiry" – guideposts to direct the data gathering and writing for each criterium.
- Subcommittee members will devote significant time this semester as they identify documents for the evidence inventory. The committees are using a restricted, shared Google Drive to accomplish this work.
- Evidence-finding interviews with members of the College will also begin this semester. Later this year, subcommittee members will begin writing their analysis of the College's compliance with each standard.

Save the Date!

Commencement 2023

Tuesday, May 16
10 a.m.
MetLife Stadium
East Rutherford, NJ
grad.bergen.edu