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Candidates Fill CLAS Presidential Tickets Ahead of Student Elections

By Ryan Schwach
Managing News Editor

As America’s turbulent 2020 election begins to pick up, Brooklyn College begins its own election cycle: with CLAS elections, happening from April 15th to April 17th and the candidate field is beginning to fill up with at least four tickets emerging from across campus.

Each candidate comes with their own background - from student activists to CLAS officials to former CLAS officials - each with their own platform, and each each with their own ideas for how to improve the Brooklyn College campus for its 17,000 undergraduate students.

So far the most notable entry into the presidential race is Young Progressives of America founder Carlos Calzadilla-Palacio, who is running with Nailah Pressley, current Vice President for WBCR and representative of Sigma Gamma Rho. Calzadilla-Palacio comes as an outsider candidate as the only candidate who does not have a prior role in CLAS, and comes from an activism background.

“We need an activist student government who will not be afraid to call out what is wrong on our campus,” Calzadilla-Palacio told Kingsman. “We need someone who is going to stand up to the administration and hold them accountable.”

Calzadilla-Palacio takes aim at wider issues, including CUNY underfunding, uniting our diverse campus, and the ongoing adjunct “7K or Strike” campaign. One of his major plans is to take the stipend and hopes other CLAS members will follow suit in order to “re-energize the student-first mentality.” His main goal as a candidate is to focus on “student engagement and school spirit,” hoping to increase the number and awareness of student events, and working to fix and clean campus bathrooms.

“I’m working for the students, not the money,” Khilji told The Kingsman.

Finally, there’s a “dark horse” ticket made up of presidential candidate and Finance major Ciara Ligon. Ligon runs a Youtube channel called “Uneasy TV,” which challenges a diverse group of New Yorkers to answer thought-provoking questions such as “What would the world be like without people of color?” She’s running with VP candidate Anesiya Rivera, a Communications major. Ligon and Rivera have kept a low profile so far at Brooklyn College.

The Kingsman reached out to Ligon for comment, but she did not respond by press time.

Brooklyn College students are faced with a diverse set of candidates each with their own opinions on how our time here can be better spent outside of class as Brooklyn College decides who will lead them into the upcoming academic year.

The petitioning period for would-be Presidential tickets ends Thursday, April 4. The campaign period begins in earnest on Friday, April 5, and lasts until the vote closes on Wednesday, April 17.
CUNY Chancellor Rebukes Trump Executive Order on Higher Ed

By Allison Rapp  
Managing Digital Editor

On Thursday, Mar. 21, the White House released an executive order titled “Improving Free Inquiry, Transparency, and Accountability at Colleges and Universities,” with the intent to “promote free inquiry, including through compliance with all applicable federal laws, regulations, and policies” on college campuses nationwide.

But as CUNY pointed out in an official response dated Mar. 22, the City University of New York already does this, “because it is the very foundation of education in a free society.”

“CUNY will always safeguard free speech, encourage deep and thoughtful engagement with ideas, and promote free inquiry,” said Interim Chancellor Vita C. Rabinowitz in CUNY’s response statement. “Exposing students to a wide range of viewpoints and perspectives is fundamental to all levels of undergraduate and graduate education.”

When President Trump signed the executive order, he emphasized that the order would protect against “ideological intolerance on campus,” which he labeled as “rigid” and “far-left.” This sort of rhetoric is familiar to Brooklyn College students, who will remember the outcry last semester when a business professor came under hot water for some questionable comments on his personal blog, and called the college a “leftist training camp.”

In an effort to get colleges and universities to take the order seriously, Trump added that federal grants were on the line, saying “Every year, the federal government provides educational institutions with more than $35 billion in research funding. All of that money is now at stake.”

In Rabinowitz’s response, CUNY dedicated itself to upholding free speech on all campuses, regardless of political affiliations or viewpoints.

“In our democratic system, the government may not interfere with a university’s academic judgment on these matters,” Rabinowitz wrote. “Any attempt to pressure colleges and universities to favor one side of the political spectrum would set a dangerous and unconstitutional precedent, chill creativity, and erode the scholarly exploration vital to robust academic life. Such governmental interference would also violate basic democratic values essential to a free society.”

Nearly a Dozen Compete to Fill Jumaane’s Seat

By Quiara Vasquez  
Editor-in-Chief

Last March, Brooklyn College alumnus Jumaane Williams emerged from a field of over a dozen as the winner in a crowded special election for Public Advocate. Williams is now at the epicenter of yet another crowded special election, this time to fill his now-vacant seat on the City Council.

As of press time, eleven candidates have announced their intention to run for City Councilperson for Brooklyn’s District 45, which includes the neighborhoods of Flatbush, Marine Park, and Midwood (where Brooklyn College is situated).

Three Brooklyn College alumni are in the running for the seat. Anthony Alexis ’96 is on the board of the Brooklyn College Alumni Association, and volunteers at the Flatbush YMCA. L. Rickie Tulloch ’84, MA ’95 is the senior director at NYC Health + Hospitals. Adina "Flatbush Girl" Sash ’09 is a social media personality and outspoken advocate for Orthodox Jewish women. Also in the running is Hercules Reid, the former Legislative Director for CUNY’s University Student Senate (USS).

The current frontrunner in the race is Farah Louis, Williams’ deputy chief of staff, who received a key endorsement from Flatbush Assemblywoman Rodneyse Bichotte. Williams himself has not made an endorsement in the race.

The election will take place on Tuesday, May 14.
Brooklyn College Unites Against Hatred in Christchurch, New Zealand

By Kevin Limiti
Staff Writer

On Thursday, Mar. 21, faith and campus leaders came together to condemn the terrorist attack in Christchurch, New Zealand against two mosques that left 50 people dead.

A diverse group of organizations, including the Brooklyn College Islamic Society, Young Progressives of America (YPA), and the Muslim Women’s Educational Initiative (MWEI), gathered in the atrium of the Tow Center to mourn and speak up.

With a podium draped in an image of people hugging and words that said, “This is your home and you should have been safe here,” one by one speakers came up to the microphone and delivered powerful messages of acceptance, sadness, solidarity, and faith.

“I’d like to express our deepest condolences to all who lost loved ones and were affected by the terrorist attack in Christchurch, New Zealand,” said Brooklyn College President Michelle J. Anderson. She acknowledged the rise in terrorism attacks around the world, reflecting on other attacks such as last year’s Tree of Life Synagogue shooting in Pittsburgh which killed 11 people. “These horrific acts of hate are the acts of white supremacists and Islamophobes emboldened by the political climate around the world that too often facilitates it,” she said. “We condemn hate and extremism in all its forms. We come together to underscore the principle of religious freedom, freedom of conscience, freedom of thought.”

She also recognized Brooklyn College’s diverse population, saying, “We know that at Brooklyn College, diversity is our strength.”

Other speakers included Islamic Society President Bilal Khan, who also gave an impassioned speech. “One does not know what to tell its members,” Khan said, “when one is afraid of wearing a hijab or one is afraid of having something which signifies their religion in fear of being attacked.”

He quoted from the Quran, saying, “Whoever kills an innocent soul, it is as if they have killed the whole of humanity,” also addressed the crowd. He said to the Muslim community on campus, “We stand with you, we love you, and we will fight alongside you against these forces of evil, full of hate. . .In New Zealand, those 50 people were murdered, killed, and we have to name the enemy. The enemy is white supremacy, it is terrorism, it is hate.”

Other speakers included rabbis, imams, and a member of the Muslim Community Patrol.

New Zealand’s prime minister, Jacinda Ardern, has called the attack on Christchurch one of New Zealand’s “darkest days.” Since then, she has vowed to ban the weapons used in the shooting.

The attacks on the mosques in Christchurch were livestreamed to Facebook during the entirety of the attack. Afterwards, Facebook, YouTube, and other social media groups scrambled to try and take down the video.

The shooter released a 72-page manifesto before the attack in which he decried Muslim immigration and reputed white nationalist rhetoric.

Calzadilla-Palacio also remarked, “The rhetoric matters but what also matters is what we’re able to do in these moments. The little things; making sure our neighbors know we’re here for them, our friends, our families, even people you don’t know [...] That they can stand with you, that we can fight together to make this society a better one. And that no one, no one, should ever, ever, have to live in fear.”
Straphangers Hang On For Riders’ Rights

By Allison Rapp
Managing Digital Editor

On Wednesday, Mar. 20, Brooklyn College students and members of the New York Public Interest Research Group (NYPIRG)’s Straphangers Campaign gathered in the basement of Boylan Hall, encouraging students to call their state senators and garner support to fix the city’s transit problems.

It’s no secret that the public transportation system, which was built over 100 years ago, is not always the most reliable way to get around New York. In a city that houses over 8 million people, and welcomes millions of commuters every single day, this is a pressing issue.

The Straphangers Campaign was founded in 1979 and has since dedicated itself to advocating for “safe, reliable, and affordable New York City mass transit.” The new solution the campaign is pushing for involves introducing congestion pricing, which would charge drivers entering Manhattan below 60th Street, a plan that would generate millions of dollars in revenue intended for subway repairs, as well as reduce air pollution and the overall carbon footprint of NYC.

“New York City’s subways are falling apart. Service disruptions and frequent delays have become all too common, contributing to what has become a daily nightmare for many of New York City’s riders, including thousands of college students that rely on public transit to get to class,” said Jaqi Cohen, Campaign Coordinator for the NYPIRG Straphangers Campaign, in a press release. “New Yorkers across the five boroughs are counting on Governor Cuomo and legislators in Albany to enact a sustainable congestion pricing plan in this year’s budget. The fate of New York’s overburdened subway system depends on it.”

For the over 200,000 students currently attending CUNY, more funds to fix the transit system would directly affect their own lives -- and grades. As a result of the improperly functioning subways and buses, many students have received lower participation marks for late attendance, or have been absent for tests.

“I know there are a lot of students who, like me, have missed important meetings, been late for class, or even missed exams because of the subway. This is unfair,” said Keith Redzinak, a BC student and member of the Straphangers Campaign. “How are students supposed to do well or graduate if we can’t even get to class on time?”

“Our lawmakers need to know that for so many students, and even more New Yorkers, it is important that they pass a budget that includes congestion pricing to fix the subway,” said M.A. Rahman, another student and Straphanger member. “I have to wait all the time for my train to arrive, I don’t want to keep waiting for Albany to take action to fix the system.”

Students signing posters for the Straphangers Campaign. / Allison Rapp

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Talk to us!

Are you a CUNY student or faculty member with something to say? The Kingsman’s Opinions section is accepting submissions. Send your op-ed to kingsmanbc@gmail.com before 11:59 PM Saturday.

(The Kingsman only publishes articles written by Brooklyn College students and faculty, related to goings-on at Brooklyn College or CUNY. We reserve the right to reject submissions which are off-topic, obscene, or excessively wordy.)
Students Chase Careers At Brooklyn College Job Fair

Nearly 145 companies took time out of their day to meet and greet potential student employees. Companies such as BBC Studios, Disney/WABC News, LG, Marshalls, and Walgreens set up information tables to attract curious students. The US Army, the Peace Corps, and many educational establishments also stopped by to offer open positions to selfless and adventurous people.

The entire event was swarming with students eager to broaden their horizons and try something new. Among the many tables were the Trail Blazers, a summer camp in Montague, New Jersey. Sitting at the table, ready to answer questions was Jane, the day director of Trail Blazers, who offered some insight on what the camp is offering position-wise, and confidently mentioned how the camp will be having its 153rd summer this year. "We have three different options available with us this year. We have overnight camp counseling based in Montague New Jersey, our day camp which operates here in Brooklyn, and an after school program which operates throughout the academic year."

A few companies did not make their appearance in the job fair, causing some disappointment among the students, hoping to make an in-person impression. The buzz about Canon not showing up spread quicker than the disappointment of media students who were hoping to share their experience with the promoters.

"I was going to flash them my camera," a student spoke up, displaying his Canon lens.

Aside from the no-shows, the several other companies attracted crowds and lines of eager students clutching their résumés. The Disney table attracted a swarm of students, who paid close attention to the two sponsors as they spewed out information and answered questions. BBC Studios and LG were two other companies that caused a big hype.

"I'll tell them my name and tell them I am a marketing major, and that I am part of the Marketing Society on campus and we work on helping market events on campus," said Frances Sanzone, a Business Administration major. "And that I am also getting some practice with graphic designing in art classes, I am proficient in that as well. And then I’ll ask them if they have anything like internships, mostly, or possibly a job. Whichever sounds like it will give me experience."

Leaders of the Marketing Society of BC paired with the Magner Career Center to helped to operate and run the job fair.

"This is the second stage of our advertisement, this is the follow up. We spent the last week going from classroom to classroom handing out flyers, making announcements, posting on social media," said Jeffrey Wong, the president of the Marketing Society.

With the help and success of the Magner Career Center, the job fair was a success and well-organized.
Opinion: The Cheese Man Who Stole The Coffee Festival

By Noah Daly  
Business Manager

Consider the themed events you’ve attended; every Expo, Carnival, ComicCon, street fair, and farmer’s market. There’s always a few outliers: vendors who are either out of place, promotional sponsors, or just apparently lost. (The guy selling “organic toilet paper” at the farmer’s market was my favorite.) At the NYC Coffee & Tea Festival – a convention dedicated to New Yorkers’ two favorite non-alcoholic drinks – I was floored to see that it was a cheesemonger from Lancaster, Pennsylvania that did some of the most business.

From a marketing standpoint, the five boroughs could be the most diverse intersection of markets in the world. Every day, 800 languages are spoken in our city. For folks in business looking for a start, or employees learning to further understand their market, it’s an ideal proving ground. The easiest place to put your goods on display is a market-style venue such as a convention. Conventions are a great way to drum up new business, especially with food and beverages. New York hosts more expos, conventions, and professional fairs than Chuck E. Cheese’s hosts children’s birthdays, so when I found out there would be a Coffee and Tea Festival in Greenpoint, I figured it’d be a great way to taste what the city had to offer, not to mention a hoot of a Saturday afternoon.

Vendors and patrons crowded the Brooklyn Expo Center this Saturday, March 24. With the waterfront of Greenpoint turning the streets into merciless wind tunnels, most were eager to come off of the sidewalks and into the warmth and aromas of various teas.

More than fifty vendors of coffees, teas, food, and accessories lined the isles. Some bizarre standouts like Verizon Fios and a local purveyor of marble tiling also bought out space to purvey their wares for throngs of people. But one gentleman boomed over the timid hipsters and refined businesspeople selling their styled wares. He was Howard M. Field, a man in his early sixties who came with his wife to offer a vast selection of the family’s handcrafted cheeses from Lancaster, Pennsylvania.

Whenever he saw someone inspecting his stand for a moment, he’d lean over the counter and say something like “Want to try something? Hell, you’re going to try everything. Hang on… LADIES AND GENTLEMEN, TODAY WE RE GOING ON A JOURNEY. A JOURNEY THROUGH TIME AND CHEESE.”

He never failed to attract a crowd. In moments, hungry hands were eyeing cheese cubes and eager to sample the many varieties the Farm Fromage team had brought with them. It began with stickers, the merit badge of swag that told everyone at the festival “I 💛 Cheese.” “Here ya go folks, get your cheese stickers,” Howard said, “They won’t let you leave without them!” he assures the crowd as he steals a wink in the direction of my companion.

The tour took tasters through eight different cheeses. “This is our beer-washed cheddar, it’s like a three-ring circus in your mouth.” “This is our young Camembert-Style. “With chalks and yum sounds, flocks of people came, tasted, and even bought a decent amount of the stand’s stock.” “I was a hypnotist folks, one of the best on the eastern seaboard, but one day I woke up and my wife realized I’d be a far better cheese salesman.”

In truth, Howard is a former natural gas salesman, but he used his booth’s position at the most well-lit portion of the massive glass wall with as much skill as conjurer of tricks. To amass crowds for tasting tours of their entire selection, he told stories and jokes. He engaged with every single customer like they were at a SuperBowl party, beer in hand. Not like he had driven three hours before dawn to sell them something. Even when he openly pitched, heboomed in a way that brought you in. Each and every hungry hand that extended his way was promptly taken care of. In short, his presentation was exceptional.

But why here? Why would the cheese man come to the coffee and tea trade show? Howard’s company, Farm Fromage, is like thousands of family-owned businesses across the country. He and his family drove through the night to set up their cheese stand before the early bird crowd arrived at 7 A.M. Like every other vendor there, the Fields saw an excellent opportunity to engage with a market in Brooklyn that has more buying power. With superior incomes comes the willingness to spend $10 on a small block of truly superior applewood smoked cheddar cheese, where his neighbors back in Dutchess County may only have a few dollars to spend on some pre-sliced store brand cheddar.

Notables included the Wise Ape Tea Co., Ippodo Kyoto Company, which has been making teas and Matcha since before the American Revolution.

I went to the event with every intention of telling their stories. They all did great business, but none of them held a shred of my attention next to the bombastic cheese salesman. Howard and his many tasty cheeses were not the main attraction. Not even close, but for some reason I had to get his story. He was too damn interesting. Several companies brought delicious and entirely topical products to the expo center. I walked through that expo twice, but the only memorable conversations I had or heard with people I met at this massive coffee & tea convention revolved largely around the loud guy selling blocks of cheese to the hip crowd in Greenpoint.

Howard is an example of a rare breed: the purebred salesman who could probably sell you the shoes on your feet. Whenever folks like him go in a crowded market, you’re far more likely check out what he’s got, maybe even to spend money.
By Maruful Hossain  
Sports Editor

The Brooklyn College Men’s Volleyball team found themselves in a very competitive conference match against CCNY. In a night where seniors Sayuj Zachariah and Ryan Chable were honored at the West Quad Center, the Bulldogs lost to the CCNY Beavers 3-1 (25-20, 18-25, 26-28, 18-25). The most notable set was the third, where the Bulldogs lost in heartbreaking fashion. The Bulldogs are now 7-11, 1-4 in CUNYAC.

The first set the Bulldogs took convincingly. The Bulldogs were up 17-16. Three straight scores ended in a kill by freshman Omar Rezika. Defensive Specialist Utku Tanritanir ended the set with a kill, ending the set 25-20.

CCNY took an early lead in the second set, which ended in their 18-25. However, the story of the game was the third set.

It went back and forth as the Bulldogs initially led 8-7 early in the third set. The Bulldogs lost three straight points and trailed 10-8 but then managed to make four straight scores. The set seemed to be in The Bulldogs favor leading 22-17, looking like they were going to take the set. However, CCNY stormed back and tied the game 23-23. The Bulldogs took a 25-24 lead with an Omar Rezika kill, but it was CCNY that ended up taking the set 26-28, ending the set in a very close call as the ball appeared to be out of bounds but was in bounds according to the referee.

CCNY then secured the fourth set in healthy fashion 25-18.

Freshman Omar Rezika had a team-high 12 kills and 15 points. Senior Sayuj Zachariah lead the team with 27 assists. Junior Middle Blocker Gabriel Pjatek also contributed with 10 kills, one ace and one block. Sophomore outside hitter Jasper Diangco had 5 kills and junior setter Michael Valentin had three kills and two aces. CCNY had 45 kills to the Bulldogs’ 36 kills. CCNY had a .158 hitting percentage while the Bulldogs had a .056 hitting percentage. CCNY also had 13.0 blocks in the game while the Bulldogs only had two.