

# Public Meeting of the CB12M's Youth and Education Committee Meeting

**Meeting Minutes #10**  
**Monday, December 9, 2019**

**Location:** CB12M Office 530 West 166 Street, 6<sup>th</sup> Floor, New York, NY 10032

**Committee Members Present:** Fe Florimon, Chair; Glennis Aquino-Gill, Assist Chair; Carolina Charles; Maria Luna; Jonathan Nunez-Frometa; Ariel Miranda; Curtis Young.

**Committee Member(s) Excused:** Carolina Charles; Gabriela Estrella; Miriam James; Maria Luna; Jonathan Nunez-Frometa **Members Absent:**

**Committee Public Member:** Wendy Castillo, Associate Professor; Guillermo Perez, Community Activist;

**Guests and General Public:** Guillermo Rivera, Associate Director of Admissions at CCNY; Stephanie Barreto-Lastra; Borough Manager of Community Affairs- Dept of Education; Niky Garcs-CCNY-Citizenship; Mariela Graham; Jahzeel Montes, Executive Director for Internal Creations, Inc; Christina Richiez, Financial Counselor, NTFP;

**The meeting was called to order by Fe Florimon at 7:11 pm.**

**Discussion that took place as indicated below:**

Members of the Committee and the audience were introduced by the Chair followed by the review of the agenda.

1. **Guests: Stephanie Barreto-Lastra**, is the Community Affairs Borough Manager at the Division of Community Empowerment, Partnerships, and Communications of New York City Department of Education. She discussed her professional role, the mission of her department and a brief description of personal life. According to the presenter, the Division of Community Empowerment, Partnerships, and Communications are the larger division of DOE. Part of its mission is to build and improve proactive community relationships, especially with, Community Base Organizations (CBOs), Parents Associations (Pas), Community Boards (CBs) and Advocacy Groups among others folks and organizations according to the presenter. In her primary and new role Ms. Barreto-Lastra is meeting with different community organizations to introduce herself and learn about their educational priorities. Presently, there are three bucket areas in which her department is concentrating:
  - **Immigrant families:** Provides innovative and creative ways to bridge the gap between Immigrant families and DOE- in that DOE is also thinking about culturally relevant ways to build communication and trust whether be for monolingual community or specific topic/resources and/or for community population with special needs (e.g. ESL training or others). The department works also close with community advocates and stakeholders on this area.
  - **Students Voice:** A citywide initiative, under the fairly new leadership of Solamania, who is the Manager of the program and representative the students' voice leadership initiative Citywide.

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The program aims to promote teen/youth advocacy and uplift their voices in the process of decision of making spaces. The initiative is under the leadership of Solamalia, who is fairly new the students' voice leadership activities.

- **Diversity, Integration and Conversation:** It focuses on moving forward at lots of the conversation and processes around diversity and integration in the city. Kind of localizing district conversations in the areas of diversity and integration at city and state levels, along with stakeholders to connect DOE's resources where is needed. These are some of the main working areas of Ms. *Barreto-Lastra's* professional role within the School Districts 4, 5, and 6 in NYC. As for her personal life, she was born and raised in Queens, New York; also a product of the NYC Public School System, presently an employee of the same system. Prior to her position with DOE, she was working in public sector for several community base organizations. After her presentation, questions and answers were facilitated. After sharing her contact information, she encouraged members of the committee and general public to contact her/ or her department if case of any questions, including invitation for community collaboration with DOE.
- In reference to collaboration, Ms. Florimon provided a brief background regarding some of work that was done in conjunction with *CB12M Youth and Education Committee and Community Education Council of District 6* when she was chairing both committees at the same time. On behalf of both committee she proposed to former Chancellor Farina (via both in writing and also in person) to consider the idea of helping to increase the enrollment of High Schools in D6, especially for the George Washington Educational Campus.
- She also addressed to the chancellor the need bring together all Education Committees/Community Boards/Parents Associations/SLTs and Community Councils at the table to encourage their involvement on educational policies for system improvement.

2. **Guests: Guillermo Rivera, Associate Director of Admission at City College of New York City:** " An avalanche of educational opportunities available to undergraduate and graduate candidates at CCNY According to the Presenter:

- City College is a great Institution with over 70 different undergraduate majors and over 60 graduate and PhDs programs. The PhDs Programs at the Graduate Center have been moved to actual/different CUNY Campus.
- City College is well known for their STEM program. In the past 20 years the Division of Humanity and Social Sciences has increased tremendously. It has an amazing Music Program and resources for Writers. Also, the School of Education has produced tones of teachers including many at high school levels whose have decided to go for the Masters Degrees- and that tells a lot about CCNY in a positive manner.

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- The College has also successfully increased participation in the latest Open House. Last year they had a record breaking of 1,886 guests (students and their families) from different States ( U.S. cities), ethnicity background and Alumni. It was the largest Open House in the CCNY's history.
- Mr. Rivera believes that "education is about elevating people rather than getting a degree". And at every possible opportunity he gets to encounter with youth, he usually encourage them on the path of education. City College and CUNY in general has a lot opportunities.
- Questions/Answer were facilitates by committee members and public members.
- A brief summary about presenter's career background has been attached to this minutes.

### **3. Business / New Business: Community Announcements**

- Invitation to : The 3<sup>rd</sup> Holiday Seasons Youth Performing for Seniors event at Isabella Geriatric Center- Saturday, December 21<sup>st</sup> , located at 515 Audubon Ave, New York, NY 10040. Chair encouraged participants to feel free to recommend youth to perform or volunteers to help at the event.
- CB12M Holiday Season celebration for members still pending so far possible date 12/19/19, but need to be discussed and approved by the Board Executive Committee.

### **Guest Presenter: Background Statement**

I am the Associate Director of Admissions at the City College of New York. As part of today's CB 12 Youth and Education Committee meeting, I am much honored to be sitting here tonight and noticed how far my community in Washing Heights and Inwood has reach. For the past 15 years, my plan has been to extend the power of education across the city and other areas of the New York—and sometime beyond the state borders. As many of us, I am an immigrant that was given the opportunity to arrive to this very powerful nation and seek for some kind of success. On the same note, I am not stranger to social, financial, and cultural-shocking challenges that, even today, our community. Coming from a single-parent household, with two sisters and multiple little jobs, here and there, the compass constantly pointed towards enhancing my education. As the only person to finish college in my family, I am glad to experienced HS and college in the US; and as time passes, I keep holding the idea that "education" is the best path to success. With humbleness and persistence and after trying 12 times, I earned the opportunity to study at CCNY. 20 years later, I am sitting with those that had the power to deny students during my earlier academic years. Having a voice on that table is a voice for our community. After this long journey to where I am today, that young man from the immigrant community, son of a hardworking mother, proud of two fantastic sisters, and father of a beautiful daughter, still have the same values and respect for education. I believe that education is one of the best investments that any person can put time and effort in. My main job is to expand education, but my major civil duty is to extend the value of education to as many young minds as possible. Thank you so much.

**Meeting was adjourned at 9:28pm**