Lehman Students in Hurricane Relief Effort

The Office of Community Engagement and New Student Programs pivoted all of its normal year-end activities to the Hurricane Sandy relief effort. The Office collaborated with Lehman student clubs, CUNY, and New York City and launched many of its own outreach efforts as well. Among the activities: students and staff helped clean up debris and cleared trees at two city parks in the Bronx. Volunteers joined a debris cleanup and meal distribution effort in the Red Hook community in Brooklyn.

The Office organized the Surviving Sandy Donation Drive, an ongoing effort—with the first delivery to a Staten Island evacuation center on Nov. 7. Items currently needed include (new, unused) heavy duty trash bags, gloves, masks, brooms, shovels, rakes, cleaning supplies (Clorox wipes, sponges and rags), pet food, baby food, baby wipes, new baby clothes, tooth brushes, toothpaste, socks, underwear, diapers, blankets, jackets, pajamas, and items to keep kids occupied (toys, coloring books, crayons), flashlights, batteries, office supplies, and recyclable totes.

This year the annual campus Turket Trot benefitted the CUNY Student Relief Fund. Lehman students also joined CUNY’s relief effort in hard-hit boroughs. Volunteers participated in a drive for Kingsborough Community College students, many of whom have been living without power and some have lost their homes.

In partnership with Habitat for Humanity, the Office will explore the option of a “StayBreak” Alternative Spring Break in New York and New Jersey to help rebuild with the local community.

With community partner “The Bronx Is Blooming,” Lehman students removed hurricane debris along Pelham Parkway. With the National Latino Evangelical Coalition, volunteers are participating in a donation-collection effort from a staging area in the Kingsbridge Armory.

If you are able to contribute your time, money, or supplies, your help is urgently needed for this long-term effort.

Volunteers can pick up a free Lehman College T-shirt from the Office of Community Engagement in Shuster Hall, Room 201B. Student volunteers are also inducted into “Team Lightning” in recognition of their services.

For more information, contact amanda.dubois@lehman.cuny.edu or call Amanda at (718) 960-8151.
The Urban Male Leadership Program (UMLP) and the Latin American & Puerto Rican Studies Department presented a Hispanic Heritage Month tribute in Lovinger Theatre on Oct. 10. Its theme: “Latinos at the Forefront: Strengthening Our Communities Through Higher Education.”

New York City Councilmember Fernando Cabrera, the keynote speaker, addressed 500 students from Lehman and Bronx high schools. Dr. Cabrera is director of the graduate program in Counseling at Mercy College. In his inspiring lecture, in which he described his own extraordinary life’s journey, he encouraged students to focus on the future by following a clear path to educational achievement.

UMLP member and college assistant Marvin Sanchez was emcee for the event. He received the Urban Lehman Celebrates Hispanic Heritage Month Male Leader Academic Achievement Award in 2011 and will graduate from Lehman this semester. Sanchez plans to attend law school in the fall.

UMLP Outreach Diversity Recruiter Dwight Stephenson addressed his remarks to the hundreds of high school students in the audience. He talked about the importance of making a smooth transition from high school to college. He emphasized opportunities available in Lehman’s new Science Facility and described some of the College’s unique academic majors and programs.

A highlight of the event was honoring Liliana Calvet, Director of the Office of Academic Standards and Evaluation and a powerful advocate for higher education during her 37-year tenure at Lehman. Dr. Calvet was cited for her exemplary leadership and service to students and the Lehman community. She began her career as a Spanish professor and continues to enjoy teaching, calling it “essential to her existence.”

For more than 35 years, “Take Back The Night” events have focused on eliminating sexual violence, and thousands of colleges, universities, women’s centers, and rape crisis centers have participated.

In preparation for its annual “Take Back the Night” event at Lehman in April, the Planning Committee has launched a contest for a new and unique logo that will be used to help get the word out about this important activity on the Lehman campus.

At the Hispanic Heritage event (l-r): Urban Male Leadership Program Director Michael A. Deas, Student Affairs VP Jose Magdaleno, President Ricardo R. Fernández, Councilmember Fernando Cabrera, Professor David A. Badillo and Distinguished Lecturer Andres J. Torres of Latin American & Puerto Rican Studies, College Assistant Marvin Sanchez of UMLP, and UMLP Academic Intervention and Success Coordinator Keith Lewis.

Liliana Calvet

‘Take Back the Night’ Planners Announce Logo Contest

Here are the contest rules: Submit your logo design in poster form (no larger than 11” x 15”) or jpeg image. Suggested colors are teal, purple, black, white and grey, but we will accept submissions with other colors as well. Submissions are due by January 31. Submit your entry to Nicole M. Rosario in the Counseling Center (Old Gym Room 114) in person or via email at nicole.madonnarosario@lehman.cuny.edu.

First place prize is a Kindle Fire generously provided by the Office of Student Life.
Counseling Center Expands Services and Training

The Counseling Center added new services for Lehman students and expanded its internship/externship training programs this fall.

“Our goal is to provide training in collegiate mental health and, at the same time, to give Lehman students access to counselors from diverse backgrounds and perspectives,” says Norma I. Cofresi, Ph.D., Director of the Center. “As always, our focus is on addressing issues that interfere with students functioning successfully.”

The Center provides a range of educational and supportive services to aide Lehman students in meeting their academic and personal goals. Staff members take a holistic, pragmatic approach in addressing student concerns.

Stress reduction group workshops help participants develop coping skills and improve their interpersonal skills. Among the new workshops this semester: “Romantic and Family Relationship Harmony,” “Dare to Dream,” “Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction” and “Keeping Your Cool.”

Groups are designed to meet the needs and interests that students have identified in conversations with their counselors and via the Student Satisfaction Questionnaires that are distributed at the end of the Fall and Spring semesters.

Academic workshops build study skills in areas of time management and exam prep. Chronic college issues are addressed in the workshop “Procrastination, Prioritizing and the Myth of Perfection.” Lehman G.P.S. also helps students build skills and develop the resources they will need to achieve their potential.

For more information, contact Dr. Cofresi at (960) 718-8761.

New Child Care Facility Is Growth Opportunity

When Lehman’s eco-friendly Child Care Center opens its doors as planned in early 2013, the new facility will more than double the number of families served, increasing capacity from 55 to 120. In September, 22 modules were placed on the Center’s foundation, between Shuster and Davis Hall. Final internal connections, finishing work and approvals from the city agencies are all that remains.

The 12,000 square foot facility will have six classrooms, a multi-purpose room, family/teacher conference room and a welcoming atrium where parents can transition their children into the center or just hang out with them in a cozy setting. Skylights will provide natural lighting in the atrium and windows on each end of the building will brighten the classrooms.

President’s Award to Lehman Student Veteran

Lehman College student veteran Trent Love was awarded the “Lifetime President’s Volunteer Service Award” with a citation from President Obama in a ceremony on Nov. 2, at the University of Southern California in Los Angeles. Love was recognized for his work with the “Fathers & Families Coalition of America.”

The citation read: “The President of the United States awards the Lifetime President’s Volunteer Service Award to Trent… for his commitment and support in volunteering for Fathers & Families Coalition of America. His personal contributions to make children a priority, a light to many fathers, and giving strength and encouragement to organizations and peers to reduce the impacts of father absenteeism identified him as a servant leader.”
Students with Disabilities Focus on Careers

During National Disability Employment Awareness Month in October, the Office of Student Disability Services held a number of events. Students took part in a job shadowing activity, learned to submit resumes electronically, did mock interviews, and met with a federal recruiter. They learned about “Emerging Leaders, Disability Mentoring Day” and the federal “Workforce Recruitment Program.”

The Office sponsored a workshop for students receiving Social Security Disability who want to work and become financially independent while keeping their health coverage. “We’re working hard to give our students a competitive edge,” said Merrill D. Parra, Office director. “One in 10 working age persons have a disability and the unemployment rates of college graduates with disabilities is much higher than their nondisabled peers. For individuals with disabilities, career development can be a very complex process.”

In collaboration with the Office of Career Services and the assistance of LEADS advisor Lauren McCarthy, recent efforts are paying off. Lehman students have obtained work in such diverse fields as teaching sign language, working as an instructor for the DoE and as a case manager/mentor at the Center for Human Development and Family Services.

A master’s degree student is now a fulltime foster care case manager. Another is kitchen manager at Willow Towers Assisted Living, which is directly related to her nutrition studies at Lehman. One student has a paid internship with Mutual America and another is working on a political campaign for a state senator.

New Beginnings at Well Ed Program

Dugeidy Ortiz is the new Director of Lehman’s Wellness Education and Promotion Program, which now has a new name: the Well Ed Program.

Ortiz has worked with diverse populations in the U.S. and abroad. Most recently, as community outreach coordinator and program developer at the NYC Department of Health, she focused on increasing the availability of healthier food options in the South Bronx and Harlem.

At Lehman, she will develop programming to provide students with accurate, timely information to help them make sound health decisions. She will focus on ways to improve the well-being of individual students and of the surrounding college community.

Women's Inaugural Soccer Season a Big Success

Last February, Lehman announced the creation of the school’s 18th varsity sport, women’s soccer, and Amanda Popoli was named head coach. Popoli is a former college soccer star herself who has coached at some of the top metropolitan soccer leagues. She immediately began recruiting student-athletes from local high schools as well as the Lehman campus, in preparation for the team’s first season of varsity competition.

Popoli brought in an assistant coach Toma Gojcevic, and the two began to plan a short spring season to assess the newly formed 20-member team.

“We present opportunities to our students that fit who we are,” said Dr. Martin L. Zwiren, Director of Athletics. “Our student population is decidedly female—so adding a women’s soccer team made sense.”

The Athletics Department hosted “Pink Weeks” in October to promote awareness of breast cancer and the importance of early detection—and to raise funds to fight the disease that has had a devastating impact on so many women and their families. Teams of Lehman student-athletes wore pink shoelaces and pink ribbons throughout the month, and they participated in the American Cancer Society’s “Making Strides Against Breast Cancer Walk,” held at Orchard Beach. This was the eighth year in a row that Lehman student-athletes have participated in the event. “This is a great opportunity for our student-athletes to give back to the community,” said Eric Harrison, head women’s basketball coach and event organizer for Lehman Athletics. “It is a great experience, and we will always do our part.”

The women’s team played its first game on Aug. 31, at home, against Yeshiva University. Minutes into the play, freshman Juliana Generoso scored the first goal in Lehman history, and the team won its inaugural game, setting a positive tone for the season.

Success followed, including a third-place finish in the CUNY Athletic Conference’s regular season. “It was amazing,” said Popoli. “We came so far and are getting better every day. The team worked hard, showed great determination—and we had a little bit of luck.”

Athletes Against Breast Cancer

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Yonkers freshman Claudia Lucera