



President Marcia V. Keizs: Major Accomplishments at York College/CUNY



President Keizs with VPs, Deans, and Chairpersons of Academic Departments at York College's Honors Ceremony, 2019

Academic Programs, Departments and Faculty

- President Keizs led the development and launching of 7 new undergraduate Programs: Aviation Management (2006), Journalism (2008), Pharmaceutical Sciences (2008); Health Sciences (2013); Nursing (2014); Public Health (2015); Finance (2017); Dual Joint AS/BS with Queensborough Community College: Biotechnology (2010). Expanded majors from 46 in 2005 to 66 in 2018.
- Developed and launched 6 new Masters Programs: Pharmaceutical Science and Business (2016); Physician Assistant (2016 conversion from BS); Social Work (2018); Aviation Management (2019); Clinical Trials (2019); Nursing (2020).
- Secured regional re-accreditation: Middle States; renewed accreditations: Occupational Therapy, Physician Assistant, Teacher Education, Social Work; gained new accreditations: Clinical Laboratory Sciences; Movement Sciences.
- Established three schools in order to internally build school spirit and externally brand the college: the School of Arts and Sciences; the School of Business and Information Systems; and the School of Health Sciences and Professional Programs.
- Restructured academic departments to more intentionally serve students: Restructured Natural and Applied Sciences into three distinct departments—Biology, Chemistry, and Earth & Physical Sciences.

- Restructured Accounting and Business into two distinct departments: Business and Economics and Accounting and Finance.
- Established stand-alone departments: Occupational Therapy, Nursing and Social Work.
- Renewed and expanded the Performing Arts Department by including under its umbrella communications technology; strategically hired faculty across all disciplines; and provided professional support of the Gallery.
- Hired a diverse, well-qualified and accomplished faculty in all disciplines and provided professional development at the entry and senior-levels (Professor 101, Professor 201); provided support of their research, scholarship, creative work, and grants writing efforts; and upon the assumption of administrative duties provided opportunities to participate in programs offered by organizations including the American Council of Education, the American Association of Colleges and Universities and CUNY.
- The number of full-time faculty increased by 25% with 47% being women and 44% being minorities.
- Integrated adjuncts through annual professional development day programs and selected from among the adjuncts a dozen full-time lecturers for permanent full-time teaching positions.
- Expanded opportunities for faculty to compete for CUNY-wide, Federal and other funding to support their research efforts and leverage the development of new knowledge building on the York tradition of securing grant funding in the sciences and beyond to benefit students and faculty alike.



Valedictorian Clinton Ehidom, President Keizs and Dr. Margaret MacNeil, Chair, Biology, 2018

Student Success and Student Support

- President Keizs established new academic admissions criteria as the right fit for incoming York College students; developed a Freshman Year Program; improved retention and graduation rates.
- Increased overall enrollment by 25% and freshman enrollment by 61%.
- Restructured academic advisement with the advisement office taking the lead for advising incoming freshmen while faculty assume responsibility for advisement of their majors upon declaration; developed curriculum road maps for each major.
- Increased the offering of Honors Programs, Study Abroad/Study Away, Undergraduate Research across all disciplines, internships (Food and Drug Administration Northeast Regional Laboratory, Thurgood Marshall College Fund, Port Authority of New York and New Jersey) and other experiential learning opportunities.
- Launched the Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) program which, for the last 11 years, has provided internship training for 105 York College students, who under the guidance of faculty, prepared income taxes for the community free of costs returning millions of dollars to the community.

- Expanded the Undergraduate Research program beyond the Sciences into all disciplines.
- In 2012, re-established the Reserved Officer Training Corps (ROTC) program at York College/CUNY, the first to do so at CUNY since the program was discontinued in 1960.
- Propelled students into competition for scholarships and graduate school fellowships, and into grad school achieving multiple CUNY Salk Scholars who went on to study for the MD; students who went on to pursue the Ph.D. in the sciences, and others who pursued master's degrees in business, law, journalism, education and other graduate professions.
- Created a Merit Scholarship program through the York College Foundation to attract academically well-prepared students to York College to pursue their degrees and provided over 2 million dollars of scholarship since 2008.
- Since 2011, supported the emergency needs of nearly 500 students through a gift of \$800,000 from the Carroll and Milton Petrie Foundation that assists students with emergency funding to sustain their college attendance.
- Built a strong collaboration among students, faculty and administration through the regular governance channels as well as through scheduled meetings of the President and Cabinet with students to the benefit of the larger college community, resulting in stable attendance at Senate Plenary and general support from students to address college facilities needs, development of technology kiosks and York Cardinal app, etc. and ready access to college leadership during times of need.
- Created "Chat with the President" (formerly "Open Fridays"), to provide a monthly opportunity for students and other members of the college community to have a one-on-one conversation with the president.
- In 2016 and 2017, York College/CUNY was ranked #1 U.S. College with Lowest Student Debt by The Institute for College Access and Success.
- In 2018 -2019, York College/CUNY was ranked #15 in the US News and World Report Top Colleges in the North.



President Keizs with York College Students and Administrators at CUNY Women's Leadership Conference, 2017

Strategic Planning and Governance

- In 2009, President Keizs led a strategic planning process that established the course of the next ten years and embraced a new mission, vision and values.
- In 2015, revised the College Charter which had not been reviewed in 33 years, making the following notable changes: align the York College Governance with CUNY Bylaws, establish two new Committees: Governance and Resources; establish the use of alternates in certain committees and replace a burdensome process for governance revisions by locating this responsibility in the Senate Plenary and in its Governance Committee.

- January 2019, started the process of developing of the York College 2020 - 2025 Strategic Plan utilizing a cross-college representation of faculty, administrators and students. The process thus far includes deliberations of the Strategic Planning Committee in six sessions, the hosting of nine forums of faculty, staff and students and one community forum as well as collecting responses to a survey and reviewing data all in preparation for developing a framework.

Employee Recognition

- President Keizs established the Annual Employee Appreciation Ceremony in summer 2015 to recognize employees who have served the College for many years, some since the College was founded in 1966. Since 2015, 688 awards have been presented to employees in increments of 5, 10, 15, 20, 25, 30 or more years in recognition of their service to the college. The Annual Employee Appreciation Ceremony is one of two campus-wide events which recognize employees; the other is the Fall Convocation, the formal opening of the academic year for faculty, students and staff at which faculty are recognized for scholarship and service; employees recognized for service; and York College first year students take the freshman pledge.

Facilities and Technology

- President Keizs secured more than \$200M in capital funding over the past fourteen years from New York State and City to renovate and upgrade facilities and information technology systems. Some projects have been completed, others are underway.
- Completed projects include: Academic Core Dewatering Phase 1 (relocated submerged electrical conduits overhead); Upgraded instructional technology throughout the college (classrooms, laboratories, faculty resource centers); Academic Core Building Envelope Repairs Phase 1 (mitigate water penetration).
- Secured \$30M down payment toward construction of the Academic Village and Conference Center.
- Renovated library, with the support of the YC Student Government.
- Updated student affinity spaces (Student Government offices, student clubs meeting rooms, Men's Center, Women's Center, YC Radio Station, and Career Counseling) and others created (Game Room, Veterans Office, Scholarship Office, Center for Student Leadership): Created student lounges throughout the campus, in partnership with the YC Student Government; Health and Physical Education Complex (HPEC) Rehabilitation, Cardinal Walkway, Fire Alarm and Safety upgrade.
- Projects in progress include: Elevator/Escalator replacement; Restroom Renovation (ADA); Performing Arts Center Interior Renovation; Outdoor Track and Field Replacement; Interior lighting in the Academic Core; Building Entrance Replacement throughout the campus (ADA), Academic Core de-watering Phase 2; HVAC/Greenhouse upgrade and recommissioning, Rehabilitation of the 159th entrance to the campus, Transformation of the former Faculty Dining Room into a state-of-the art meeting venue.

Budget Process

- President Keizs led the piloting of a new budget planning process in 2014, beginning with academic departments, and was fully implemented throughout the college in 2016. The new process was designed to align program planning at the department or unit level with budgeting and with the College's strategic goals.
- A budget template and a calendar containing submission and notification dates were developed and were the foundation on which the Budget Office provided user training: New academic chairpersons and directors are trained, as needed. During the pilot phase and since then, the leadership and contributions of faculty who serve on the Personnel and Budget Committee were instrumental in refining the budget planning process currently in use.
- Since fall 2015, utilizing the newly established Resource Committee of York College Senate provide faculty and students an active role in developing the colleges annual budget plan as well as having input into long range financial plans.



Honorable Archie Spigner, President Keizs, Governor Mario Cuomo, Borough President Melinda Katz and Congressman Gregory Meeks (background), Jamaica Downtown Revitalization Initiative, 2016

Community

- President Keizs enhanced York College's Town/Gown relationships through strategic partnerships with all sectors of the broader South East Queens Community and beyond.
- Expanded K-12 partnerships by providing opportunities year-round in MUREP (previously called SEMAA), Summer Undergraduate Research Program, College Now, York Early College Academy (YECA) and Queens High School for the Sciences at York College, in which K-12 students engage in a range of academic and experiential activities that enhance learning and in some cases earn them college credits while still in high school.
- Through the Milton G. Bassin Performing Arts Center and the Department of Fine and Performing Arts, created a venue and cultural hub, in collaboration with local arts and cultural organizations, to present a rich array of high-quality, affordable cultural and arts programs geared to every segment of the broader Queens community throughout the age spectrum.
- Utilizing the Distinguished Lecture Series, Provost Lecture Series, Executive Leadership Breakfasts, and Public Policy Debates, provided opportunities for local, regional, national and international leaders to present, debate or otherwise discuss issues of the Day: Speakers like Dr. Ronald (Ron) Daniels; Dr. Henry (Hank) Sheinkopf; Daniel L. Doctoroff, Deputy Mayor for Economic Development; State Comptroller Thomas DiNapoli; Congressman Gregory W. Meeks; Lawrence Mandell, President, United Way of NYC; JetBlue Founder, David G. Neeleman; Carla Harris, Author, Expect to Win and Vice Chairman of Wealth Management at Morgan Stanley; President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf of Liberia; Sir Hillary Beckles, Vice Chancellor of the University of the West Indies; and Micro-Lending Guru, Muhammad Yunus.
- Hosted community forums on behalf of Borough, City, State, and Federal legislative representatives to discuss topics with immediate or looming emergency ranging from issues of international, to national, and local concerns, such as the Global Environment, the Caribbean Diaspora in North America, the Affordable Care Act, New York City Charter Reform, the Downtown Jamaica Revitalization Initiative.
- York College served as an emergency shelter and medical-needs facility for approximately 1000 Queens residents and their pets for several weeks as a result of the dislocation wrought by Super Storm Sandy on the local community.
- York College houses a CUNY Citizenship Center, which provides guidance and assistance to those in need of accurate legal advice on immigration and naturalization matters.

- Partnered with various not-for-profit organizations, sororities, fraternities and civic organizations to host discussions and information sessions on topics which included; health, affordable housing, predatory lending practices, workforce development, small business and economic development.
- Established the Volunteer Income Tax Assistance Program (VITA) in 2008, utilizing 105 York College student interns under the guidance of York College Faculty led by Professor Robert Clovey, that served 3,600 community clients saving them in excess of \$5 million of filing fees and returning to them in excess of \$25 million in Federal (IRS) taxes and in excess of \$10 million in New York State taxes (90% are repeat clients).
- Hosted local, regional and national academic conferences for example Haitian Studies Association Conference, Northeast Business & Economics Regional Conference, New York African Studies Association Annual Conference, as well as inaugurations, installations and other ceremonial events that accrue to the benefit of York College students and the wider Southeast Queens community.
- Collaborated and partnered with the York College Alumni Association to support initiatives and programs which benefit the York College alumni, current York College students and the greater community. With the leadership of an alumna, the York College Foundation received its first endowment, a gift of half a million dollars from the Association of Certified Fraud Examiners (ACFE), which was followed by the Foundation's second endowment, established by science alumni in the name of two beloved retired scientists/professors, entitled the Leslie A. Lewis-Jack Schlein Professorship in Natural Sciences.
- Re-established the York College Foundation and built upon the work begun by the York College Commemorative Quilt Committee, whose fundraising efforts on behalf of the College helped to create the York College Merit Scholarship.
- Established or re-established advisory boards for various academic programs and related entity corporations inclusive of community representation, as required.
- Established the Food and Drug Administration Northeast Regional Laboratory York internship program in partnership with Greater Jamaica Development Corporation (GJDC).
- Located three new businesses in the designated opportunity zone under the umbrella of Governor Cuomo's Startup NY Program: York Analytical Laboratories, Inc., Pro Drones USA, LLC and IHealthScreen.
- Played a lead role in the development of the Downtown Jamaica: Downtown Revitalization Initiative Strategic Investment Plan that was awarded 10 million dollar grant from the State of New York.



President Marcia V. Keizs Addresses Incoming York College Students and Their Parents, 2017

Dr. Marcia V. Keizs started her CUNY career as an English professor in 1971 at Queensborough Community College before moving into academic administration. Prior to her appointment as president of York College, she was the vice president of Academic Affairs at Bronx Community College/CUNY for seven years. Her scholarship includes published articles in her area of specialty, African American Literature.

A firm believer in community service and academic citizenship, Dr. Keizs has served as the CUNY Representative on the American Association of State Colleges and Universities (AASCU) Council of State Representatives; serves on the boards of the Greater Jamaica Development Corporation; Governor Andrew Cuomo's Regional Economic Development Council and is a member of the JFK Redevelopment Community Advisory Council. She previously served on the boards of the NCAA Division III President's Council, as well as having chaired the CUNY Women's Leadership Conference

Committee for nearly a decade. President Keizs has also served on the American Council on Education's Commission on Executive Leadership. She is the founding editor (1981) of the New York Carib News, a newspaper catering to the Caribbean Diaspora and African-American communities.

A native of Kingston, Jamaica, Dr. Keizs is a graduate of the University of Manitoba in Winnipeg, Canada (B.A.), and Teachers College, Columbia University (M.A. and Ed.D). She holds a certificate in Educational Management from the Harvard Graduate School of Education.

York College, a senior institution of the City University of New York (CUNY) established in 1966, enrolls more than 8,400 students in the liberal arts, career and professional programs on its modern 50-acre downtown Jamaica campus. In addition to offering baccalaureate degrees in the liberal arts and sciences, business, health, human services, teacher education, social work, nursing and other professional health programs, York is the only CUNY senior college offering a BS/MS degree in Occupational Therapy and the BS and MS in Aviation Management. York College is the home of the CUNY Aviation Institute and the Northeastern Regional Laboratory of the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA).