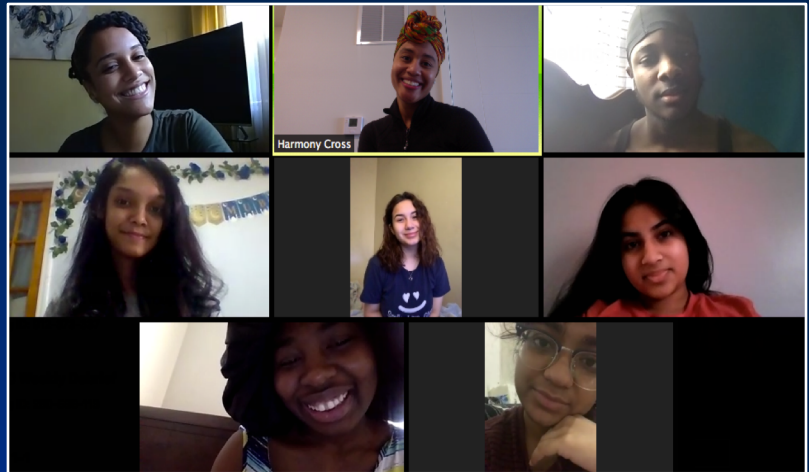


# HEOP WORKS



## Dear MMC Community,

As summer begins, flowers start blooming, and the Spring 2020 semester comes to an end, HEOP recognizes that this semester was unlike any other. COVID-19 has changed the direction of the world, the way institutions operate, and the way people live their daily lives. In response to COVID-19, Marymount Manhattan College rapidly transitioned to remote instruction for the safety of faculty, staff, and students at the institution. To ensure the success of our students and to help them adjust to remote learning, HEOP Leadership Council, HEOP Director Harmony Cross, and HEOP Counselor/Coordinator Stephanie Nunez implemented new initiatives that are highlighted in the *HEOP's Response to COVID-19* section. This edition also celebrates the HEOP graduating seniors, welcomes the new HEOP Counselor/Coordinator Stephanie Nunez, congratulates HEOP Director Harmony Cross, and recaps the initiatives that HEOP implemented during the Spring 2020 semester. We would like to acknowledge and thank the entire HEOP community and our readers, as your support ensures the continuation of the Newsletter!

- *Fahima Degia '21*

HEOP Public Relations & Marketing Manager/Intern and HEOP Newsletter Chief Editor

**HEOP WORKS** is a biannual newsletter from the Higher Education Opportunity Program and made possible by the Office of Academic Affairs.

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## Students Attend Inclusive Leadership Conference

To kickstart the spring semester, HEOP Director Harmony Cross accompanied HEOP students to Temple University in Philadelphia for the Annual Inclusive Leadership Conference on Saturday, February 1. The day-long conference is designed to give college students the opportunity to enhance their leadership skills through presentations, workshops, dialogues, and panel discussions on topics related to inclusive leadership and social change. This year, the theme of the conference was “Raise Your Voice... it Matters” in an effort to highlight the importance of empowering historically marginalized individuals and communities too create change, Conference participants were also treated to remarks by keynote speaker Andre Davis, a public speaker, poet, and documentarian.



## The Jubilee Class of 2023 Attends Advocacy Day in Albany

HEOP Director Harmony Cross accompanied students from HEOP’s “Jubilee Class” to the New York Student Aid Alliance “Advocacy Day”, an opportunity for students and advocates to come together to show support for student aid funding and higher education. Students were able to speak with representatives from Senator Liz Kruger’s office and Assembly Member Rebecca Seawright’s office, and advocated for a 20% increase in funding for programs like HEOP and the State’s Tuition Assistance Program (TAP).

## HEOP Wellness Wednesdays

HEOP students were treated to a series of wellness events hosted and planned by Christine Mitchell '20 and Jerandy Beato '22, Special Projects and Events Managers. Mitchell and Beato are members of the HEOP Leadership Council and they co-developed the Wellness Wednesdays series to promote mindfulness and wellness in the HEOP community. We kicked the series off with a Yoga and Meditation session, led by HEOP alumna Tatiana Valencia '18 and current HEOP student Aisatou Ishimori '23.



## HEOP's Response to COVID-19

In response to the global pandemic and the transition to remote education, HEOP supported students through a few initiatives:

### Peer Support Groups

Peer Support Groups were developed by the HEOP staff and Leadership Council to ensure that first and second year students were supported through remote instruction. Students were divided into small groups of five, and sessions were led by HEOP Counselor Stephanie Nunez. The meetings fostered community engagement and allowed a safe space for students to discuss their feelings. Group leaders included: Melanie Bermudez, Junior Tucker, Zaheraa Ramsahoye, and Jerandy Beato.

### Progress Reports

Progress reports were distributed to faculty over Spring Break to gather an idea of how all HEOP students were performing in classes. This allowed staff to tailor their approach during weekly meetings with students. Action plans were created for students with a C or below in a course and shared with faculty.

HEOP students "zooming" with CAST Director Monica Colbert (center)



### Weekly 1-1 Meetings

All HEOP students were required to meet with HEOP Counselor Stephanie Nunez and HEOP Director Harmony Cross once a week via phone or zoom. Meetings ensured that students were on track academically and it also granted students a medium to voice any concerns.

### HEOP Leadership Council Meetings

The HEOP Leadership Council met once a week with HEOP staff throughout the semester to advocate on behalf of their class peers, discuss new initiatives, and lend support to one another.

"I appreciate the support that was implemented to support us through remote instruction."

"Seeing my peers at group meetings was beneficial as we checked in with each other every week."

"We got to bond through debriefs and provide support to each other emotionally"

## HEOP's Response to COVID-19

In response to the global pandemic and the transition to remote education, HEOP supported students through a few initiatives:

### 4 Week Final Stretch

The 4 week final stretch was developed to reintroduce students to campus staff and resources during the last weeks of the semester. Speakers and topics discussed included:

- Ryan Atwell, Assistant Director of Career Services and Internships  
*Discussed internships and services provided by Career Services*
- Monica Colbert, Director of the Center for Academic Support and Tutoring (CAST)  
*Led workshops on academic resources and study habits*
- Tatiana Valencia, Health Promotion Coordinator for the Counseling and Wellness Center (CWC)  
*Discussed mindfulness and coping strategies*
- Ariel Williams, Academic Advisor for the Office of Academic Advisement  
*Discussed the pass/fail and withdraw process, and academic majors/minors*

"I really enjoyed learning how to practice mindfulness."

"Meetings taught me coping strategies, and resources such as OWL Purdue. I was also reminded of the library's resources."

"Speakers were very informative as I learned about many resources, and walked away with several tips I didn't know before."



"I always love collaborating with my HEOP family, a program that gave me so much growth when I was a student at MMC. With the home setting currently merging multiple aspects of our lives."

**Tatiana Valencia '18, Health Promotion Coordinator**

(above, zooming with students)



"It was an absolute pleasure connecting with our HEOP students during our small group meetings. It is evident our HEOP students have a very bright future ahead of them."

**Ariel Williams, Academic Advisor**

"HEOP students are on their way to pursuing some amazing internships and gaining as much experience as they can to best position themselves for life after graduation! It is always a pleasure to collaborate with the HEOP team."

**Ryan Atwell, Assistant Director of Career Services and Internship Programs**



# Senior Shout-Outs!



## Yessenia Adorno

Major: Digital Journalism, Minor: Environmental Studies

Highlight: Yessenia plans to attend Brooklyn College for graduate school



## Grace Baez

Major: B.A. In Dance, Concentration: Teaching Dance Education

Highlight: Tutor at Practice Makes Perfect



## Jennifer Benescome

Major: Psychology, Minor: Social Work

Highlight: Accepted Job Offer



## Brielle Charles

Major: International Business, Minor: Economics

Highlight: Studied Abroad in Costa Rica, Paris, and Japan, Interned at Mad&Women and Kleinfield



## Amanda Cruz

Majors: Digital Journalism, English and World Literatures, Creative Writing

Highlight: Silver M Award Recipient and pursuing writing career after graduation



## Zoh Guoin

Major: Business, Concentration: Fashion Marketing, Minor: Photography

Highlight: Interned with celebrity stylist Zoe Costello



## Rebecca Maxwell

Major: Politics and Human Rights, Minors: Sociology, Gender & Sexuality Studies

Highlight: Accepted to Craig Newmark Graduate School of Journalism



## Christine Mitchell

Major: Business, Concentration: Economics, Minor: Studio Art

Highlight: Recipient of HEOP Eileen Bertsch Award, Silver M Award, and member of the HEOP Leadership Council



## Catherine Shimabuku

Major: Psychology

Highlight: Full time public/private tutor/interventionist for Practice Makes Perfect and Recipient of Silver M Award.

# HEOP Staff Shout-Out

## HEOP Director Harmony Cross Nominated as NYC Region Representative

HEOP Director Harmony Cross was nominated to serve as the New York City Regional Representative HEOP Professional Organization. Cross is one of eight regional representatives. In addition, Cross is a member of the College Success Network (CSN) through the College Access Consortium of New York (CACNY). Cross is also scheduled to present at future conferences on retention practices for students of opportunity programs.



## HEOP Welcomes New Counselor/Coordinator Stephanie Nunez

In February, HEOP welcomed Stephanie Nunez as the newest community member and HEOP's Counselor and Coordinator.

Nunez is a 2016 graduate of SUNY New Paltz, where she earned a degree in Marketing. Nunez previously worked at Goddard Riverside Options Center as a Senior Access Counselor. Nunez is very passionate about helping youth succeed, both academically and professionally, as she herself is an EOP alumna.



## Members of the HEOP Leadership Council Receive Awards

HEOP Special Projects & Events Manager/Intern Christine Mitchell receives the 4<sup>th</sup> Annual HEOP Eilene Berstch Award, and a Silver M Award. HEOPs Alumni Relations Manager/Intern, Stephanie Galvez (left) receives MMC's First Year Outstanding Leader Award at the 2020 Leadership Awards, hosted by Student Development and Activities..



## Eilene Bertsch HEOP Award

*Christine Mitchell*



# Student Engagement

HEOP Programming and Events Pre Covid-19



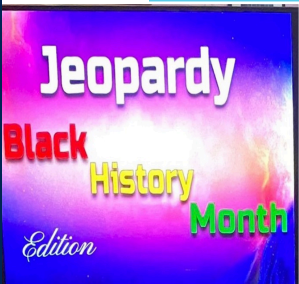
## Community Service

HEOP's Community Service and External Partnership Manager/Intern, Zaheraa Ramsahoye, led a series of community service projects, including a collection for hygiene products to donate to the Lenox Hill Shelter, as well as a Winter Clothing Drive for the Bowery Mission.



## HEOP Scholars

First and second year HEOP students above a 3.0 GPA and upperclass HEOP students with a 3.5 GPA and higher were treated to a HEOP Scholars Luncheon at Donna Margherita on the Upper East Side.



## HEOP Events

HEOP Special Projects & Events Managers/Interns Christine Mitchell and Jerandy Beato led a series of events, including the HEOP Black History Month Workshop, HEOP Game and Karaoke Night, and HEOP Wellness Wednesdays.



## HEOP Recruitment

HEOP Recruitment Manager & Intern Melanie Bermudez and HEOP Counselor Stephanie Nunez attended the transfer fair at Bronx Community College in February. Members of the HEOP Leadership Council participated in several recruitment trips before the pandemic.



## Young Men's Initiative (YMI)

Members of YMI kickstarted the semester by going to the Spyscape Museum for their monthly excursion. Members of the YMI had the opportunity to meet CEO and Founder of CS Photography in the month of March. Cameron Simms spoke about the importance of building your brand, networking, surrounding yourself with role models, and embracing creative expression.



# HEOP Professional Staff

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## HEOP Para-Professional Student Staff

### Jerandy Beato

HEOP Special Projects & Events Manager/Intern



### Melanie Bermudez

HEOP Recruitment and Administrative Manager/Intern



### Fahima Degia

HEOP Public Relations & Marketing Manager/Intern and  
HEOP Newsletter Chief Editor



### Stephanie Galvez

HEOPs Alumni Relations Manager/Intern



### Christine Mitchell

HEOP Special Projects & Events Manager/Intern



### Zaheraa Ramsahoye

HEOP Community Service & External Partnership Manager/Intern



### Junior Tucker

HEOP Office Manager/Intern and Young Men's Initiative Delegate

