February 18, 2009

TO: The Hostos Community College Community
FROM: Vice Chairman Philip Berry, Chair, The Hostos Community College Presidential Search Committee
RE: Search Progress Report #4

The Hostos Community College Presidential Search Committee is pleased to announce that the following three finalists will visit the campus on three separate days:

Monday, February 23, 2009
Félix Matos Rodríguez
Cabinet Secretary, Department of the Family
Commonwealth of Puerto Rico

Tuesday, February 24, 2009
Natalie M. Gómez-Velez
Associate Dean for Academic Affairs
CUNY School of Law

Thursday, February 26, 2009
Wilfredo Nieves
President
Middlesex Community College

The Open Forums/Town Hall meetings will be held on the above dates from 3:00 – 4:00 p.m. in the Savoy Multipurpose Room. The entire Hostos Community College community is invited to attend.

Biographies of each of the candidates are attached. The full curriculum vitae for each candidate are available through Ms. Sandra Ruíz.

I would like to thank the Hostos Community College community for your continued enthusiastic support.
Félix Matos Rodríguez

Félix V. Matos Rodríguez has a distinguished academic, educational, and social service policy career record. Trained as a social scientist, he has worked in foundations, universities, policy centers and government were he has been able to combine his scholarship with social policy, advocacy and change.

On December 31st 2008, Dr. Matos Rodríguez finished serving as Secretary of the Department of the Family for the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico. As Secretary, he formulated public policy and administered service delivery in the following programs: Child Support Enforcement, Adoption and Foster Care, Child and Elderly Protection, Food Stamps, TANF, Child Care, and Head Start. Dr. Matos Rodríguez managed a $2.2 billion dollar annual budget and oversaw nearly 9500 employees. Previously, he had served as Social Welfare and Health Advisor to the Honorable Governor Aníbal Acevedo Vilá.

Dr. Matos Rodríguez is an Associate Professor of Black and Puerto Rican/Latino Studies at Hunter College (currently on leave) and teaches courses on Caribbean, Latin American and Latino history. His is also part of the History Department at CUNY’s Graduate Center. Dr. Matos Rodríguez served as the Director of the Center for Puerto Rican Studies at Hunter College [CUNY] -- one of the largest and most important Latino research centers in the US -- from 2000-2005.


Dr. Matos Rodríguez graduated from Colegio San Ignacio High School in San Juan. He attended Yale University as an undergraduate and graduated cum laude in Latin American Studies. He received his Ph.D. in history from Columbia University.

Prior to his work at Hunter College, Dr. Matos Rodríguez was a Program Officer at the Social Science Research Council in New York City and a faculty member at Northeastern University in Boston. He has also held visiting and adjunct teaching appointments at Yale University, Boston College, and City University [CUNY].

Dr. Matos Rodriguez has also been active in community organizations. He has been a board member of Aspira of New York, Inc.; Phipps Community Development Corporation, and of the Community Advisory Board of El Diario-La Prensa. He has received numerous awards for his community service including a special recognition by New York City’s Council during the 2003 Hispanic Heritage Month and by the New York State Senate and House Puerto Rican Latino Caucus for excellence in education in 2002.

He is married to Dr. Liliana M. Arabia, a dentist, and has two sons: Lucas (7) and Juan Carlos (5).
Natalie Gómez-Vélez is Associate Dean for Academic Affairs and an Associate Professor of Law at the City University of New York (CUNY) School of Law. Prior to her appointment with the law school, Dean Gómez-Vélez served as Special Counsel to Chief Administrative Judge Jonathan Lippman of the New York State Unified Court System and as Assistant Deputy Attorney General for Public Advocacy in the administration of New York State Attorney General Eliot Spitzer. Dean Gómez-Vélez has also served on the Lawyering faculty at New York University School of Law, as an attorney with the ACLU and the Brennan Center for Justice, and as General Counsel to the New York City Department of Youth Services. Dean Gómez-Vélez began her legal career in private practice.

Dean Gómez-Vélez, a native New Yorker, received her Juris Doctor degree from New York University School of Law (where she was an Arthur Garfield Hays Civil Rights/Civil Liberties Fellow, and as a member of the Latino Law Students Association Steering Committee). She received her Bachelor of Arts degree from Hunter College of the City University of New York (where she graduated summa cum laude and was elected to Phi Beta Kappa). (In 2007, she was inducted into the Hunter College Hall of Fame.)

Dean Gómez-Vélez recently completed an unexpired term on the New York State Board of Regents, where she served as Regent for the Twelfth Judicial District (the Bronx). She is the former Bronx Representative to the New York City Panel for Educational Policy (Board of Education), appointed by Bronx Borough President Adolfo Carrion, Jr. and serving from 2002-2004. She currently serves on New York’s Statewide Judicial Screening Committee, the New York State Continuing Legal Education Board, and the Board of the City Parks Foundation.
Dr. Wilfredo Nieves brings 30 plus years of education experience to his role as president of Middlesex Community College. A long-time community college administrator, his career demonstrates the depth and breadth necessary to provide exemplary leadership in the complex environment of higher education today.

Dr. Nieves’ extensive career exemplifies a lifetime commitment to the community college mission. From his early work in student services to his more recent roles and accomplishments as an academic and administrative leader, he has a comprehensive understanding of college leadership. His appointment as President of Middlesex Community College in 2001 positioned him as a valuable contributor to the Middlesex service area and to many national community college organizations.

Dr. Nieves serves as an evaluator for the Commissions on Higher Education for the Middle States Association and New England Association of Schools and Colleges. He has received numerous awards for his contributions to education and community service.

Dr. Nieves is a committed community leader and is active in many civic organizations. His community involvements have included service on the boards of directors of the National Coalition of Advocates for Students, the Middlesex County Chamber of Commerce, the Middlesex United Way, and the Portland Visiting Nurse Association. He is on the American Council on Education’s Commission on Advancement of Racial and Ethnic Equity, a corporator of Liberty Bank and the Middlesex Health System, Inc. and a member of the Middletown Rotary Club.

Dr. Nieves holds a baccalaureate degree in Mathematics from Kean University of New Jersey, a Master of Arts Degree in Human Development and the Master of Education in Guidance from Columbia University and a doctorate in Counseling Psychology from Rutgers the State University of New Jersey.