



CUNY Humanities Alliance

**Fellows Showcase
Cohort 2021-2023**



Graduate Center's Leadership:

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Borough of Manhattan Community College:

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Guttman Community College:

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Hostos Community College:

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Kristopher Burrell

LaGuardia Community College:

Ljubica Depovic

Pablo Avila

Eric Hofmann



Beginnings are tough. They are full of uncertainty and wrong turns; they might be confusing and exhausting. Beginnings are also exciting. They are full of possibilities, and one has the power to find new ways and chart new paths. When we launched the second iteration of the Humanities Alliance, we anticipated that our first year would be full of challenges and unexpected circumstances. Little did we know the magnitude of those, until we navigated the process of deploying a program during a pandemic. That's why we selected our first cohort of candidates, with the will to figure out the trail while walking it, driven by their commitment to public education and to CUNY students. For the past two years, we have been continually reassured by their brilliance and creativity and the many ways they have been there for each other. While working at four community colleges (Borough of Manhattan Community College, Guttman Community College, Hostos Community College, and LaGuardia Community College), they showed both a willingness to learn and understand the systems and cultures that define these spaces and a generosity to contribute their own experiences and interests.

This document aims to showcase the work produced by the first cohort of Humanities Alliance fellows (21-23) and to celebrate their tenacity and compassion towards themselves and others.

Luis Henao Uribe
Humanities Director



Ariel Leutheusser
they/them
**Borough of Manhattan
Community College**
Comparative Literature



"My basis in teaching methods from the humanities undergirds my understanding of course and workshop design, and I believe that this underlying philosophy of mine, towards the human and cultural element of the classroom and relationships, defined my collaborations."

At the Borough of Manhattan Community College, Ariel has designed and led a series of workshops in collaboration with both the Center for Excellence in Teaching, Learning, and Scholarship (CETLS) and their peer HA fellows. The workshops have encouraged and facilitated intentional discussions between faculty as well as programs geared toward undergraduate students to target some of the campus's pressing needs, including topics such as mentor-mentee relationships, expanding asset-based learning in the classroom with audio assignment design and implementation, and insight for students considering graduate school. Complementing the audio assignment curriculum workshop Ariel worked with faculty members individually to consider and design podcast assignments and their potential role in expanding asset-based learning. Ariel also worked to create and implement experiential learning opportunities for the Open Educational Resource (OER) faculty-student research project Black Studies Across the Americas, involving trips to the Museum of Food and Drink (MoFAD), the New York Historical Society, and The Tenement Museum.



Sokunthary Svay
she/her
Guttman Community College
English



"It's still an adjustment to refer to what I do within the realm of humanities but I see now,, that I'm smack dab in the middle of it...Ultimately, the human interaction and the appreciation for what it creates in culture, in inquiry, and the learning that comes from it is at the heart of everything I do whether creating or teaching. I am steeped in the humanities. I would say now that it is the foundation of my work."

At Guttman, Sok has co-organized workshops and panels that facilitate writing exercises, performance, and discussion around Latinx Heritage Month, Guttman's Big Read program, and National Poetry Month with faculty and HA fellows. Sok's panel, *Poetics, Poesis, and Professors: Artists Teaching at Public Two-Year Colleges*, held in April 2023, brought together artist-teachers across CUNY to celebrate the multitudes of their work while also examining how each panelists' art practice informs their pedagogy in public community colleges. Like Sok's other projects, the panel featured a range of poetry and photography.



Greg Hartmann
he/him
Guttman Community College
Music



"I strove to incorporate music into as many different aspects of the fellowship that I could. In the Philosophy 103 class, I led a variety of discussion activities that incorporated songs or instrumental music. Additionally, I founded the Deep Listening series at the New York Public Library to introduce the general public to emerging classical composers...I am so happy with how the Deep Listening series has gone."

Greg's HA fellowship at Guttman Community College (GCC) has focused on developing and leading a program called *Deep Listening: Composers of the New York Scene*, in partnership with a nearby branch of the New York Public Library. Greg's experience as an accomplished musician, performer, and scholar of music theory shaped this series.

Each session featured a presentation by an award-winning composer, including Bradley Harris, Cheng Jin Koh, Haralabos Stafylakis, and Itzá Garcia. For each session participants were invited to meet the composers, hear their work, and listen to other musical examples and influences. By helping the audience to understand each composer's unique background, as well as by putting new works in a historical and social context, Greg's series has made classical music more accessible to a wide range of listeners. Greg also led in-class activities centered on hearing songs, poems, and other texts aloud and engaging in small-group discussions. As a part of Guttman's Big Read Series organized by the GCC library director, Greg led some of the discussion sessions. He also created an academic skills workshop focusing on "study hacks" and participated in a poetry panel.



Rosalía Reyes Simon
she/her
Guttman Community College
Latin American, Iberian and
Latino Cultures



"The most rewarding experience I had with the HA fellowship was as a journalism mentor to guide the student who won the Pulitzer Center Student Reporting Fellowship, a joint initiative of Guttman Community College with the Pulitzer Center. This project provided an opportunity to explore the role that activism can play within the academic and education fields."

Rosalía has been part of the organizing committee of the Pulitzer Center Student Reporting Fellowship, where she drew on her journalism experience to mentor a student in developing a multimedia news piece that highlighted an underreported social justice issue. The student documented how immigrant Latinx women were learning to fight for their labor rights as cleaning workers in New York. Rosalía also helped faculty organize readings and lessons with visiting Pulitzer Center journalists and designed a lesson on racial justice and human rights to accompany filmmaker and photographer Eli Hiller's presentation, who shared his experience covering the mass protests triggered by the murder of George Floyd by police in 2020.

Rosalía also supported interactive lessons and community-building programs that fostered reflective discussion around the humanities beyond the classroom. This included Afro Latinx Heritage Month events such as a bilingual poetry reading. Separately, in a hands-on workshop, each student created a "Cartonera"-style cardboard book in which the overarching theme was the diversity of Latin American cultures. Rosalía also formed part of the Guttman Big Read Series, a project organized by the GCC library director that encouraged community building and critical thinking through guided literary discussions. In 2022, participants read a memoir by Cathy Park Hong, *Minor Feelings: An Asian American Reckoning* and in 2023 participants read *Faces in the Crowd* by Mexican writer Valeria Luiselli.



Angela Dunne
she/them
Hostos Community College
Urban Education



Mehrnaz Moghaddam
she/her
Hostos Community College
Cultural Anthropology





"One of the most rewarding experiences of the fellowship was traveling to D.C. with my co-fellows and presenting at the CIES conference. It was a well-received presentation to people from all over the world. It was really nice to go through the whole process from conference proposal to presentation."

- Angela

"All the experiences of working with interdisciplinary cohort and faculty opened my eyes to many issues that had been invisible to me. Better understanding of higher education was one of my main reasons to come to this fellowship and it was all about if higher education is where I want to target for my future career. And, this fellowship helped me to learn and figure that out to a great extent."

- Mehrnaz

As Humanities Alliance Fellows, Mehrnaz and Angela have been integral in enhancing the use of Learning Communities (LCs) and Experiential Learning (EL) programs at Hostos Community College that promote interdisciplinary knowledge and meaningful collaborations between students, faculty, and the local community. Building on Hostos' mission, the fellows' research on existing programs (at CUNY and elsewhere) has opened the door to wider discussions on the benefits and opportunities in LCs and EL. This dedicated study of LCs and EL has been foundational for identifying Hostos-specific opportunities as well as laying the groundwork for a sustained and enthusiastic future of cross-curriculum engagement between students, staff, and faculty both in and beyond the classroom.



Oriana Mejías Martínez
she/her
LaGuardia Community College
Latin American, Iberian and
Latino Cultures



“One of the most rewarding experiences was to be able to partner professors from LaGuardia with two professors from Latin America. It was challenging in many aspects but my goal was to prove that decentering English from the classroom was not only possible but also fruitful since also the exchange allowed students diverse ways to access knowledge.”

At LaGuardia Community College, Oriana has strengthened the pivotal Collaborative Online International Learning (COIL) program by contributing to its multilingual curriculum and experience for students and faculty. COIL was developed at SUNY over fifteen years ago and is now a fundamental initiative at LaGuardia that pairs local faculty with international counterparts to develop shared, virtual modules for students to enhance cross-cultural and cross-linguistic communication. Oriana’s commitment to interactive and reflective pedagogy helped to remedy students’ hesitation through supportive translation while encouraging active student participation in practicing multilingual connections with peers abroad, while at the same time developing her own skills as organizer, facilitator, and observer. For one of the courses she was involved with in Spring 2022, a final product was an international recipe book created by food anthropology students and their instructors at LaGuardiaCommunity College and the Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México. Evaluations to convert it to an Open Educational Resource (OER) are in the works.



Marianne Madoré
she/her
LaGuardia Community College
Sociology



“[The HA Fellowship] has helped me move forward my dissertation research in unexpected and excited ways. I have also met wonderful people through this fellowship, i am really grateful for their brilliance and our comradeship.”

At LaGuardia Community College, Marianne first spent time reading what students had to say about their Collaborative Online International Learning (COIL) experiences. From there, she designed new tools to assess students' learning outcomes, and worked with faculty to introduce COIL-specific learning objectives. She is currently developing an interview-based research project to understand how the Global Learning Competency is taught at LaGuardia, and has presented preliminary findings at the Comparative and International Education Society (CIES) meeting in February 2023.

In April 2023, Marianne collaborated with her peer fellows, Oriana Mejías Martínez and Sharanya Dutta, as well as the Reclaim the Commons Coalition to organize a teach-in with CUNY activists and archivists on historical examples of student organizing at our shared university, titled *CUNY Struggles Across Generations*.



The CUNY Humanities Alliance (HA), supported by the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation, explores how humanities inquiry and engagement can facilitate justice and equity in higher education. Through mentorship and supportive peer- and near-peer networks for undergraduate students, graduate students, faculty, and staff, the program helps participants better understand the systems and structures that create conditions of learning in the university, and become more able to act within them to make humanistic inquiry more inclusive and empowering for the students CUNY serves. The CUNY Humanities Alliance (HA) was launched in 2016 as a partnership between the Graduate Center (GC) and LaGuardia Community College, and expanded in 2020 to incorporate Hostos Community College, Guttman Community College, and Borough of Manhattan Community College (BMCC).

For more information visit: <https://cunyhumanitiesalliance.org/>