

Dear Faculty and Staff Colleagues,

I am very pleased to share that the U.S. Department of Education has approved our application to become a Hispanic Serving Institution, or HSI, which will help Manhattanville offer more resources to our Latinx population. With this national designation, the College is eligible to seek specific grants designed to provide support and enrichment for Hispanic students.

Out of roughly 400 higher educational institutions designated as HSIs, only 26 are in New York State, and Manhattanville is the third HSI in Westchester County.

To qualify as an HSI, an institution must demonstrate that Hispanic students make up at least 25 percent of the full-time equivalent student body. Currently, thirty-seven percent of Manhattanville's student body identifies as Latinx and they are an integral part of our diverse campus community. Manhattanville has long been considered a Hispanic Serving Institution by professional organizations such as Ed Excelencia and the Hispanic Association of Colleges and Universities (HACU). These designations are based on nationally reported enrollment data through The Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS) and following the federal definition of an HSI.

Manhattanville's enrollment goals through fall 2022 reflect continued growth of Latinx students among first-time full-time students, transfer students, and students in our recently launched second degree nursing program. Latinx students are on track to increase from 37% of first-time full-time students in 2020 to 40% in 2022. Plans to maintain and increase Latinx enrollment include continued recruitment efforts, alumni engagement and demonstrating successful outcomes, an increase of the first-generation scholarship program which was new in the fall of 2020 and employing diverse admissions staff.

In recent years, a third of our undergraduates have received need-based financial aid. Of the students with high financial need, a third are first-generation students and more than half are members of racial or ethnic minority groups. I am thrilled that the College will now be able to apply for additional funding that might assist these students as they pursue their goals, both here on campus and beyond.

Of course, Manhattanville has a long tradition of providing pathways to students' success—a commitment that recently helped us rank eleventh in "Top Performers of Social Mobility" by *U.S. News & World Report*. With HSI grants, the College can expand educational and leadership opportunities for Hispanic students, which not only helps current and prospective Latinx Valiants but also demonstrates our intentional investment in their future.

Many thanks to everyone who played a part in making Manhattanville an HSI. I have no doubt that these efforts will broaden our ability to serve our Latinx students and to foster a more diverse, equitable, and inclusive community for everyone.

Sincerely,

Michael E. Geisler, PhD
President

