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Chile to open first community college in South America

LaGuardia Community College is inspiration behind new South American school, to open in 2010

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A college in Queens has become an interesting place for higher education in a country far away from New York City, according to an article from the *New York Daily News*.

LaGuardia Community College in Long Island City is the inspiration for South America's first community college, expected to open in Chile by March 2010. LaGuardia President Gail Mellow said the Community College at Universidad Central in Santiago will give more students from low- to middle-income families a chance to attend college, according to the *Daily News*.

She feels that Chilean students will be excited to find that their diplomas will be honored as LaGuardia degrees.

"The Chilean country has just emerged from 20 years of a pretty brutal dictatorship, and they want to enter the global economy," Mellow said. "To do that, you've got to educate more people to a higher level."

In Chile, only the top few percent are accepted into the country's public universities, which are a much lower cost.

The others must attend private schools, which most Chileans simply can't afford. Also, the *Daily News* reported that if students switch careers then they lose all their credits.

As quoted by the *Daily News*, Sergio Quezada, the dean of math and physical science at the Universidad, said the college will cost about a third less than

private schools in the country. The idea for the community college grew from an exchange program between LaGuardia and Universidad Central, a four-year private nonprofit university in Santiago.

The school will first offer only engineering and computer science courses, then later add health and political science programs.

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