

4. General fundraising letter to be adapted to a request for a specific program:

Foundation Letter-

SAMPLE [2004]

On behalf of LaGuardia Community College and the Foundation, it is my pleasure to submit the enclosed [prospectus, brochure, description of our program] at LaGuardia Community College.

Our Neighbors and Our Neighborhood

Located within the “immigrant destination borough,” of Queens, LaGuardia Community College students represent the approximately one hundred and fifty nations that have immigrated to Queens and established communities throughout the county. Spanish and Latino, Romanian, Irish, Turkish, Indian/Pakistani, Bangladeshi, Thai, Filipino, as well as Peruvian, Russian, Israeli, African-American, Afghan, Korean and Chinese communities, among many others, make their living here, share cultural experiences, traditions, values and a host of struggles in community oases throughout the county. Over 25% of those living in Queens have immigrated to this country in the last five years. Most of these immigrant families came to this country to improve their own lives and the future opportunities of their children.

Effecting Systematic Reform

Through partnerships with schools, communities and businesses, using innovative and culturally sensitive pedagogy, LaGuardia Community College has been at the forefront in effecting systemic reform that works to reverse the trends of increasing income inequality and declining wages of the working poor and undereducated. It is currently a critical national resource of experience and knowledge of what works best to assist under-served populations in accessing educational opportunities and career paths that insure financial security.

Democratic Education and Educating for Democracy

Because community colleges play a large and increasingly comprehensive role in the lives of their students, their success depends in large part upon how well college programs, outreach, advisement and recruitment serve to sustain individuals, groups, neighborhoods and communities. If our country is to remain the world’s leader in business and technology, our students must thrive as effective members of our economic community and help maintain a true democracy as productive partners in our social fabric.

LaGuardia Community College is Setting National Standards

LaGuardia Community College is at the vanguard of higher education in the United States, responding to vast community needs among its predominantly immigrant population of students, as well as offering quality secondary education to more than 12,000 students each year. For several consecutive years, LaGuardia Community College has ranked among the top community colleges in the country in graduating minority students. It has also won national recognition for graduating the fifth largest Latino community college class in the United States. In 1998, LaGuardia was No. 4 nationally among the top 100 colleges conferring associate degrees.

Innovative Teaching

The college has long been recognized for its innovative teaching and deep-rooted commitment to programs responsive to barriers to the success of its students. Its leadership position in the academic world has frequently been recognized, being one of two community colleges nationally recognized this year as an "Institution of Excellence" by the Policy Center on the First Year of College. More recently, LaGuardia Community College has been named one of three top large (8,000-14,999 students) community colleges in the country. This award is based on national benchmarks of quality evaluated by the Community College Survey of Student Engagement, funded in part by Pew Charitable Trusts, the Lumina Foundation and MetLife Foundation. Yet to be formally announced is LaGuardia's receipt of the prestigious TIAA-CREF Hesburgh Award for undergraduate education to the director of the **Center for Teaching and Learning**.

Transferring Knowledge and Skills Locally and Globally

We are creating the next generation of new Americans and LaGuardia truly reflects what this nation will look like in the future. The College has recently come to a clear consensus that the struggles of our largely immigrant students are also assets. Their ethnic and racial backgrounds can foster their educational success, their job worthiness, their leadership potential and their abilities to form community bonds, progress economically and become citizens. Rightly conceived, diversity is an advantage in a city committed to and sustained by diversity, in a nation riding a decades- long increase in immigration, and within a world moving towards globalization. LaGuardia Community College has received honors to our Small Business Development Center from New York City and New York State for helping more than 1,000 clients obtain \$10 million in loans and assistance in the past two years. Our programs have helped hundreds of clients move beyond public assistance to over 635 jobs through certificate programs. Through leadership by students, partnerships with business and community agencies, LaGuardia expects in ten years to be capable of transferring our education back into the countries from which our students have come.

Seeking Resources

LaGuardia has recently begun a strategic outreach campaign to both apprise the institution of the needs of its communities and to garner much needed resources to support our students and faculty in the face of dwindling federal budgets. We need help in the areas of. We are hoping that you will take the time to carefully look at [the enclosed materials]. Having done that, we are hoping that you will find a way in which to support our programs, our faculty and our students.

3. Program statement related to community needs and outreach at LaGuardia

Project Description for Community Advisors for ACE-- SAMPLE [2004]

Description of the College

Positioned in one of the nation's most ethnically diverse counties, LaGuardia Community College is a portal to the American dream for thousands of immigrants every year. The College's mission is to provide innovative, challenging learning opportunities to the area's diverse residents, allowing them the opportunity to achieve economic success and career advancement.

The College offers extensive credit and non-credit programs, and is committed to keeping those programs responsive to workforce needs. Its nearly 12,000 credit students earn Associate's degrees in area such as liberal arts, science, allied health, technology and

business curricula that prepare them for transfer to four year colleges or for entry into promising career paths. Many of these students are economically disadvantaged and must juggle the demands of work and family along with their academic work. The college's non-credit students number more than 28,000 each year in a variety of programs and services aimed to provide access to education and jobs for those with significant barriers to advancement. Their target populations include working adults who attend evening classes to acquire skills for better jobs, as well as veterans, disabled students, recent immigrants, disadvantaged youth, deaf adults, unemployed and under-employed men and women, and homeless heads of households.

The student body at LaGuardia is richly diverse. Our students come from all over the world, and many have arrived in New York relatively recently. In fact, in the 2000 entering class, 66% of these students are immigrants, nearly half had immigrated to the U.S. less than five years before. Among the almost 12,000 students in credit-bearing programs, there were 159 countries represented, 110 different languages spoken natively and over 140 languages spoken. Nearly all LaGuardia students make their homes in New York City now. More than two-thirds live in Queens County.

For several consecutive years, LaGuardia Community College has ranked among the top community colleges in the country in graduating minority students. In 1999-00, LaGuardia was No. 4 nationally. So many students come from so many different places to study together that we call ourselves The World's Community College.

The College strives to be a full participant in the economic, civic, and cultural aspects of the city of Queens by responding creatively to changes in the student population, technology, and the global economy. Its leaders cultivate partnerships with business, community groups, government, and public schools to enhance the economic, social, cultural, and educational development of Western Queens and New York City. The college has long been recognized for its innovative teaching and deep-rooted commitment to programs responsive to workforce needs. Its leadership position in the academic world has frequently been recognized by external experts, being one of two community colleges nationally recognized as an "Institution of Excellence" by the Policy Center on the First Year of College.

Need

The population of Queens is the most ethnically diverse county in the nation. People from approximately one hundred and fifty nations have immigrated to Queens and established communities throughout the county. Spanish and Latino, Romanian, Irish, Turkish, Indian/Pakistani, Bangladeshi, Thai, Filipino, as well as Peruvian, African-American, Afgan, Korean, Russian, Israeli and Chinese communities, among many others, make their living here, share cultural experiences, traditions, values and a host of struggles in community oases throughout the county. Over 25% of those living in Queens have immigrated to this country in the last five years. Most of these immigrant families came to this country to improve their own lives and the future opportunities of their children. Therefore, it is critical that they have access to both educational opportunities and career paths that insure their financial security. Yet for adults newly arrived in this country it is difficult to understand how to access training resources that can lead to decent jobs and how to navigate the American higher educational system for their children.

Because community colleges play a large and increasingly comprehensive role in the lives of their students, their success depends in large part upon how well college

programs, outreach, advisement and recruitment serve to sustain individuals, groups, neighborhoods and communities. Throughout Queens there is an extensive network of community agencies and local neighborhood groups that service the needs of particular ethnic communities within the borough. In a recent survey, LaGuardia Community College identified over 100 large, medium and small agencies and groups that dedicate themselves to helping their own ethnic group. Yet many of these agencies have limited knowledge of the availability of educational programs and services available at LaGuardia Community College. According to a 2003 community-wide market study commissioned by LaGuardia, its programs are somewhat selectively visible to the citizens of Queens. Both business and community leaders expressed an interest in obtaining more information about the services and programs of the College.

Although the College has strong partnerships with some community agencies, there is clearly an untapped opportunity to partner with many more agencies. No formal program operates at the College to systematically reach out to potential community partners. In the past three years, the College, under new leadership from President Gail Mellow, has engaged in a comprehensive strategic planning effort that has identified seven major goals that are focusing all College efforts. One of those top goals is to increase our linkages with the external community. President Mellow has made great strides in connecting to the business community, in part through the recent establishment of a Foundation Board comprised of 20 business leaders. Now it is time to create another advisory group that will connect us strongly to key community organizations and agencies.

One of the challenges of serving such an ethnically diverse population is to understand the variations in community perceptions as well as community needs among the different groups. Because of their close ties with their constituents, immigrant-serving agencies are a unique and valuable resource to inform and shape the college's programs and services. They can help the college understand the aspirations of their constituents, the educational barriers they face, their perception of the college and ultimately ways in which to tie our programs more closely to those community issues and needs. Once connected to LaGuardia, these agencies can provide the community support services that can help overcome the life circumstances that frequently threaten the academic progress of our students. Therefore the College is committed to developing a Community Advisory Committee that will connect us in a formal, systematic way to these community resources and ensure that we work together to reinforce each other's missions.

Detailed Program and Timeline

It is the goal of the college to create a permanent community advisory group that will serve as a structural interface between community needs and college resources. This group will represent the major ethnic and racial groups within the borough and will be a key source of community outreach, collaboration and program development for the college. In order to lay the groundwork for this advisory group and to identify potential members, we are requesting MetLife Foundation funding to undertake an aggressive, well-organized outreach program tapping key resources of the college.

LaGuardia seeks to engage over the next twelve months in a highly innovative and creative process to reach communities, to make College resources visible and to recruit leaders for the Community Advisory Committee. This program's primary need for external funding is for a Coordinator for the following specific efforts.