



# NEWSLETTER

WINTER 2024

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# INSPIRING MOMENTUM

Baruch students, faculty, and alumni know that in business, and in life, the only constant is change. Every day, our community of scholars deliver on their commitment to create change for good—improving the ways we work, live, and apply knowledge to new and unforeseen challenges.

Our future is bright because of them, and because of you, the loyal and generous 17 Lex Society members who fuel their progress. The pages that follow reflect that progress and illustrate the inspiring momentum we are building on in 2024. Thank you for all that your support has made possible!



# LEADING SUSTAIN

## What does a more sustainable future look like? How will green energy financing impact our economy? How do we help people feel activated, not immobilized, in the midst of a climate crisis?

These are just some of the questions Baruch's Climate Scholars are committed to answering.

"Our planet is changing in profound and uncertain ways," says **Mindy Engle-Friedman, PhD**, professor of psychology at the Weissman School of Arts and Sciences and ombudsperson for Baruch College. "The best way for us to proceed is to be prepared."

The initiative is designed to prepare more students for leadership roles in green energy. As Climate Scholars, students commit 20 hours each week for six months to semi-weekly didactic sessions, peer-to-peer mentorship opportunities, research labs, and internships focused on climate change resiliency and the transition to renewable energy.

"We want to give students a deep dive into the cutting-edge science around the growing number

of issues that are directly related to climate change," says Engle-Friedman.

"We believe in the future vibrancy of our city, our country, and our planet, but we can only have that if we are prepared," she adds.

The Baruch Climate Action Collaborative includes approximately 30 faculty from across Baruch's three schools who are doing research and teaching in areas related to climate change. Currently, Baruch's Climate Scholars are exploring a wide range of topics, from coastal ecology to energy finance to climate journalism, areas that will inform strategies for resilience locally, nationally, and globally.

Students like **Judah Duke '24**, a journalism major who is double minoring in computer science and environmental sustainability. Duke, an aspiring science reporter, saw the Climate Scholars Program as an opportunity to strengthen his knowledge in climate change and environmental science, areas that will ultimately inform his reporting.

Working alongside **Dr. Brett F. Branco**, director of the Science and Resilience Institute at Jamaica Bay, Duke's project focuses on a new type of green innovation in nature-based infrastructure intended to mitigate shoreline erosion.

"As a Climate Scholar, I'm seeing science and communication in action," he says. "Working in the lab and learning from experts in these didactic sessions are providing the tools I need to translate



To read more about the Climate Scholars Program, scan the QR code.

# AVAILABLE CHANGE



**CUNY**  
CLIMATE  
SCHOLARS

highly technical scientific jargon into content that's easier for the public to consume and understand.”

In an evolving information landscape, Baruch Climate Scholars will play a vital role, according to Engle-Friedman, applying their specialized knowledge to our most pressing issues—and the ones we have yet to uncover.

“We have an opportunity to do good, to make a difference, and to set our sights on a safe and healthy future,” she says. “It’s about educating our students. Everything starts with education.” ■



# REDEFINING ENTREPRENEURSHIP

**Across industries and organizations, the pandemic was a reflective time for many employees. Virtual work environments resulted in difficulties separating their personal and professional lives, leaving many people dissatisfied with their jobs and questioning the future.**

**There was even a name for it: The Great Resignation.**

This movement exposed a problem in the workforce—employees are lacking autonomy and creativity, so much so that many of them are seeking it on their own. Now, Baruch is preparing the next generation of leaders with a solution.



**Scott Newbert, PhD**

“Entrepreneurship isn’t just about starting a business, it’s about teaching the skills to be creative and innovative changemakers within any organization,” says **Scott Newbert, PhD**, professor and chair of the newly established Department of Entrepreneurship and Innovation. “We’re putting entrepreneurship front and center because entrepreneurship isn’t just something Baruch does, it’s something we’re leading.”

The department, which launched on July 1, reimagines the Zicklin School’s major in entrepreneurship by placing a greater emphasis on creativity, changemaking, and innovation, empowering students to identify and act on their strengths. These strengths aren’t limited to business students, says Newbert, another change in the department’s structure.

“Students in the arts, sciences, public policy, and so many more fields have great ideas and a desire to leverage them into potential career options,” he says. “We wanted to create a more diverse classroom, which is why our courses are open to any student on Baruch’s campus.”

**Sandra Smith '24** is one of those students. Smith, a student at the Zicklin School who is also minoring in psychology, credits the department with challenging the traditional idea of entrepreneurship and empowering more students, just like her, to leverage her strengths.



## ENTREPRENEUR SPOTLIGHT:

# DENNY GABRIEL '24

### **What does entrepreneurship mean to you?**

Entrepreneurship is boldly pursuing new opportunities, whether it's in the form of a product, a service, or simply an idea. Often times, this requires making decisions and taking action, even when the path ahead isn't fully clear.

### **How is Baruch preparing you to take the next step in your business venture?**

I want to be an early-stage investor of innovative startups across software, healthcare, FinTech and climate tech. In terms of deal sourcing as an early-stage investor, I've established a large network of investors and startups through the Department of Entrepreneurship and Innovation. The professors and faculty have done a phenomenal job at bringing in entrepreneurial leaders that, as a student, I can leverage as an aspiring investor. Similarly, my hands-on involvement with the Field Center for Entrepreneurship has expanded my in-class learning with real-world examples of the processes and methods we learn in class.

### **How do Baruch students embody the entrepreneurial spirit?**

Baruch students are scrappy and resourceful. They're not shy about leveraging New York City as an extended campus and rapidly expand their networks. I've experienced firsthand their tenacity and continual refinement of ideas, drawing lessons from more experienced upperclassmen and their eagerness to collaborate in diverse teams. This diversity, a true strength of Baruch's student population, fosters unique connections among students from various backgrounds, enriching their entrepreneurial journey with a multitude of perspectives and experiences. ■

"Exploring entrepreneurship has confirmed there is a whole world beyond what I think I know, and how capable we are of expanding our horizons if we allow it," she says.

"My goal is to build successful social enterprises starting from within my community. Every course I have taken has deepened my understanding of my current business and fostered my confidence to pursue another venture," Smith adds.

The Department of Entrepreneurship and Innovation, which is rooted in an experiential, hands-on approach to learning, also provides valuable opportunities for students to explore their ideas outside the classroom by connecting with potential users in the real world.

"Our belief is that a book can only teach you so much," says Newbert. "We don't want the first time our students practice being an entrepreneur to be when the stakes are high."

"Getting out there, practicing, even failing," he adds. "That's all part of learning." ■



TREVOR EDWARDS '84, '89 MBA

# STAYING CURIOUS ALL THE TIME

**Baruch College set the stage for Trevor Edwards' rise to global marketing success at some of the biggest names in business. Now, as a 17 Lex Society member, he is committed to paying that generosity forward in a way that empowers a new generation of leaders and trailblazers.**

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Goldman Sachs, Colgate Palmolive, and Nike are some of the biggest brands in the world, and throughout his career, **Trevor Edwards '84, '89 MBA** has called them all home. Each organization has shaped his career, but there's one place that served as the ultimate training ground for his success: Baruch College.

"Working in marketing, I've always had a strong focus on the consumer—you have to understand who you serve, and that tenet was instilled in me at Baruch," says Edwards. "At Baruch, there's a diversity of people, of experiences, of opportunities, and it all comes together to create this really incredible environment for learning."

After graduating with a bachelor's degree in management science and finance in 1984, Edwards began his career at Goldman Sachs. He returned to Baruch to pursue an MBA in international business and marketing, which he received in 1989. From there, he went on to hold a number of executive level roles globally in marketing and general management, including a 25 year tenure at Nike, where he served as president from 2013-2018. Today, he leads a strategic advisory practice and serves on the board of directors for Funko Inc.

and VF Corporation, which owns Vans, The NorthFace, Timberland, and Supreme.

Edwards' ascent to Fortune 500 success wasn't luck—it was rooted in foundational elements that he acquired nearly 30 years earlier as an eager, driven, and ambitious undergraduate.

"One of the most valuable takeaways from my time at Baruch was this idea of being a lifelong learner, staying curious all the time," he says. "It's not just about gaining knowledge; it's about applying it. Constantly thinking about innovating and finding better ways to serve consumers."

**"It's incumbent on us, as alumni, to use our experiences, resources, and abilities to provide access to even more students."**

It's those curious thinkers that make Baruch what it is today, according to Edwards, an environment he feels compelled to champion and strengthen today as a 17 Lex Society member.

"Baruch represents something much bigger than just another university; it plays an incredible role in shaping the way we think about society," he says.

"To ensure that the Baruch experience has its maximum value, it's incumbent on us, as alumni, to use our experiences, resources, and abilities to provide access to even more students," Edwards adds. "If we share that with the university that helped us thrive, then our impact will multiply over time." ■



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# SAVE THE DATE

**2024 BERNARD BARUCH DINNER**

MONDAY, APRIL 8, 2024  
ZIEGFELD BALLROOM



For more information about  
the 2024 Dinner or to purchase  
tickets, scan the QR code.