

# 17 SOCIETY LEX

## NEWSLETTER

**SPRING 2025**

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# THE EXCITEMENT IS JUST BEGINNING

As the 2024–25 academic year winds down, one thing is clear at Baruch: the excitement for what's ahead is just beginning. From imagining the next 25 years at Weissman to celebrating the remarkable achievements of the unstoppable Class of 2025, this spring has given us so much to be proud of.

As a 17 Lex Society member, your partnership is central to each one of these accomplishments and achievements—helping build a community where our students have the resources to explore their passions and truly thrive. Have a great summer; we look forward to seeing you again this fall!





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# UNSTOPPABLE AMBITION

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**What lies beyond Baruch for the Class of 2025? For Mia, Carla, and Masayori, their unstoppable ambition means the sky's the limit.**

## **Mia Castillo '25**

As Mia Castillo looks back on the last four years as an aspiring accountant and nationally recognized student-athlete at Baruch, one thing is certain: she's made the most of every moment.

"It's been a crazy experience, but I wouldn't have traded it for anything," she says.

Castillo, who enrolled at Baruch in 2021 in the aftermath of the

COVID-19 pandemic, dreamed of playing basketball at the collegiate level and following in her parents' entrepreneurial footsteps as a business major. At Baruch, she embarked on both journeys without hesitation.

After officially declaring an accounting major in her sophomore year, Castillo joined the National Association of Black Accountants (NABA), eventually leading the organization as vice president

during her junior year—the same year she led NCAA Division III in both points per game and steals per game. The following year, Mia led both categories again as a senior, and was named the all-time leading scorer in the City University of New York Athletic Conference (CUNYAC), surpassing a record set more than two decades ago.

In addition to her accolades on the court, Castillo played an active role in Success Amplified, paying forward her experience as a mentee by serving as a mentor for fellow Black and Latinx students.

"Being able to witness their journey, and knowing I might have played a small role in their success—that's amazing," she recalls.

As a Dean's Scholar, which covered the cost of her tuition for all four years, Castillo felt compelled to take full advantage of Baruch's expansive community of extracurriculars, clubs, and activities. Knowing her parents would also be supporting her twin brother's college education at the same time, she saw the scholarship as a blessing—one she couldn't, and wouldn't, waste.

Now, as she plans to pursue a graduate degree and follow her dream of becoming a certified public accountant, Castillo is grateful for every opportunity Baruch presented.

"I want to exude excellence in all I do, and my time here taught me that you shouldn't let anyone put limitations on what you can accomplish," she says.

"If you put in the work, it'll pay off."

### **Carla Muñoz '25**

As a corporate communications major, Carla Muñoz is leaving Baruch College ready to take on her goal of improving quality of life on a global scale, both through her passion for sustainable real estate and her broader approach to the positive impact business can bring to the world. Looking back on her time at Baruch, she credits not just what she learned, but who she learned from.

"I've always sought out mentors—people older than me who I could learn from," Muñoz says. "Joining Executives on Campus (EOC) was the first time I developed a personal relationship with someone accomplished in business who I could truly look up to; someone who could help

me navigate issues that I was previously unprepared for."

After transferring from Hunter College, Muñoz jumped at the chance to get involved, joining both EOC and the Financial Women's Association—Baruch Mentoring Program (FWA). These experiences introduced her to mentors who helped shape her confidence and leadership abilities.

"I didn't see myself in that way before, but with the support of these mentors, I was able to recognize qualities that were already within me, just waiting to be realized," Muñoz recalls. "Because of these experiences, I feel more equipped for the leadership roles I want to take on."

In addition to influential extracurriculars like EOC and FWA, Muñoz—a scholarship recipient—cannot overlook the impact financial support played in easing the burden of pursuing a college degree. Thanks to her scholarship, she was not only able to finish her degree faster and with less stress, but she also realized her lifelong dream of traveling to Europe, spending a semester abroad in Barcelona, Spain.

"Studying abroad has been a dream of mine since high school, and thanks to my scholarship, I was able to see the world—I even visited Paris and Greece," she says. "It really opened up my worldview."

For Muñoz, reflecting on her time at Baruch wouldn't be complete without the Feit Honors Seminar, a class she describes as "nothing like I've ever experienced." The class, "Creativity Unleashed," co-taught by two professors from different

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departments, blended storytelling, improvisation, and creativity.

“It taught me a lot about failure and experimentation, because being willing to fail—that’s important in life,” she says. “It made me more of a creative thinker and a risk taker, and that’s something I’ll take with me in everything I do next, in work and in life.”

### Masayori Sudo Hasegawa '25

When Masayori Sudo Hasegawa graduates with his Bachelor of Business Administration in December 2025, he will have spent just three years at Baruch—but you wouldn’t know it from his growing list of accomplishments.

Pursuing a career in tax accounting, Sudo Hasegawa has already completed six internships; served as co-president of the Pre-Law Society; mentored through Peers for Careers; joined the Dr. Wendy Heyman Public Interest Fellowship; and helped his team earn second place at the 2024 Deloitte National FanTAXtic Competition.

“It’s been quite a journey,” he says. “But that’s the great thing

about Baruch—it offers the best of both worlds: a strong academic foundation and opportunities to launch your professional life.”

That experience was only sharpened by participating in the Heyman Public Interest Fellowship. As a fellow, Sudo Hasegawa was able to serve as a project manager and volunteer for Makinohara City Hall in Japan. There, he coordinated monthly virtual English classes for public school children and helped organize the December 2023 Japan–Hawai’i Global Exchange with Olympian Carissa Moore, among other responsibilities.

As team captain for the 2024 Deloitte National FanTAXtic Competition, he helped lead his team to a second-place finish, competing against 13 schools and 85 students and showcasing the team’s analytical excellence on a national stage.

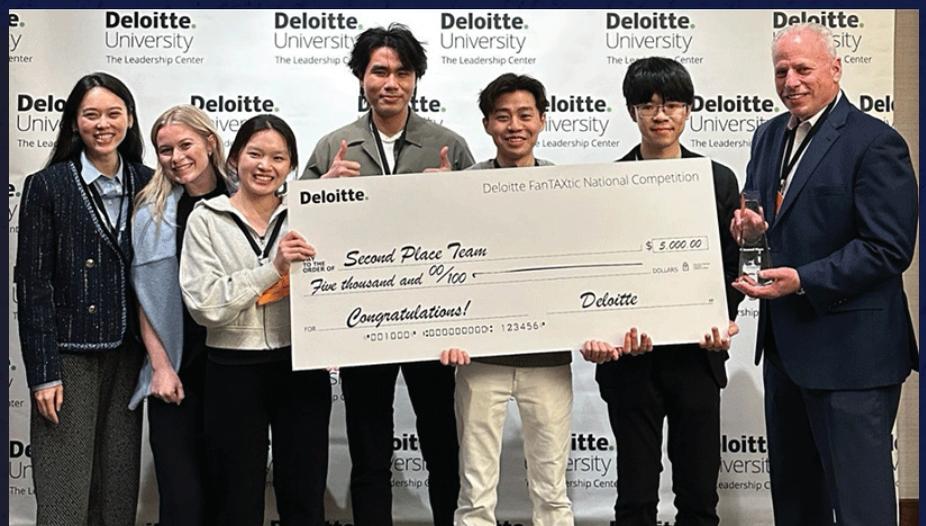
“This competition was an incredible experience because it gave me a taste of the work CPAs do in real life,” Sudo Hasegawa recalls. “It challenged me to think critically, analyze complex tax scenarios, and

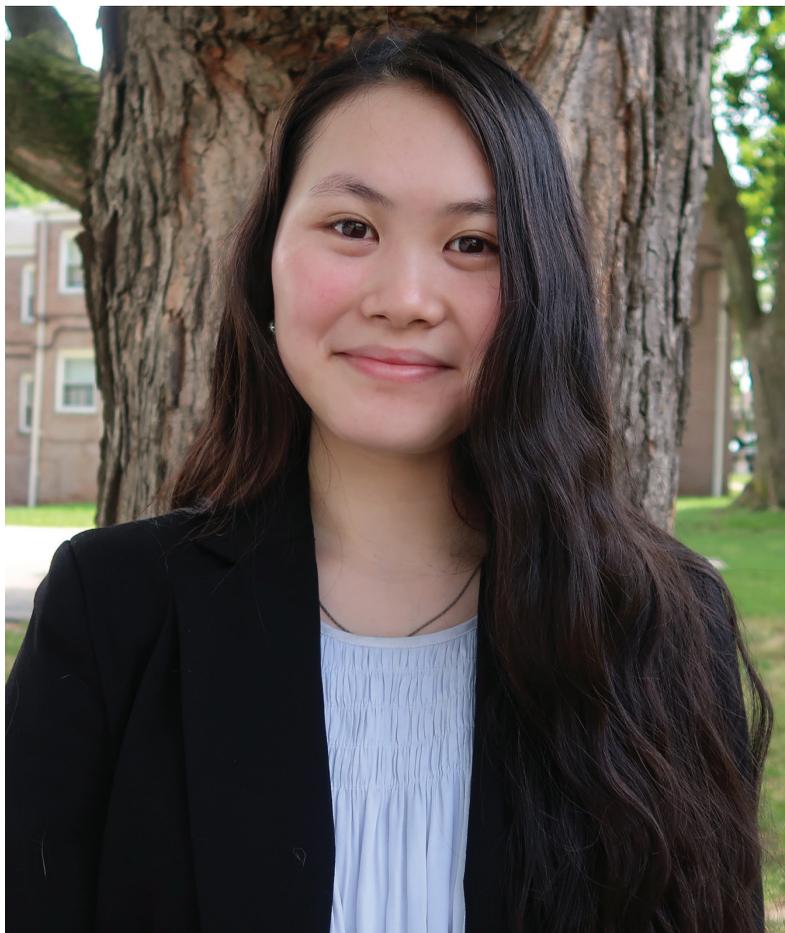
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pursue our dreams.”

work under pressure—skills that are essential for both accounting and law. More than anything, it reinforced my passion for problem-solving and strategic thinking, making me even more excited for the career path I’m pursuing.”

Looking ahead, Sudo Hasegawa plans to enroll in Baruch’s Master’s in Taxation program and eventually become a Certified Public Accountant, attend law school, and pursue a career in tax law. As he reflects on his Baruch experience, one thing is certain: he learned with—and from—the best.

“So many Baruch students work and attend school at the same time—seeing what my peers do is really inspiring,” he says. “All of us share a connection because we’re all working to pursue our dreams.” ■





## MEMBER SPOTLIGHT

# BREAKING BARRIERS

## KYNTHIA LEE'S PATH TO FINANCE AND PHILANTHROPY

### **From financial uncertainty to a thriving career, Kynthia Lee '22 shares how Baruch transformed her future—and why she's giving back.**

When Kynthia Lee graduated from Baruch College in 2022, she gained more than a degree. She gained the experience, network, and drive to jump into the fast-paced world of finance. But it almost didn't happen.

"There was little chance for me to go to college if it wasn't paid for," says Lee, who received a BCF donor-funded scholarship that covered her tuition. "As an immigrant household with two children, they couldn't have made it work."

Upon arriving at Baruch, Lee hit the ground running. Along with her scholarship, she was part of the Zicklin Undergraduate Honors

Program and participated in the Financial Leadership Program (FLP) and the FWA Mentoring Program, both aligning with her finance major.

Lee also received a grant from Baruch's student emergency fund to cover legal fees as she struggled to obtain a work permit as an international student. With that help, she secured her permit in time for her role as an investment analyst at Guggenheim Partners.

Programs like FLP and FWA not only supported Lee's professional goals but also helped her build a sense of community at Baruch, which can be hard for commuters like herself.

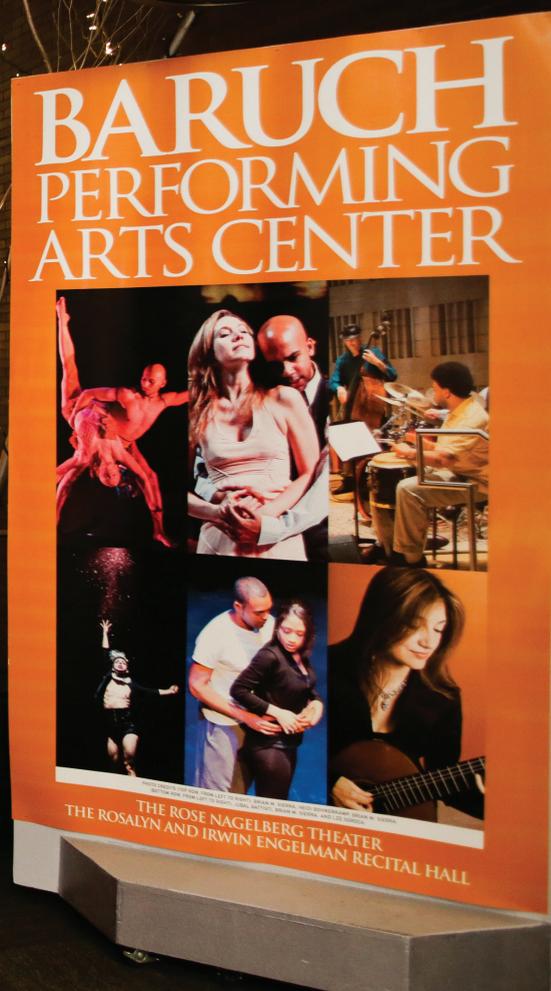
"Joining these activities helped me connect with others who had similar goals," she says.

Her mentors in FLP and FWA played a key role in expanding her network, connecting her with a mentor at Guggenheim Partners. "I was so focused on building a network at Baruch because it's priceless," she says. "Success is built on the network of those who came before you."

Inspired by these experiences, Lee joined the 17 Lex Society after graduation, giving back to the institution that had supported her. "Baruch helped me get into the finance industry, so I was able to give back financially," she says. "I always wanted to give back to the communities that helped me, and now I'm fortunate to offer others the same opportunities I received." ■

# WEISSMAN'S NEXT 25 YEARS

A TRADITION OF EXCELLENCE,  
A VISION FOR THE FUTURE



## **After celebrating its milestone 25th anniversary in 2024, Dean Jessica Lang reflects on the school's impact, its evolving role in higher education, and why a liberal arts education is more essential than ever.**

Baruch's diversity—in its students, their backgrounds, and their professional aspirations—has come to be known as one of its defining characteristics. But regardless of which college or department students call home, they're all united in one unmistakable way.

"The vast majority of our students take half or more of their academic studies at the Weissman School of Arts and Sciences," says Jessica

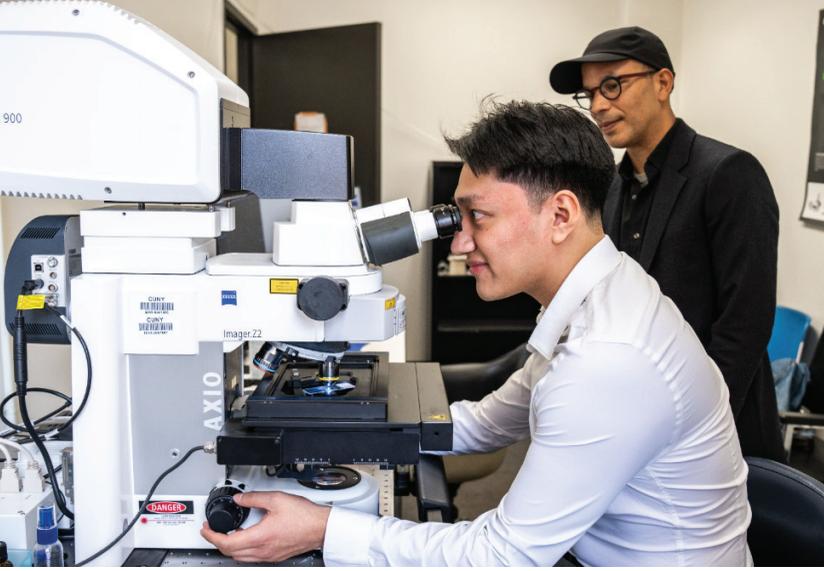
Lang, PhD, dean of the School. "Their major might fall in the Zicklin School or the Marxe School, but all Baruch students are Weissman students."

The Weissman School, which celebrated its milestone 25th anniversary just last year, has long been known as the liberal arts backbone of our institution. In fact, it's that very foundational education—one that all Baruch students receive—that serves to prepare a

new generation of leaders—the ones society needs, according to Lang.

"Well-rounded students are those who can learn and be nimble in their thinking. At Weissman, we're focused on providing students with critical and creative thinking, scientific analysis, and communication skills, preparing them to function at a level of meta-understanding that enhances the application of fundamental operational skills. This enables them to move into positions that are above entry level," she says.

Now, as the Weissman School steps into its next chapter, the momentum behind the school's mission, vision, and student body is greater than ever. Offering more



than 50 areas of study across 13 academic departments, the impact of Weissman graduates continues to expand.

“There’s such a diversity of professional outcomes for our students—it’s remarkably rich,” Lang says. “They’ve gone on to do exceptional and transformative things in some of our most critical professions and industries.”

But despite a history of great success, the future is not without its challenges, and no one understands that more than Lang, who is completing her second decade at Baruch. Since assuming the role of dean in 2022, she has witnessed what others identify as “a crisis” in

the humanities. Lang views this as an opportunity, one that Weissman is uniquely positioned to correct.

“Schools of Arts and Sciences, not just here at Baruch but across the country, need to move away from thinking of a liberal arts education as an end unto itself,” she says. “We need to help students connect the dots between these degree programs and the amazing opportunities and outcomes they provide.”

“I see Weissman as a leader in this movement,” Lang adds.

As this uncertain future unfolds, Dean Lang is both excited and optimistic about the role the

Weissman School will play in creating an impact that extends beyond Baruch.

“We’ve seen a real devolution of civil discourse. How can we disagree in ways that grow our understanding?” she says.

“A liberal arts degree is a powerful mechanism to re-establish those connections and reconnect us with the humanistic, natural leanings that we all have.”

**“Engaging more, continuing to learn—questioning, researching, investigating. These principles are more important than ever, and they’re at the heart of what we’re teaching our students.” ■**



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