

**For Immediate Release**  
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## **LEHMAN COLLEGE FACULTY AWARDED \$1.25 MILLION NIH GRANT TO PROMOTE HEALTH STUDIES & CAREERS FOR BRONX HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS**

*Associate Professor and CUNY Institute for Health Equity Director Dr. Maria Isabel Roldós to Co-Lead Grant Initiatives*

**The Bronx, NY**—Lehman College is proud to announce Dr. Maria Isabel Roldós has received a five-year, \$1.25 million National Institutes of Health (NIH) Science Education Partnership Award (SEPA). In collaboration with Hunter College Associate Professor and Co-PI Dr. Judith Aponte, Roldós looks to develop place-based education initiatives in Bronx high schools to address health disparities and train students in health disparities research. Lehman faculty members Drs. Tailisha González, Mia Budescu, and Martin Downing are also co-health investigators.

“In the past decade, understanding healthy equity and disparities has become more crucial than ever. As a Hispanic-Serving Institution, our campus is uniquely positioned to transform the pipeline of students and professionals entering the research field while also addressing health disparities in our community,” said Roldós, an associate professor at Lehman College and director of the CUNY Institute of Health Equity (CIHE). “I am excited to work with high school students and teachers to create a lasting impact that will help shape the future of health research and open doors to new career pathways and contribute to the science of health disparities.”

The initiative will target The Marie Curie School for Medicine, Nursing, and Health Professions to develop and test educational modules centered around research on local health issues such as diabetes, adolescent mental health, sleep disparities, HIV and STIs prevention as well as community and population health theory and practicums.

“Lehman College’s Center for School & College Collaboratives looks forward to introducing high school students and their teachers to critical topics in community health,” said Anne Rothstein, founding director of the Center for School & College



Collaboratives at Lehman College. “Students will have the opportunity to learn about health issues impacting them and their families and will develop research strategies to study community data and presentation skills to share their knowledge with their community.”

The education modules and strategies developed through the initiative will be integrated into the curriculum of Lehman’s [Science and Technology Entry Program](#) (STEP) for an upcoming cohort of students. STEP provides academic enrichment in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics with the mission of increasing the number of historically underrepresented and economically disadvantaged Bronx students prepared to enter college. In addition, high schoolers in STEP will have the opportunity to earn college credit through the [College Now](#) program.

Furthermore, the grant will showcase the College’s scholarship and research in the Bronx and will promote community health forums with public health and health services practitioners such as the Director of Health of the Office of the Bronx Borough President Vanessa L. Gibson, the Division of Center for Health Equity and Community Wellness from NYC Department of Health and Mental Hygiene, and other community partners.

### **About Lehman College**

A perennial national leader in promoting social mobility, Lehman College of The City University of New York serves as an intellectual, economic, and cultural center for the Bronx, New York City, and beyond. The college - which sits on a tree-lined 37-acre campus – supports more than 13,000 undergraduate and graduate students, another 14,000 students in continuing and professional programs, and over 90,000 alumni. As a federally designated Hispanic-Serving Institution in the Bronx, Lehman College educates a diverse population of students. The college offers bachelor’s, master’s, and doctoral degrees as well as certificate programs in the liberal arts, sciences, and professions.