

CONVOCATION 2022

August 23, 2022

Welcome Baruch College Class of 2026! I am David Wu, and I am your President. I am *thrilled* to be here and share in this special moment with you! You know, I am relatively new to Baruch as well. In fact, this is only my third Student Convocation as president, but the very first one to be held in person and I can feel that energy and excitement in the room—that electricity in the air! On behalf of Baruch’s faculty and staff, I want to extend my warmest welcome for you to join the Baruch family, and we are all looking forward to seeing you around our vibrant campus.

As you get to know one another in the coming days and years, you will learn what I already know: that the Class of 2026 is amazing. You are high-achieving, diverse, and driven.

How do I know that? Because you are here at Baruch—not only the most selective within the City University of New York (CUNY) system, but an institution that is consistently highly ranked in our region, and in the country.

To be accepted here, you excelled in your high school or community college despite unprecedented disruptions to your educational experience in the past two years. In this way, you have already proved that you are smart, resilient, and determined. In short, you have what it takes to excel as Bearcats!

The Class of 2026 also represents the signature diversity that is Baruch’s hallmark. You come from more than 550 high schools or community colleges, many of you are New Yorkers coming from all five boroughs, and many joining us from around the tri-state region—and as far away as Florida, California, and Oregon. The first-year class also spans the globe, with over 50 countries represented among you.

As you progress through your journey, you will see that your Baruch experience will be your superpower. The experience of immersing yourself in an incredibly diverse, talented, and driven group of peers will set you apart. You may feel intimidated and uneasy at times, but it is the challenge that brings out your best and allow you to fulfill your true potential.

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I know this from personal experience, as someone who immigrated to the United States from Taiwan some 40 years ago, and from conversations with many Baruch students and generations of Baruch alumni.

- As you study, collaborate, and socialize with people who are different from you, you will naturally hone your ability to read people from different perspectives and different angles.
- You will develop an understanding that people from different backgrounds may behave and act differently but have tremendous value to add.
- This skillset—this heightened situational awareness—is invaluable. In fact, it is priceless.
- And that will be your superpower. Your empathy, your ability to relate to anyone and everyone, and your drive to succeed and to make a difference.

Ultimately, our goal here at Baruch is to nurture your talents—your intellect, curiosity, drive, and compassion—and give you the knowledge, tools, and experiences you need to be successful, and make a difference in your chosen career and in your communities. How do we do that?

- Baruch is located in the heart of a global capital, with unparalleled access to world-class institutions and enterprises.
- In partnership with many of these organizations, we make sure you can take full advantage as a Baruch student—whenever possible, we turn the city itself into a classroom and laboratory, for you.
- Our faculty are expert educators, leaders in their fields, and many practice the profession they teach.
- Most of them are here because they love Baruch students. They are here for you: to guide you every step of the way.
- As Bearcats, you also have exceptional student support services at your fingertips: from outstanding internship and career counseling, to academic advising and mental health services. Remember, if things get tough, get help! You don't have to do it alone. Baruch is here for you.
- There are more than 100 student clubs and organizations to join. College is the best time for you to develop new interests, deepen experiences that you have already had, or simply strengthen connections with your fellow students.
- Take advantage of the club hours on Thursdays, and I will see you at the Club Carnival this afternoon.
- Baruch and CUNY also offers many opportunities and resources around New York City—and they are yours to explore.

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I feel privileged to move ahead with you on your college journey. I also look forward to seeing you around campus and getting to know you throughout your college careers.

But for now, I hope you have an amazing first day as Bearcats. Welcome!

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