Behind the Scenes at EOC
by Stephen O’Brien, EOC Mentor and EOC Advisory Committee Chair

Behind the fantastic leadership of J., Karolina as well as our founding members Paul and Dick, is a group of talented and dedicated volunteers who not only mentor students like all of you, but give back by volunteering to be a part of the EOC Advisory Committee. The Advisory Committee was formed in 2011 to help create ways to sustain EOC programs during severe budget cuts which jeopardized EOC’s existence. The Committee rallied behind the organization, strategized ways to leverage relationships with the College and developed a fundraising campaign to keep EOC solvent. Thankfully, Baruch College valued the renewed commitment the organization has made to the students and supported us thought this period.

As of last year, the EOC Advisory Committee reorganized its efforts to support both J. and Karolina with their work. We set up an attendance policy, created an annual timeline and developed three subcommittees with measurable goals to support the work that needs to be done all year. The three sub-committees that were created were, Mentor Alumni Program, Program Quality and Recruitment. Each of these committees took the time to develop specific plans to support improving the overall EOC program and students.

The Program Quality sub-committee sought ways to increase the quality and retention of Mentors and Mentees. They conducted focus groups, telephone surveys, and reviewed existing survey results, gaining valuable insights into the strengths and weaknesses that EOC programs offer. These insights helped inform improvements to the EOC Guidebook, additional events such as the recent Mentor Orientation and upcoming additional programming, such as Risk to Succeed with Ricky Cohen that will allow Mentees and Mentors to interact and develop a strong sense of community. Similar focus groups and additional surveys will be conducted this year in order to continuously improve the experience for all in the EOC community.

The September 9th Mentor Orientation was a new and important initiative of the Program Quality sub-committee which brought together new and returning Mentors, EOC staff and representatives from key student services offices to familiarize Mentors with EOC’s Academic Year-Long Mentoring Programs, as well as resources and support available to them and their Mentees on-campus. The event also served to solidify the EOC Mentor community, it was a success with 126 new and returning Mentors in attendance. The Mentor Orientation was recorded and will be made available to Mentors who could not attend the event.

The Mentor Alumni Program (MAP) was created by former Baruch College students who were Mentees in EOC programs and wanted to give back to EOC and to Baruch. MAPers are anywhere from 1 to 7 years out of Baruch and are not yet fully-fledged Mentors (EOC Mentors have a minimum of 7 years professional experience), but provide a community of support for Mentors and Mentees and one another though social gatherings, workshops, and support for EOC events. This year MAP has created a new initiative, the MAP Rolodex Program: a contact database of members who are available to assist Mentors and Mentees as needed. The goal for MAP members is to become EOC Mentors once they reach a minimum of 7 years of professional experience; they will be the new generation of EOC and will make our organization sustainable. The MAP sub-committee supported the organization and development of MAP by attending additional meetings and helping to shape their strategic plan. This sub-committee has been recently dissolved as MAP has come into its own.

The Mentor Recruitment sub-committee was created to support the expanded growth of EOC. The sub-committee drafted and circulated emails for Mentors to personally forward to professional acquaintances who they thought might be interested in mentoring at Baruch. A goal was set last spring to recruit 40% more Mentees and Mentors for this year (160 Mentees were served in last year’s Zicklin/Weissman Academic Year-Long Mentoring Program, goal was 200). Each of the programs has exceeded this goal and the students continue to value the benefits of a professional mentorship. This year we are proud to announce that we have record numbers of Mentors and Mentees in our Academic Year-Long Mentoring Programs: 263 students can be served in the Zicklin & Weissman Program, and 57 students served in the SPA Program.

The EOC Advisory Committee is proud of the work we do each and every month to support EOC and Baruch College. For more information about the EOC Advisory Committee please contact execuitvesoncampus@baruch.cuny.edu