

HOSTOS UNITED/HOSTOS UNIDO
Hostos Community College
475 Grand Concourse
Bronx, New York 10451

Hostos students, faculty and staff have joined in a united front, under the banner of HOSTOS UNITED/HOSTOS UNIDO, to campaign to obtain the funding for the renovation of the 500 Grand Concourse building.

HOSTOS UNITED was organized during meetings in mid-January which were attended by students and faculty representing a wide spectrum of the college community. Among the organizations represented were: The Student Government Organization, the Puerto Rican Student Organization, the Dominican Student Organization, the South American Student Union, the Black Student Union, FUSP, the Professional Staff Congress and other unions representing college staff.

A Spirit of Unity

Although some debate arose at the January meetings over the structure of HOSTOS UNITED, a general sense of unity and good will prevailed throughout. Repeated calls were made to avoid the divisiveness which permeated the struggle during the Save Hostos crisis two years ago.

Structure

At the January meetings, there was some debate on the size of the Hostos United steering committee and the relative weight that different student and faculty groups should be given. The structure finally adopted is as follows:

1. Any student organization is eligible to have one voting member on the steering committee. The organization, however, must show a commitment by making a financial contribution from its budget. It was decided that, because the student government represents the entire student population it will have a representation of four on the steering committee.
2. Faculty and staff will be represented on the steering committee in a ratio of one faculty or staff member for each two student representatives.
3. Finally, there will be five working sub-committees, which will be responsible for the following functions: finance, information, community relations, activities and press relations. Each committee will be staffed by one faculty or staff member and one student. Members of these work committees can be members of existing organizations as can unaffiliated students, faculty and staff. Everyone at the college, including friends in the local communities, is urged to participate.

The 500 Grand Concourse situation at a glance

The status of the renovation of the 500 Grand Concourse building is as follows:

- ...The building was acquired, following months of campaigning, in 1974.
- ...The renovation has been held up since then because the Dormitory Authority, which funds such projects, has not been able to sell bonds.
- ...Alternate ways of funding the renovation have been explored since, including a grant from the federal government under the local Public Works Act. The Hostos application, however, was denied in the summer of 1977; other projects such as the construction of a monkey house at the Bronx Zoo and a parking lot at Yankee Stadium were approved.
- ...During the fall semester, The Bankers Trust Company offered to buy a special issue of private bonds by the Dormitory Authority, thereby getting around the problem of the Authority's inability to sell bonds.
- ...The special issue sale was approved by the Dormitory Authority, but has been held up because Governor Hugh Carey and his budget staff have said they will not approve any new City University construction until Chancellor Robert J. Kibbee issues a master construction plan for the university through the year 1990.
- ...The Chancellor has said that the plan will not be published until this summer, if then. (Meanwhile, the cost of the renovation continues to escalate and has gone beyond the \$6 million limit established by the city and state back in 1974.)
- ...The City University has said that it has been trying to convince Governor Carey that the renovation does not fall under the category of "new construction" and should, therefore, not be subject to his construction freeze.
- ...But the City University central office has, in the meantime, taken some of its architectural staff off the Hostos project, casting doubt as to its commitment to the project.
- ...Some local legislators, including senator Robert Garcia, Assemblyman Jose Serrano and even Deputy Mayor Herman Badillo, have taken note of the Hostos plight. But HOSTOS UNITED firmly believes that its activities must be stepped up to further impress these and other public officials of the urgent need of the renovation of the 500 Grand Concourse facility. Only then will they feel compelled to act on behalf of the college.

Meetings: HOSTOS UNITED meetings will be announced regularly through this news sheet or on college bulletin boards. Everyone is welcome to attend.