



Hostos Community
College

CUNY

Natural Sciences Department



EARTH WEEK CELEBRATION

WELCOME TO OUR HOUSE

APRIL 20 – 25

A-507

Hostos Research Center | C-130

Spring
2026

Chair Welcome Message

The Natural Sciences Department (NSD) warmly welcomes the Hostos community to celebrate **Earth Week 2026**. Observed annually around April 22, Earth Day highlights the importance of protecting our environment and inspiring collective action. This year's theme, "**Our Power, Our Planet!**", emphasizes a fundamental truth: meaningful environmental progress is driven not by any single administration or event, but by the everyday actions of communities, educators, workers, and families working together to protect the places where we live and work. We invite you to join us during the **week of April 20** for a variety of engaging and educational events. Highlights include a keynote address by Dr. Neal Phillip, Professor and Chairperson, titled *The World is CUNY's Campus: Empowering Our Students Through Global Learning for Planetary Change*, and a featured presentation by Paramita Sen, M.Sc., Lecturer, on *Urban Air Inequality at the Micro Scale: Mapping Pollution in Mumbai and Delhi by CUNY Students*. Both speakers are from the Department of Chemistry, Earth Sciences, and Environmental Sciences at Bronx Community College. Additional activities include teach-ins, conversations with advanced science and engineering student alumni, the Hostos STEM Olympiad, hydroponic tower demonstrations, a plant giveaway, the Engineering Program's Fourth Alumni Reunion, and more. NSD remains committed to raising awareness about climate change and the environmental challenges facing our planet. Together, we can inspire change, promote sustainable practices, and work toward a healthier future. We have only one Earth. Let's learn, engage, and celebrate it together during **NSD Earth Week 2026**.



Dr. Yoel Rodríguez
Professor and Chairperson
Engineering Program
Coordinator

Keynote Speaker

Dr. Neal Phillip is **Professor and Chairperson** of the Department of Chemistry, Earth Sciences, and Environmental Sciences at Bronx Community College of CUNY, where he also served as Associate Dean of Academic Affairs. He is Co-Director of the CUNY CREST Institute International Partnership and Global Networking Pillar and played a key role in establishing CUNY's first India-focused center, the Achyuta Samanta India Initiative.

Dr. Phillip holds a **Ph.D. and M.S. in Environmental Engineering and dual B.S. degrees in Chemistry and Meteorology**. His research and publications focus on air and water pollution, atmospheric chemistry, and environmental education. He has contributed significantly to curriculum development at CUNY and served on the Pathways Steering Committee that created the University's 30-credit Common Core.

An **active leader in global sustainability initiatives**, Dr. Phillip has led multiple international research and study abroad programs, secured major grants from NSF and the U.S. State Department, and established environmental monitoring networks in the U.S. and abroad. His work continues to expand opportunities for students through global partnerships, research, and innovation.



Dr. Neal Phillip
Professor and
Chairperson
Department of Chemistry,
Earth Sciences, and
Environmental Sciences
Bronx Community College

Featured Speaker

Paramita Sen is a **Lecturer** in the Department of Chemistry, Earth Sciences, and Environmental Sciences at Bronx Community College of CUNY and a **Ph.D. candidate in Earth and Environmental Sciences at the CUNY Graduate Center**. She holds Bachelor's and Master's degrees in Geography and a Bachelor's degree in Education from India.

Professor Sen serves as **Director of the Achyuta Samanta India Initiative and Associate Director for International Partnerships at the CUNY CREST Institute**. She is a Principal Investigator on multiple major grants from the U.S. State Department and the National Science Foundation, supporting global sustainability, climate education, and study abroad programs.

Her work has led to the **development of international research collaborations**, installation of environmental monitoring systems, and **hands-on training opportunities for over 100 CUNY students**. Professor Sen continues to advance global partnerships and expand student access to research, innovation, and sustainability initiatives.

Professor Sen is an **International Advisory Board member** for the ISKCON Govardhan Ecovillage School of Sustainability in Palghar, Maharashtra, for Pimpri Chinchwad University in Pune, Maharashtra and for Heritage International Public School in Durg, Chhattisgarh.



Paramita Sen, M.S.
Lecturer
Department of Chemistry,
Earth Sciences, and
Environmental Sciences
Bronx Community College

2026 Earth Week Celebration

Our Power, Our Planet!

AGENDA

Wednesday, April 22, 2026

Hostos Research Center | C-130

- 11:00 am** **Opening Remarks**
President Daisy Cocco De Filippis, PhD
Provost Andrea Fabrizio, PhD
Natural Sciences Department Team and
Dr. Yoel Rodríguez – Chairperson, Natural
Sciences Department
- 11:10 am** **Keynote Presentation**
The World Is CUNY's Campus: Empowering Our Students Through Global Learning for Planetary Change
Dr. Neal Phillip | Professor and Chairperson
Department of Chemistry, Earth Sciences, and Environmental
Sciences, Bronx Community College
- 12:30 pm** **Urban Air Inequality at the Micro Scale: Mapping Pollution in Mumbai and Delhi by CUNY Students**
Paramita Sen, M.Sc. | Lecturer
Department of Chemistry, Earth Sciences, and Environmental
Sciences, Bronx Community College
- Exhibit** **Hydroponic Towers | Phytoremediation Research**
Prof. Anna Ivanova, PhD | Ms. Karin Contreras, CLT
Mr. Emilio Peña Torrez, CLT
- Hydroponic Tower Pruning**
Join us for the pruning of our hydroponic towers and learn about plant maintenance and sustainable growing practices.
- Plant Giveaway (Basil & Cilantro)**
Attendees will receive harvested plants, including basil and cilantro, while supplies last.

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- **Hostos STEM Olympiad | Tuesday, April 21 | 2:00 pm**
 - **Teach-in Activities | Week of April 20**
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PROGRAM

Teach-in Activities

Monday, April 20, 2026

Cancer and Environmental Risk

Anatomy and Physiology BIO 230 208A

In Person | A-521 | 9:30 AM - 12:15 PM

Prof. Bianca Rivera, PhD

Class Discussion

Student Oral Presentation | Phytoremediation of Heavy Metal-Contaminated Water

CUNY Research Scholars Program

Research Students: Steven Martínez and Kareem Protain

Zoom Meeting | ID: 893 4945 0047 | Passcode: 789655 | 12:00 PM - 1:00 PM

Prof. Anna Ivanova, PhD, Mr. Emilio Peña and Ms. Karin Contreras

A Scholarly Analysis of the Environmental, Energy, and Civilizational Implications of Artificial Intelligence

In Person | A-401 | FYS 101-401 | 12:00 PM - 1:45 PM

Prof. Asrat G. Amnie, PhD (Education Department)

Class Discussion

Student Debate & Role-Play: Amazon's Carbon Footprint: What Is Our Role as Consumers?

Environmental Sciences ENV110 710A | 44632

In Person | A-536 | 5:30 PM - 6:45 PM

Prof. Nelson Nuñez Rodríguez, PhD

Environmental Science students will take on the roles of Community Advocates, Amazon policymakers, and Local Politicians in a dynamic role-play debate. They will explore how all of us, as Amazon consumers, have a role to play in shaping our consumption habits and lifestyles. Students will also examine our responsibility as informed citizens to question corporate carbon footprints and to demand that politicians act within the complex, interconnected environmental challenges we face, considering that these challenges involve political, economic, social, and ethical dimensions, and require thoughtful decision-making.

Tuesday, April 21, 2026

The Public Health Implications of Nuclear Power Generation. Classroom discussion

Anatomy and Physiology I Lab BIO 230 111A | Not Open to Public

Zoom via Brightspace | A-522 | 8:00 AM - 10:15 AM

Prof. Vyacheslav Dushenkov, PhD

PROGRAM

Teach-in Activities

Tuesday, April 21, 2026

Plant Diversity in Traditional Cuisines Around the World: A Botanical Approach

Plants and Society | BIO 130/131

In Person | A-536 | 9:30 AM - 11:00 AM | Prof. Flor Henderson, PhD
Students Oral Presentations

Environmental Topic

General Chemistry | CHE 210

In Person | A-435C | 9:30 AM - 10:45 AM | Prof. Francisco Fernández, PhD
Students Oral Presentations

Bonding with Our Planet through Chemistry

Introduction to Chemistry I CHE110 216A | Not Open to Public

In Person | A-432 | 9:30 AM - 10:45 AM | Prof. Sharmila Shakya

Powering Progress: Does Nuclear Energy Help or Harm Human Health?

Anatomy and Physiology I BIO 230 411A | Not Open to Public

Online | 12:30 PM - 3:15 PM | Prof. Vyacheslav Dushenkov, PhD

Wednesday, April 22, 2026

Noise Pollution in NYC

General Physics II PHY220W 215A | Zoom Meeting

ID: 816 3251 6767 | Passcode: 039773 | 9:30 AM - 10:45 AM | Prof. Biao Jiang

Presentation Guest Speaker: Mamos (Spiritual Priests) of the Arhuaco Tribe from the Sierra Nevada De Santa Marta

Message from the Heart of the World on Earth Day Week

General Biology II BIO 210 and Anatomy and Physiology BIO 230

Online | Zoom Link: [https://hostos-cuny-edu.zoom.us/j/84620213685?](https://hostos-cuny-edu.zoom.us/j/84620213685?pwd=XHQxXzaXK94TnarzPUUV53sQ2mLim01)

pwd=XHQxXzaXK94TnarzPUUV53sQ2mLim01 | 9:30 AM - 10:45 AM

Prof. Amanda Bernal-Carlo, PhD, Prof. Maria del Carmen Inda García, PhD

STEM Hands-on Activities

Science, Geoscience, Science & Art, Physics, Lego, Robotics Clubs

Area in Front of the Hostos Research Center | 12:00 PM - 2:00 PM

Prof. Anna Ivanova, PhD, Prof. Yoel Rodríguez, PhD, Prof. Daniel Amarante, PhD,

Prof. Biao Jiang, PhD, Prof. Zaira Ramos-Barreto, MFA (Humanities Department)

PROGRAM

Teach-in Activities

Wednesday, April 22, 2026

How to Study Effectively for Exams

Open for Any Course | A-408

12:30 PM | Prof. Soheli Chowdhury, PhD

Anatomy and Physiology of Flowering Plants

Anatomy and Physiology I BIO 230 410C | Not Open To Public

In Person | C-555 | 12:30 PM | Prof. Marcia Ribeiro, PhD

Class Discussion

Stuff Swap

Free Swap! Leave What You Can, Take What You Need!

In Front of the Hostos Library | 1:00 PM - 3:00 PM | Prof. Jennifer Tang

American Transcendentalism: Another Language for Deep Ecology

English Expository 110 Writing 515A

In Person | B-508 | 2:00 PM - 3:45 PM

Prof. Elyse Zucker, PhD (English Department)

Conversation with Advanced Science and Engineering Students/Alumni

General Physics I PHY 210W 215A

Zoom Meeting | ID: 873 9065 9046 | Passcode: 644227 | 2:00 PM - 3:00 PM

Prof. Yoel Rodríguez, PhD and Ms. Karla Contreras

Peer Instructions | Physics Knowledge Contest

General Physics I PHY 210W 215A

In Person | A-534 | 3:00 PM - 4:00 PM | Prof. Yoel Rodríguez, PhD

Carbon, Climate Change, Ramifications

Microbiology BIO 310 710A

In Person | A-408 | 5:45 PM - 6:30 PM | Prof. Julie Trachman, PhD

Class Discussion

PROGRAM

Teach-in Activities

Thursday, April 23, 2026

Arte Museum Field Trip and Reflection on New Technologies in the Planet

Anatomy and Physiology I | General Biology BIO 230-210 | 9:30 AM | Meeting at A-Building Main Entrance | Prof. Maria del Carmen Inda García, PhD

Oral Portfolio Presentation | Advance in Organic Synthesis in AI Era

Organic Chemistry II CHE 322

In Person | A-534 | 11:00 AM - 1:45 PM | Prof. Debasish Roy, PhD
Student Presentation

Environmental Topic

General Chemistry II CHE 220

In Person | A-425C | 11:00 AM - 12:15 PM | Prof. Francisco Fernández, PhD
Student Presentation

The Engineering Program Fourth Alumni Reunion

Engineering Program | Natural Sciences Department, and Mathematics and Computer Science Department, Alumni Office

In Person | A-Atrium A-Building | 5:30 PM

Bonding with Our Planet through Chemistry

Introduction to Chemistry I CHE110 711B | Not Open to Public

In Person | A-431 | 7:00 PM - 8:00 PM | Prof. Sharmila Shakya
Student Participation

Friday, April 24, 2026

Research Work in Progress Presentations

CUNY Research Scholars Program - CRSP

Zoom Meeting | ID: 858 7060 6789 | Passcode: 349387 | 12:00 PM - 1:30PM
Student Research Presentations

Saturday, April 25, 2026

How Can Tree Genders Affect Mental Health?

Principles of Biology I BIO 111 213A

In Person | A-526 | 12:30 PM - 3:15 PM | Prof. Jamie Parker, PhD

Hostos Journal of Student Research - HJSR

- The purpose of the **HJSR**, housed in the Natural Sciences Department, is to **showcase achievements of students** involved in research under the guidance of research mentors. We anticipate that having the Journal will inspire all our students to write and publish high quality scientific manuscripts.



Scan Me

- **2026 Call for Student Research Articles!**

Types of articles:

- **Reports of Original Students' Experimental Research,**
- **Scientific Reviews** done in class as an assignment or as an essay on the subject of interest.

Letters written in response to articles you have read in the Journal are also welcomed.

CONTRIBUTE

- To make a gift to benefit **students** attending **Hostos Community College**, please visit www.givetohostos.com
- To make a gift to benefit the **Natural Sciences Department** specifically, please contact Idelsa Méndez at imendez@hostos.cuny.edu or **718.518.4341**



The Natural Sciences Department thanks the Office of the President, Office of Academic Affairs, Hostos Research Center, Communication Office, National Science Foundation, Campus Operations, STEM Clubs, Institutional Advancement, Office of Student Activities, Student Government Association. Thank you all for your support!



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