Dr. Gail O. Mellow

Dr. Gail O. Mellow has served as President of LaGuardia Community College in Long Island City, Queens since 2000. A member of the City University of New York (CUNY) system, LaGuardia is a recognized leader among community colleges for launching programs and teaching methods that have become pilots for the nation. An expert on the history, development and future of the American community college, Dr. Mellow co-authored *Minding the Dream: The Process and Practice of the American Community College* (Rowman & Littlefield, 2nd ed. 2014) and the new book *Taking College Teaching Seriously: Pedagogy Matters!* (Stylus Publishing, 2015), which explores a groundbreaking digital model for improving faculty teaching to increase student success.

With over 30 years of experience in the field, Dr. Mellow is frequently sought as a commentator on the changing landscape of higher education, strategies for improving the nation’s graduation rate and the role community colleges play in strengthening America’s economy. She has been extensively quoted in a range of publications, including *The New York Times, The Wall Street Journal, Bloomberg Businessweek* and *The Washington Post* and has appeared on national radio and television broadcasts on NPR, MSNBC and PBS.

A community college graduate, Dr. Mellow is ardent in her work to raise the profile of community colleges. Since she joined LaGuardia, the College has gained increasing recognition, named one of the Top Three Large Community Colleges by the Community College Survey of Student Engagement in 2003 and winning numerous awards, including the prestigious 2006 MetLife Foundation Community College Excellence Award for Service to Underserved Students and was awarded a highly competitive First in the World grant by the U.S. Department of Education in 2014. A recent series of three *New York Times* articles about LaGuardia shed critical light on all-too-common obstacles faced by community college students, administrators and faculty.

Under Dr. Mellow’s leadership, over $20 million in external funding through grants and contracts is secured each year for workforce development programs and initiatives that support at-risk students. LaGuardia was invited to be the anchor college for the Goldman Sachs 10,000 Small Businesses initiative, which provides entrepreneurs and small businesses with education and resources designed to help them grow and thrive. The College has also received numerous federal and foundation grants to help other colleges incorporate student-developed electronic portfolios (e-Portfolio) into their curriculum as tools to assess learning over time. Non-credit programs at LaGuardia, ranging from high school equivalency preparation to English language programs, have garnered funding support and become national models.

Dr. Mellow is pioneering work in developmental instruction methods as co-creator of *Taking College Teaching Seriously*. With current support from the Kresge Foundation and initial support from the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, this project seeks to increase college completion rates by helping faculty improve their teaching through online collaborative professional development as a way for faculty to reflect on what they do in the classroom, connect with other faculty and improve their teaching.

This year, Dr. Mellow was appointed by Mayor de Blasio to the New York City Economic Development Council, and by the White House to the College Promise Advisory Board, where she has been leading efforts to mobilize students, alumni, faculty and business and community leaders to support state and national efforts to make two years of community college free. She currently serves on the boards of Jobs for the Future, Comprehensive Development, Inc. and Change: The Magazine of Higher Learning.

Dr. Mellow received an A. A. from Jamestown Community College, a B.A. from SUNY Albany, where she graduated Phi Beta Kappa, and her M.A. and Ph.D. in Social Psychology from George Washington University.

To learn more about Dr. Mellow, visit: [www.laguardia.edu/gailmellow](http://www.laguardia.edu/gailmellow)