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5/11/22 Prof Steegmann

**“Can you spell your name before we start?”** “Yeah sure, it’s B-R-A-G-Y-E” “And your last name?” “P-A-Y-A-N-O”

**“To start off, can you state a little bit about yourself and USG?”**

“Uh, okay so my name is Bragye Pagano, I’m a part of the Undergraduate Student Government, I am a senator, an engineering senator. I am a freshman, an engineering major. What Undergraduate Student Government, USG does, what we do is that we’re the student representatives for any issues, we bring it up to the staff, and have them addressed.

**“So, what made you choose CCNY?”**

“Uh, well CCNY has a pretty good engineering program, and like, I don’t know, the rest of the community is mostly just that. And it’s also nearby.”

**“And what made you join Student Government?”**

“Well, one of my friends, he was already in USG, and he was telling me how good it is, because it’s also like a good experience to participate more in school and just, like, do something in school that can help change it.”

**“And what would you say Student Government has done to help things like around the campus?”**

“We do a lot of things, it’s just not, um brought up as much. One of the main things students have said helped them is the math, grading system, like last semester it was graded based on finals, like 30% for each, and we felt that was unfair, so we brought it up to the staff and they lowered it, to like 20% for finals and 10% for other grading. It was an improvement from last semester.

“Another thing we have been working on making school more accessible for the disadvantaged, like the disabled, and we’re also working on making CCNY a voting site, which opens it up for the neighborhood to vote.”

**“And do students come to your organization with concerns, or do you reach out to them?”**

“Well, the goal is for both of that, we want students to come to us, we have our own hallway like you came in, anyone can come in and just talk to us if they have any concerns... because of COVID, a lot of students don’t know about us, but we’re working on improving that and being more active on campus, which is why we go out of our way to host events and be like “hey, we’re here”, if you ever need anything.”

**“Would you say CCNY has adequately catered to the needs of students? Like resources if they need help, etc.”**

“The thing is, we do have a lot of resources, but it’s not really known by students, which is another thing USG is working on promoting, like we have a psychiatric center on campus, we have the counseling center, the food pantry, COVID resources, there’s a lot, but people don’t know about it.”

**“Do you think the use of platforms such as the Community App, Instagram, social media, would you say that has helped to spread awareness about student life?”**

“For the app, I would say yes because, I feel like a lot of students don’t go on the app as much as they should be, it’s not something a lot of students care for. Me personally, I don’t go on the app that often, but I feel like Instagram is a good area of media to spread resources which is why we are active on our USG Instagram page.”

**“Would you say that people should make more use of platforms like that?”**

“Yeah, I’m pretty sure all the other clubs and organizations have their own Instagram's, it’s a way of promoting and making sure students know it’s there.”

**“What kind of advice would you give to students coming into CCNY as freshmen? Things they should do or check out?”**

“As a freshman myself, I was coming in, it’s been 9 months, I would say just read the booklet that they’re given, it has a lot of important information, a lot of people just skip over it. Look into that, clubs and other forms of resources that student government has.”

**“What would you say is the ideal college experience for people who come to CCNY?”**

“The issue is, CCNY is a commuter school, so students come and leave. I would say just participate in events since you’re only going to be here for around 4 years, just try and be there. You may be busy with school but take a few hours out of your day to be on campus or in clubs.”

**“In the future, do you think if it was gone about a different way, you would get more people reaching out for help?”** “Yes, that’s one of the major things we’re working on, we finished making a website, so all resources are there to help, and we put up posters to get students to know more about it.”

**“Lastly, how would you promote CCNY to someone thinking of going here?”**

“I’d say it’s a good experience for commuters to go to a place where you can get resources, the school tries to put it out there, but do you want the resources, the education.”

Today I interviewed freshman Bragye Payano from the Undergraduate Student Government (USG) committee at CCNY. She has dark, curly hair with tanned skin and freckles. I observed from the beginning of the interview that she has an outgoing, friendly personality, and was laidback in answering the questions so it wasn’t awkward. We arranged this meeting spontaneously after I received a DM from her responding to my inquiry about interviewing a member of the student government on the CCNY Discord community server. After quickly explaining the details of my research topic, we sat down in one of the empty office rooms outside the USG room on the 1st floor. To start off, I asked her to say a few words about student government and herself, to which she answered that she has been at CCNY for the past 9 months, making her a freshman. She is an engineering major and joined USG through a friend telling her about the group. The main goal of USG is to promote and support student life, while also listening to concerns and working to find solutions. When I asked why more people didn’t take advantage of these resources given to them, she answered that a lot of the student body does not feel comfortable reaching out for help, and if they do hear about it many will most likely ignore it. She lives nearby and does not commute to campus but rather walking, but says her friends commute but try to be active on campus when they don’t have class. They hang out with their friends and go to events. People who dorm have a better experience than people who commute and wake up 2 hours earlier because they don’t have to put in much effort as those who live far. Commuters would have to take in the long commute to attend the campus events and then get home, which is an issue. Some of the most important things Bragye states is necessary for students is to have at least one person to go to if you have any issues and know where to go because it is very stressful with a lot going on, so having that outlet, whether it’s your mom, friend, or counseling center. You can manage yourself well by keeping track of things like work, school and clubs on calendars to know where to be and what to do. In the future, she says she will continue at USG the following year, doing classwork and internships for a few years as an engineering major to build her career.