

July 1, 2020

## Weissman School Welcomes President WU's Call for Unity

### A Time for the Baruch Community to Come Together

Dear Baruch Community,

We are living through a tenuous moment in American history. In the midst of a pandemic, our streets are flooded with outrage and grief in response to the senseless violence and reprehensible acts against our Black citizens. Ahmaud Arbery, Breonna Taylor, George Floyd are names we should all know and always remember.



I feel compelled to write to you as your incoming president as it is more critical now than ever before for us to support each other, and to come together as a community. I share the anger and outrage of the thousands of people marching in U.S. cities large and small, as well as in communities around the world, to protest the legacy of discrimination and racial injustice that is engrained in our society. Across the countless images and video clips, I am also heartened to see the incredible diversity of people who have come together to fight for long-overdue change. Racism is not just relevant to the Black community; it is germane to us all. And only through solidarity and sustained commitment can we begin to undo the horrific consequences of racism.

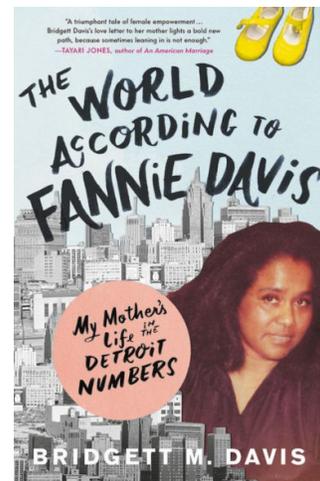
[Read the full statement by S. David Wu](#)

## #WeissmanProud

### Weissman Professor's Memoir To Be Adapted for Major Feature Film Release

**Bridgett Davis**, Weissman Professor of journalism and creative writing, author of the memoir *"The World According to Fannie Davis: My Mother's Life in the Detroit Numbers"*, will adapt her book for a feature film -- to be released by Searchlight Pictures, the Disney-owned arthouse studio, and produced by Brad Pitt's production company, Plan B Entertainment. For details, see [The Hollywood Reporter](#). For more details, see [Detroit Metro Times](#).

"This memoir about my family is, I believe, a timely illustration of the racial discrimination that has continued to impact



African- American lives for hundreds of years,” said Prof. Davis.

“Playing the numbers constituted an informal, underground economy in the Black community that helped my family and many, many others realize a middle-class life,” explained Prof. Davis. “Millions of African-Americans migrated from the racist south, like my family from Tennessee, to create what they called “a way out of no way”. However, when they arrived in urban cities, they were confronted with an equally virulent Northern racism, which restricted their access to good jobs, or even steady employment.”

Prof. Davis will be writing the feature film script with an assist from Pulitzer Prize-winning playwright Lynn Nottage. The author of novels as well as this memoir said she’s excited to convert her story to film because it will “reach a wide audience, illuminating the ingenuity of black folks like my mother, who always believed she too was entitled to the American Dream.”

[Read more.](#)

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## Fall 2020 First Text Selection

Out of the 18 books reviewed by the First Year Text Committee, the final choice was made out of three (3) books recommended to the College president, provost and vice president for student affairs per the final selection protocol. Dr. Lisa Blankenship, chair of the Committee announced Weissman Professor of Journalism, Bridgett Davis, author of *The World According To Fannie Davis: My Mother’s Life in the Detroit Numbers*, was selected as the mandatory reading first-year text for incoming Fall 2020 semester first-year students. Each year, a campus-wide call for recommendation of books suitable for the First Year Seminar is made, the selection committee is guided by these considerations: ability to engage a wide Baruch audience of diverse interests and opinions; application to a variety of disciplines; contemporary appeal of story and character(s); and exemplifies quality writing. The author will be the featured speaker at the Student Convocation on August 25.

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## News Spotlights

### ***"Weissman Journalism Students Report on the Complex Impact of the Covid-19 Pandemic, Border Immigration Policies and Local Violence on the 2020 Texas Elections"***

As Texan’s voted on June 23 in the Super Tuesday election primaries, Baruch journalism students were able to give readers an exciting look behind the scenes at how the pandemic combined with political crossroads affected the election. These student reporters, intent on completing their assignment remotely after canceling what would have been an eight-day intensive reporting trip to the Texas and Mexico border during spring break. The pandemic kept them from traveling but not from their valiant effort to produce a nine-story special edition for *Dollars & Sense* student magazine on the potential impact of the U.S.-Mexico border on the 2020 elections.



The students developed stories on how voter suppression and low Latino voter participation have helped turn Texas into the no-vote state; how Covid-19 has impacted education in rural areas around El Paso, including the colonias; the conflicted lives of border-patrol agents, many of them Latinos; how Trump’s “Remain in Mexico” policy and the border wall are influencing life and politics on the border and the binational culture of El Paso and Juarez. These student reporters expose “ The ties tested in recent years with the surge of Central American migrants and refugees who have passed through the two cities, the Trump administration’s crackdown on illegal immigration and the mass shooting at an El Paso Walmart.”

"D&S showcases our students’ best classroom work as well as enterprise stories they do on

their own", said Andrea Gabor, Bloomberg Chair of Business Journalism, the publication's long-time advisor. The class assignment was under the guidance of both Professor Andrea Gabor and Professor of Journalism Vera Haller. [View full report](#)

[Check out their work, "The Border Interrupted."](#)

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**Vincent DiGirolamo**, Weissman Assistant Professor of 19th and 20th century history, is featured in a special July 4<sup>th</sup> edition of *Time Magazine* entitled "[21 Lessons from America's Worst Moments](#)". Professor DiGirolamo wrote the piece on the Sand Creek Massacre. "The lesson of Sand Creek is that life matters only when truth matters. The tragedy also reminds us of the courage of history's whistleblowers and of our responsibility to carry on their work," Professor DiGirolamo remarked, "One interesting coincidence is that the Civil War monument in front of the Colorado state house, which features a bronze soldier from the cavalry unit at Sand Creek, was toppled overnight the same day that the Time magazine article appeared." These remarkable historic milestones highlighted in this Time Magazine feature give a timely perspective on the events happening today.

**Glenn Albright**, a professor of Psychology at Weissman, created a Gatekeeper Behavior Scale (GDS), which is a scale used to evaluate whether succedent prevention training has been effective. It is now being translated and validated in other countries. [This link is to a recent article](#) on how the GDS was validated in Korea, which apparently has a very high suicide rate.

**Angie Beeman**, associate professor of Sociology at Weissman and **Tsedale M. Melaku**, Sociologist and Postdoctoral research fellow at The Graduate Center for CUNY, were featured in the *Harvard Business Review* for their article, "[Academia Isn't a Safe Haven for Conversations About Race and Racism](#)".

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## Sidney Harman Program News

**Harman Fall Writer-in-Residence Program**, Harman looks forward to welcoming Xiaolu Guo as our Fall 2020 Writer-in-Residence! Born in China, Guo is a writer and filmmaker. Her feature *She, a Chinese* (2009) won the top award at the Locarno International Film Festival. The first of her novels to be written in English, *A Concise Chinese-English Dictionary for Lovers*, has been translated into 26 languages and her 2017 memoir, *Nine Continents*, won the National Book Critics Circle Award for Autobiography. Her latest novel, *A Lover's Discourse*, comes out this fall.



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### **Ironic Moment In A Conversation About Race and Police Brutality**

A Letter from Esther Allen, Director, Harman Writer-in-Residence Program. About a decade ago, I took a taxi home from JFK late one night and glanced at the driver's name. It was Amadou Diallo...[Read the full letter here.](#)

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## Thank you Joyce and Cathy!

**Congratulations to Joyce Marotta and Cathy Levkolic** for committing 35+ years at Baruch College Weissman School of Arts and Sciences. You will both be fondly remembered for your boundless dedication to the students, faculty and staff at Baruch. Wishing you a wonderful retirement!



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## Opportunities for Faculty

- [NIHCM Foundation Seeks Letters of Inquiry for Investigator-Initiated Health Services Research Grants- Deadline 6/29/2020](#)
- [Fulbright US Scholar Program- Deadline 9/15/2020](#)
- [Cornelia T. Bailey Foundation Invites Applications for New ERA Women Writers Program- Deadline: Rolling](#)
- [National Geographic Invites Applications for COVID-19 Emergency Fund for Journalists- Deadline: Rolling](#)

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