Assistant Dean Barbara Moss to Retire From GS After 30 Years of ‘Going the Extra Mile’

By Paige Hunting

If you happened to be in the Dean of Students Office at the School of General Studies (GS) around the holidays this winter, you may have noticed Barbara Moss’s office door plastered with photos of hip-hop star Eminem.

The decoration was part of a holiday gag played by a co-worker who was surprised to learn of Moss’s affinity for the hip-hop star.

But the pictures of Eminem speak more of Moss’s character than her musical taste. It is precisely her youthful, fun-loving approach to work and life, combined with a superior ability to cross age and social barriers, which has made Moss popular with GS students and colleagues.

Among many significant contributions to the School of GS, the most outstanding is the Special Admissions Program (HEOP), which Moss has run for more than 30 years. Under her directorship, HEOP has grown from 87 students in 1972 to 7,500 students this year. With a student body that includes students from far-flung corners of the country and the world, Moss’s main job has been to ensure that everyone feels at ease.

Moss excelled in making new students feel at home. “If I can do that, I know the trip will be worthwhile,” said Wendy Castillo, CC ’04, a Washington Heights native who was the first recipient of the HEOP, and uses his spare time serving as a mentor and counselor for younger HEOP students.

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“He really excelled in working with students to find their way.”

Realizing that the economic crisis was beginning to change, Government initiatives such as the Higher Education Opportunity Program (HEOP), initiated during the late 1960s, were being implemented to provide more educational opportunities to students of color.

Moss’s first position at GS was as a HEOP counselor with responsibility for advising 90 financially disadvantaged students and helping them map their academic careers in the city when they started college.

Almost immediately, Moss excelled in making new students feel at home. “If I can do that, I know the trip will be worthwhile,” said Moss. “I try to go into every meeting. “Get active, register to vote, and get your c**t off the government,” said Barbara Moss.

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