

2025



## **Minutes Board of Directors Meeting**

**June 23 and 24, 2025**

**Borough of Manhattan Community College, CUNY**

**Hybrid Modality**

**Quick Reference Guide****First Day: Agenda Board Meeting (Morning Session)**

Welcome and Introductions of HETS Board Members  
Review of the Agenda and January 2025 Minutes Approval  
Presentation of New Members  
2024-2025 HETS Status Report Summary based on the Strategic Plan  
2024-2025 HETS Financial Status Report  
Surveys Report and Board recommendations for HETS Strategic Plan 2025-2028

**Corporate Partners (Afternoon Session)**

Welcome and Introductions of HETS Board Members and Corporate Partners  
HETS Services and Initiatives Summary Report  
Opportunities for collaboration: Partners' presentations  
Open discussion and closing remarks

**Second Day: Agenda Board Meeting (Morning Session)**

Welcome and Introductions of HETS Board Members and Partners  
Board recommendations for HETS Strategic Plan 2025 -2028  
2025-2026 HETS Proposed Budget  
Special Session: Student Passport New York Edition Results  
Open Discussion about Future Initiatives  
Collaboration Opportunities and Institutional Announcements  
New Items, next meeting dates, and host selection  
Closing Remarks

**Reading Guide:** Action items in **red font**.

**List of Attendees****Executive Committee:**

1. Eng. Gladys Nieves, President, EDP University, Puerto Rico – In Person  
**HETS Chair**
2. Dr. Carlos Vargas-Aburto, President, Southeast Missouri State University – In Person  
**HETS Vice Chair**
3. Dr. Tomás Morales, President, California State University, San Bernardino – In Person  
**HETS Secretary**
4. Dr. Olga E. Rivera, President & CEO, ICPR Junior College, Puerto Rico – In Person  
**HETS Treasurer**
5. Dr. Maritza Rondón Rangel, Chancellor, Universidad Cooperativa de Colombia – In Person  
**HETS International Representative**
6. Dr. Sumaya Villanueva, Assistant Provost for Academic Engagement, Office of Undergraduate Studies John Jay College of Criminal Justice, CUNY – In Person  
**HETS Regional Representative – East**

**Board Members - In Person:**

7. Mr. Sanjay Ramdath, Host, Vice President for Enrollment Management Borough of Manhattan Community College, CUNY, (Designated Representative)
8. Dr. Toyin Tofade, President, Albany College of Pharmacy and Health Sciences, New York
9. Dr. Nelson Soto, President, Albizu University, Puerto Rico
10. Dr. Danny Ambrose, Vice President for Enrollment Management & Student Affairs, Guttman Community College, CUNY (Designated Representative)
11. Dr. Betsy Vidal, Vice President Student Affairs, NUC University & Columbia Central University, Puerto Rico (Designated Representative)
12. Mr. Sunil Gupta, Vice President Adult Continuing Education & Workforce Development LaGuardia Community College, CUNY, (Designated Representative)
13. Dr. Francisco García, Director for Center for Online Learning and Teaching Technology University of Texas Rio Grande Valley, (Designated Representative)
14. Dr. Mary Jo Parker, Executive Director Scholars Academy, University of Houston Downtown (Designated Representative)
15. Mr. Delwar Sayeed, IT Academic Specialist, Queensborough Community College, CUNY (Designated Representative)
16. Mr. Luis Camacho, Assistant Professor, SUNY Empire State University, New York, (Designated Representative)
17. Ms. Claudia Hernández, Chief of the Staff, Office of the President, University at Albany, SUNY (Designated Representative)
18. Ms. Jennifer R. Lang, History Professor, Louisiana Community & Technical College System (Designated Representative)
19. Dr. Kristina Harb, Title V Program Assistant, On PACE for STEM Success, New Jersey City University (Designated Representative)
20. Dr. Carlos Guevara, Co-Director, Office of Educational Technology, Hostos Community College, CUNY (Designated Representative)

**Board Members - Virtual:**

21. Dr. María Hernández Núñez, President, Atenas University Dr. María Luisa Hernández, Puerto Rico
22. Dr. Carmen V. Lidz, MS – Vice Chancellor and CIO, Los Angeles Community College District, California
23. Ms. Theresa Arias, Director of Learning Innovation, Hill College, Texas (Designated Representative)
24. Dr. Brenda Méndez, Director of Career Development, California State University, Dominguez Hills (Designated Representative)
25. Dr. Kamari Collins, Vice President, Student Success & Enrollment Management Chesapeake College, Maryland, (Designated Representative)
26. Dr. Irving Maldonado, Dean of Academic Affairs, San Juan Bautista School of Medicine, Puerto Rico (Designated Representative)

**HETS New Members**

27. Dr. González-De Jesús-De Jesús, Vice President, Lawrence Campus and Community Relations Northern Essex Community College, Massachusetts, (Designated Representative) – **In Person**
28. Dr. Ramón Edecio Pineda Varela, Chancellor, *Instituto Superior Tecnológico* Consulting Group, Ecuador – **In Person**

**Special Guests**

29. Ms. Pamela A. (Krauser) Vargas, HETS Online Journal Chief Editor and Director and Office of Research and Sponsored Programs, Southeast Missouri State University – **In Person**
30. Dr. Silvia Mejia, Director of Spanish Language Programs, SUNY Empire State University – **In Person**
31. Ms. Priscila Barrera, Promoter, Instituto Superior Tecnológico Consulting Group Ecuador – **In Person**
32. Mr. José R. Zurita Guevara, Promoter, Instituto Superior Tecnológico Consulting Group Ecuador – **In Person**
33. Mr. Milton W. Paredes, Counselor, Consejo de Aseguramiento Calidad de la Educación, Ecuador – **In Person**

**Corporate Partners & Members**

34. Ms. Mitzi Cardona, National Program Lead and Portfolio Management American Heart Association – **In Person**
35. Ms. Kate Sonka, Executive Director, Teach Access - **Virtual**
36. Mr. Marcelo Rodríguez, President, InQmatic - **Virtual**
37. Dr. Madeline Shellgren, Director of Global Outreach, Online Learning Consortium- **Virtual**
38. Mr. Jair Ayala Zárate, Associate Director, ETS - **Virtual**
39. Ms. Gina Rogoto, SVP, Operations and Programs, For a Bright Future (FABF) – **Virtual**

**HETS Staff**

40. Dr. Yubelkys Montalvo, HETS Executive Director – **In Person**
41. Ms. Izarys Gutiérrez, HETS Executive Assistant – **In Person**
42. Ms. Stephanie Pérez, HETS Marketing and Communications Consultant – **In Person**

**First Day: Agenda Board Meeting (Morning Session)**  
**Monday, June 23, 2025**

The Board Meeting was convened at 9:40 AM.

**Welcome, Greetings, and Introductions of HETS Board Members**

HETS Chair Eng. Gladys Nieves, President of EDP University, welcomed meeting participants, thanked everyone for their time, and requested all Board members to present themselves to call attendance., Eng. Nieves and Dr. Yubelkys Montalvo, HETS Executive Director, recognized the presence of online attendees, thanked them for their time, and recorded their attendance.

**Review of the Agenda and January 2025 Meeting Minutes Approval**

HETS Chair Nieves requested Board participants to review the agenda. President Olga Rivera from ICPR Junior College presented a motion to approve the meeting agenda, the motion was seconded by Dr. Tomás Morales Vargas from California State University San Bernardino. HETS Chair Eng. Nieves proceeded to the approval of the minutes from the Winter Meeting held on January 16 and 17, 2025, at *EDP University* in San Juan, Puerto Rico. Dr. Kristina Harb from New Jersey City University presented a motion to approve the minutes, and the motion was seconded by President Nelson Soto from Albizu University. The Meeting Agenda and the January 2025 Meeting Minutes were approved with no objections.

**Presentation of New Members**

HETS Treasurer, Dr. Olga Rivera, introduced two new institutional members, starting with Northern Essex Community College and its Vice President Dr. González-De Jesús. She made a brief presentation of her institution. Dr. Rivera welcomed Vice President González and introduced a second new member, *Instituto Superior Tecnológico* Consulting Group Ecuador – Esculapio (ISTCGE) and its Chancellor, Dr. Ramón Pineda, who gave a brief presentation about his institution.

HETS Chair thanked representatives of both new member institutions and invited Dr. González-De Jesús, Vice President of Northern Essex Community College and Chancellor Pineda from the *Instituto Superior Tecnológico* Consulting Group Ecuador – Esculapio (ISTCGE), to receive a certificate acknowledging their institution's official incorporation as a new member.

**2024-2025 HETS Status Report Summary based on the Strategic Plan**

Continuing with the agenda, the HETS Chair, Eng. Gladys Nieves, introduced Dr. Montalvo, Executive Director, to discuss the 2024-2025 Academic Year Status Report. Dr. Montalvo initiated emphasizing both semesters' achievements, while going through the presentation of the sixth year of the Strategic Plan, informing the Board of the progress made vis a vis the activities proposed in the Plan. Dr. Montalvo presented the three board-approved strategic core areas and major goals established in the plan: access, retention and successful completion, as well as online learning and technology integration.

Dr. Montalvo explained that, as part of the first core area, Access, one of the objectives is publishing at least four (4) articles annually (two per issue) on Hispanic access to Higher Education in the HETS Online Journal (HOJ), the organization's peer-reviewed journal. During 2024-2025, HETS was able to publish three (3) articles from two members, versus five (5) articles from 4 Member Institutions during 2023-2024.

Dr. Montalvo moved on towards the discussion of the projects presented under the Access Core Strategic Area for the Virtual HETS Best Practices Showcase (VBPS). The annual objective was to share at least three best practices on the use of technology to help overcome barriers to Hispanic Access to Higher Education. During this 2025 (VBPS), six (6) of the projects presented were related to the "Access" core area vs. fourth (4) presentations in 2024, both years exceeding the goal. In addition, 10 presentations by 15 students from six (6) member Institutions were showcased versus six (6) presentations by 11 students from four (4) member Institutions.

The Executive Director added that another objective within the Strategic Plan was to increase by 25% the number of institutions participating in the Academic Fair, which usually took place when the Best Practices Showcase was face-to-face. Dr. Montalvo pointed out that the Academic Fair was held on September 5 and 6, 2024, as part of The SUMM: Student Experience Summit event endorsed by the Department of Education in the Island. Also, HETS member institutions from the U.S. and Latin America were invited to participate as part of the collaboration with The SUMM. During this event, more than 17,000 high schools and undergraduate students participated. Seven (7) member institutions from the U.S. and *Universidad Cooperativa de Colombia* took advantage of this opportunity. Dr. Montalvo shared photos and a brief video of the two-day event held in San Juan, Puerto Rico's Convention Center and shared the dates for the SUMM.

Another objective for this year was to increase the number of students who were impacted through the Student Leadership Showcase and Graduate Fairs at member institutions, by 25% participation. On September 2024, one hybrid edition of the Student Leadership Showcase was organized for students in the United States, PR, and LA, which benefited more than 700 students vs. 1,215 students in 2023-2024. Also, Dr. Montalvo mentioned that in October 2024 and in March 2025, HETS staff participated in the IAUPR Law School Open House, impacting 175 students. In addition, she mentioned that the usage of the Peterson's Test and Career Prep databases on this academic year increased by 52% with more than 15,000 hits reported vs. 7,539 in 2023-2024.

The Executive Director continued to discuss the objectives and accomplishments within the Retention and Successful Completion, second core strategic area. She pointed out that one of the annual objectives was to publish at least six (6) articles (three per issue) related to student support and retention in the HETS Online Journal. During 2024-2025, four (4) articles from three (3) members and one (1) non-member institution were published versus five (5) articles from three (3) members and one (1) corporate partner in 2023-2024.

According to Dr. Montalvo, within this core strategic area, the goal is to share at least three (3) best practices annually on the use of technology to improve student retention during this year's Virtual Showcase Conference. During January 2025, fifteen (15) presentations were presented under a new track about Innovation vs. seven (7) presentations in 2024.

Dr. Montalvo explained that during years 4 and 5, the objective was to make at least 5,000 unique visits to the access-related sections of the Student Placita. During 2024-2025, the total page visits were 71,627 for the Student Placita and 39,897 for the Faculty Placita. During 2024-2025, the objective was to increase the number of unique visits to the Virtual Plaza by 25%, and the total unique visits during this academic year was 111,524, compared with 149,647 for the academic year 2023-2024, representing a decrease of 29% of last year's total.

The Executive Director moved on to discuss the efforts to develop mini workshops focused on specific student support skills. Dr. Montalvo showcased the efforts under this core area to support retention and student success through training opportunities. One (1) Student Leadership Showcase (SLS) and twelve (12) webinars were coordinated and executed for students during 2024-2025, resulting in 5,272 registrants vs. two (2) SLS and eight (8) webinars with 4,888 registrants in 2023-2024.

Dr. Montalvo shared the fact that this fall, HETS offered its first Student Passport: Connect, Learn, and Lead (Puerto Rico Edition) in September 2024. She explained that this initiative's main objective is to promote student mobility through academic and cultural experiences. She reported that 26 students from six (6) member institutions in the US and LA, and one corporate partner participated in this edition, including 20 student presentations of their innovative projects in different academic fields. The initiative included visits to 11 campuses around the Island, three workshops, two cultural visits to historic venues, a dinner at the Department of State of the Puerto Rico Government and participation at the SUMM: Student Experience Summit and the HETS Student Leadership Showcase in the PR Convention Center. Dr. Montalvo shared pictures and videos of the activities and some of the students and staff feedback about the initiative.

In addition, Dr. Montalvo shared that a second edition of the Student Passport: Connect, Learn, and Lead, in June 2025 to explore member institutions in New York City. She reported that 20 students from five (5) member institutions in the US, PR, and Colombia participated in this edition. A total of 22 student presentations from 27 students from 15 members were selected to share their innovative projects in different academic fields. This NY Edition included visits to five (5) campuses in Manhattan and the Bronx, two workshops, a cultural visit to historic venues Downtown, and a sponsored lunch and by Bella Media.

Also, Dr. Montalvo shared out that during 2024-2025 HETS staff trained a total of 76 key staff from 24 members institutions in the States, five (5) member institutions in Puerto Rico, and two in Latin América, versus 44 student support staff from 11 member institutions in Puerto Rico, the US, and Latin América in 2023-2024.

To benefit new members, Dr. Montalvo added that, in 2019 (Year 1), the organization started the Student Ambassadors Program, with the goal of recruiting and training 30 student ambassadors from member institutions in P.R. and, during Year 2, the goal was 20 student ambassadors from member institutions in the U.S. Dr. Montalvo mentioned that this number decreased mostly during the Covid, impacting the number of students on the campus. As of June 2025, HETS maintains a total of two (2) active ambassadors in P.R. and four (4) prospects vs. nine (9) in 2023-2024. The Executive Director expressed her gratitude to these committed students and their institutions for their support. Also, Montalvo indicated that these efforts are vital to promote access to HETS services and mentioned that the webinars evaluations surveys show that 53% of the students did not know the access code to the Student Placita databases versus 55% in June 2024. Likewise, the survey's results showed that the main needs for students were training on the use of new technologies, search for jobs, and scholarships.

The third strategic core area discussed by the Executive Director was Online Learning and Technology Integration. Under this core area, the plan established the objective of publishing at least six (6) articles annually (three per issue) on this topic. In 2024-2025, a total of five (5) related articles were published in the HOJ as well as five (5) articles during 2023-2024.

The Executive Director continued her presentation by reporting on the accomplishments of sharing best

practices related to the third core area. As she explained, the objective was to share at least three (3) best practices related to online learning annually. The HETS Virtual Best Practices Showcase included 11 out of the 30 presentations about online learning and technology integration projects vs. 21 out of the 44 presentations in 2024. In addition, Dr. Montalvo informed that, as of January 13, 2025, 225 participants registered for the 2025 Virtual Best Practices Showcase vs. 154 participants in January 2024.

About the objective of increasing the number of articles submitted for publication in the HOJ by 20% annually, Dr. Montalvo explained that, on 2024-2025, a total of 12 articles were submitted for publication, compared to 18 as of June 2024. Of these totals, 11 of these articles were approved and published as of 2024-2025, compared to 16 as of June 2024. Regarding Google Analytics views of the HOJ, during 2024-2025, the Journal achieved more than 14,300 views versus more than 7,900 on June 2024, representing an increase of 57%. An additional 8,346 reported from the EBSCO databases as of May 2025 vs. 12,112 in June 2024, representing a decrease of 36%.

Other strategies within this core area include the development and delivery of training in online learning and technology integration. A series of webinars for faculty members, developed with the support of our expert resources within our member institutions. This series resulted in 14 free of charge webinars (seven in Fall and seven in Spring) offered in both English and Spanish, in 2024-2025, to more than 5,000 participants from 36 member institutions, 37 non-member institutions, 3 international institutions, and 15 organizations vs. a total of 19 in 2023-2024 reaching more than 7,000 participants from 35 member institutions participants, 41 non-member institutions, 4 international institutions, and 22 organizations. Dr. Montalvo emphasized the added value of the expert resources that were able to support HETS during the webinars.

As well, Dr. Montalvo pointed out that the objective before the pandemic was to develop a total of eight (8) training sessions, including four (4) face-to-face opportunities and four (4) online sessions, six (6) in Spanish and two (2) in English. The organization offered two online trainings in Spanish during the Fall semester 2024 tailored to one institution in Puerto Rico, related to Design and Selection of Effective Educational Materials and Use of Technological Resources in the Teaching Process, which had 18 and 12 participants respectively.

Hindmost, this core strategic area discussed by Dr. Montalvo HETS Learning Technologies Leadership Academy (H-LTLA), was proposed idea by our former chair, Dr. Carlos Morales. This is a professional development program focused on developing the next generation of leaders to promote and facilitate the adoption of teaching and learning technologies. One edition with concurrent sessions in English and in Spanish was offered in February 2025, with 23 participants selected to participate versus its edition in English and in Spanish offered in Spring 2024, for a total amount of 21 participants in 2023-2024. Also, Dr. Montalvo mentioned that digital badges were granted to 124 alumni of the HETS Academy from its start in 2021. In addition, she mentioned that more than 5,600 registered at events, webinars, workshops and the HETS Academy sessions this 2024-2025 vs. 7,600 during 2023-2024.

The Executive Director continued presenting the publication of research reports on distance and online education. As she explained, four (4) research reports have been published and made available online: "*Educación virtual y a distancia en Puerto Rico*", which had five (5) download during 2024-2025; "*Documento de trabajo: teoría y práctica de la educación a distancia en Puerto Rico*", with a total of 5 downloads; "*Lo obvio y lo escondido de la educación a distancia en Puerto Rico*", which had 10 downloads and, "*El futuro de la educación a distancia en Puerto Rico*", has been downloaded 23 times. New downloads in 2024-2025 were



43 vs. 99 as June 2024 for a total of 2,872 downloads.

Following the report, the Executive Director presented a summary of HETS investments in direct services for 2024-2025, for a total of \$170,582 distributed as follows: 32% in Online Resources; 26% in Best Practices and Student Leadership Showcases and event coordination; 19% in Professional Development Events; 14% in the HETS Online Journal; and 9% in activities related to Grants and Outreach efforts. Dr. Montalvo added that total expenses amounted to \$268,936 out of which 63% were related to direct services; 28% to operational activities; and 9% to administrative expenses.

Succeeding, Dr. Montalvo reported on the organization's growth and development status and efforts. She informed that the organization added five (5) new members institutions: Ponce Health Science University, Chemeketa Community College, Atlantic University, Northern Essex Community College, and, *Instituto Superior Tecnológico* Consulting Group, in Ecuador. Dr. Montalvo also presented a summary of the outreach efforts, focusing on a new strategy in which the Executive Committee members actively participated contacting directly and referring HETS services and membership to colleagues. As a result of the Member Referral Initiative, 94 institutions were contacted, including former members and prospects in PR, the US, and International. The HETS Office followed up letters from HETS officers and corporate member referrals.

Dr. Montalvo reported that an 85% retention rate has been achieved, reaching our goal. However, seven (7) members could not renew their membership (College of Staten Island, California State University San Marcos, Caribbean University, Eastern State University Connecticut, Humacao Community College, Kingsborough Community College and Tarrant County College). As a strategy to promote the value of the members' benefits, email campaigns are sent to key staff promoting the benefits and Membership Services Reports have been prepared to share the services, events and initiatives offered by HETS during the academic year.

In terms of outreach, the Executive Committee was engaged in an initiative to endure these efforts. Dr. Montalvo visited, Jhon Jay College of Criminal Justice, Borough of Manhattan Community College, Atlantic University, University of Houston Downtown, Chesapeake College, and met virtually with members and prospects members like SUNY Empire State College, California State University San Bernardino, Eastern State University Connecticut, Chemeketa Community College, Ponce Health Science University, Continental University of Florida, Mech Tech, and California State University Sacramento and Dominguez Hills, among others

The Executive Director also reported that, HETS has been able to maintain adequate controls over costs and expenditures due to the following strategies: in-kind promotion support from members such as the expert resources for webinars and events; promotional designs for HETS events and SLS are done in-house; sponsorships on the raffle prizes for the SLS in exchange for the promotion of their products and services; Bb Collaborate license and hosting for our webinars and workshops; and host Institution office space and utilities as part of the in-kind agreement. The organization also made efforts to continue controlling costs and expenditures, as established in its Strategic Plan.

Continuing with internal and external visibility efforts, Dr. Montalvo continues capitalizing on the potential of the Online Journal as a public relations strategy for HETS and its members. As a result, a fourth edition was published on the Open Editorial platform providing better browsing experience to its users and agile

process for authors and reviewers. During 2024-2025, a total of 11 articles were published.

Dr. Montalvo shared a summary of the use of the web and social media during 2024-2025, to increase the visibility of the organization, including social media presence enhanced due to the high number of online webinars held. She indicated that a total of 110 email campaigns were sent, and 15 news articles were published at the HETS website. In addition, Dr. Montalvo indicated the HETS social accounts (LinkedIn, Facebook, Instagram and YouTube) results during 2024-2025 in comparison with the academic year 2023-2024. All of them increased the posts published on each media and the number of impressions which measured the reach of each post. However, she shared a decrease in the metrics of the HETS website page views from 345,062 during 2023-2024 to 123,384 in 2024-2025, and the unique page views in the same period were 106,105 to 54,007 this academic year.

Dr. Montalvo mentioned that internal alliances and liaisons continue with ICANN (HETS is an At-Large certified organization); Internet Society of Puerto Rico; The SUMM; Connect Marketplace; Every Learner Everywhere; Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation; HACU; *Excelencia* in Education; *El Nuevo Día* Speaker Series about student mobility; Bella Media; and a special panel Invitation at Harvard University to talk about Careers in Higher Education. Also, Montalvo mentioned a new workshop with Teach Access; Partnership with For a Bright Future and a \$100,000 grant award from Every Learner Everywhere during 2024-2025.

Also, Montalvo contributed additional outreach efforts made to our new partners: American Heart Association; Uplanner; Territorium; Online Learning Consortium; Miami EdTech; Anthology; ETS; Symplicity; and Teach Access, resulting in three new corporate members in 2024-2025.

Dr. Montalvo proceeded with her presentation by reporting revenues collected during 2024-2025, through its multiple efforts. Overall, the organization's revenues for this academic year totaled \$376,103. Most of the revenues (53%) were collected through membership dues; followed by 27% from Every Learner Everywhere grant award; 9% from corporate sponsorships and donations; 6% from workshop registrations; and 5% related to the Virtual Best Practices and Student Leadership Showcases.

Dr. Montalvo concluded her presentation presenting the new initiatives for 2025-2026, including HETS Student Passport: Connect, Learn, and Lead (Puerto Rico Edition) and Best Practices Showcase in person modality for February 2026, a call for new student ambassadors, and opportunity for expert resources.

### **Questions and Board recommendations**

HETS Chair, Gladys Nieves thanked Dr. Montalvo for her Status Report presentation and hard work and invited Board Members to ask questions or share recommendations.

**Dr. Mary Jo Parker from University of Houston Downtown suggested create an outline calendar with annual list of the activities and sharing it with all members to facilitate the participation and plan for the students.**

**Dr. Sumaya Villanueva from John Jay College of Criminal Justice, recommended to create a collaboration throughout corporate member Symplicity to incorporate a career platform which is much easier to use by employers to contract students.**

HETS Chair thanked board members for their recommendations and adjourned the meeting at 11:10 am

for a ten-minute break.

### **HETS 2024-2025 Financial Status Report**

After the break, HETS Chair, Dr. Nieves moved forward and presented Dr. Olga Rivera, HETS Treasurer, to proceed with the HETS Financial Report, who mentioned that this was a balanced budget as a non-for-profit organization. The Treasurer explained that the financial information included in the report corresponds to the period from July 1<sup>st</sup>, 2024, to May 31, 2025, and June 2025 Projected. The report includes the statements of HETS Financial Position and Statement of Activities.

### **HETS – Annual Financial Report for the fiscal year 2024-2025 (As of May 31, 2025, and June 2025 Projected)**

Dr. Olga Rivera explained that the Hispanic Educational Technology Services (HETS) financial information, included in this report, corresponds to fiscal year 2025. Since the fiscal year has not yet concluded, financial results include projection for the month of June 2025. A comparative report on Budget versus Actual results is being included for further review and analysis of this period's HETS financial accomplishments. The statements present HETS Financial Position, Changes in Net Assets, and Cash Flows.

### **Budget versus Actual Analysis**

HETS Treasurer informed that HETS current operation year is being presented with the approved 2024-2025 Budget. Total revenue was lower than anticipated resulting in a 98% achievement. This is mostly attributable to the Memberships Dues revenues and Best Practices and Event Coordination revenues lower than expected by \$4k and \$3.8k, respectively. Total expenses achieved 95% of the budget, having a saving mostly in the items of Direct Services of \$18k and an additional saving on the Every Learner Everywhere Grant expense of \$15.7k. Saving in the item of Direct Services was due to savings in HETS PDEs (\$4.6k), the Student & Best Practices/Event Coordination (\$9.1k); the Grant savings due to Travel (\$4.9k) and Other Direct Costs (9.8k), respectively.

### **Statement of Financial Position**

Dr. Olga Rivera added that HETS total assets amounted to \$355,545 and to \$175,809 as of June 30, 2025, and 2024 respectively, or an increase of 102%. Increase is mostly attributable to increase on Accounts Receivable of \$202k for fiscal year renewal memberships billed in May 2025.

Accounts receivable at June 30, 2025, consist of the following:

|                                      |            |
|--------------------------------------|------------|
| Membership Dues                      | \$221,679  |
| Less allowance for doubtful accounts | <u>371</u> |

|                          |                  |
|--------------------------|------------------|
| Accounts receivable, net | <u>\$221,308</u> |
|--------------------------|------------------|

Dr. Olga Rivera mentioned that:

- Total current liabilities amounted to \$259,947 and to \$103,054 as of June 30, 2025, and 2024, respectively, for an increase of 152%.
- Accounts payable corresponds to HETS' personnel salaries and fringe benefits that will be reimbursed to the Inter American University in July 2025.
- Accrued expenses correspond to expenses to be incurred during the month of June 2025.
- The increase in Deferred Revenues is mostly due to fiscal year 2026 membership billed in May

2025.

- Total Net Assets amounted to \$95,598 and \$72,754 as of June 30, 2025, and 2024, respectively.

### **Statement of Activities**

Dr. Olga Rivera continued the report with the HETS' revenues from its educational activities, memberships, and sponsorships amounted to \$376,103 and \$251,095 for the fiscal years 2025 and 2024, respectively or an increase of 50%. She mentioned that the increase is mostly attributable to an increase in Membership Dues and revenue from Every Learner Everywhere Grant.

She added that HETS' expenses comprised of administrative, direct services, operational expenses and Every Learner Everywhere Grant expense amounted to \$353,259 and to \$274,853 for fiscal years 2025 and 2024, respectively for an increase of 28%, mostly due to Every Learner Everywhere Grant's expenses. Also, indicated that change in Net Assets for the fiscal year increased by 196% from a net deficit of \$23.7k as of June 30, 2024, to an estimated net income of \$22.8k as of June 30, 2025.

### **Conclusion**

Dr. Olga Rivea concluded her report indicating that HETS financials show a stable positive outlook. Likewise, she highlighted that expenses continue to be within approved HETS budget. In addition, she mentioned that the report also illustrates HETS' efforts to maintain and increase participant members, provide educational services, and maintain adequate control over costs and expenditures.

A motion to accept the financial status report was presented by Dr. Sumaya Villanueva from John Jay College of Criminal Justice, CUNY and seconded by Dr. Carmen Lidz from Los Angeles Community College District.

### **Surveys Report & Board recommendations HETS Strategic Plan 2025 - 2028**

**HETS Chair commented on the new challenges about the new reality related to Hispanics, diversity, and inclusion on the academia and invited board members to discuss the proposed strategic plan for the next three years.**

**Dr. Mary Jo Parker from University of Houston Downtown suggested evaluating the programs and services before taking action to change HETS' name.**

**Dr. Thomas Morales from California State University San Bernardino mentioned unlike other organizations, HETS offers various benefits aimed at students and faculty at a lower cost focus on online learning, professional development for faculty and students.**

**Mr. Armando Flores from SUNY Empire State University commented the Artificial Intelligence is a tool and we must be careful to integrated AI in all over the places to improve education.**

**Dr. Carlos Vargas from Southeast Missouri State University mentioned that the environment about AI in the US is very challenging and many states prohibited the use of AI Tools.**

**Dr. Kristina Harb asked if HETS income comes from memberships or grant funds. Montalvo**

**replied that HETS funds mostly comes from memberships dues.**

HETS Chair thanked board members for their recommendations and adjourned the meeting at 12:30 pm for lunch.

### **Corporate Partners (Afternoon Session)**

#### **Welcome, greetings & introduction of HETS Board Members and Corporate Partners**

HETS Chair Nieves welcomed all Corporate Partners and Board Members and requested all board members and corporate representatives to introduce themselves for the record. Chair Nieves thanked all the representatives and invited Dr. Montalvo to present the HETS Services and initiatives Summary Report.

#### **HETS Services and Initiative Summary Report**

Dr. Montalvo presented a summary of the status report shared to the Board and thanked all corporate members for their support during the 2024-2025 academic year.

#### **Opportunities for collaboration: Partners' presentations**

HETS Chair Nieves thanked Dr. Montalvo for her presentation and proceeded to present Ms. Mitzi Cardona, National Program Lead and Portfolio Management from American Heart Association (AHA), who offered a presentation about the Scholars Program and AHA opportunities for Higher Education. HETS Chair thanked Ms. Cardona and proceeded to present Ms. Kate Sonka, Executive Director of Teach Access, to offer a presentation about their programs and resources. HETS Chair thanked Ms. Sonka and proceeded to present Mr. Marcelo Rodríguez, President of InQmatic who offered a presentation about the services for the institutions. Dr. Montalvo thanked Mr. Rodríguez and proceeded to present Ms. Gina Rogoto, SVP, Operations and Programs, For a Bright Future (FABF), who offered a presentation about their programs and initiatives. Finally, Mr. Jair Ayala Zárate, Associate Director at ETS spoke about their services for the institutions.

HETS Chair Nieves thanked all Corporate Members for their presentations and support to HETS and asked the Board if they had any inquiries regarding the corporate presentations.

#### **Open discussion and closing remarks**

Dr. Nelson Soto from Albizu University asked Ms. Mitzi Cardona about the Hispanic Serving Institutions (HSIs) programs and the evaluation system. She explained that students access the portal and submit their proposals, which are evaluated by a committee, and then assigned a mentor to work closely with them. She noted that mentors are almost always external to the institution and are assigned from a center located near the university.

Dr. Kristina Harb from New Jersey City University asked Ms. Mitzi Cardona if the HSI program is during the full academic year. She replied that it is for the entire academic year and the application period ends in September.

Dr. Tomas Morales from California State University San Bernardino asked Ms. Cardona if the HSI program is only for students who want to be doctors, or is it open to other branches of healthcare. Mitzi replied that the program is open to a wide range of healthcare-related careers.

Dr. González-De Jesús from Northern Essex Community College asked whether the TOEFL exam available on Student Plaza is linked to ETS Global, to which Dr. Montalvo, Executive Director of HETS, replied that it is not, as the database where the exam is accessed is managed by Gale.

## **Second Day: Agenda Board of Meeting**

**Tuesday, June 24, 2025**

The Board Meeting was convened at 8:40 a.m. (EST).

### **Greetings and Introductions of HETS Board Members and Partners**

HETS Chair Nieves welcomed all Corporate Partners and Board Members. Eng. Nieves requested all board members and corporate representatives to introduce themselves for the record. Chair Nieves thanked all the representatives and proceeded to present Dr. Madeline Shellgren, Director of Global Outreach at Online Learning Consortium, who offered a presentation about their services.

Dr. Sumaya Villanueva from John Jay College of Criminal Justice asked Dr. Shellgren if their programs include initiatives for faculty or staff with professional development focus on tools with Artificial Intelligence and career advisors, and Shellgren responses that they have programs for faculty. Also, Dr. Thomas Morales from California State University, San Bernardino asked Dr. Shellgren: "In your opinion, how can this organization contribute to the improvement of both organizations?" Dr. Shellgren replied that as a new member of HETS, she sees the primary need is strengthening alliances and services for the community and providing leadership-training opportunities for HETS members.

### **Board recommendations for HETS Strategic Plan 2025 - 2028**

HETS Chair Nieves explained that we need to discuss the strategic plan since the current plan finished on June 30, 2025.

Also, Dr. Thomas Morales of California State University commented that changing the name of the organization is an extremely important step. He suggested that perhaps the most prudent course of action would be to adopt a "wait and see" approach. He added that while we continue to reflect on that decision, a Zoom meeting could be organized with board members, the executive committee, and other members to explore what this change would mean for the organization. He mentioned that in his opinion, there are two perspectives: on one hand, some colleagues from certain states might contact the organization and say that they can no longer afford the HETS membership fee because the name is "Hispanic Educational Technology Services"; and on the other hand, if the name is changed, there may be organizations that no longer want to be associated with HETS because they feel that we are no longer focused on the Hispanic population.

Dr. Kristina Harb, from New Jersey City University, proposed extending the current strategic plan by one or two months, or until the end of summer, in order to allow sufficient time to hold a meeting to thoroughly analyze possible changes or adjustments, given the importance of the issue.

Dr. Olga Rivera from ICPR Junior College presented a motion to postpone approval of the new strategic plan

and coordinate a meeting with the executive committee or the entire board of directors, emphasizing that no hasty decision should be made and that all elements must be in place before proceeding. Dr. Nelson Soto from Albizu University second the motion to postpone the approval of the new strategic plan.

### **2025-2026 HETS Proposed Budget**

Dr. Montalvo presented 2025-2026 HETS Proposed Budget including revenues from current member institutions and corporate partners and expenses to cover administrative, operational and direct services including the Student Passport Puerto Rico Edition and the Best Practices Showcase in person modality in February 2026, among other initiatives for this academic year.

Dr. Carlos Vargas from Southeast Missouri States University presented a motion to approve the proposed budget. Dr. Olga Rivera from ICPR Junior College second a motion to approve the proposed budget.

### **Special Session: Student Passport NY Edition Results**

Dr. Sumaya Villanueva from John Jay College of Criminal Justice offered a presentation to the Board members on the impact, outcomes, and participants of the Student Passport NY Edition. Dr. Villanueva emphasized that initiatives like this provide invaluable opportunities for students to showcase their talents and research, while gaining immersive experiences that strengthen the essential skills needed for academic and professional success. She stated that such programs not only enhance students' confidence and ability to excel in their chosen fields but also contribute meaningfully to their personal and professional growth. For these reasons, she reaffirmed the importance of continuing to invest time, effort, and resources in this initiative.

Dr. Montalvo highlighted the support of member institutions, and the sponsorship of some corporate partners make this initiative possible.

### **Open Discussion about Future Initiatives**

HETS Chair Nieves emphasized the importance of fostering collaboration among universities, although it is difficult to connect with everyone in just one day. These meetings often spark a flood of ideas and inspiration, making it essential to be intentional about who participates. She highlighted the value of bringing the right staff members along with students, as these events create meaningful opportunities to identify common interests among faculty and staff, particularly around professional development and advanced degrees. She added that creating space for those connections is vital.

Dr. Mary Jo Parker from the University of Houston-Downtown recommended compiling and sharing a list of the participant emails. Reflecting on the Puerto Rico event, she noted that sharing this information could greatly facilitate post-event networking. She mentioned that even sponsors would benefit from knowing who attended and how to follow up effectively.

### **Coffee break at 11:15 am**

### **Collaboration Opportunities and Institutional Announcements**

HETS Chair Gladys Nieves, moved the discussion and presented Dr. Carlos Vargas, President of Southeast Missouri State University, to lead the discussion. Dr. Vargas mentioned that the University once had an enrollment of up to 12,000 students, but numbers have declined, particularly among Hispanic students, who

currently make up only 2 to 3% of the student body. Despite strong success in athletics, the institution has struggled to attract Hispanic students. To address this, the University has built partnerships with institutions in Puerto Rico such as Inter American University of Puerto Rico, Sacred Heart University, and EDP University of Puerto Rico, for programs in visual and performing arts, bilingual journalism, and professional pilot training. These collaborations have led to student exchanges and even job placements, including a Puerto Rican student now working full-time at a local TV station seeking bilingual talent.

Dr. Vargas explained the value of using events like HETS Board meetings to foster meaningful collaboration between institutions, especially in areas like online learning and technology integration, and other strategic areas like retention or completion. He recommends that institutions bring expert representatives in key areas to these meetings to develop innovative, practical solutions that support student success.

Dr. Nelson Soto of Albizu University shared the experience where President Tofade of Albany College of Pharmacy and Health Sciences impressed him by being fully prepared with her institution's strategic plan. He used this to highlight the importance of visibility and preparation. Although Albizu is well known in Puerto Rico for psychology, just like Sagrado is known for communications programs, many do not realize they also have a Campus in Miami, Florida. He gave a brief history of Albizu's founding by Dr. Carlos Albizu Miranda, who challenged the biased psychological assessment of Puerto Ricans based on white, Anglican norms.

Dr. Soto emphasized that all Albizu campuses include clinics, and while they have strong academic programs, they face challenges placing Puerto Rican students in internships outside the Island. He encouraged institutions to partner with Albizu to provide bilingual psychological or mental health services and internship opportunities, suggesting it could be mutually beneficial, especially for campuses in the US mainland.

President Tomas Morales from California State University, San Bernardino, highlighted an important point raised by Dr. Soto. He suggested encouraging greater interaction and collaboration among institutions. **He recommended the HETS office could distribute an updated directory with the contact information of all member institutions.** Although many of Board members already have this information in their program booklets, having a current and easily accessible version would help promote meaningful dialogue and facilitate potential partnerships, such as the collaboration between EDP University and SEMO.

The HETS Chair reflected on how brief the time spent at meetings can be and emphasized the importance of building stronger connections among member institutions. She originally envisioned the institutional catalog as a tool to showcase student mobility opportunities (e.g., hybrid or online programs), not just for information sharing, but to inspire engagement, especially among Puerto Rican institutions. She highlighted the success of EDP University's hybrid nursing program, which allows Hispanic students living in the US to study in Spanish while preparing for English-based exams like the NCLEX. She highlighted that bilingualism is a strength, and that offering even one online course in Spanish could help students gauge their readiness to study or live in Puerto Rico.

HETS Chair Nieves shared as an example of effective collaboration, how a few fashion design students from Puerto Rico visited SEMO (Southeast Missouri State University) and worked with their performing arts department, gaining hands-on backstage experience. Their faculty also led a master class in English, enriching SEMO's programs despite the lack of a formal fashion design major. This kind of exchange promotes retention and offers students meaningful cultural and academic growth.



Additionally, HETS Chair Nieves described a powerful short-term trip to Medellín, where fashion design students learned about sustainable textile production, waste reduction, and fast fashion's environmental impact, turning a three-day visit into a life-changing educational experience, supported by sponsorships and later showcased in student presentations. Even one meaningful collaboration can take years to develop, but it's worth the investment.

**HETS Chair Nieves encouraged institutions to take the initiative to find creative and mutually beneficial opportunities that nurture both students and partnerships across the HETS network.**

Armando Flores from SUNY Empire State University shared that this is the perfect moment to highlight the launch of the University's first fully Spanish-language BBA program, set to begin in Fall 2025. This will be the first program offered entirely in Spanish within the State University of New York System (SUNY). He mentioned that all courses will be delivered in Spanish, taught by a diverse and multicultural faculty composed of professors and scholars from across Latin America. He added that, during the program's development, they discovered that their own institution already had faculty fully capable of teaching in Spanish, something they hadn't previously realized. The program includes general education, business, and elective courses, and is fully aligned with the university's mission to increase access and inclusion. Beyond academics, Flores emphasized the importance of faculty mobility, noting that professors are often the most influential figures in students' academic journeys. Their presence and collaboration across institutions can significantly enhance the impact of such programs.

Flores echoed the sentiments shared by other speakers, underscoring the value of inter-institutional collaboration to promote and expand programs like this one, especially in the US, where the Hispanic population continues to grow and requires greater educational support. Flores concluded by stating that the Spanish BBA program offers a powerful opportunity not only to improve educational outcomes, but also to drive economic, social, and cultural advancement within the Hispanic community. He invited fellow institutions to collaborate and reiterated the key role of faculty engagement and mobility in supporting HETS' mission to expand access and excellence in both online and in-person education.

### **New Items, next meeting dates, and host selection**

HETS Chair Nieves asked the Board for everyone's availability, to continue the discussion to select the dates of the next board meeting. **After a deliberation of dates, it was agreed that the Winter Board Meeting will be held on February 12 and 13, 2026, at Universidad Ana G. Méndez, Carolina Campus in Puerto Rico.**

HETS Chair Nieves asked the Board if they have any announcement or news they would like to share and Dr. Nelson Soto from Albizu University invited all board members for the *40 Congreso Internacional de Psicología en Puerto Rico*.

HETS Chair invited all board members to CISTEI Congress in Puerto Rico and thanked all board and corporate members for their commitment to student success and their engagement in the discussions.

### **Closing remarks**

The HETS Chair and Dr. Montalvo shared details about upcoming events, noting that the Student Passport (PR Edition) initiative will take place the same week of the Board meeting, from Monday to Wednesday. In

February 2026. Additionally, on June 12th and 13th, the Best Practices Showcase will be held, which also includes a dedicated student track, allowing students to actively participate in the event. The Student Passport will span the entire week, from Sunday arrival to Friday, ensuring that both students can fully engage in the activities. This presents an excellent opportunity not only for professional development but also for networking and institutional collaboration.

The Best Practices Showcase will run concurrently with the Board Meeting, which means institutions are encouraged to bring faculty members along. While board members will spend most of the time in the meeting, the schedule will allow them to attend the opening and plenary sessions and some concurrent sessions of the Showcase.

Dr. Olga Rivera from ICPR Junior College celebrated the HETS Student Passport and Board meeting in February and Dr. Toyin Tofade from Albany College School of Pharmacy seconded her comment.

Dr. Tomás Morales from California State University, San Bernardino presented a motion to conclude the meeting.

HETS Chair, Gladys Nieves thanked all members and special guests for their time and valuable recommendations. The meeting was adjourned at 12:00 PM.