

NR19-21  
**May 28, 2019**

## **Lehman Adds Digital Diplomas for Graduating Students**

BRONX, NY— On May 30, Lehman will present diplomas to the largest graduating class in the college's history, but those 3,670 students won't get just a piece of paper to mark the occasion.

In addition to traditional paper diplomas, Lehman graduates will also receive digital diplomas supported by blockchain technology.

"We are delighted to pilot the use of digital credentials for our graduating students. Lehman degree earners will now have a portable, secure, and verifiable credential that leverages an important and emerging technology, blockchain," said Peter O. Nwosu, Lehman College provost and senior vice president for academic affairs and student success. "This further reinforces our mission of educating, engaging, and empowering our graduates."

With the launch of this initiative, Lehman will be the only CUNY institution offering a credential that can be verified with blockchain, an emerging technology that allows for digital information, or transactions, to be stored in a distributed fashion without relying on one central authority for access. These credentials are a unique, time-stamped, and secure record that is cryptographically signed and accessible from any computer.

More and more educational institutions rely on some type of digital diploma or credential. Lehman already offers students the option of earning microcredentials and badges for extracurricular learning and academic success using technology provided by Credly, an award-winning firm at the forefront of the digital credentialing movement.

Over the last 18 months, the college has issued 11 badges or microcredentials to more than 5,000 students using the Credly platform. Lehman is adding digital diplomas because Credly now provides access to blockchain technology.

"Digital credentials provide students with a secure, portable, verified record of learning achievements," said Jonathan Finkelstein, CEO of Credly. "In offering the ability to publish those achievements to blockchain, Lehman College is taking steps to future-proof the accessibility and ongoing integrity of its digital credentials."

The digital diplomas will be offered to students at no charge, and students have the choice on whether or not they wish to use the electronic credentials.

"This new approach reinforces that students own' their credentials as lifetime learners," said Ronald Bergmann, vice president for Information Technology and CIO at Lehman. "The use of blockchain will grow, and if a student chooses, employers, colleges and universities will have a fast, secure method of verifying the degree. This also reduces

the need for former students to return to the college to request a certification of their degree.”

Lehman’s digital diplomas can be verified using Blockcerts, an open, collaboratively-developed standard originally developed by the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. With Blockcerts, academic credentials, professional certifications, and other records become secure, verifiable, and shareable from any open-standards based credentialing platform.

For more information about Lehman College, visit:

[www.lehman.edu](http://www.lehman.edu)

-end-

Media contact:  
Lisa Hirschfield  
[lisa.hirschfield@lehman.cuny.edu](mailto:lisa.hirschfield@lehman.cuny.edu)  
(718) 960-8044