

Speech by Tyree Alexander
GirlsREACH and BoysREACH Graduation
Top of the Rock Observation Deck at Rockefeller Center
Wednesday, October 10th, 2007

Good Evening ladies and gentlemen, my name is Tyree Alexander and I would like first like to congratulate my fellow NYC GirlsREACH and BoysREACH participants. It has been an educational yet enjoyable experience, and I am honored to have been a part of this life altering program with you all. When I first stood before you, it was only the first few weeks into the program. We still had so much to learn and experience ahead of us. I'm so honored to be here this evening once again – this time, to help close the program. And now that the internship is over, I can't think of any words, that can adequately describe the way I feel and the amount of gratitude I have towards the program and the people responsible for its existence.

When I first was informed of the BoysREACH program, I joined because of what I was told the program had to offer. I soon came to learn that the program gave much more than they advertised. They promised a paid internship, Kaplan SAT classes, Metro cards, corporate wardrobing at Macy's, and a partial college scholarship - all of which have been delivered. However, what I was unaware of was what came attached to their promise, - an experience. How often can an inner-city student, under the age of 18, work in some of the top and most recognized companies in the country? In addition to employment, a participant receives an instant social network, of which we all learned the importance of, during our time together. I take pride in saying that I am a student who excels academically; however, prior to the program, I lacked something that set me apart from the thousands of other college applicants, nation wide. After my employment at Tishman Speyer, the world's largest private real estate company, which owns

100 million square feet of property, I can now be confident, that my college applications will not appear similar to the other thousands of applicant's. BoysREACH has significantly boosted my confidence, by providing me with opportunities such as this. In addition, my confidence has been influenced by the Kaplan courses. After the series of practice tests, it is apparent that my SAT score will rise approximately 200 points, the next time I take the SAT. That's amazing, and without BoysREACH, I probably wouldn't have been able to accomplish that.

I used to believe that the program was preparing us for the real world, but now I realize it gave us a membership to the real world. At our young tender ages, it placed us right in the center of it, where others work a lifetime to reach. We are now all young, educated, experienced, and productive citizens of the work force, thanks to NYC GirlsREACH and BoysREACH.

I would just like to take this time to thank everyone at Tishman Speyer. It is an amazing company, which has intensely affected my career goals. My boss, Mr. Redin Barefoot, was an inspiring mentor, and an even better person. In addition, I would like to express my appreciation for those who everyone here should be thankful for, those who are responsible for the programs existence, most importantly, Mayor Bloomberg, Commissioner Jeanne Mullgrav, CWI Chair Anne Fuchs, and all of the other staff of the NYC GirlsREACH and BoysREACH program. I, on behalf of all the BoysREACH as well as GirlsREACH participants, would like to thank you.