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The New York City Housing Authority
and

The City University of New York

*Welcome You
to the*

NYCHA-CUNY Resident Scholarship Program Awards Ceremony

September 15, 2011





About the NYCHA-CUNY Resident Scholarship Program

The NYCHA-CUNY Resident Scholarship Program was established in 2005 by the New York City Housing Authority (NYCHA) to support the efforts of NYCHA residents in their pursuit of higher education. Annually, the Resident Scholarship Program awards \$1,000 scholarships to eligible residents who are enrolled at colleges of The City University of New York (CUNY). Scholarship recipients can use the money to pay for tuition, books or other education-related expenses.

For more than 75 years, NYCHA has kept the promise of public housing alive by providing decent and affordable housing for low-income New Yorkers, and by delivering innovative social services, recreational, and educational programs, such as the Scholarship Program.

NYCHA is proud to partner with CUNY on this and many other enrichment and vocational training programs that support residents in achieving their professional goals.

Program

WELCOME

Jay Hershenson

*Senior Vice Chancellor for University Relations
and Secretary of the Board of Trustees
The City University of New York*

GREETINGS

Dr. Frank D. Sanchez

*Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs
The City University of New York*

Tischelle George

*NYCHA-CUNY Resident Scholarship Program Manager
New York City Housing Authority*

REMARKS

John B. Rhea

*Chairman
New York City Housing Authority*

Robert Jackson

New York City Council Member

PRESENTATION OF AWARDS

Ian James

*Executive Assistant to the Vice Chancellor
for Student Affairs*

The City University of New York

&

Tischelle George

New York City Housing Authority





Meet the 2011 Resident Scholarship Recipients

Miguel Acosta
Hunter College - Mitchel Houses



Miguel Acosta began a career in nursing at the age of 47 after his son was hit by a car. He is now pursuing a degree in Nursing at **Hunter College** and is on course to complete a four year degree in just half of the time. Although this single parent of a special needs child is balancing work and school, he still finds the time to tutor fellow students in microbiology. Miguel, who is a former U.S. Marine and a current member of CUNY's esteemed Leadership Academy, is committed to doing community service and using his talents and opportunities to inspire others to achieve their goals. Miguel Acosta resides in **Mitchel Houses** in the Bronx with his teenage son.



Christina Chaise
Hunter College - Ravenswood Houses

Christina Chaise believes the best way to create social change and increase opportunities for inner city youth is through education. She began her college career as an honors student at the Borough of Manhattan Community College, and now this **Hunter College** student is pursuing a double-major in Psychology and Sociology and maintains a stellar 4.0 grade point average. Christina describes herself as a community activist and is an aspiring elected official. As a current resident of **Ravenswood Houses** and a former resident of Queensbridge Houses in Queens, Christina aspires to shatter negative perceptions about youth from public housing. She credits NYCHA for fueling her fire and CUNY for teaching her how to hone it.

William Dean
Borough of Manhattan Community College - Grant Houses



William Dean's parents have left him a legacy of education that he aims to honor and uphold as he pursues a degree in Video Arts and Technology at the **Borough of Manhattan Community College**. As a child growing up in **Grant Houses** in Harlem, William watched his father earn a Master's degree in Pharmacology from Long Island University and his mother earn a Bachelor's degree in Education from CUNY's City University of New York. As an adult the desire to obtain a higher education became even more pressing for William, after being passed over numerous times for job opportunities and promotions. Today, William is emphatic about continuing his studies and is grateful for the affordable and quality education that CUNY provides.



Taffney Eustache
New York City College of Technology
Penn-Wortman Houses

Helping people is what pleases Taffney Eustache, and she plans to help families in need as a Registered Nurse and eventually as a Pediatrician. Over the past two years, Taffney has dedicated herself to performing community service for children, adults and seniors through a variety of volunteer activities, all while maintaining good grades as a Nursing major at the **New York City College of Technology**. Taffney resides with her extended family in Brooklyn's **Penn-Wortman Houses**.



Christine Ho
Hunter College - Washington Houses

During her formative years at the age of 14, Christine Ho left her family and friends in China to move to America with her single mother. The language barrier negatively impacted her academic performance and the cultural differences made her feel inferior to others. Through faith and determination, Christine has successfully overcome those obstacles and is beginning her senior year at her dream school, **Hunter College**, where she plans to graduate with a degree in Nursing. Christine loves that her affordable NYCHA apartment in **Washington Houses** frees her from the financial responsibility of having to work to help pay for the household expenses, and she is able to enjoy the privacy and space to study in her own room. Christine is an aspiring Certified Emergency Nurse.



Ti-Anna Lee
Bronx Community College - University Ave Rehab

Ti-Anna Lee is a single mother of two, and when her children are in school so is she. Getting laid off from her job as an ultrasound technician two years ago, subsequently led to Ti-Anna and her children losing their home. Their days of bouncing from friends and family and eventually to a homeless shelter came to an end when Ti-Anna's application for public housing was approved and she was offered an affordable two-bedroom apartment in NYCHA's **University Avenue Rehab** apartments in the Bronx. For Ti-Anna, obtaining a college degree in Nuclear Medicine from **Bronx Community College** will make the difference between having a job and establishing a career.



Sara Lewis
Queens College - South Jamaica Houses

When Sara Lewis moved to the United States from her native home of the Dominican Republic at the age of ten she didn't understand why her mother uprooted her from the only life she knew. A decade later, she now understands how far her mother's efforts have brought her. Prior to moving into **South Jamaica Houses**, Sara had to work part-time while she attended **Queens College** to help her mother pay the rent. Gaining acceptance into NYCHA's public housing has made a huge impact on Sara's academic performance. She directly attributes her ascension onto the Dean's list to her family's transition into public housing, because the hours she once spent working are now devoted to studying. Sara is poised to complete her studies with honors and fulfill her goals of becoming a Spanish teacher.





Yessenia Mejia
Queens College - Woodside Houses

After losing her father in 2004 to his battle with Parkinson's and Alzheimer's disease, Yessenia Mejia promised to never give up on herself or her family. Following her father's death her family could no longer afford their previous apartment and applied for public housing. Since moving into **Woodside Houses**, Yessenia says it is here where her family would galvanize and be embraced by the Queens community. This fourth year Psychology major is grateful for the opportunity to go to **Queens College** and is now on the cusp of achieving the goal she set for herself four years ago: being the first person in her family to graduate from college.



Virgilio Rivera
Kingsborough Community College - Nostrand Houses

Virgilio Rivera is passionate about bringing out the best in others and he does this by getting people to move. As a Physical Education major at **Kingsborough Community College**, Virgilio volunteers with seniors and other students to help keep them physically fit. Virgilio leads by example and is involved in numerous sports teams at his school. He is fortunate to be a part of the Kingsborough family and appreciates living in NYCHA's **Nostrand Houses**, where he has the security of having a place of his own and the ability to concentrate on his studies in a peaceful environment. Virgilio is an aspiring Physical Education teacher.

Hui Bin Pan
Baruch College - Baruch Houses



Like many New Yorkers, Hui Bin Pan and her family emigrated to New York from China for a better life. Her parents' struggle to make ends meet on one income sometimes makes Hui Bin feel like dropping out of school so she can work full-time to help pay the bills and care for her mother who has been diagnosed with kidney failure. But now that they live in NYCHA's **Baruch Houses**, some financial burdens have been lifted it allows her to focus on studying and spending more time with her family. Hui Bin is a Business major at **Baruch College** and enjoys the opportunity to put her studies into practical use during tax-filing season when she volunteers alongside other business students to prepare income tax returns for low-income individuals.

Heriberto Vega
Hostos Community College - Amsterdam Houses



Heriberto Vega is a sophomore at **Hostos Community College** where he is majoring in Public Interest/Paralegal Studies. Since he was a child, Heriberto has struggled academically due to an emotional disability. As a young man he served in the U.S. Marine Corp, but was honorably discharged due to his disability. Today, with the support of his friends and family, and the assurance that he has established a stable home life for himself and his three beautiful daughters at **Amsterdam Houses**, he is an aspiring lawyer, with a 3.7 grade point average, who plans to attend CUNY's John Jay College of Criminal Justice.

In Loving Memory of



*Regina A. Figueroa
8-10-2010*

Regina A. Figueroa was an employee of the New York City Housing Authority's Department of Communications for ten years. Regina was also a resident of Throggs Neck Houses in the Bronx, and a graduate of John Jay College of Criminal Justice where she was studying to pursue a career in law. Although Regina spent most of her life in a wheelchair that did not stop her from doing whatever she set her mind to. She was an advocate who fought for the rights of disabled citizens. Additionally Regina was extremely resourceful, generous, and a huge asset to the Housing Authority and to her community.

After a valiant fight with cancer, Regina passed away on August 10, 2010, at the age of 32. In honor of her memory and contributions to society, NYCHA established the Regina A. Figueroa Memorial Scholarship to recognize the academic and civic achievements of disabled NYCHA residents who are enrolled at colleges of The City University of New York.

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Resident Scholarship Program
is funded in part by a generous grant from*

New York City Council Member

Robert Jackson, District 7

and

New York City Council Member

Letitia James, District 35.

*Thank you for your continued support of
NYCHA residents.*



**CONGRATULATIONS
SCHOLARS!**