

OUR VOICE

IMAGINE, INTEGRATE, EDUCATE

Issue IV September 2017

"The great leaders are like the best conductors - they reach beyond the notes to reach the magic in the players."
--Blaine Lee

FEATURED STUDENT: RONALD LYNCH

College Initiative (CI) student Ronald Lynch has many things to celebrate, including his graduation from City College, where he graduated with a Bachelors in Paralegal studies, his acceptance into New Jersey City University where he is studying for his Master's in Business Administration, and of course, the start of his new business, Pic a Photobooth. Ronald has been a member of CI since 2008 and used college as an outlet to further develop himself and find his passion after being released. Ronald's business has been a major success and is currently finding itself in a very good problem of being over booked and attracting a large demand. In the process of creating his own business Ronald found that, "There are limitations that are placed on you when trying to do this work. I didn't want barriers, so I created my own space where there wouldn't be barriers." Ronald believes that, "everyone deserves second chances – put yourself in a position to make the most of the second chance you're given. Don't give up on yourself. Don't think that it's the end because it's not." We wish Ronald the best of luck on his path to his MBA and a continued success with his business!

OUR NEW FELLOW

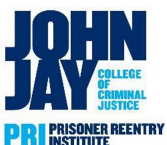
Every year College Initiative comes across many wonderful changes. One of those wonderful changes is the new incoming Pinkerton Fellows. For the past two years, College Initiative has offered the Pinkerton fellow's the opportunity to work with students and their transition to college. My name is Marlen Martinez. I'm the new Pinkerton Fellow at College Initiative and am so excited to be working with students this upcoming academic year. I am currently an undergrad student at John Jay College and major in Criminology and minoring in Psychology. College Initiative has introduced me to a whole new world, the work they do for their students is amazing, especially their outreach. For the past few months, Anna has been the person who creates our weekly Bulletin. She has shared her artistic talent with the CI community and is now guiding me through the process. After Anna leaves, I'll pick up where she left off among other responsibilities; it's going to be an exciting 12-month journey.

#LOVEISLOVE

June 25, 2017, New York City's Annual Pride March

Make the Road shouts "Breaking Wall" on July 10th to celebrates their 6th Annual Trans-Latinx March around the Jackson Heights Community. An evening of colors where "Make the Road" New York stands strong leading events and actions across the city, giving visibility to their community and celebrating their diversity. They rise and march together to fight against transphobia, hate violence against their trans and gender non-conforming sibling and fight for the rights and visibility of the LGBTQ+ community. This year the march focused on sending a message to the community that Trans brothers and sisters will not allow any kind of violence. Not only did the Jackson Heights community share their pride but so did the heart of New York. This year thousands of New Yorkers took actions on the streets of Manhattan waving rainbow flags, and their costumes were ever so colorful.

STAY CONNECTED!



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FEATURED STUDENT: TERONIA CAMPBELL

Teronia Campbell has been a member of College Initiative since 2006. After receiving her Associate's degree from Bronx Community College, Teronia enrolled with CI around the same time she became a social work student at Lehman College. Recently, she celebrated her graduation from Hunter College with a Master's Degree in Rehabilitative Counseling. Teronia has many fond memories of College Initiative. She reflected on the mentoring program, and how someone had met her on her terms. She explained how impactful this was, and how it influenced her decision to become a mentor to incoming CI students. "I wanted to do it because someone did it for me," Teronia says. "I mentored people who had just come home. I understood how it made a difference to have someone support you because CI had supported me." Teronia spends most of her time helping other people. She works to improve her community by participating in things like clothing drives and works with people who are experiencing homelessness and substance use disorders. Currently, Teronia is a vocational counselor with a CASAC-T certificate. She has worked in social services for over 15 years. Her favorite thing about the work was seeing someone combat the issues they were facing and be thriving twenty years later. Additionally, Teronia has a soft spot for working with mothers and children; in the future, Teronia wants to open her own substance abuse treatment facility for mothers, and she'd like to host support groups for children to express their feelings at a young age. "Every human being deserves the opportunity to change and be changed," says Teronia. "I had no guidance or role models – no one to understand me. Now I understand the power in someone just being able to listen to you and being willing to help you. It's so important." She explained that while some obstacles in life may seem like a setback, they can actually be a setup to improve your life. She believes that "education has so much power. It's something that no one can take away from you; it's something that you've earned." She thanks College Initiative for supporting her throughout her success. "With CI, you don't have to do it by yourself. What seems like such a small thing to help someone could be a big turning point in their life. It's not always going to be easy, but with College Initiative's support, you can get through some of the hurdles that you might encounter during your journey." Here's to Teronia's continued success!

"My energy just couldn't stop dancing. I was caught up in the music of struggle, and I wanted to dance."

-Assata Shakur

COLLEGE INITIATIVE CELEBRATES 15 YEARS OF SUCCESS

This year, College Initiative celebrated its fifteenth anniversary. This year culminated in a record-breaking graduation, featuring our first-ever Ph.D. graduate. This year, 24 College Initiative students received their first, second or third degrees from fourteen different colleges and universities. This brings the total number of degrees earned by College Initiative students to 314!

The event featured several guest speakers, including the Chancellor of CUNY, and debuted the College Initiative Fifteenth Anniversary Film - a short documentary that highlighted a few students and their journeys to higher education. Additionally, awards were presented to several students, as well as the director of the college program for young individuals earning their degrees on the inside. Finally, for the first time ever, College Initiative presented degrees to two young students who earned their full Associate's degrees on the inside. The students' families accepted their awards on their behalf and spoke about how meaningful it was to participate in something as significant as a graduation event. The room was packed with supportive members of the community as each degree recipient addressed the crowd with jubilation, holding a plaque with their name and degree engraved on it. It was truly amazing to see the wide network of support that the College Initiative community has fostered. We'd like to once again congratulate the 2017 graduates, and wish them all the best in their future endeavors!



EVENT HIGHLIGHTS

TOWNHALL 2017

Once a year, the College Initiative staff will invite the community to come and discuss what they are enjoying the most about working with College Initiative, and what they would like to see more of. Twenty students came for pizza, icebreakers, and deep conversation centered around improving the services that College Initiative offers. The event started with everyone getting to know each other as aspirations, dreams, and classes were discussed. In a large group, different materials that College Initiative uses (such as the College Initiative Weekly Bulletin) were promoted, as well as upcoming events such as the Fifteenth Anniversary Graduation. Students gave their input as to what they liked about the events offered and gave suggestions as to how the events could reach even more of the community. The day ended with students and staff getting into small groups and speaking freely about what they wanted the future of College Initiative to look like. It was such a pleasure to be part of a positive think-space filled with excellent ideas! We thank the students who came out for providing such insightful feedback to enrich the experiences of our community.

FIND YOUR SCHOLARSHIP

Every year, there are more than 1,000 of scholarships and award offered throughout CUNY and its 24 colleges. Scholarships are grants or payments made to support a student's education, awarded on the basis of academic or other achievements. Each CUNY schools has a complete listing of all the scholarships and financial awards they offer to students. In addition to scholarships available at the CUNY campuses, there are thousands of private organizations that provide assistance to college students. These scholarships are based on a variety of factors. John Jay College offers a scholarship for transfer students who have earned a certain amount of credit and have cumulative GPA of 3.2 at your previous institution(s). Coca-Cola Community College Academic Team recognizes high achieving two-year college students who demonstrate academic excellence and intellectual rigor combined with leadership and service that extends their education beyond the classroom to benefit society. You can learn more about scholarships by visiting <http://www2.cuny.edu/financial-aid/scholarships/>



FEATURED STAFF: EBONY MAHER

Ebony Maher has been a member of College Initiative (CI) since 2012 and obtained her Bachelors in Social Work from York College in 2016. Ebony began her time at CI as a student, she later participated in the Peer Mentoring program, and now she is an Academic Counselor. Ebony's favorite part about the work is, "giving back to the reentry community." Prior to becoming part of the CI community she was at an alternative to high school program for students and says that at this time "reentry called her" into the work. Ebony is loved by many many students at CI and shared one of her favorite memories from last year's CI graduation, where she was "able to give out awards and receive her own." In the future, Ebony hopes to attend graduate school for her Master's in Social Work and write a book. Ebony's message to students is to "find peace, purpose, and stability in yourself." CI is fortunate to have Ebony as part of the CI community and thanks her for her dedication and the love she brings into CI every day!



WORD SEARCH

Wonder Women-Beast Boy-
Batmen -Scare Crow-Nightwing
-Cyborg-Flash-Joker -Red Hood -Solomon
Grundy -Green Arrow-Lex Luther- Two
Face-General Zod-Bane -Raven -Shazam

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MAZE



CALENDAR

Events listed are open to all CUNY students unless noted otherwise.

9/29: CUNY-Wide Conference on Academic Integrity, Keynote Speaker: Sandra Jamieson, Drew University. Hostos Community College

9/27: Fall 2017 Career Fair
BMCC Center for Career Development is hosting their Fall 2017 Career Fair. It's a great opportunity for BMCC students to meet with prospective employers. Borough of Manhattan Community College

12/15: Celebrate Black History Month With Olympic Medalist Ibtihaj Muhammad. Queens College

8/10: Myrna Bain Scholarship Benefit Concert! John Jay College

5/11-8/11: New Exhibit at Roosevelt House on Enduring Impact of The New Deal on NYC. Hunter College

9/17: International Coffee Hour - Celebrate Hispanic Heritage Month. College of Staten Island

6/21-8/20 Ugo Rondinone presents a work of art by Giorno's husband. Hunter College

9/14: Music In Midtown. The Graduate Center CUNY

9/15: Nursing Program Open House & Information Session. The Graduate Center CUNY



Transitional
Living
Residence 3/5/1

Illustration by Eric Bright

STUDENT SUBMISSIONS

If you are interested in being interviewed or having your work featured in the newsletter please contact us at pristudentnewsletter@gmail.com or mail in your submissions to:

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