

DOUBLE ISSUE

FALL 2019/SPRING 2020

SCIENTIOLARS

HONORS
PROGRAM





NEW YORK CITY COLLEGE OF TECHNOLOGY
of The City University of New York

President: Russel K. Hotzler
Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs: Bonne August
Associate Provost: Pamela Brown

Honors Scholars Program
Director: Reneta D. Lansiquot
Interim Assistant Director: Amanda Almond
Program Coordinator: Christopher Navarrete

Founding and Managing Editor: Reneta D. Lansiquot
Contributing Editors: Tyne Hazel, Christopher Navarrete
Art Director/Graphic Designer: Christopher Navarrete
Photographers: Renata Budny, Romario Denoon, Jonathan Foong, Tyne Hazel, Imane Sana

Cover Photo: City Tech Closed

Printing:
Digital Imaging Center at City Tech



CONTENTS

5 **Liliana Huier Li Ruan**

6 **Material Selection in Digital Era**

8 **Helping Others through Engineering**
Fahmeda Khanom

9 **Appreciating my Inner Drive**
Mansi Kutwal

10 **An Unexpected Journey**
Pavlos Malonoukos

12 **A Life of Math and Passion**
Christopher Lobato

13 **Nursing: A Personal Goal**
Mbene Lo

14 **Embracing my Past to Start Anew**
Stacy Ganthier

16 **Captivated by Science**
Romario Denoon

17 **My Journey from Burkina Faso to New York**
Imane Sana

18 **Making Success itself a Goal**
Damani Douglas



6



9



10



18

Nearly two decades ago, former Director Prof. Janet Liou-Mark and then-student Director of the Honors Scholars Program Reneta D. Lansiquot initiated City Tech's chapter of the National Society of Collegiate Scholars (NSCS). As the sole academic honor society on campus, NSCS acknowledges high-achieving students from all academic disciplines. Early in their academic career, students receive an invitation to join our chapter of this national honor society. The on-campus benefits include networking and access to leadership training, Graduate Record Examination (GRE) preparation, scholarships, research opportunities, and more.

Last year, our NSCS chapter received donations to help cover the cost for eligible students to receive a lifetime membership so they can enjoy all the benefits that such a national honor society can afford. To qualify for the fee waiver, potential NSCS members had to submit a short essay that answered the following prompt: How do students represent the three pillars of NSCS (leadership, scholarship, and service), and how will they continue to serve and uphold those pillars as a member?

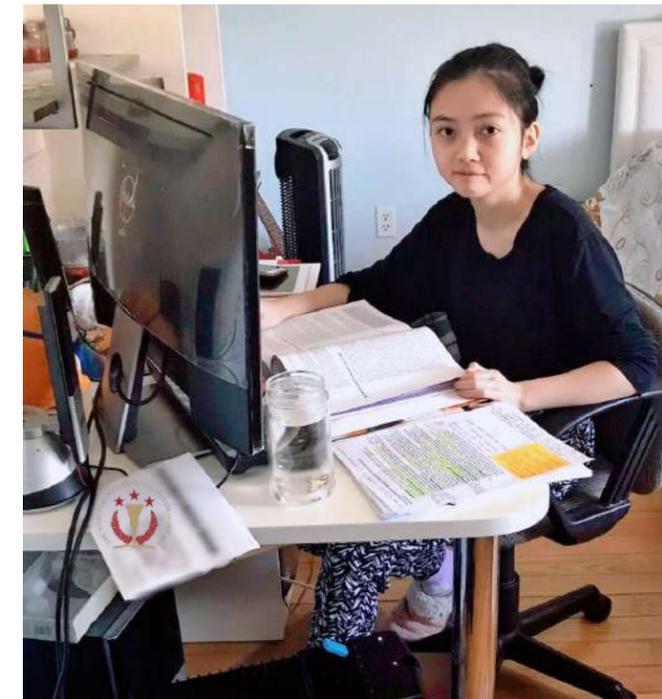
We selected one such student who submitted her response, Liliana Huier Li Ruan, who is a first-generation student who aims to make her mark in the health care industry.

To our donors, we would like to say thank you for your support in helping students like Liliana in getting a rare and valuable experience by joining NSCS.

Grateful for Your Support,



Tamrah D. Cunningham
Co-Advisor, City Tech NSCS Chapter



Liliana Huier Li Ruan



I earned an AAS degree in health information technology at BMCC with a health management concentration and obtained my Registered Health Information Technician certification. I successfully completed my first semester at City Tech with a 3.75 GPA. I am pursuing a BS in health services administration and am writing to express my interest in joining the National Society of Collegiate Scholars at City Tech.

While pursuing my AAS degree at BMCC, I improved myself personally and professionally. I participated in the Streetwise Partners Program, a nonprofit organization seeking to provide the unemployed with mentorship, career resources, and access to building a network. After completing the program, my second-most valuable accomplishment in the program was developing my interpersonal and networking skills through mock interviews and in-person weekly meetings at the program. I also collaborated with two industry professionals by working to improve my resume and exercising effective job search techniques.

My passion for a career in the health care industry derives from my struggle to get quality care for treatments. As a first-generation student, my family and I felt the least amount of outreach, patient engagement and health care education. This has inspired me to pursue a career in health care. I want to gain a better understanding of what is involved in health care delivery and the processes that needs to be in place for this

to happen in the US health care system. Also, I would like to use my knowledge to help others in need and become part of something that will have a great impact in other people's life and well-being and promote community health. My goal is to become more involved in school activities and take advantage of school resources outside of my scheduled classes. Additionally, I would like to network with various people in the health care industry and be allowed to gain the experience to one day have a career as a health care administrator.

City Tech's NSCS Chapter will help me grow personally and accomplish these goals. I would love to engage in extracurricular activities, meeting new people who, like me, seek to develop themselves daily while pursuing their academic and career goals. I'm also interested in the graduate school connections that the NSCS offers. I'm planning to pursue my masters after graduating from City Tech. I hope to become a valuable member in the NSCS with the skillsets that I develop academically and professionally.

I know I can give back to the community. As a health care professional, I want to help people from different backgrounds and walks of life, knowing that every day I have made a difference in someone's life and maybe made it better or easier than it was before. I honestly care, and that is a quality that people need to have when working with the public. I want to be in a position to help others to show that I care.



Material Selection in Digital Era

A Lecture & Live Demonstration, Special Guest Ms. Kiyoko Ban, KURARAY AMERICA, Inc. and Restorative Dentistry, NYCCT

Presented by Kazunobu Yamada



On June 4, 2019, Restorative Dentistry, NYCCT, in partnership with KURARAY AMERICA, Inc. welcomed a special guest, Ms. Kiyoko Ban, and hosted a lecture and a live demonstration titled "Material Selection in Digital Era" presented by Kazunobu Yamada.

Ms. Ban has been involved in the dental laboratory business since 1980 and has been the driving force behind the success of the Noritake Dental laboratory division. Through her leadership, Noritake was able to take the knowledge and experience in the art of making fine china and apply it to making the most beautiful dental porcelain in the world. Due to its success in the global laboratory market, Noritake formed a joint venture with Kuraray Dental, to which Ms. Ban serves as an important advisor.

Mr. Yamada is the owner of the Kanare Technical Center in Nagoya, Japan, one of the best highly esthetic private laboratories in Japan. His great understanding and appreciation of esthetics

led him to develop the Complimentary Concept for Porcelain Laminate Veneer Restorations. He has been lecturing worldwide for the last 25 years and has been a long-time contributor and clinical advisor to Noritake Dental Products.

The Department of Restorative Dentistry was honored to host such amazing professionals who contribute so much to the profession of dental laboratory technology. The event covered the creation of highly esthetic restorations in relation to the developments of new materials and techniques. CAD/CAM systems and Zirconia materials were discussed. During a live demonstration, Mr. Yamada presented the clinical case and finished with a staining technique on a Noritake KATANA Full-Contour Zirconia Crown. The event was very well received by faculty and students alike.

The Department of Restorative Dentistry is grateful to Kuraray America Inc for sponsoring this event and bringing world-class speakers to City Tech.



Treatment Planning the Edentulous Arch with Removable Attachment Options

Department of Restorative Dentistry, New York City College of Technology, CUNY

Presented by Chris Bormes, MICOI, Sponsored by Preat Corporation

On September 19, 2019, the Department of Restorative Dentistry at City Tech, Brooklyn, NY was visited by Chris Bormes, MICOI, President of Preat Corporation located in Santa Maria, California.

Besides getting an opportunity to introduce his innovative company, Chris Bormes presented a seminar, "Treatment Planning the Edentulous Arch with Removable Attachment Options," at which attendees learned about the importance of proper treatment planning and the choices of when and why to use specific dental prostheses like fixed detachable, fixed removable, overdenture bars (such as Hader, Plunger Loc, Sagix, and Locator), and overdenture studs

(such as RT-x, Clix, Locator, O-Rings, and Magnets). They also reviewed available attachment systems for overdenture therapy to restore implant-supported prostheses simply and successfully.

The clear presentation and company catalog were great ways to familiarize about 60 freshman and senior students in attendance with implant dentistry. The students will take this knowledge with them and become that much more valuable for their future employers. The Restorative Dentistry faculty and students are very appreciative of Chris Bormes and Preat Corporation for supporting higher education.



CUNY in collaboration with Cusp Dental Lab offered Networking Event on October 17, 2019

Department of Restorative Dentistry, New York City College of Technology, CUNY

On October 19, 2019, the Department of Restorative Dentistry, NYCCT, in collaboration with Cusp Dental Laboratory offered a networking event and a seminar presented by Kimiyo Sawyer, the President of this high-quality oriented laboratory. The event focused on communication between dentists and laboratories, quality control, and streamlining dental lab work. Cusp Dental Lab specializes in dental esthetics and large reconstruction cases while

collaborating with labs in the Boston area and across the country. The lab was established in 1990 in Midtown Manhattan, and in 1995 the second lab opened in Malden, near Boston, MA. Ms. Sawyer's presentation provided invaluable lessons for students and faculty alike. The Restorative Dentistry program is thrilled to welcome Cusp Dental Lab and develop collaborations for years to come. We appreciate the dedication and support for higher education



Helping Others through Engineering

Fahmeda Khanom

Everyone has unique life goals. I wanted to become a computer engineer to build things that will help bring others happiness. I moved to the United States from Bangladesh four years ago. In my country of origin, I had a career goal that changed after coming to the United States.

After seeing many patients being mistreated and taken advantage of in Bangladesh, I initially wanted to become a doctor who will save people's lives. When we lived there, my mom was prescribed antidepressants that deteriorated her health. The US doctors told her these medications were wrong and that she had overdosed. Back in my country, I used to contemplate becoming a psychiatrist for the sole reason of treating my mother and other patients with similar cases without overcharging people who could not afford it. Seeing my mother awake all night and sleep all morning due to her medication was hurtful to see. It's my goal to reduce her suffering and that of people like her.

However, upon arriving in the United States, I realized how long, costly and difficult becoming a doctor would be and how badly a medical education could harm my family financially. Being that my father is the only person who works in the United States, it was difficult for him to efficiently provide for five people. My father sacrificed his dreams of becoming a businessman back in Bangladesh to give us better opportunities here. Witnessing him as he has struggled to support us changed my main goal in life. Now, my dream is to complete my education and give my parents the life they deserve, especially considering my parents always supported my career decision and were willing to do extra to support me.

Instead of becoming a doctor, I decided to become a computer engineer because I believed in the advancement of technology and found the challenges enjoyable. Computer

engineering will help me gain knowledge of both software and hardware engineering. At City Tech, I aim for an associate's degree in electromechanical engineering and a bachelor's degree in computer engineering. My decision of becoming a computer engineer came to be when I participated in the Woman in Technology and Entrepreneurship in New York (WiTNY) program, which encourages female CUNY students to pursue a career in the tech field. Participating in the summer guild with WiTNY caused me to love coding.

After being offered several opportunities in computer engineering during my first year, I realized that my career was a good choice. Joining in one of the internships offered by WiTNY required me to work in the ASAPP company for three weeks during winter break. At ASAPP, I've managed to learn a considerable amount of information about how a company runs and how to use Python for projects. Learning backend programming enabled me to create tables in the database, coding login systems for users, and hashing passwords to protect the database from hackers. I also participated in a mock interview where I witnessed the interview and employee selection process. I had a great experience with the internships, and they've helped me build professional relationships with several members of the company.

My family and I value work and believe its experiences are important. They have always encouraged me to follow my dreams. I am currently pursuing computer engineering technology, participating in internships that help me to understand how to apply the knowledge I've learned and grasp a clear view of my career choice. Opting to have practical and experimental knowledge rather than memorizing course materials, I've developed a liking for coding and the hands-on approach for using different materials. I hope one day to become a great engineer.



Appreciating my Inner Drive

Mansi Kutwal

Over the years of experiencing many fluctuations in my familial and personal life, I have always been able to rely on my drive. From my parents' divorce to moving four times in three years, the one thing that kept me cemented was school. With the constant changes occurring around me, I knew the one thing that would remain perpetual was my education. The difficulties I overcame further inspired me to make a mark on this world with my educational achievements. While undergoing parental issues and domestic violence in my own home, which involved social workers, I earned a spot in the Junior National Honor Society. Graduating high school, I participated in the National Honor Society and Science National Honor Society based on my grades and educational triumphs. My family and I downgraded from my childhood home into a one-bedroom apartment where I slept on a mattress on the living room floor, but this just helped me gain these merits.

All of my hard work and educational achievements led to my being accepted into my top choice in colleges due to its nursing program. I was offered a position in the Sage Honors Scholars Program at Hunter College along with a merit-based scholarship. Taking a position in their honors program, I attended Hunter College with high hopes of its granting me stability, especially because college was the one place that could hold my interest. Throughout my two semesters at Hunter, I realized that the school was not the best fit for me. I lacked accountability to participate and attend classes due to their large sizes and the distraction of my social life. With my world turning upside down during this pivotal moment, I was thrown into a frantic disequilibrium for the simple fact that I had always relied on school as a constant. Making the drastic decision on leaving this prestigious spot in an honors program was ultimately more sensible for my future career plans. Eventually, I realized that

this step benefitted my main goal of becoming a nurse.

Upon using the process of elimination for the next-best option, I decided City Tech looked enticing for the sole reason of having one of the highest passing rates for national Counseling Licensure Examination. Grateful to have been granted a second chance, I transferred to City Tech knowing I would graduate this competitive program.

As a caregiver, I realized pursuing a nursing was the best fit for me. Having the ability to care for others and showing the utmost consideration for several patients at a time make nurses heroes. One of the most rewarding feelings is being able to save a person's life. Planning on marking a change in this world, I immediately gravitated to this career path. Although, I am fortunate and grateful to have been offered this nursing program at City Tech, I admit that the program is tough. But I remind myself of my goal to help me persevere, as this produced stability during a great education.

Over years of experiencing many fluctuations in my familial and personal life, I have found one thing as a constant, and that is my drive. Hunter College acknowledged my work, and this sparked the confidence within me that I am capable of doing anything I sent my mind to. Indeed, I was offered a merit-based scholarship in the Sage Honors Scholars Program. I was ecstatic upon hearing the news, considering Hunter's nursing program is so prestigious. Lacking the accountability to stay focused at Hunter, I realize that it may not have been the right choice for me. With my world turning upside down, I was thrown into a frantic disequilibrium due to change. Now, I realize that no matter where I am placed or what changes occur around me, I will always succeed thanks to my drive. Finally finding my equilibrium once again, I am grateful to attend City Tech.



An Unexpected JOURNEY

Pavlos Malonoukos

Lady Mary Montgomerie Curri stated, “Good things come to those who wait,” and my “good thing” was getting rejected from dental school and accepted into CUNY City Tech’s Dental Restorative Program. After numerous attempts at applying and remaining adamant about teeth, I knew being a dentist was not the most fitting choice for me. As a young adult, becoming a dentist was an aspiration of mine, especially being aware of the dedication that it required. My obsession with smiles led to my passion for turning frowns upside down.

For as long as I can remember, I was fascinated mouth movements and how immobile one can be without proper dental care. When I became old enough to attend college, my intuition was to pursue a career involving the dental field. For my first job, I was granted the opportunity to become a dental assistant for my uncle, a dentist. On weekends, I assisted him on various dental procedures. He made practicing dentistry all the more endearing. I realized, for him, dentistry was not just work. It was about changing people’s lives for the better, and I wanted to attain just that.

When I worked as a dental assistant, I was enrolled in Hofstra University as a full-time biology major. After graduating with my bachelor’s degree, I began the application process of dental school. During this long and vigorous process, I was determined to get accepted. Unfortunately, after applying and getting denied for four years, I had to reconsider my options. Although this was a difficult process, and for a moment I thought that my dreams were crushed, I was

introduced into the field of dental laboratory technology. I quickly researched what this occupation entailed and realized that dentists aren’t the only ones who can fix smiles. Learning that dental laboratory technology is both a science and an art that requires a technician who acquires a skill to use of sophisticated instruments and machines, I came to the conclusion that this was the most fitting job for me. Dental technicians are valuable members in the dental care team because they are responsible for constructing and manufacturing dental prostheses such as crowns and dentures based on a dentist’s recommendations. The main difference between the two occupations is that dental technicians cannot work on patients, whereas dentists can.

In the spring of 2019, eager to begin this chapter in my life, I applied to City Tech’s Dental Restorative Program and was accepted. I quickly realized this is my new calling. I took classes that taught the basics of tooth anatomy, dentures, and crowns. My favorite class was Dentures 1 because Professor Avis Smith and his years of experience made it easy for a student to comprehend his teachings.

Enjoying the new challenges and experiences that becoming a dental technician entails, I look at these obstacles in a positive way to foreshadow the ones I have already overcome. In being rejected from dental school, I realized I could still fulfill my dream of fixing smiles. City Tech’s Dental Restorative program will give me all the tools necessary to do just this and more.



A Life of Math and Passion

Christopher Lobato

Migrating from El Salvador—a country devastated by the civil war—to El Barrio, New York—an area rich in culture and diversity that I can now call home—has brought better opportunities for me and my family. It was a wise decision for my parents to break all ties with El Salvador, still suffering from the rumination of the war and thousands of men dying for the cause. As the only son in my family and as a scholar, I had the onus weighing on my shoulders to fulfill my parents' dreams that they never could. Yet when choosing a passion, I felt lost.

I was skeptical about my studies in my STEM high school because my interests leaned more toward STEM subjects, though I also excelled at drawing. This talent stemmed from drawing plans in engineering and conjuring individualistic designs. Nearing my final years in high school, I remained irresolute and nearly opted to enroll as undecided for a major, but a fellow peer pursuing software engineering invited me to join him and his family in Japan to experience their culture. This trip felt like a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to discover myself and experience the culture that has inspired a growing tech economy. Spending some time in the “Land of the Rising Sun” further brought out my passion for computer science.

Shinjuku, a ward in Tokyo renowned for exhibiting exceptional, efficient, and precise architecture, was one of our first stops in Japan. This city brought forth my love for mathematics, proficiency, efficiency, and design. As a reflection of my work, I'm inclined to incorporate these key details considering mathematics is my greatest passion. Unlike other subjects, math always needs an explanation that can be summed up into a single value. Being of a creative background, I have seen in both Shinjuku and Akhiabara how technological design plays a huge role in our livelihood. Every design is individualistic as if it were a completely original idea personified. Thinking outside of the box is essential for programming, whereas code is designed to meet the needs of a said program. Without both, engineering won't work. In tandem, programming and designing code are a riveting experience, enabling me to project my inner artist, produce new ideas, and materialize a fascination for innovation.

The final thing I learned is the main reason why I would love to go back again. No matter where in Japan, the countryside or the city where the vibrant atmosphere incited my imagination, I found a sense of community. It became apparent that the culture values family and community, and the unexpected is not to be an inconvenience. I've learned these values from my own family. I possess a strong sense of responsibility. Working as a team and in an engineering field have made this notion important to me. My friends and peers were major reasons why I chose this field. Collectively, we motivate one another, begetting the mantra that collaboration should be embraced.

Cities like Shinjuku re-introduced me to my love for mathematics, proficiency, and design through its efficient and precise architecture. It has inspired me to concoct designs that are just as exceptional.

After returning from my trip to Japan, it became clear to me why it has inspired a plethora of innovation in the past century. It is a beautiful country that has maintained an equilibrium between old and new. Its well-preserved culture and history have helped inspire ideas and storytelling. The juxtaposition of its natural scenes like Mt. Fuji and its concrete jungles like Tokyo has helped keep things vibrant. Cities like Shinjuku re-introduced me to my love for mathematics, proficiency, and design through its efficient and precise architecture. It has inspired me to concoct designs that are just as exceptional.

Unlike other subjects I've taken in school, math always needs to have an explanation that can be summed up into a single value.

Now, after my first semester at City Tech and as a collegiate scholar, without a doubt I still love computer science. What solidified my decision to pursue computer science studies was my experience with a Saturday morning computer programming course, a problem-solving class, and my former professor, Michael Gomez. I was obligated to complete the exercises he'd assigned, immensely improving my skills. During this class, he believed in participating in every aspect, so my creativity and precision when coding improved immensely. Being frequently encouraged and helping each other made this class so special, it serves as a guide. Helping others has helped develop me as a leader, holding ever to the importance of assisting those who are less experienced. I am optimistic in pursuing my degree, becoming a software engineer, ultimately providing leadership as I work hard to show my precision, artistry, background, and community.

Nursing A Personal Goal



Mbene Lo

I grew up in Senegal with my family, and being the oldest amongst my siblings. I was the designated caretaker when my mother away. Siblings being siblings, we've tended to annoy one another resulting in many arguments. However, considering I care for people and am the nurturing type, I still loved providing for them.

From a very young age, I dreamed of working in the medical field. In my childhood, other kids played with toys, whereas I would act like a nurse, treating my friends like patients and curing their ailments. Pretending that my room was a doctor's office, I enjoyed how my friends would play along and act as if they were sick so I could act accordingly. With time, I realized that caring for others and their health and savings lives wasn't just an act anymore; it's something that I've grown to love. The possibility of pursuing nursing as a career excites me even more.

In Senegal, due to lack of jobs, people struggled to earn and provide. Therefore, we need to help each other in order to survive. Back then, a nurse lived right in front of me. She was extremely nurturing and helping, going as far to treat my family whenever any of us felt ill, which was less expensive than being in a hospital. We need more people like her. Being helpful by remotely loving and caring, she and I had something in common: our love for people. Being inspired and wanting to follow in her footsteps, I studied hard because my goal is to become a nurse one day.

When I was twelve years old, I began to assist my aunt and other members of my family when they were sick. I helped them take their medicine and prepare their beds and foods. For my favorite brother and his demanding job, I would brew him herbal tea whenever he was home on the weekend. It brought me joy to be of service when he was sick or tired. With this type of assistance, not only have I learned to take care of the home, but I also encourage my loved ones to overcome their sickness. These instances have helped me to understand caretaking not only as a duty, but also a passion.

I remember when I found out that my aunt was deathly sick, and I wasn't ready to lose her. My aunt was basically my second mother. She would spoil me like a baby and come to my defense and protect against any harm. When she was hospitalized and endured an episode, I thought I was going crazy because I considered my aunt an angel who would always stay by my side. Because the doctor didn't take the time to examine my aunt to see how severe her condition was while giving her tons of useless medicines, he failed at preventable measures for my aunt. At times, before knowing about her disease, I thought she had been faking her sickness as an excuse to not do any work. However, after a few months, she became thinner, lost her appetite, and quietly endured pain. Hearing her complain of her bones and chest, I empathized with her pain. Yet, not understanding how to treat her pain nor being a nurse, I couldn't do anything to help. I felt useless. Being turned away by various doctors, my aunt continued to suffer until

her eventual death. Looking back, I believe the doctors gave up on my aunt without even trying and preferred letting her die after suffering hell. This fierce reality angered me but ultimately inspired me to want to act in contrast to the doctors who could have tried to save her. While enduring one of the most painful memories of my life, I was also encouraged to study nursing and fight for my aunt's legacy. Nursing will allow me to make connections with people, especially my patients. In their time of need, they can rely on me to help them.

After I finished middle school, my dad suggested that I move with him to New York, where my sister was studying nursing. I did not want to leave my mom and my beautiful country, but my sister, who is now a nurse, convinced me by telling me about all the great opportunities New York could offer me. So, I agreed to move here, and I am so glad.

Not being used to the environment or speaking the common language, I found my year in New York a real struggle, but I never gave up. Enrolled in an international high school, Liberty High School Academy for Newcomers, I met people from around the world. With my advisors and teachers helping me go through the process of adapting. I've managed to learn the language. Many of my teachers were bilingual, and most of them spoke French. They opted to speak in French to help me understand the class. My high school treated us all equally; there was no discrimination or bullying. I was comfortable from my first year to the end. As my family stood by my side, my sister and dad became my biggest support by encouraging me to keep going and to believe in myself. Thanks to all their support, I was able to make it to my second year in college and prepare for the nursing exam. To prepare myself even more, I volunteered at Mount Sinai to familiarize myself with the hospital settings. Thanks to my hard work, my supervisor promoted me to an intern to assist her. I have had the chance to meet great people in the medical field who inspired me with their hard work. It was a great experience learning how to communicate with patients and their family members, depending on certain situations. The skills acquired there will surely benefit me in my future career as a nurse.

As previously mentioned, nursing suits me as I am always pursuing a new goal and love a challenge. I would like to help people through some of their most challenging moments by not only performing the role of a caretaker, but also being a friend and trusted adviser. Being a nurse is like being on the battlefield because you're being challenged every single day, struggling with patients whom you need to satisfy. I want to win that battle by satiating my patients' needs, and the only way to achieve my goal is to get into nursing school and make that big dream become reality. Being that I fell in love with this career choice at a very young age, it's more than a dream to attain. My love for nursing is huge, and I won't regret making this decision.



Ultimately, my aspiration is to become a nurse practitioner. Loving a challenge and content that I've made it this far with the goal I set for myself, I intend to excel in the future.

Embracing my Past to Start Anew

Stacy Ganthier

As a high school graduate, I can say that I'm a young woman attaining my dreams. I was born in Haiti, and I lived there until the horrendous earthquake struck on January 12, 2010. Shortly after the natural disaster devastated the country, my parents decided it was best that I move to the United States to live with my aunt. I dreaded the idea of leaving them behind, but I trusted that every decision they made was for the greater good. Growing up in Haiti, I saw as my parents always emphasized the significance of education and ensured that I attended the most prestigious schools. They reminded me to focus on my studies and had a major impact on my performance in school and life. Due to their persistence, I am capable of overcoming the obstacles I face. Although I am grateful to have been granted opportunities after moving to the United States, I can't help but profoundly miss my family and country.

Initially, it was very difficult to live away from my family and be enrolled in a school in a country whose customs and language were entirely foreign to me, causing my homesickness. Toward the end of my first school year, I started to get a grasp for the language. A testament to that was understanding our class lessons with the minimal knowledge that I possessed. Nearing the end of my fourth grade year, I was ecstatic to find out that my parents planned to move to Brooklyn and that I would be living with them. Adjusting to a new school, new people, and a new environment again were a hindrance, albeit much less, due to my parents. Living with them, I was more than elated to be showered by their endless support and encouragement.

When my parents were enrolled in college, their studies leaned toward careers in health care, with my father ultimately becoming a urologist and my mother a nurse. Before I was even born, my father had decided that I would follow in their footsteps, not that I mind that this was envisioned for me. Intrigued by the choice, I decided to pursue the career after always being asked, "Why do you want to be a nurse?" My answer is, "All of my family members work in health care." Albeit it is true that my family has contributed to my optimistic view on nursing, today I am able to genuinely explain why I wish to pursue this career, and that is all by virtue of experience.

Two years ago in high school, I attended a collegiate-level practical nursing program. Fortunately, I passed the Test of Essential Academic Skills, and was admitted into the practical nursing program. Undoubtedly, it was tough to balance nursing class, standard school classes, and clinical work. I initially struggled with an abundance of nursing concepts because they were foreign to me. As a result, I failed numerous tests. However, every time I fell down, I got back up on my feet again. More than motivated to become a nurse, I studied harder and even went as far to change my methods. Suffering from anxiety, I provided health care to individuals, which made it worse with time. Gravely afraid of doing something wrong, I had trouble acquiring a few skills. Once again, I didn't give up. I watched videos and studied the steps I needed to practice to diminish my anxiety,

Becoming familiar with nursing techniques, I started to enjoy performing the skills I've acquired, such as administering medications via the injection route or feeding tube. Graduating from the course, I was proud to obtain a multitude of new information about myself, about the nursing practice, and about contributing to an individual's level of maximum wellness. Passing my national licensing exam, obtaining my license as a practical nurse, and helping improve a person's health are a few of my accomplishments.

Attending City Tech and applying to the nursing program, I have realized that I'm capable of succeeding if I put my mind to it. As a result, I greatly enjoyed my semester of college due to meeting a multitude of amazing students and captivating professors. The most interesting courses were in biology and mathematics. Struggling with mathematics, I opted to put my all into the course to avoid failing, which genuinely caused me to find sheer enjoyment from it. Facing a multitude of obstacles with my main challenge being time management, I've efficiently learned to balance a nursing job and school. Eventually, I've discovered the best strategy. Ultimately, my aspiration is to become a nurse practitioner. Loving a challenge and content that I've made it this far with the goal I set for myself, I intend to excel in the future.



Captivated by Science

Romario Denoon

Albert Einstein said, "Few are those who see with their own eyes and feel with their own hearts," which is one of my favorite quotes that appropriately describes my feelings about science and helping others. The complexity and aesthetics of science combine with its attempt to solve life's phenomena. It's like solving a jigsaw puzzle with several missing pieces and fitting those missing pieces into the intended spots only to render the puzzle all the more complex than before. Even as a child, I had the utmost respect for science being that the simplest things always seem to captivate me. For instance, I used to track butterfly migrations and watch the abundance of monarch butterflies, all while noting their flight patterns. In science, it's not how much we don't. Science is fascinating for the sole fact there are new discoveries being made daily.

I grew up in the small country of Trinidad and Tobago with my father and siblings. There, education was mostly centered on business and trades, which was a hindrance for pursuing anything else. Being enrolled in a foreign institution is the most successful way to achieve either goal. After starting a blooming a passion for science, I realized that my interest lay elsewhere. Eventually succumbing to social convention, I chose to major in business. After graduating from school, I moved to the United States to live with my mother and brother. Once we were settled in, I applied to CUNY. In the long run, the application process rekindled my passion for science

and medicine. Having siblings with genetic medical conditions (my brother has sickle cell anemia and my sister a brain disorder with seizures), I've decided to become a doctor. Fortunately, with the development of medical technology, their episodes have been reduced.

From experience, I know how genetic medical conditions can affect individuals and their family members. My compassion, determination, and knack for pinpointing pain are skills I've acquired from frequent hospital visits. There are two things I have learned from those visits: first, there aren't enough doctors in the world to tackle all the illnesses that exist today; secondly, finding cures takes a lot of patience and effort. Becoming a doctor will allow me to help find cures for the conditions my family suffers from.

I became obsessed with genetics and cells. Yearning for a better comprehension of the medical field, I bombarded myself with an abundance of science courses, consequently being exposed to plethora of scientific research. Enrolled in New York City College of Technology, I applied for the Emerging Scholars Program and studied research collaboratively with Dr. Jeremy Seto for two semesters. Working with Dr. Seto not only gave me the opportunity to test my knowledge and immensely improve my skills, but also granted me the opportunity to learn new skills along the way.

During the summer, I interned under Dr. Park at the Memorial Sloan Kettering Center, where I performed clinical research on leukemic stem cells. The internship ran from late May to early August and involved researching bidaily standing and weekly meetings and presentations with the research team and the Penn State STEP-UP program coordinator, Dr. Gail Matters, along with NIH NIDDK's STEP-UP program cohorts. The research I did there was centered on DNA and protein extractions, such as assisting my mentor by collectively working with mice models while setting up and documenting the experiments. Near the end of my internship, we traveled to the STEP-UP Annual Undergraduate Scientific Session and Research Presentations at the National Institutes of Health in Bethesda, Maryland.

The research that I have done thus far has been maintaining different strains of a particular model organism (i.e., *C. elegans*) for experimentation, counting cells, running and monitoring the experiments, and graphing and analyzing any data obtained. I also made agar plates and LB broth for bacterial culture growth, running PCR, which amplifies DNA, gel electrophoresis, western blot analysis, flow cytometry, and a bit of programming. Performing computational studies of cis and trans configurations of proline with a former mentor Professor Deora. I've obtained an abundance of research experience at an undergraduate level.

Currently, I'm majoring in biomedical informatics and believe that science and programming go hand-in-hand. Given the enormous possibilities of computer programming, a large amount of data can be accurately stored and analyzed at an efficient pace. Before deciding on my major, I searched for the one offering the most science courses that satisfy the pre-med requirement needed, and allowed me the liberty to choose the classes I'm interested in. I chose biomedical informatics because it is a new and exciting field.

Primary, my goal is to become either a cardiology or neurology surgeon. I am planning on taking the Medical College Admission Test (MCAT) and applying for the 2021 cycle. I am considering an MD/PhD program, depending on my MCAT scores.

My Journey from Burkina Faso to New York

Imane Sana



As a young, ambitious woman who was born and raised in Burkina Faso, West Africa, I can say I was ready to face a different world in 2017: the United States. At first, I didn't know if I wanted to move to the United States because I could not speak English, but my rage to conquer and accomplish my dreams overcame my fears. Moving to the US was one of the hardest experiences I faced, but I convinced myself that I was capable of anything. My main goal in life is to work at an engineering firm such as Siman or Sciame.

When I arrived in the US, I took advantage of every opportunity that I could. For example, I worked at The Geriatric Career Development Center, an organization that helped care for residential elders. I kept a good relationship with the elderly by making them laugh with stories and more. Working there was a great experience and reminded me of a task I underwent in Africa years ago. In this task, I worked alongside nurses through a school program, where I went from house to house to raise awareness about our community's sleeping under mosquito nets. I recorded how many family members were in a family to determine how many mosquito nets needed to be given to said family, helped community members avoid diseases and assisted in completing government reports. Making a difference and caring for people made me dream of a career in medicine.

Dedication and respect are values I've been taught, and these ethics have helped me succeed in school. My values are also an incentive

for passionately pursuing engineering. In eleventh grade, I was one of twenty-five students selected to attend the Apple Engineering Technology Summer Camp for four weeks. I was mentored by Apple engineers, worked in a group to complete a challenge, and presented it to the Apple leadership. Due to Apple confidentiality, I am not allowed to disclose any information regarding anything else that we've worked on. Collectively, all of these experiences conjured an enjoyment for building, creating and designing.

In twelfth grade, I participated in Architecture, Construction, and Engineering (ACE) program after school. I worked in groups and was mentored by professionals that were in all the stages of the building process, which enabled me to design residential buildings. Being fortunate enough, I interned MTA and was introduced to a world of trains. Since then, I've learned the importance of engineering and how it plays a role in people's daily lives. Now, civil engineering has become a dream of mine, and being involved in the design of public work greatly satisfies me.

My experience interning with Apple and MTA have persuaded me that my main goal in life is to obtain a master's degree and a PhD in civil engineering and to work at a firm related to the degree. I am 100 percent sure about this decision. All of my prior experiences have enabled me to make a well-constructed decision about my career and aspire to accomplish this dream.



Making Success Itself a Goal

Damani Douglas

As a first-year student at City Tech, I had expected my future to be trapped inside the whimsical world of game design. However, the path to living to one's full potential is never a straight line. The purpose of one's life is to find something that sparks a fire inside of them and to pursue excellence in that particular area, contrary to my lackadaisical thought process throughout my childhood and teenage years.

As a child I had many incompletely explored interests. I admired the skill and thrill in skateboarding, but never found the courage to push past a struggling "ollie." I tried my hand at violin, but even after begging my family to buy me one for weeks, I resigned it to

my grandparent's bedroom once I was bored of it. I found through forced practice that I very much enjoyed reading, though I seldom made an effort to read voluntarily. I also found some solace in writing, and before the end of my middle school years, one of my poems was nominated to be published into the National Poetry Association. Unfortunately, it was not published as a result of my missing deadlines. I eventually learned to play the steel pan at my middle school, but after graduating I let that skill wash away into the bundle of incomplete passions I endorsed.

My time at Midwood High School was less about honing a particular skill than it was developing my sense of self. I had decided to

join the band program in my second semester and listen to the fire inside of my heart as a guide to a career path. Throughout my four years of band and liberal arts studies, I found an undying love of music and the performing arts, all the while reinforcing my distaste for mathematics and computer science. My band program was a vital part of my high school development because a majority of my closest friends and fondest memories, from concerts to jam sessions, came from this program. Based on these experiences it should have been clear that my career path would be music-driven. However, when it was time to apply to college, my ambition to pursue music proved to be nothing but a dream for the richly spirited to conquer. I suppressed every thought of music as a career deep into my psyche out of the looming fear of self-destruction. I plagued my mind with visions of my failures and seemingly inevitable poverty given I pursued music. Before I knew it, I had applied to many game and graphic design schools, cementing the thought process of chasing after something attainable for someone of my nature, seldom motivated and with wavering resolve.

In my first semester at City Tech, I majored in Communication Design (COMD) but also enrolled in an interactive game design club to see what it would be like to create video games. As my mind wandered about the fantastical appeal of game design, I realized that creating games is extremely different from and much more complex than what I initially believed. My innermost doubts as to whether I had chosen the best-suited field of study grew steadily within me, until each day became a bombardment of questions without answers from my family and myself: "Why are you going to change your major? Why don't you do something more financially secure? Why are you taking so long to decide? Why do you want to major in something that you cannot make money in? Why are you wasting so much time deciding? Why push yourself to do something you know you can't do?"

As the semester continued, my inability to commit to an area of study lowered me into a state of despair. I eventually made the conscious choice to discard my ideals of being a game designer and focus my efforts on communication design. In my interactive game design club, I quickly saw the toll of seeing the skeleton of video games sprawled in front of me. Each session of analytic game-building diminished the wonderment I felt when it was actually time to play. As if in a crystal ball, I foresaw my attraction to video games being swiftly snuffed out if I continued to pursue game design. Having nothing else to attach myself to, I fell back onto my current major of communication design. However, I soon began to lose focus in my classes. Not a soul in my circle of family and friends had suggested or worked in communication design. I had chosen the COMD track solely as a segue into game design by broadening my understanding of graphic design, and with my newly found distaste for game design, I lost sight of a goal to work toward.

I was lost in a pot of tricks and trades, fishing for a golden carrot among the confusing muck. I was lost while struggling to acquire skills to draw and type for a purpose unbeknown. I was lost in the deprecatory shouts I rewarded myself for spending years of my life loving everything and refining nothing. Most apparent of all, I was lost in the quicksand of brainless routine, day after day, week after week, until the monotony felt like it could make my heart stop.

I grew tired of working through a major that holds the idea of servitude as an ideal. I yearned to do something freeing, to work for myself and myself only. At the end of my first semester, I was thinking about journalism, music production, and novels as



potential careers, struggling to undo the fact that I had made the wrong career choice.

Then, like a divine message from the Gods to the elders, my father gave me advice I should have followed from the beginning: He told me to break free of self-doubt, spurned from a lifelong inability to "find what you love and put your mind, body, and spirit into it." I then decided to change my mentality of self-deprecation to that of encouragement and unconditional support. Through deep reflection and thoughtful investigation, I was able to break free of self-doubt. I then faced countless career possibilities to choose from. I rekindled the smothered flame in my core that burned brightly for music and grasped the determination to attain the skills needed to create and produce music. Though still in the beginning stages of the learning process, I have been granted clarity and drive and lifted myself out of my despair. I am confident that in whatever challenges I may face, I will push through them without wavering. I will apply 100 percent of my entire being into everything I do, whether it's washing dishes, performing at King's Theater, or doing honors assignments for future classes. I will put my all into living fully and being the best person I can be no matter the obstacles that face me.

NEW YORK CITY COLLEGE OF TECHNOLOGY



CUNY



NO PARKING
Anytime

