

## **Five Phi Theta Kappa Members Named Kaplan Scholars**

Jackson, MS -- The Kaplan Educational Foundation awarded scholarships to a third group of community college students on May 29 and five Phi Theta Kappa members were among the recipients. At the same time the Foundation celebrated the transfer of its second group of scholars from community colleges to four-year schools. Ranging from 18 to 32 years old, the participants are made up of aspiring professors, attorneys and entrepreneurs.

The Foundation's Leadership Program helps students at the community college level with their continuing higher education goals. Targeted to help high-achieving, lower-income, and under-represented students in the New York area reach their full potential, the Program provides scholarships to help pay tuition (historically as much as \$30,000 per year). It also provides for a comprehensive array of resources and personal support. Additional funds help the students with living and other educational expenses. They also serve to guide the students step-by-step through the transfer process from an associate's to a bachelor's degree program. Leadership development training, academic advising, tutoring, and career counseling are also offered.

"In the knowledge economy of today, it is very important that not only deserving high school graduates and students in four-year colleges get scholarship opportunities, but students at the community college level also have a chance to continue their educations," said Jennifer Benn, Director of the Kaplan Educational Foundation. "We hope these students' success will serve as a model to organizations striving to close the achievement gap and to focus on individuals not typically targeted for scholarship opportunities who have demonstrated great leadership potential."

Three years ago Phi Theta Kappa's Executive Director Rod A. Risley worked with Benn to help structure a program funded by Kaplan that would provide assistance to need-based minority students attending New York City area community colleges. "It is very much a hands-on program to help students complete an associate degree and prepare to transfer to very good colleges," Risley explained. "Kaplan provides scholarships and much needed personal advising in the way of assistance."

The Program's first group of scholars will graduate from four-year colleges next spring, including New York University, American University, Goucher College and Morehouse College. The Kaplan Educational Foundation continues to provide service and financial support to these students through the completion of the Bachelor's program. Scholars in the second cohort have already been accepted to four-year schools, including Mount Holyoke College, Smith College, Howard University, Syracuse University and George Washington University.

The newly accepted Scholars are:

Janet Araya, a John Jay College student and aspiring attorney.

Nolvia Delgado, a Borough of Manhattan Community College student working as a legislative assistant for a N.Y. State Assemblyman, interested in a career in public service.

Luis Feliz, a LaGuardia Community College student, volunteer teacher for English as a Second Language (ESL) studies and aspiring professor, who launched and writes for his school's literary magazine.

Bouniyaminou Gbadamassi, a trilingual Bronx Community College student and immigrant from Togo, who hopes to lead a global business.

Kesha Montgomery, a Queensborough Community College student and member of the Business Society Club, hoping to work for the Federal Reserve.

Anastasia Morton, a single mother and LaGuardia student, who wants to teach her community's young people the importance of education and self-esteem.

Don Patterson, a student at LaGuardia, where he holds multiple leadership positions, including Executive Student Senator and liaison for the Student Advisory Council.

Cristina Rodriguez, a LaGuardia student, who wants to work on improving the public healthcare system.

Andrew Santiago, an aspiring writer, Borough of Manhattan Community College student, who works at Prep for Prep.

Norberto Taveras, Hostos Community College student and aspiring occupational therapist, who serves as President of his school's Disability Awareness Club.

Phi Theta Kappa members include Feliz, who serves as Publications Officer for his chapter; Gbadamassi; Patterson, who serves as Phi Theta Kappa chapter liaison for the Student Advisory Council on his campus; Santiago; and Taveras.

The Kaplan Educational Foundation was founded by Kaplan, Inc., a global leader in education and career services. The Foundation provides high-potential, lower-income students with academic and financial support, and leadership training to raise their expectations for success and open doors to opportunities that will change their lives and their communities. For more information about the Kaplan Educational Foundation, visit [www.kaplanedfoundation.org](http://www.kaplanedfoundation.org).

Phi Theta Kappa International Honor Society, headquartered in Jackson, Mississippi, is the largest honor society in American higher education with 1,250 chapters on two-year

and community college campuses in all 50 of the United States, Canada, Germany, the Republic of Palau, the Republic of the Marshall Islands, the Federated States of Micronesia, the British Virgin Islands, the United Arab Emirates and U.S. territorial possessions. More than two million students have been inducted since its founding in 1918, with approximately 100,000 students inducted annually.