

BOROUGH OF MANHATTAN COMMUNITY COLLEGE GRADUATES LOOK FORWARD TO BRIGHT FUTURES

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NEW YORK, June 3 -- The City University of New York's Borough of Manhattan Community College issued the following news release:

In the WaMu Theatre at Madison Square Garden on May 30, the 2007-2008 graduates of BMCC proudly walked across the stage to accept their diplomas. With family members and friends rooting them on, the crowd's enthusiasm was contagious.

After all the graduating students' names were announced, the excited members of the Class of 2008 - sitting in the front of the auditorium in their blue caps and gowns -traditionally tossed their caps into the air. They were enthusiastic, they were sad, they were eager to begin new careers or move on to another college or university in further pursuit of higher learning. But most of them reflected on their time at BMCC with memories they will cherish for years to come.

BMCC Felt Like "Home"

"This is a big accomplishment for me," said Erica Ware, who took two-and-a-half years to receive her A.S. in Human Services from BMCC. "After the first semester, I knew this was the place for me. Everyone made me feel comfortable, and made me feel at home." The Staten Island native plans to attend City College for her Bachelor's Degree.

Raquel Whitter received a Liberal Arts degree from BMCC. "I'm very happy and so excited," Whitter said about commencement. She hopes to pursue of Bachelor's Degree in Nursing at either Long Island University-Brooklyn Campus or City College. "What I loved the most about BMCC is when students would come together for study groups."

Graduate Sabrina Simon is the first one in her family to graduate from college. "It was a long, hard struggle," she said. "But my professors were so great." She especially thanks Professor Danny Sexton, Deputy Chair of the English Department. The Liberal Arts graduate's next step is John Jay College, where she will be studying forensics.

Ricardo Oakley received his degree in Multimedia Programming. Oakley, who is originally from Jamaica, said he'll miss his BMCC friends but definitely plans to stay in New York City. "It's so diverse." He is looking to attend another college in September. **Kaplan Scholar Sharrise Simmons grew up in Brooklyn and is currently living in the Bronx - but not for long. She'll be moving down to Washington, D.C. this fall to attend George Washington University. The BMCC Liberal Arts graduate said she was torn between enrolling at Northeastern University in Boston and George Washington in D.C. "I got a great education at BMCC and the staff is so supportive," said Simmons. This summer, Simmons might take classes while she prepares for her move to George Washington, where she plans to pursue a degree in Biology and Public Health.**

Parademic Graduates Move Onward and Upward

Sitting together in their row at commencement, Jasmin D. Howard, Jimmy Henry, and Ivelisse Burgos enrolled in the August-to-August Paramedic program at BMCC. The three Paramedic graduates became fast friends during their time in class. "Having the reputation from BMCC follows you throughout your life and jobs you pursue," said Howard. "You need to have that motivation and that drive to be a paramedic."

All three graduates are currently working in New York City as paramedics with American Medical Rescue and St. Luke's-Roosevelt Hospital, and Burgos is applying to be a Fire Department EMS.

"I've always had it in me to want to help others," agrees Henry. "To think quickly, move fast, and help others, is why I wanted to be a paramedic."