

# The Kingsborough Dispatch

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## Rickel Foundation And Kingsborough Announce Initiative To Support Math And Science Teachers Of Tomorrow

To help meet a chronic shortage of math and science teachers and increase the number of teachers of color in New York City public schools, the Annette Urso Rickel Foundation and Kingsborough Community College today announced an initiative to support community college students interested in pursuing teaching careers in math or science.

"This is the greatest news for our students who would like to pursue a teaching career in math and science but lack the financial resources to do so," said Dr. Regina Peruggi, president, Kingsborough Community College. "The support provided by the Annette Urso Rickel Foundation to community college students will positively impact the shortage of math and science teachers as well as enhance the diversity of the New York City public school system."

Although her foundation is small, Dr. Annette Urso Rickel believes it can tackle a big job. "Teacher quality is a primary determinant of student achievement. By encouraging motivated community college



**Dr. Regina Peruggi, president,  
Kingsborough Community College**



**Dr. Annette Urso Rickel**

students to pursue teaching careers in math and science, we are helping to raise achievement levels and state-wide test scores in these critical subjects," said Dr. Rickel. "These students are the teachers of tomorrow."

Dr. Rickel noted that community college students are often overlooked, citing the example of the Teacher's Academy which offers financial aid and other services to future teachers attending CUNY's four year colleges. "To pursue careers in such demanding fields as math and science, community college students need and deserve financial and academic support."

Kiesia Messado, a mother

of two young children living in Brooklyn, spent her youth in Jamaica. She earned an associate degree from Kingsborough Community College while working full time at night. Kiesia received a scholarship from the Rickel Foundation in her final year at Kingsborough. She now attends Brooklyn College and is a second year Rickel Teaching Scholar. "You worry about getting your grades at a certain level, getting your papers in on time, about spending quality time with your children. The scholar-

*(Continued on page 2)*

**Kiesia Messado**

ship means one less thing to worry about and that is a huge peace of mind for anyone working and going to school who has kids." Kiesia plans to teach science so she can "make an unforgettable impact on the lives of those I will have the grace to cross paths with in classrooms."

Carmela Randazzo also received an associate degree from Kingsborough Community College and is in her first year at Brooklyn College. A resident of Gravesend, Carmela says the scholarship takes a lot of pressure off her. "It's an honor to receive this scholarship and it helps me a lot financially." Carmela still works part time in a dentist's office to help pay off her loans. "My dream is to become a teacher. Looking back at my childhood years at P.S. 153, I can only remember the good times the teachers brought to the classroom." Carmela, who was an honor and straight A math student at Kingsborough, is taking several math classes

**Carmela Randazzo**

at Brooklyn College.

Since the Foundation was established last year, 20 students with outstanding academic records have received scholarships. Most of the Rickel Teaching Scholars are the first generation in their families to go to college; many are foreign born; some had previously dropped out of college because of financial and other pressures; most have young children and are struggling to get a college degree while raising a family and working. For many, the scholarship makes the critical difference in continuing their education. Four of the 2006 recipients are attending BMCC.

The chronic shortage of math and science teachers in New York City and the nation has been widely reported. Nationally, eighty-four percent of math and science teachers in grades 5 – 12 did not major in these fields. The teachers in grades 5 – 12 did not major in these fields. The recent release of state math tests

showed substantially lower achievement from the 5<sup>th</sup> to 8<sup>th</sup> grades.

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The Annette Urso Rickel Foundation is a 501c(3) organization. The Foundation is soliciting contributions from the public to support additional scholarships for deserving students. For information on applying for a scholarship or for making a contribution, please contact the Annette Urso Rickel Foundation at 730 Fifth Ave., 9<sup>th</sup> Floor, New York, NY 10019, or call 212-659-7760. You may also visit [www.teachingscholars.org](http://www.teachingscholars.org) or email the Foundation at [info@teachingscholars.org](mailto:info@teachingscholars.org). Students interested in applying for scholarships have until March 1, 2007 to make their applications.

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Kingsborough Community College is located on a 70-acre campus in Manhattan Beach, on the southern tip of Brooklyn, New York. It was founded in 1963 and serves approximately thirty thousand students per year, offering a wide range of credit and non-credit course in the liberal arts and career education, as well as a number of specialized programs. The breathtaking Kingsborough Community College campus overlooks three bodies of water: Sheepshead Bay, Jamaica Bay and the Atlantic Ocean. Kingsborough serves a widely diverse student population and ranks among the top community colleges in the country in associate degrees awarded to minority students.

*Office of public relations*