



## Pathways to Graduation

Preparing for high school equivalency and beyond

# THE BRONX BEAT

**P2G Bronx Borough  
Principal, Suri Singh  
Thursday, December 1, 2016**

## Upcoming Events and Reminders

December 7<sup>th</sup> & 14<sup>th</sup>: First Aid/CPR Training @ Bronx Hub (Selected Staff Members)

December 12<sup>th</sup> & 13<sup>th</sup>: TASC Testing @ Mid-Manhattan ALC

December 13<sup>th</sup> – 15<sup>th</sup>: ORT Testing @ Bronx Hub

December 14<sup>th</sup> & 15<sup>th</sup>: TASC Testing @ Brooklyn ALC

December 15<sup>th</sup> & 16<sup>th</sup>: Spanish ORT Testing @ Bronx Hub

December 15<sup>th</sup> & 16<sup>th</sup>: Spanish TASC Testing @ Mid-Manhattan ALC

December 16<sup>th</sup>: Math Professional Development @ Bronx Hub

December 26<sup>th</sup> – January 2<sup>nd</sup>: Winter Recess

January 9<sup>th</sup> & 10<sup>th</sup>: TASC Testing @ Mid-Manhattan ALC

January 11<sup>th</sup> & 12<sup>th</sup>: TASC Testing @ Brooklyn ALC

### Principal's Perspective

On Friday, November 18<sup>th</sup>, we held the first P2G Bronx Partnership breakfast at Bronx Community College. Representatives from North Central Hospital, Future Now, Argus, New Settlement Apartments, Bronx NeON, The Bronx Youth Center, Mary Mitchell, Workforce One, and the Children's Aid Society sat down in the same room and shared a meal with each other. They shared about their respective organizations and what they offered to both P2G students and to the communities they serve. The representatives took advantage of the opportunity and connected with each other, inquiring more about resources that the other agencies offer that can support their students.

**Vision:** P2G Bronx will produce constructive members of a global society who are prepared for college and careers.

**Mission:** P2G Bronx is a supportive and motivational student-centered program where students will have the opportunity to change their lives.

**Creed:** We believe that success depends on hard work, dedication, and continual practice. We believe in educating the heart, the mind, and the soul. We believe we can make it!

#### BRONX REGIONAL REFERRAL CENTER

10 10 Rev. James A. Polite Avenue  
Bronx, NY

Tel: (718) 518-3320

Fax: (718) 518-4009

#### Yesinia Vargas-Criales, AP

*Adlai Stevenson*

*Argus*

*Bronx Youth Center*

*P2G @ Children's Aid Society*

*Lehman H.S. – PM*

*New Settlement*

*Project Ready*

#### Michelle Guzman, AP

*Bronx NeON*

*Dewitt Clinton High School*

*Future Now @ Bronx CC*

*Mary Mitchell Family & Children's  
Center*

*North Central Bronx Hospital*

*Workforce One*

#### Dannette Queen, AP

*Bronx Regional Referral Center/Hub*

*Davidson*

**ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL SPOTLIGHT****Yesenia Vargas - Criales**

Greetings all!!!

Welcome to the new change in time. Lots of excitement in the air as we enter the holiday season.

During the month of November, our students had the opportunity to visit the Lehman College and Mercy College, Bronx Campus. We had a nice turn out, approximately 15-18 students attended. Students were able to get exposed to college life, what they had to offer and many questions answered. Students enjoyed lunch with staff that chaperoned the trip and had great conversations outside the classroom. Students returned to their sites eager to take the ORTs and TASC exams, and looking forward to the college admission process. Thank you staff for making these trips a memorable experience for students. We have another college trip in December to Hunter Community College. All who are interested, please reach out to Mr. Nunez.

The Bronx Borough is planning an overnight trip to Washington DC. I have asked our teachers to recruit two students per site based on criteria discussed. Please submit names ASAP to me so we can continue the process. Thus far, I have received one name.

Congratulations to all students that achieved their HSE in the last two months and their sites for really challenging students in preparation for the TASC. Special **CONGRATULATIONS** to Project Ready whom as of December 1st has achieved 20 HSE's, Let's keep our numbers growing and let's prepare our students for their next steps.

Project Ready has completed Planned Parenthood workshops once a week for the month of November. Thank you Ms. Barnes and staff for setting it up.

Please be mindful of your celebrations this month.

Finally, please join me in welcoming Mr. Palmer, our new teacher who just joined our P2G team at New Settlement. Welcome Aboard!!!

Have a great, safe and blessed holiday season.

**ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL SPOTLIGHT****Michelle Guzman**

When the first issue of the 2016-2017 Bronx Beat was published on November 8, America was in the process of selecting a new President. In the early morning hours of November 9, it was announced that Donald J. Trump had secured the needed electoral college votes, and became President Elect Trump. Only time will tell what kind of President Donald Trump will be, but for now the only thing we are certain of is uncertainty.

In visiting the sites in the days and weeks following the election, I noticed increasing energy around the election...and its results. Staff were teaching what the electoral college is and the differences between winning the electoral college vote and the popular vote. While some students were active in asking questions to help them make sense of what Mr. Trump's election might mean, others avoided the topic completely.

During these visits, I also observed discussions that did nothing short of amaze me. Students were provided the opportunity and the space to articulate their beliefs and explain why they supported Clinton or Trump. Students expressed not only their opinions, but also used facts to support and defend them. When a student stated an opinion or belief that differed from the larger group, the others listened attentively to what was being said, some respectfully pushed back on their peers, and at the end of the day what often happened is that students agreed to disagree and went on with their work.

Discussions such as these support students and promote critical thinking in many ways. Academically, a good discussion question will engage students. It will also provide feedback on the extent of a student's knowledge of the content based on what students are saying. Discussions also allow students to extend their understanding of content by listening and responding to various points of view.

There are also many social emotional benefits of classroom discussion. Discussions promote interactions between and among students. During discussions students learn how to actively listen and respond to one another, regardless of whether or not they agree with the point of view being presented. Participating in a discussion also provides students practice with having their voice heard in a group setting.

Discussions have many, many benefits to support the academic and social emotional development of our students. I encourage all of you to incorporate discussions into your classrooms and work with students on the hard and soft skills they need to be successful in participating in these activities. Happy discussing!

**ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL SPOTLIGHT****Michelle Guzman**

Jennifer Cecilio

My Experience as a P2G Student

Pathways to Graduation has been the start of my professional and educational career. When I applied to P2G I was lucky to be assigned to one of the best sites at North Central Bronx Hospital. I'm in awe with all the program has to offer and attending here is truly a privilege.

Ms. Bishop is a great teacher, always pushing us to do our best but also patient and ready to assist in any given situation. Mr. Ramirez has helped me improve so much in math, which was my weakest subject by far. Ms. James also makes sure I have enough information to study and understand all the math topics. In fact I just took an in class ORT and scored a 15 on the Math section!!!

I have recently started a program in Coop Tech that will allow me to receive several medical certificates at the end of the school year. I give a thankful shout out to Ms. Bernal who brought this opportunity to my attention and made sure I applied.

My expected ORT date is December and if i pass, my TASC exam will be no later than January.

I am extremely thankful for all the staff at North Central and Coop Tech. They are helping me to succeed and reach my best potential. Just because I had my son at a young age doesn't mean I give up. In fact my son is my motivation and the reason why I try even harder to obtain my goals. I also want to mention my partner Antonio, who along with all the people named above, is an extremely helpful part of my support group. He always pushes me to strive for the best!

**ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL SPOTLIGHT****Michelle Guzman****Spotlight on Jennifer Cecilio Cont'd**

Teacher write up on Jennifer Cecilio / NCBH:

Jennifer started with us in September of this year and has gotten off to a great start. Her portfolio is complete and she is maintaining above 90% attendance. She is scheduled for the December ORT with an anticipated TASC date of January 2017.

Jennifer is also currently co-enrolled at Coop Tech here in the Bronx in the year long Medical Office course and upon completion will be issued the following three certificates: 1. Medical Coding 2. Medical Billing and 3. Administrative Medical Assistant. She has done so well so far and impressed her instructors enough that she is one of only 3 students in class chosen to participate in an internship program 2 days a week at Montefiore Hospital.

On a personal note, Jennifer loves to travel with her partner Antonio and their son Antonio Jr. This year they have traveled to both Toronto, Canada and Disneyworld in Orlando, Florida.

We at NCBH are very proud of Jennifer for eagerly taking on the opportunities that have come her way since enrolling in P2G Bronx!!!

**ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL SPOTLIGHT****Michelle Guzman**

Bronx P2G welcomes Lismeldy Rosario,  
College & Career Coach

My name is Lismeldy Rosario, and I am the new CCRC for Bronx Neon, Future Now, Mary Mitchell, Dewitt Clinton, North Central and Workforce 1. I recently graduated from Stony Brook University with a Bachelors of Arts in Psychology. I was born and raised in Manhattan, and am currently adjusting to working my way around the Bronx. My goal as a CCRC is to provide information and guide students with college and career options. I plan to execute this by working one on one with students and by doing career readiness workshops.

**ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL SPOTLIGHT****Michelle Guzman**

Bronx Beat Article 2:

At this time of the school year, we find ourselves in the midst of the holiday season with Thanksgiving just behind us and the winter holidays right in front of us. Although many consider this time of year to be celebratory, this is not always the case. Around the sites, I anecdotally hear of variations in student behavior and/or even an uptick in incidents. I feel it is important take a few moments to acknowledge some of these behaviors and consider what we can do to continue to provide the supportive environments our students need.

We need to be cognizant that while some of our students have supportive family structures in place, there are many more that do not. Many of our kids are here on their own with family members quite literally almost a world away. At a time of year that emphasizes family and abundance, it can be a harsh reminder for our students of the things in their lives that are wrong and they do not have. This can cause a shift in daily behaviors of our kids, especially as we get closer to winter break. During this time our students could exhibit a range of behaviors such heightened sadness and frustration and may act out in negative ways.

But what can we do? By trade, most of us are educators, and have limited training in guiding students through these emotions. However, there are options. Many of us took the Therapeutic Crisis Intervention (TCI) course a few years back. We learned terms such as baseline and what it meant to be agitated, but more importantly we learned strategies on how to support students in finding constructive ways to handle these emotions.

Sometimes students need a safe space to express what they are feeling. In many cases our sites are these spaces. One of the things we can do is provide a space to listen to our students. Some sites have adopted an advisory period where regular “check-ins” are conducted in a group setting. Sometimes, our kids want to be heard individually and a student needs someone to engage a conversation with them. A strategy we can use is the Life Space Interview technique, where the student is spoken to privately. Once the student is isolated, allow the student to explore his/her feelings. Afterward, staff would summarize those feelings. This is followed by making the connection between the feelings and the behavior. If appropriate, an alternate behavior or strategy is introduced to the student with an opportunity for the student to practice the behavior. After this has been done, support the student with acclimating to the new routine.

At our sites we can foster a sense of connectedness. Being connected can remind students that they are surrounded by people who understand, care about and support them. Celebrations acknowledging diversity and different traditions can also foster a sense of connectedness.

Cont'd

**ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL SPOTLIGHT****Michelle Guzman****Article 2 Cont'd**

We can also foster connectedness by providing opportunities for students to interact with other students using turn and talks, group work, and in class discussions. At the same time, don't force them to participate. The holidays can be stressful for everyone, but especially for those who are struggling. Give students the space they need. Be patient and let them take the lead. Be flexible and allow students to do as much or as little as possible. Finally, know your limits when it comes to serious mental health emergencies and contact an administrator who can assist by providing additional support from either a guidance counselor, social worker or psychologist. The holidays can be a time of reflection and change, and as educators we must always encourage the best in our students regardless of unique situations.

Special thanks to School Psychologist, Dr. Karen Mack for her support in writing this article.

**ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL SPOTLIGHT****Dannette Queen**

**Spotlight on Topaz Arthur, College & Career Coordinator  
Erick Mpolesha, Community Coordinator and Ruth Gomez, Parent Coordinator**

Below is a brief autobiography:

---

My name is Ms. Topaz Arthur. I received my Bachelor's Degree from the College of Mount Saint Vincent in Riverdale, NY. My passion is to work with young people and to expose them to qualities of life they may not be prone to receiving. I am certified in Youth Development and credit my experience working with Inner City Youth from my time as a Counselor for Good Shepherd Services at a transfer High school in Brooklyn, NY.

Cont'd

**ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL SPOTLIGHT****Dannette Queen****Spotlight Cont'd****Ruth Gomez, Parent Coordinator**

My name is Ms. Ruth Gomez. My previous work experience was in corporate of 20 + years starting out as a file clerk then moving on to becoming an Administrative Assistant. In 2015, I decided to change my career and on February 9<sup>th</sup>, 2016 I was given the wonderful opportunity to be part of Pathways to Graduation. In my role as Parent Coordinator, I have learned so many new things. One of many proud moments here at Pathways to Graduation was to able to witness this past June the graduation ceremony and it was such a great experience and honor to part take in such a wonderful event with so many graduates. The love for our kids is something that has grown even more because in this role, I realize how much our students in our community need our guidance to lead them onto the right path. I truly enjoy assisting and providing a helping hand to our students.

**Erick Mpolesha, Community Coordinator**

My name is Erick M. I'm a community associate at Bronx P2G, and I started working with the DOE in June of this year. Before joining Pathways to Graduation, I worked for private companies and nonprof-its organizations in which I shared some good moment with them.

When I received a phone call from Pathways to Graduation and they asked me if I would like to come for a job interview, I said yes! I came for the interview and met with Mr. Singh & Ms. Patience. Everything went good. I was asked to come in for a second interview again with Mr. Singh and Ms. Patience. During that time I was pleased to meet for the first time two beautiful and nice women, Ms. Queen & Ms. Gomez. I finally got the job! Two weeks was enough to convince me that this job was perfect for me, and also, those two weeks turned out to be the most excited weeks of my job career.

I love being here and I would like to take this moment to thank every P2G staff member for their kindness and their great work ethics.

## ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL SPOTLIGHT

**Dannette Queen**

# How We Do School

*Ask yourself:*

Is it truly easier for *all* to sit and learn?  
Should 8-year-olds *all* share the same ability and concern?

Does everyone learn better when there's silence in the room?  
Do 50-minute periods give *all* the time to bloom?

Is the only way to learn about geometry from a book?  
Are having five neat paragraphs how each essay should look?

Does every brain work at its best at 7:45?  
Do practice tests for seven weeks make everybody thrive?

Does every learner need a break at exactly the same time?  
Are projects better if each one must have the same design?

Does only certain literature make somebody a reader?  
Do only sports, or math, or speech make somebody a leader?

Can everyone show what is known by way of written tests?  
Does giving "points" inspire *all* to do their very best?

Does compliance to the rules of school define a better student?  
Is it possible the misfits are as able, bright, and prudent?

Appears if we look closely at the structures we embrace—  
Creating hardships for some students, making school a hampered place;

We'd understand that many problems seem to be our fault—  
*How we do school* is often for convenience of adults.

## ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL SPOTLIGHT

### Dannette Queen

#### Reflections About How We Do School *“One Size Doesn’t Fit All”*

Reading the poem, “*How We Do school*”, How We do School, Karen Morrow Durica, line by line, allows me to reflect on the different ways that learners learn. Students are not the same, but we (schools) treat them as if they are. Just as in clothing, lessons must be different too. “*One size doesn’t fit all.*” Research on the human brain lets us know that students are different, that they learn differently and have different likes, preferences, and needs. With this knowledge we still expect students to adjust to the learning when the learning should be adjusted to the student. When we were obtaining our certification we learned that we needed to have, “Knowledge of the learner.” This knowledge should be used to adjust the teaching and learning. It includes their prior knowledge, their likes, what they are like, need, and prefer. The Standards and the needs of the students should guide the instructional plans. Looking at the Weekly List for your site/Hub, getting the item analysis report for their TABE score, administering a diagnostic test when they join your class, administering on-going assessment, and a preference analysis will give you knowledge of your learners.

***Differentiated*** Instructional Strategies enable you to plan your lesson to meet the needs of our diverse learners. **Differentiated instruction** gives a variety of options to successfully meet the Learning Objective and the Standards. You can effectively differentiate content, assessment tools, performance tasks, and instructional strategies.

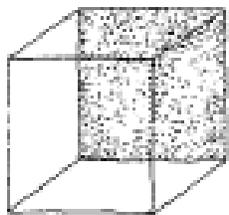
Through differentiation, we assure that all our students have the opportunity to reach their potential.

There are at least two ways to look at something. We see things differently, we are different. Take a look at the following illusions. What do you see? The Book of Think, Marilyn Burns, Little, The Yolla Bolly Press, 1976, page 54.

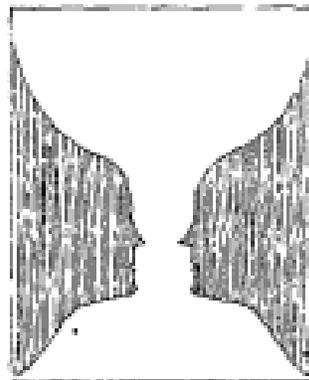
## ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL SPOTLIGHT

### Dannette Queen

Some illusions can be looked at two different ways. Look at each for a bit. You will switch back and forth from seeing one thing to another.



*Is the shaded side  
inside or outside?*



*Do you see the profiles first or  
the goblet?*



*Which is easier for  
you to see — the  
rabbit or the duck?*



*Can you find both the old woman  
and the young woman?*

**ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL SPOTLIGHT**

**Dannette Queen**

**Bronx P2G Students!**

**Come join us on an overnight journey to  
Washington D.C. the Nation's Capitol**

**See the White House, Capitol,  
Federal Buildings, Lincoln and  
Jefferson Memorials and more...**

**Tentative Dates: March 2-3, 2017**

**Deadline to apply: December 9, 2016**

**Interested?**

**Speak to your Counselor for details.**



**Education**

**Food**

**Fun**

**History**

Greetings Colleagues,

My purpose in writing to you is both informative in nature and hopefully helpful in your daily practices with regards to safety protocols and classroom management techniques.

In regards to safety protocols) I would just like to reiterate those measures to be taken in the following circumstances.

**EVACUATION OF BUILDING.** This is your typical fire drill exercise where the faculty will follow the egress/ingress procedures listed on your evacuation location near your respective doorways and lead your students to these locations. Faculty should also carry with them an evacuation folder that lists your current students and Assembly cards. Any missing students, injuries and /or problems should be communicated to first responders immediately. All use of electronic devices during this time is prohibited!

**SHELTER-IN.** The protocol for this calls for all students to remain in the building. Faculty should conduct classroom business as usual. Faculty should increase their situational awareness and continue protocol until they hear over the PA system the "All Clear "directive stating that the "Shelter-in has been lifted."

**LOCKDOWN.** If a notification of either a Hard/Soft Lockdown has been announced via the PA system, the following actions should take place.

Students must immediately return to their previous classroom and move out of sight from any doors/windows in classroom.

Faculty should shut off all lights and keep absolute silence in classroom during drill.

Soft Lockdowns will end with a message via the PA system calling for an All Clear message-The shelter-in has been lifted. Doors may then be re-opened and transitions may once again take place.

Hard Lockdowns may only be lifted by **FIRST RESPONDERS WHO ARE RESPONSIBLE FOR UNLOCKING ALL CLASSROOM DOORS FOLLOWING THE ALL CLEAR MESSAGE.**

#### CLASSROOM MANAGEMENT TECHNIQUES

First, if any student exhibits disrespect, disruptive or inappropriate behavior in your class, please follow these measures first:

Review classroom expectations to entire class.

If any individual student refuses to follow the above mentioned expectations ask the student to briefly conference with you privately outside your classroom door or at your desk. The main

inference being Private so as to avoid any possible drama by having other students getting involved in the situation.

If you feel the conference is not effective and the inappropriate behavior continues then you may have the student removed from your class by communicating to a hall monitor, guidance counselor, Dean or Administrator that such student must be removed during this class period and a follow up conference with written documentation will be followed up by faculty member. This conference should include but not be limited to GC's, Dean, Administrator and parent/ guardian. At no time should a student be told to leave your classroom unaccompanied to the assigned office or room. This may possibly lead to a safety issue.

Parental calls, conferences with the above mentioned facilitators, class transfers, school transfers, school suspensions are all protocols that may be employed depending on the infraction and or egregiousness of the offense.

Finally, let me just remind everyone that our particular population has their own set of issues. Some of these issues we can address using proper protocols, support measures i.e. TCI and/or the realization that some of these issues are not able to be addressed with our limited resources. Communication of these issues via documentation becomes paramount in order to most effectively and expeditiously resolve them.

Brian McCartin – Dean of Students  
Bronx P2G

## Resources

**To access the curriculum, use the following information:**

<https://district79-public.rubiconatlas.org>

**The password for everyone on the public site is:**

**District79**

**For teacher resources and future updates on TASC, visit our P2G website at:**

<http://pathtograd.org>

**Sign in: p2g**

**Password: staff**

**New Website: [www.P2G.nyc](http://www.P2G.nyc)**

**BrainPOP!**

[brainpop.com](http://brainpop.com)

**Sign in: p2g**

**Password: staff**

**P2Gprep.com**

**Password: District 79**

