



For Immediate Release
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FPWA Awards More Than \$25,000 In Scholarships to 14 Resilient College Students

(New York, NY) On Thursday, July 26th, FPWA presented 14 college students with a \$2,000 scholarship at FPWA's 2018 College Scholarship awards breakfast held at its headquarters in Lower Manhattan. Recipients are New York residents, who are in their junior and senior year of college, and were recommended for the scholarship by FPWA's network of community-based member agencies. Students were selected for their individual abilities to excel despite challenging circumstances and have demonstrated a strong commitment to furthering their education.

FPWA has been awarding college scholarships for more than 30 years, with a keen interest in assisting students in their junior and senior year as less financial opportunities are available to upperclassmen. All of the scholarship honorees are working tirelessly to turn adversity into advantage.

"As an organization, we feel an immense amount of pride during our annual college scholarship program", said **Aleciah Anthony, Programs Director at FPWA**. "With the rising costs of education and cost of living, it's become more and more difficult for students and their families to find the financial means to complete school. College scholarships are one of the many ways that we seek to address the needs of New York's young people and potential future leaders, all of whom who have been through adversity yet remain committed to pursuing their education and excelling in their personal lives."

The event was kicked off with an inspiring welcome address by Ms. Anthony, followed by a few words of wisdom from Chief Program and Policy Officer Emily Miles. The scholarships will be used to cover a variety of needs including tuition, additional school fees, textbooks and other school supplies, transportation and food. Advocates who have worked with each of the students were also on hand to provide a few words about their student's unique qualifications and background. The referring community-based member agencies are: Brotherhood/Sister Sol, Cypress Hills LDC, Dewitt Reformed Church, Goddard Riverside Community Center, Harlem Congregations for Community Improvement (HCCI), Henry Street Settlement, Jewish Child Care Association (JCCA), and SCO Family of Services.

The FPWA college scholarships are funded by the [New York Times Neediest Cases](#).

2018 College Scholarship Award Recipients:

Jahmila Amanfu, Senior, Cornell University – *"My long term goals include creating a health initiative or program that lessens the health disparities among poor minorities and to work as a hospital administrator or health program manager."* – Jahmila is a two-time FPWA college scholarship recipient majoring in biology and society with a focus on public/community health. She was recommended for the scholarship by Dewitt Reformed Church.



Irene De Jesus, Junior, Lehman College, CUNY – *“At Lehman College, I hope to be the first graduate in my family and make my parents proud. The FPWA college scholarship will be a tremendous help for me because...I will stop working long hours on weekends and instead use those hours to study.”* Irene is a computer graphics and imaging major and was recommended for the scholarship by Goddard Riverside Community Center.

Noeimie Desir, Junior, University at Albany – *“My dream goal is to enter medical school and become a primary physician or become a physician’s assistant. I also want to do humanitarian efforts and provide services to nations that are in dire need of health care resources.”* Desir is a human biology major and was recommended by SCO Family of Services.

Jermani Faulk, Senior, Binghamton University - *“My education is the most important thing to me in my life right now...this scholarship will allow a kid out of East New York, who never knew he would be in college in the first place, to be the first in his family to obtain a Bachelor’s degree.”* Jermani is a political science major and was recommended for the scholarship by Cypress Hills LDC.

Brendan Lipford, Senior, SUNY Old Westbury – *“I want to teach children that learning is exciting and that you must be dedicated to your work to succeed.”* Brendan is an American studies major and was recommended for the scholarship by Goddard Riverside Community Center.

Luis Linares, Senior, Baruch College – *“We all have that American dream, El sueño Americano, that we heard back in our countries, but we are not told that it’s even harder than how it sounds. Yes, I am another Latino student trying to break the stereotypes, the statistics that surround us, and above all, I am just a simple person trying to obtain the degree that will potentially open a path towards my success.”* Luis is an accounting major and was recommended for the scholarship by Goddard Riverside Community Center.

Jermaine Meadows, Senior, The College at Brockport – *“As a first-generation college student who is supporting myself through my education, this scholarship would be very helpful to me and my studies...outside of the classroom as a student leader, I have learned how to advocate for myself and others. I continue to learn about implementing programs and processes that not only impact small groups but the whole campus.”* Jermaine is a physical education major and was recommended for the scholarship by Cypress Hills LDC.

Heydrick Padilla, Senior, Wheaton College/Dartmouth College – *“In retrospect, I realize that I was never really asked what I wanted to do or what I wanted to become, but the idea that was drilled into my mind was that I needed to be the child to make it for my family. I want to encourage the next generation of leaders passionate for STEM careers, to have their own powered light bulb moment like I did.”* Heydrick is a double major in chemistry, chemical engineering/mathematics. He was recommended for the scholarship by Henry Street Settlement.

Rosaura Romero, Senior, University at Buffalo - *“Helping people, assisting them in dealing with their issues, caring for them and seeing it through is not easy, but if my mentors hadn’t helped me I probably wouldn’t be in college. By becoming a counselor, I can give back what was given to me.”* Rosaura is a psychology and health & human services major with a concentration in community mental health. She was recommended for the scholarship by The Brotherhood/Sister Sol.



Tiara Simmons, Senior, John Jay College – *“When I complete my studies at John Jay College, I plan to pursue a law degree. My passion is to serve the community. I want to give back...by helping at-risk youth and others less fortunate with legal counsel, when in need.”* Tiara is a law and society major and was recommended for the scholarship by Harlem Congregations for Community Improvement, Inc. (HCCI).

Sarah Slater, Senior, SUNY Oswego – *“Since last year’s award, I have accomplished so much...FPWA’s financial support made it possible for me to work less and focus on aspects of school and life that I wanted to improve such as taking summer classes so that I can have a lighter load during the semester.”* Sarah is a two-time FPWA college scholarship recipient. She is double major in business administration and public relations and was recommended for the scholarship by SCO Family of Services.

Megan Soto, Senior, Brooklyn College – *“My dream job in life is to become a speech pathologist down the line. Right now, I am a communications major and I want to be successful and help children and people who are struggling.”* Megan is a communications major and was recommended for the scholarship by Goddard Riverside Community Center.

Natalie Torres, Senior, SUNY Oswego – *“I would like to one day work for a government or private company that uses LiDAR and other remote imaging tools to collect data on and from different parts of the world. Using this data, I would be able to help in natural disaster areas such as where forest has been ravaged by forest fires, or in urban areas to help map new parks or buildings.”* Natalie is a two-time FPWA college scholarship recipient majoring in geology with a concentration in environmental science. She was recommended for the scholarship by Henry Street Settlement.

Nakia Vassell, Senior, Queens College – *“There is never a “right” time to continue your education, or a “right” time for anything, you just have to want it bad enough to make the time to go after what you want.”* Nakia is a psychology and English major. She was recommended for the scholarship by Jewish Child Care Association (JCCA).

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About FPWA

FPWA is an anti-poverty policy and advocacy organization committed to economic opportunity and upward mobility. Having a prominent New York presence for nearly 100 years, FPWA has long served New York City's social service sector, providing grants to help individuals and families meet their basic needs, and advocating for fair public policies on behalf of people in need and the agencies that serve them. FPWA's member network of 170 human-service and faith-based organizations reaches more than 1.5 million people in New York's communities each year. Join us at: fpwa.org, [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), [Instagram](#).