Annual Report: Community Scholars Program

Number of Applications Received: 11
Number of Scholars Selected: 5

The Community Scholars Selectees Provided Below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>#</th>
<th>First Name (Initial)</th>
<th>Last Name</th>
<th>Zip Code</th>
<th>Selected (Y/N)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>R</td>
<td>Hill</td>
<td>10027</td>
<td>Y</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>R</td>
<td>McCoy</td>
<td>10035</td>
<td>Y</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>L</td>
<td>Nickelson</td>
<td>10030</td>
<td>Y</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>P</td>
<td>Noel</td>
<td>10026</td>
<td>Y</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>V</td>
<td>Williams-Kurutz</td>
<td>10025</td>
<td>Y</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The Community Scholars Applicants Provided Below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>#</th>
<th>First Name (Initial)</th>
<th>Last Name</th>
<th>Zip Code</th>
<th>Selected (Y/N)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>M</td>
<td></td>
<td>10037</td>
<td>N</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>K</td>
<td></td>
<td>10027</td>
<td>N</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>M</td>
<td></td>
<td>10031</td>
<td>N</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>A</td>
<td></td>
<td>11237</td>
<td>N</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>R</td>
<td></td>
<td>10037</td>
<td>N</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>K</td>
<td></td>
<td>10025</td>
<td>N</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Additional Supporting Documentation

- Copies of public notifications and/or announcements of available scholarships
- Columbia Community Scholars Program: Prospective Scholars Application
- Columbia Community Scholars Program: Community Scholars & Project Descriptions: Cohort IV
- Columbia Community Scholars Program: Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)
Columbia University’s Community Scholars Program is seeking nominations and applications for its next class; the deadline is Friday, April 29, 2016. The program, one of the benefits associated with the Manhattanville Campus Expansion, offers independent, community-based scholars from Northern Manhattan access to a suite of Columbia University services and resources in order to work toward the completion of a particular project or to attain skill in a particular area. We hope you will share the link with people you think would make great candidates.

Please click here to view an informational video about the Columbia Community Scholars Program

*****

For those with questions regarding the application, we are hosting a Columbia Community Scholars Program Information Session on Thursday, March 17th from 6:00 pm to 7:00 pm in the Burden Room of Columbia University’s Low Library (Room 206). Please RSVP to at your earliest convenience if you plan to attend.

*****

Directions:
Access to Low Library can be gained by entering Columbia’s Morningside Campus at West 116th St. from Broadway or Amsterdam Ave. and walking up the steps of Low Memorial Plaza.

*****

Please see program website for detailed information on eligibility, application requirements and program terms.
One morning this summer, Eric K. Washington led an attentive group through the streets of Harlem, telling the story of the neighborhood’s renowned cultural renaissance in the 1920s. The occasion was the historic revival of Harlem Renaissance composer H. Lawrence Freeman’s grand opera, *Voodoo*, at the Miller Theater at Columbia University’s School of the Arts. In addition to the walking tour, Washington also presented at a two-day symposium on campus entitled, “Restaging the Harlem Renaissance.”

“I am so psyched that I got to see Eric’s presentation,” said Columbia Professor Matthew Sandler. “It very much set the tone.”

Washington is one of thirteen local, independent scholars who spend time on campus as part of the Columbia Community Scholars Program. A joint initiative of Columbia’s Office of Government and Community Affairs, the Office of the Provost, and the School of Continuing Education, the program allows promising candidates from Northern Manhattan libraries access and course auditing privileges as they work toward the completion of a project. Washington has audited courses, including Sandler’s MA seminar in American Studies, and conducts research toward his current book project, which explores black upward mobility in the early 20th Century through the life of a porter at Grand Central Terminal.

Another scholar, Adarsh Alpons, is the founder and executive director of Project Art, an organization which provides public school students with free art education. Alpons has taken advantage of courses at Columbia in fundraising and non-profit management in order to grow the venture. “When I applied to the program last spring, we were in about three or four public librar-

“You really see the resources available in your community,” Alpons said. “Now we’re in 26 locations across all five boroughs.” Alpons’ success has landed him a spot in *Town and Country Magazine’s* “Top 50 Best Philanthropists” as well as recognition as a CNN “Hero.” His focus now is on taking Project Art national, with programs set to launch in Miami and Detroit.

Martha Diaz is an advocate for using hip-hop as a teaching tool; she is using her time as a Community Scholar to access resources at Columbia Teacher’s College in the design of a hip-hop teaching certificate program. So far,
she has presented her research at the Annual Diversity in Research and Practice Conference at Teachers College and launched the Reel Justice film series as part of the Education in Justice Initiative at Columbia's Center for Justice. Diaz also says that she has been able to leverage her University affiliation to form new alliances with community and business leaders. "You really see the resources available in your community," she said.

For his part, Washington has created two new walking tours of Hamilton Heights and Sugar Hill in Harlem in partnership with the Municipal Art Society of New York and continues to push ahead with work on his book. "Use of libraries, where I can comb over old newspapers going back to the last century and beyond has been invaluable," he said. "Access to interviews and profiles of people who were living then sheds an incredible amount of light on [my work]."

Interested in learning more about the Columbia University Community Scholars Program? An open house for perspective applicants will be held on Thursday, March 17th from 6-7 p.m. in room 206 of Low Library on Columbia’s Morningside Campus, 116th Street and Broadway. For more information, please call: 212-854-3117 or e-mail: communityaffairs@columbia.edu

This article first appeared in The Columbia Newsletter: News for Our Neighbors, Fall 2015.

---

Photo: Nadi Abi-Muhammad

L-R: Abiodun Oyewole, founding member of The Last Poets and Malaak Shabazz, youngest daughter of Malik EL-Shabazz, AKA Malcolm X
Community Services

Outreach to Disconnected Youth
Columbia University has initiated outreach to identify and engage disconnected youths ages 16-24 in the local community who have not completed high school or obtained a GED in order to enroll them at no cost in New York City Department of Education (NYCDOE) high school programs or GED programs. Upon completion of a high school diploma or GED, participants will be referred for skills training, internships and work-based learning opportunities through community-based organizations. Columbia will make a good faith effort to place participants in positions with Columbia University. For more information about how to access the program, please contact 212-854-1116.

Columbia Employment Information Center
The Columbia Employment Information Center (CEIC) (the “Center”) serves as the central community-based resource for local residents to apply for open positions at Columbia University. The Center provides a wide range of services to the local community including in-person and online job readiness training programs, one-on-one job-search counseling and assistance, and access to online job opportunities at Columbia.
You are welcome to call our 24-hour hotline at 212-851-1551; it provides general information about the Center, information on Columbia University job opportunities, information on construction activities and information on construction-related job opportunities.

Summer Sports Camp Scholarships for Children
Columbia University offers 25 need-based scholarships for children ages 6-12 from the Manhattanville area to attend Columbia’s Roe-rees’s Cubs Summer Camp. One scholarship is equal to one week of camp. All scholarship applications must come to Columbia University through the West Harlem Development Corporation (WHDC). For more information, please contact the WHDC at 646-475-3394.

Dental Health Screenings for Senior Citizens
Columbia University offers free dental health screenings for senior citizens through the Dental Health Screening Program. As part of Columbia University’s College of Dental Medicine Community DentCare Network, the ElderSmile Program offers free dental screenings and referrals for further dental treatment to seniors who are not currently enrolled in college, to have the opportunity to attend up to two selected lectures drawn from Columbia University’s offerings in the Arts and Sciences during the academic year.

Housing Legal Assistance
For the period from January 1, 2009, through December 31, 2014, Columbia University provided funding for one attorney, acceptable to New York City’s Housing Preservation & Development Office (NYCHP), to provide legal advice to individuals in the Manhattanville area. For the period from January 1, 2015, through December 31, 2030, Columbia University provides funding for two attorneys at a legal assistance provider acceptable to NYCHP serving the Manhattanville area to provide free legal advice to residents of the Manhattanville area. Funding will not exceed $4 million through December 31, 2030.

Mobile Dental Center for Preschool Children
Columbia University offers free dental care for preschool-age children from the Manhattanville in West Harlem area through the Mobile Dental Center. The Mobile Dental Center is a program of Columbia University’s College of Dental Medicine’s Community DentCare Network, which aims to reduce dental decay and improve the oral health of Northern Manhattan’s underserved children, through comprehensive dental treatment and oral health education.

Scholarships for Lifelong Learners
Columbia University provides scholarships for 50 residents of Manhattanville houses, Grant Houses, and the local community who are 65 years of age and older to audit up to two courses per year. Administered through Columbia’s School of Continuing Education, the Lifelong Learners Program is designed for individuals committed to the principles of lifelong education.
For more information about the program, please call 212-854-0419.

Space Provisions for Non-Columbia-Affiliated Local Artists and Cultural Organizations
Columbia University, consistent with current practice, makes good faith efforts to accommodate requests by local artists and cultural organizations not affiliated with Columbia for access to its indoor or outdoor spaces for programming that may include, but is not limited to, information sessions, performances, special events or presentations. Payment for such space will be in accordance with then current University protocols. Columbia University space is generally awarded on a first-come, first-served basis, with priority given to Columbia and student activities, followed by local community activities.

Columbia Community Scholars Program
Columbia University offers independent, community-based scholarships to Northern Manhattan residents to access a range of University services and resources not usually afforded to nonaffiliated residents. Services and resources shall be provided at no cost to participants and shall include access to all University libraries, including online access, course auditing privileges, dialogue with scholars in their field of study, and the ability to participate in seminars and special events developed specifically for the group.
For more information, please direct inquiries about the Community Scholars Program to 212-854-4289 or communityaffairs@columbia.edu.

Athletics Clinics
Columbia University’s varsity sports programs and coaches of football, volleyball, basketball, soccer, swimming, track and field, and tennis sponsor and participate in seasonal sports clinics for local community children between the ages of 5 and 13 in University facilities and throughout Harlem and Washington Heights.

Course Auditing
Columbia University funds up to 50 courses per year through Columbia’s Continuing Education Auditing Program for residents (25 residents from NYCHA Manhattanville Houses and Grant Houses and 25 residents from the local community). The Auditing Program provides adults not currently enrolled in college, with the opportunity to attend up to two selected lectures drawn from Columbia University’s offerings in the Arts and Sciences during the academic year.

Shuttle Bus Service for the Elderly and Disabled
Columbia University provides a shuttle bus service free of charge to members of the local community who are disabled or who are senior citizens (including their attendants) via the ADA-accessible inter-campus Shuttle. The shuttle bus service complies with ADA specifications to connect the Project Site to subway stations at:
• 96th Street and Broadway
• 116th Street and Broadway (Morningside campus)
• 125th Street and Broadway
• Harlem Hospital Center (135th Street and Lenox Avenue)
• Columbia University Medical Center (168th Street and Broadway)
The shuttle bus service runs on a regular schedule throughout the day on every weekday, except on state and federal public holidays.

Undergraduate Scholarships for Aid-Eligible Students From the Local Community
In an effort to encourage local students to attend Columbia College and the Fu Foundation School of Engineering and Applied Science, Columbia University undertakes a targeted recruitment effort for qualified students from the local community. Columbia University has established scholarships and aid to serve up to 40 aid-eligible undergraduate students per year who are admitted to Columbia College and/ or the Fu Foundation School of Engineering and Applied Science, with funding made available to meet their fully demonstrated financial need.
The 2016 Community Scholars application was distributed electronically to the following officials and organizations below. In some instances, telephone contact was also initiated as a follow-up measure.

**Elected Officials**
House Representative Charles B. Rangel  
House Representative Jerrold Nadler  
State Senator Adriano Espaillat  
State Assembly member Daniel O’Donnell  
State Assembly member Keith Wright  
State Assembly member Herman Farrell  
State Assembly member Guillermo Linares  
City Councilmember Inez Dickens  
City Councilmember Mark Levine  
Public Advocate Letitia James  
Manhattan Borough President Gale Brewer (both her uptown and downtown offices)

**Community Board Chairs and Dist. Managers** for CB9, CB10, CB11, CB12 and CB7

**Civic Organizations**
125th Street Business Improvement Districts (BID)  
Citizens Against Recidivism  
Columbia Community Service Agencies  
The Correctional Association of New York  
The Greater Harlem Chamber of Commerce  
The Morningside Area Alliance (MAA)  
The New York Women’s Chamber of Commerce  
West Harlem Development Corporation  
West Harlem Group Assistance

**Neighborhood Tenant Associations**
3333 Broadway Tenant Assoc.  
Manhattanville Houses Tenant Assoc.  
Morningside Gardens Tenant Assoc.  
Ulysses S. Grant Houses Tenant Assoc.
COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY
IN THE CITY OF NEW YORK

Columbia Community Scholars Program

Now accepting applications and nominations through April 29, 2016

For more information visit:
http://gca.columbia.edu/columbia-community-scholars-program
Program Information

The Community Scholars Program at Columbia University is designed to offer independent, community-based scholars from Northern Manhattan access to a suite of Columbia University services and resources that allow them to work toward the completion of a particular project or to attain skill in a particular area.

The program, part of Columbia University’s community benefits and services related to the Manhattanville Campus Expansion, resulted from discussions with the West Harlem community.

Objective: The Columbia Community Scholars Program was developed to enable independent scholars to pursue their lifelong learning aspirations, whether it be completing an independent project or attaining skills in a particular area. The program allows Scholars a formal opportunity to access University resources and participate in the intellectual life of the University through interaction with faculty, students, and other visiting scholars. Participation in the Columbia Community Scholars Program is not intended to enable a Scholar to enter into a degree program; no course credit, certificate or diploma is awarded upon completion.

Program Duration: 3 years

Community Scholars are expected to work toward the completion of a proposed project or to attain a skill in a particular area during their 3-year tenure. The scope of each Scholar’s project is delineated at the beginning of the program. Over the course of the three years, Community Scholars will have the opportunity to share their progress with members of the University and neighboring community.

The first two cohorts of independent scholars were selected through a competitive application process. Candidates who are selected from the current field of applicants will be welcomed to campus in the fall of 2016.

Columbia Community Scholars Program Application

Name: ________________________________________________

Home Address: ____________________________________________

Daytime Phone: (___)________________________ Evening Phone: (___)________________________

Cell Phone: (___)________________________ Email: ________________________________

The Community Scholars Program offers independent, community-based scholars from Northern Manhattan access to a suite of Columbia University services and resources in order to work toward the completion of a particular project or to attain skill in a particular area. The program originated as one of the benefits and amenities to be provided to the local community as part of Columbia’s Manhattanville Campus Expansion. The program allows successful applicants a formal opportunity to participate in the intellectual life of the university, providing opportunities for interaction with faculty, students, and other visiting scholars. It also helps foster and deepen ties between the University and the many independent members of the cultural and intellectual community surrounding it.

The services include access to all the university’s libraries (including on-line access), course auditing privileges (in departments offering auditable courses), interaction with scholars in their field of study, and the ability to participate in seminars and social events. A Scholar may wish to avail him or herself of all or some of the services offered; he or she may begin the program simply wishing to access the libraries, and later into the program opt to audit one or two classes. The program’s coordinator will assist each scholar to access resources and determine his or her needs, as well as alerting them to relevant opportunities on campus as they arise.

Eligibility:

- You must be a Borough of Manhattan resident living north of 96th Street;
- You cannot have a current affiliation with Columbia University;
- You must have a High School Diploma, GED or equivalent.

Scholars will be appointed for terms of three years, and will be selected by a committee that may include Columbia senior staff, deans and faculty, and may also include leaders from local cultural institutions. At the end of each Scholar’s appointment, the tangible outcome of his or her term at the University will be submitted to remain accessible for future Community Scholars and others to review.

(Continue application on opposite side)
Columbia Community Scholars Program Application
(Page 2)

Please attach the following:

☐ 1-2 page narrative describing your educational and/or professional background;

☐ 1-2 page description of the project you propose to pursue, your anticipated end
  goal/outcomes and the University resources you would like to access in order to achieve
  these outcomes (i.e. courses to audit, library, etc.). Please include a brief statement on how
  your project might be of benefit to the larger community;

☐ Résumé, or Curriculum Vitae;

☐ High School Transcript, equivalent, or equivalent experience (please explain), and
  transcripts from any college or university work;

☐ 2 letters of reference (may be from a current or former employee, community leader,
  teacher, professor, colleague, or eminent person in your field of study);

☐ Other supporting materials you would like to have considered as a part of your application:
  work sample, writing samples of up to 2 pages, audio or videotape. Please note that these
  materials will not be returned.

Please submit all materials in one package postmarked no later than April 29, 2016 to:
Community Scholars Program
Office of Government & Community Affairs
Columbia University
309 Low Library
535 West 116th Street
New York, NY 10027

Please note:
• This program does not lead to course credit, a degree or certification.
• All instruction in classes is conducted in English unless otherwise noted in course descriptions.
• Admission to Community Scholars program is conditional upon proof of northern Borough of
  Manhattan residency.
• Although terms are stated as 3 years, individual scholars may opt to complete the program in
  less time; continued enrollment depends upon continued compliance with all program
  requirements and University regulations.

The New York State Empire State Development Corporation may require Columbia University to submit each
applicant’s name, address and proof of residency to confirm program eligibility.

Signature: ___________________________ Print name: ___________________________
Date: ____________________________

Please direct inquiries about the Community Scholars Program to:
(212) 854-4289 or communityaffairs@columbia.edu
2016 Finalists

Renee L. Hill

**Project:** A study of religious communities of West Harlem, culminating in public forums and an online interactive platform designed to educate and foster multi-faith community networks.

Renee L. Hill is an independent scholar of religion and social change. Her interests include religious pluralism, liberation theologies, feminist studies, history and movements for political and social justice. In addition, she is an experienced community organizer who has worked with faith based groups and has served as the organizer for marriage equality for Lambda Legal focusing on religious and African American communities in New Jersey. She holds a bachelor’s degree in Political Science from Bryn Mawr and a Ph.D. from Union Theological Seminary.

Regan Sommer McCoy

**Project:** To develop practical research skills in oral history, digital archiving and cataloging in order to expand the Mixtape Museum’s online catalog.

Regan Sommer McCoy is a music industry and information technology professional engaged in various projects related to hip hop preservation and education. She is the founding director of the Mixtape Museum, an archival initiative that promotes the study of mixtapes as records of time, place and historical situation. Through her work with the museum, she has become involved with a number of cultural institutions including the Hip Hop Hall of Fame and the Hip Hop Education and Preservation Alliance.
Peter Noel

**Project:** A book-length compilation of Mr. Noel’s investigative reporting on police brutality in 1980’s and 1990’s New York City.

Peter Noel is a journalist with 30 years experience in investigative reporting for *The Village Voice, The Amsterdam News* and others. Born in Trinidad, Mr. Noel immigrated to New York City in 1978 where he began reporting on instances of police violence against unarmed African American men in Harlem as well the rise of controversial figures like Al Sharpton. In the 1990’s, he also covered the Los Angeles riots that followed the Rodney King verdict and post-apartheid election violence in South Africa. He is the author of one previous book, *Why Blacks Fear America’s Mayor: Reporting Police Brutality and Black Activist Politics Under Rudy Giuliani*, and was the co-host of *The Week in Review* on WRKS-FM radio.

Lil Nickelson

**Project:** *Healthy Living for People of Color* is a multi-faceted approach to promoting healthy eating habits for residents of Upper Manhattan; it includes an online newsletter, pop-up shops, and cooking classes.

Lil Nickelson’s love of home cooking dates back to her childhood spent preparing meals from scratch at her mother’s side. As an adult with diabetes, she began relying on her cooking skills to take charge of her health and encourage others to do that same. In “Dining with Miss Lil,” her monthly column for *Harlem World Magazine*, she has documented her quest to establish a healthier relationship to food. Ms. Nickelson holds a Master of Business Administration from New York University and has taken courses at the Institute of Culinary Education.

Vivian Williams-Kurutz

**Project:** To work towards growth and sustainability for the Harlem Wellness Center, a nonprofit that promotes preventative strategies for combating health disparities.

Vivian Williams- Kurutz is the founder and Executive Director of the Harlem Wellness Center, where she focuses on educating those most vulnerable to adult onset diseases that can be managed or prevented through positive health choices. She is certified as a personal trainer, meditation teacher, yoga instructor and Thai massage practitioner. In addition, she holds a Bachelor’s degree in Liberal Arts and is a graduate of the American Musical and Dramatic Academy. Ms. Williams-Kurutz is currently pursuing a Masters degree in mental health counseling.
Community Scholars Program
Frequently Asked Questions

Who may apply to this program?

- You must be a Borough of Manhattan resident living north of 96th Street
- You cannot have a current affiliation with Columbia University
- You must have a High School Diploma, GED, or equivalent

Will participation in the Columbia Community Scholars Program lead to degree program matriculation?

The Columbia Community Scholars Program was developed to assist Scholars in their completion of an independent project or to help them attain skills in a specific area of interest. Participation in the Columbia Community Scholars Program is not intended to enable a Scholar to enter into a degree program; no course credit, certificate or diploma will be awarded upon completion.

What is the cost, if any, for the Columbia Community Scholars Program?

There are no costs associated with participation in the Columbia Community Scholars Program. However should a Scholar opt to audit courses, course fees, lab fees, or book costs may apply.

Are “official” transcripts required or will “unofficial” transcripts suffice for the application?

Unofficial transcripts can be submitted with the program application; however selected applicants will be required to submit official transcripts to participate in the program.

I am a Columbia University alum; does that deem me ineligible to participate in the program?

Only current affiliation with the University renders an applicant ineligible. Columbia alumni who do not have a present affiliation with the University are able to apply.
Is this a new program?

The program was originated as part of Columbia University’s community benefits and services related to the Manhattanville Campus Expansion and resulted from discussions with the West Harlem community. The first cohort of five independent Scholars was selected from a competitive field of applicants during the spring of 2013. These Scholars began the program in the fall 2013.

How many Scholars will be selected?

Up to five new Scholars will be selected to begin the program in the fall of 2016.

What is the deadline to apply to the program?

April 29, 2016.

When will I hear about the status of my application?

Applicants will be contacted of program decisions in early-to-mid summer.

When does the program start?

New Scholars will begin the program at the start of the fall semester.

What is the duration of the program?

Columbia Community Scholars are enrolled for a period of up to three years.
If I applied last year but was not selected, may I apply again?

Yes! You may apply another time. You will need to submit a new application in order to be considered.

Is there an age limit for applicants?

No; adults meeting the program eligibility may apply to the program regardless of age.

Do I need to be an American citizen in order to apply?

No. As long as you are a legal resident of the United States, you may apply.

What University resources are Scholars able to access?

Individuals selected as Columbia Community Scholars:

- Are issued a Columbia University ID
- Will be given a Columbia University email account
- Gain access to all The Columbia University Libraries (including on-line access)
- Have course auditing privileges (in departments offering auditable courses).
- Have opportunities for dialogue with faculty members in their field of study.
- May participate in seminars and social events.