Monroe College 4th Annual Female Empowerment Event

Lisa Evers of FOX5 Delivers Keynote Address

Stirring an audience of 350 young women, Monroe College hosted its 4th annual female empowerment event, intended to boost confidence, challenge female stereotypes and inspire young women.

The crowd, exclusively young women, packed Mintz Auditorium to hear motivational stories from other women who climbed the corporate ladder and attained a measure of success which served as a seed for their own self-empowerment. They also heard from Fox 5 anchor and radio personality Lisa Evers, who delivered the keynote speech.

“The idea is to tell a story and share your story with other young people so they could know that even though they’re going through a tough situation, there is hope,” said Dr. Cecil Wright, Monroe’s Dean of Admissions, who conceived the idea three years after organizing a men’s empowerment workshop that continues today.

For the Bronx, confidence building workshops seem to fill a mentorship gap for young people. A report shows there are 233,880, or 64 percent, of Bronx homes with only one parent, making mentoring a critical part to an adolescent’s upbringing.

“Girls get lost whether it be over boys, family issues, or school issues, so they always need a mentor,” said Lindsay Rosen, Assistant Dean of Admissions. “We want girls to actually express themselves and be themselves,” said Rosen. “And be you.”

This is very important for teenagers to see that there are people out here that do wonderful things and have great educations. Next month, mentors from the workshop will host their students for a luncheon.

“We’ve had mentors who’ve attended these events years ago, return to serve as mentors” said Wright. “So it’s a pay forward.”
School of Education ABC Club

The School of Education relaunched its ABC Education Club this January with club advisor, Professor Susanne Metscher. With over forty student participants, the group aims to create a support group for students to help one another through their course studies, fieldwork in community schools, and personal life as well. Vivian Son, the club’s president explains, “We are club members building a better understanding of our field together; just as we are helping the club grow; we are growing too. The club’s mission is to support its members and create opportunities for us to find ways to enrich our community, school, and our very own academic and personal life.” Throughout interactive dialogues, projects, and activities, the group is determined to support one another in setting high expectations for themselves and the students they work with. The students themselves decide what topics the club will focus on based on their own needs and interests. Next semester, the students will even begin to lead some of the sessions themselves on topics they are passionate about!

The group’s mission is also to develop materials and ideas to support elementary schools in the community. Allicia Atkinson, a club member and the club secretary explained, “The ABC Education Club is not just a meeting place or a club to put on my resume. For me, it’s a place where like minds have a passion to change lives through education. We all have the common goal and the determination to give back to our local communities.” The club recently teamed up with Jumpstart to create reading bookmarks for students. The club also has begun creating engaging activities to support struggling students in their community schools develop sight word knowledge to support their literacy growth. And believe it or not… the club has taken their work abroad to Honduras by working alongside the Foundation for Education in Honduras (FEIH) to create a pen pal program with a school in Honduras.

The club began by meeting twice a month, but since the club was such a success, the members voted to now meet weekly. Stay tuned to hear about fundraising and special events this club will run in the future. Nelson Mandela once said that, “Education is the most powerful weapon which you can use to change the world.” With every club session, the ABC Education will start to do just that.

The Culinary Institute of New York at Monroe Scores Big in Long Island Culinary Classic!

The culinary team representing the Culinary Institute of New York at Monroe College earned 13 more American Culinary Federation (ACF) medals at the ACF Long Island Chapter Culinary Classic. Ana Rivera, a Bronx student, earned top honors with a gold medal and scholarship from the chapter. Brooklyn resident, Kafi Ferreira earned second place overall with a gold medal and fellow Brooklyn resident and C-cap student Michael Fersner Jr. took third place with a silver medal for his Dulce de Leche cake. Silver medals were also won by Bronx students Najia Barkley and Ashley Pagan, both in pastry. Mount Vernon student Shevan Palmer, Spring Valley student and former America’s Best High School Pastry Chef winner Keiry Palma and Arizona C-cap student Sabrina Aguilar-Torres also took silvers. Bronze medals were won by Astoria resident Georgiá Demakakos, Manhattan resident Steven Arias, Joshua Sutherland of Mount Vernon, and Bronx student Victor Gonzalez. Faculty member Eric Pellizzari also earned a silver medal and won the R.J. Minor’s culinary competition. The medal count now stands at 631!

Alum of the Month: Tevin Shepard

Tevin Shepherd, an award winning youth development volunteer from Saint Lucia, has lived most of his life facilitating the development of young people.

In 2012, Tevin graduated from Monroe College with a B.B.A. in Information Technology. He found experienced professors, motivated support staff and a stimulating degree program that prepared him not only for his career but for life.

After graduating, Tevin worked with Unicomer as the Assistant Service Manager responsible for technical aftersales service. At Unicomer, Tevin managed a team involved with aftersales customer satisfaction and worked closely with international suppliers to train his employees.

Today, Tevin is the Administrative Coordinator for the Caribbean Region working with the Foundation for the Development of Caribbean Children. In his role, he manages projects in early childhood development and coordinates the administration of the foundation in various Caribbean Islands.

He is also Second Vice President of the Saint Lucia National Youth Council, a democratic non-government organization representing the interests and ideals of youth in Saint Lucia. Tevin is the recipient of the prestigious Queen’s Young Leader Award. In June 2016, Tevin will receive this award from Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II at Buckingham Palace in London. The award recognizes outstanding youth across the Commonwealth making a positive impact on lives. Tevin is also the recipient of the 2013 Youth of the Year Award in Saint Lucia, an award presented by the Ministry of Youth Development and Sports to the most outstanding youth of the year.

Tevin’s favorite quote is: “The opportunity is ours to be the architects of our nation’s wealth; not wealth through money, but through the prosperity of people.” He encourages students and alumni of Monroe College to be the change they want to see in the world; to take some time to contribute to the development of their community through volunteerism.
Sports Management Programs Approved

Monroe College announced that it is launching Associate (A.A.S.) and Bachelor (B.B.A.) degree programs in Sports Management to meet the growing demand for qualified professionals working in all aspects of the business side of professional and amateur sports, such as sports marketing, sports information, and the management of sports organizations and governing authorities.

The Bureau of Labor Statistics has reported an increase in sports-related jobs, with positions relating to the promotion of performing arts, sports, and similar events growing by 30% between 2010–2014, and those relating to the representation of artists, athletes, entertainers, and other public figures as agents and managers growing by 17%.

In addition, the greater New York City area is home to five major U.S. sports leagues and 14 professional sports franchises. It also boasts countless collegiate programs and major annual sporting events like the US Open tennis tournament. Broadcasting, marketing and other related management services associated with the sports industry also maintain a large presence here.

Monroe College introduced a concentration in Sports Management and three sports management courses in the fall of 2012. Within one year, it was the fastest-growing minor offered. The new programs will be first offered in the fall 2016 semester, providing students with the necessary knowledge, perspective, and analytical skills for careers within professional sports-related organizations and their commercial partners.

"The launch of these Associate and Bachelor degree programs is a strong addition to our existing Associate degree program in Business Administration and Bachelors in Business Management programs," said Ahmed Eshra, Dean of Monroe’s School of Business and Accounting.

Those enrolled in the Sports Management programs will learn the fundamentals of how professional clubs oversee their business, the components of event management, finance and budget strategies, marketing, and how to initiate promotional campaigns. Students will also explore issues in media sports coverage and principles of ethics and law in business.

News and Notes:

- Spring definitely has sprung in the Mintz Auditorium as the Student Activities Office hosted its second annual Family Fun Day. The event creates an environment where parents can bond with their kids through various activities and also meet other families. They enjoyed foods such as cotton candy, popcorn, and hotdogs. Some got their faces painted while others constructed their bunny hats and played their favorite board games. At the end it was the magic show that took their breaths away as they sat in true amazement watching fire transform into a bird! We are convinced that everyone in attendance had a great time; we are already looking forward to the next Family Fun Day Event.

- In observance of Women’s History Month, the Student Activities Office (SAO) hosted a variety of events. Early in March there was a panel discussion by female staff and faculty who have attained a doctoral degree. The panelists gave the students a synopsis of their field of study and the challenges which they encountered while pursuing their degree. On March 16 SAO hosted a Women’s History Trivia Game. Students got the opportunity to test their knowledge on women’s past and current events. SAO hosted Qurrat Ann Kadwani, who grew up in the Bronx and is a graduate of the Bronx High School of Science and a theatre graduate of SUNY Geneseo. Qurrat’s play, *They Call Me Q* is an emotionally charged comedy consisting of 13 characters performed by Qurrat. The play speaks to the universal search for identity experienced by immigrants of all nationalities. After the play, Qurrat spent an hour with students to discuss the play and various social issues.

- This year’s Financial Wellness Week took place March 7–11. The turnout was a resounding success with both campuses teeming with lively events: Ash Cash’s presentations on credit, Financial Wellness fairs, Professor Washington’s Financial Education workshop, Panel Discussion on Student Loan Repayment; Movie Night – The Big Short; and Jeopardy games! The two campuses witnessed unprecedented involvement and interest in financial matters by our students. The event was successful in bringing insightful financial awareness to the students that were in attendance.

- On March 4, the Honors Program hosted its 2nd joint honors project with students from Point Park University, Pittsburgh, PA. The students came together to participate in a Read Across America project. The students were divided into three teams, which visited three different sites. The sites included the New Rochelle Public Library, Lebanon Phipps Universal Pre-K School, and Asbury Nursery School. At each location, the students read a book to the children and then helped the 2–4 year-olds craft a project that connected to the book’s theme. The participants enjoyed a discussion luncheon, analyzing scholarly articles and data that discuss the importance of reading to children.

- Monroe College Track and Field star Tautvydas “TK” Kieras signed a three-year contract with the NFL Kansas City Chiefs. Kieras, a native of Vilnius, Lithuania, came to Monroe in 2011 on an athletic scholarship to join the college’s nationally ranked Track and Field program. During his time at Monroe, he was a two-time All-American, winning two consecutive NJCAA discus championships. An honors student, Kieras graduated Monroe with an Associate degree in Business Administration. He continued his education at Mississippi State University on a Track and Field scholarship. Although he never played football, he caught the eye of team scouts while participating in Mississippi State’s Pro Day earlier in the month. The Chiefs flew him to their facility for a private workout and subsequently signed him as a free agent. "TK’s journey from the discus field to the gridiron is an incredible story, and we congratulate him on this extraordinary accomplishment," said Mark Goodman, TK’s former coach at Monroe College.

- 2016 Idol. On March 15, Taina Arce, Moriah Cody and Katheryn Rios competed for the final time. The ladies were required to sing one song of their choice and then did a breath-taking collaboration to Bill Withers’ *Lean on Me*. In the end, it was Katheryn Rios’ smooth rendition of Andra Day’s *Rise Up*, which captivated the audience as they voted her to be their 2016 Monroe Idol. Katheryn is a Medical Assisting major and a member of the Monroe College Music Club. In second place was Moriah Cody and Taina Arce placed third. Katheryn received $250.00, and will get the opportunity to sing the Star Spangled Banner at this year’s Homecoming Game.
Seventh Annual “Male Empowerment”

Monroe College held its 7th annual “Male Empowerment Event” for minority high school students with renowned education innovator and visionary Dr. Steve Perry delivering the keynote address.

Approximately 350 young men from local high schools attended the event to build their self-confidence and, by doing so, combat a deep-rooted problem within our higher education system – the weak enrollment and even weaker program completion rates. This year’s theme is “Tying into Manhood,” which reflects the transition these high school juniors and seniors are experiencing as they exit young adulthood and face important education, career, and lifestyle decisions.

The Male Empowerment Event began with the presentation of a blue tie to each student, symbolizing a commitment to the future success and leadership possibilities attainable for students. The tie ceremony was followed by a keynote address delivered by Dr. Steve Perry, the founder and principal of Capital Preparatory Magnet School in Hartford, Connecticut. Dr. Perry is returning to deliver the keynote address after his speech was met with a standing ovation at the previous year’s event.

A key component of the day’s activities was the small group mentoring provided by more than 40 accomplished male role models – including Monroe College faculty and staff and judges, lawyers, doctors, members of law enforcement, bankers, and entrepreneurs. These mentors spoke with students about the personal obstacles and challenges they faced in their career and personal lives, and the decisions they made to overcome them.

“Our annual Male Empowerment Event grew out of a concerted effort within Monroe to find innovative ways to counter national statistics on low college enrollment and degree completion rates for young men of color, particularly those from disadvantaged backgrounds,” said Dr. Cecil Wright, Dean of Admissions at Monroe College and director of its student empowerment programs. “We take great pride in the positive impact the event has had on setting attendees on the path to becoming confident, motivated, well-educated men.”

AmeriCorps Jumpstart Program Engages Monroe Students in Service

If you walked past Ustin 111 on a Friday morning in late September, you would have heard the laughter and cheers of students as they watched six of their peers lip-synching to “I Will Always Love You,” by Whitney Houston. No, this wasn’t an activity run by the Student Activities Office, but the end of the first AmeriCorps Jumpstart training.

AmeriCorps Jumpstart Bronx at Monroe College is working toward the day every child in America enters kindergarten prepared to succeed by sending 34 Monroe students, or “Corps members,” to volunteer in classrooms in four different preschools throughout Tremont and Morrisania. Corps members are serving on six teams to implement the Jumpstart sessions, a research-based language and literacy focused curriculum, to help close the kindergarten readiness gap. Though the AmeriCorps Jumpstart program is run through the School of Education, Corps members come from a wide range of majors and backgrounds. Some are in their first year as Early Childhood Education majors, while others are in their final year studying Health Services or Criminal Justice. All, however, receive the same 40 hours of pre-service training to prepare them for their service in the classroom on topics such as classroom management, problem-solving, and adult-child interactions. After the Corps members complete their 300-hours of service, which includes the Jumpstart sessions, community service projects, and Classroom Assistance Time, where each Corps member is assigned a classroom and teacher to help for an entire school day on Fridays, they receive a Segal Education Award worth over $1200 to be used for tuition or student loans, in addition to a bi-weekly work study paycheck.

Panda Express

A customer service inquiry at the Panda Express restaurant forged a friendship between general manager Amanda Chen and Adjunct Prof. John Conrad Ste Marthe. She explained in subsequent visits the company’s corporate philosophy and its concept of coaxing its employees to reach their maximum potential. Panda Express is a private family owned chain with sales of $2.2 billion in 2014.

On learning that the founder would be visiting his new location opposite the Bronx campus of the College, Prof. Ste. Marthe invited Mr. Andrew Cheng to be a guest lecturer. He accepted and invited the class to meet in the restaurant, because he wanted to feed them his world famous orange chicken.

The class was introduced to the director of Human Resources, who spoke to the class about the culture of Panda Express, the importance of training, and graduating from their in-house Panda University.

Mr. Cheng then spoke to the class about customer service and its importance in business. He spoke about the importance of being “outstanding instead of good,” dependability, politeness and cleanliness in the effort to keep customers happy. He spoke about the culture of promoting from within, and the importance of training.