The CUNY Justice Academy (CJA) is a unique educational partnership connecting John Jay College of Criminal Justice to CUNY’s six traditional community colleges. This program provides academic pathways leading from associate degree study to a bachelor’s degree and ultimately to exciting careers in the fields of Criminal Justice, Forensic Science, and Forensic Financial Analysis.

By enrolling in a degree program of the CUNY Justice Academy, CJA students receive dual admission into one of the six participating CUNY community colleges and John Jay College of Criminal Justice.

The CJA essay contest winners:

1ST PRIZE: ARTURO URENA
MAJOR: CRIMINAL JUSTICE
BRONX COMMUNITY COLLEGE
“When a community does not feel protected by the police and enforcers of the law, it makes its own justice.”

2ND PRIZE: JOSÉ JAVIER CASTRO
MAJOR: CRIMINAL JUSTICE
HOSTOS COMMUNITY COLLEGE
“Psychological pressure, physical abuse, and social instability are just some of the issues that we young men face as we grow up near gangs.”

3RD PRIZE: AMANDA CAMACHO
MAJOR: CRIMINAL JUSTICE
BRONX COMMUNITY COLLEGE
“The injustices I witnessed through this experience were numerous. I saw a community divided between seeing justice and remaining loyal to the ‘no snitch’ culture.”

CJA students at community colleges submitted essays that addressed one of these three questions:

Q1: What is your earliest memory or experience related to justice or injustice? How did this shape you as a person?
Q2: OR Imagine you could change one aspect about New York City to make it a more ‘just’ place. What would it be and why?
Q3: OR ‘Who’ does justice look like? Describe someone in your life, either past or present, who you feel embodies justice.

The winning essays will be published on the CJA website: www.jjay.cuny.edu/CJAcontest