

The CUNY Justice Academy **SUCCESS**

Your Track to a Criminal Justice Career

James Mott

■ Student

Criminal Justice Associate Degree
CUNY Justice Academy at LaGuardia Community College

Lina Rojas

CUNY Justice Academy Links to

A GROUP OF MEN approached Jacqueline Dipasquale's 13-year-old brother and began shooting. Bullets tore into Frankie's arm and leg, wounding him. A friend was killed instantly by a shot to the head. It was near midnight at the Forest Houses in the Bronx in August 2008.

"The people who did this were never found, and I have never found out answers as to why" they opened fire, said Dipasquale, whose brother survived. But the shootings pointed her toward a career that she's pursuing through a new CUNY criminal justice program, which links six community colleges with a senior college that specializes in the field. "I want to be a forensic scientist so that I can help people solve crimes."

Now a first-year forensics student at the CUNY Justice Academy, she pursues a 60-credit associate's degree at Bronx Community College. After earning that degree and passing the CUNY Proficiency Exam, she is guaranteed a trans-

fer to John Jay College of Criminal Justice in Manhattan to complete the remaining 60 credits for a bachelor's degree. Borough of Manhattan, Hostos, Kingsborough, LaGuardia and Queensborough Community Colleges also participate in this program. Students follow tracks in criminal justice, forensic science or forensic financial analysis.

"The best part is being in classes with students who are as smart as I am, and are trying to do something with their lives," said Dipasquale, 21. "We all live in the Bronx, and we all aspire to greatness." She is excited about working toward a joint degree with John Jay. "You might say, BCC opens doors to a four-year college," added Dipasquale, who in 2011 plans to be the first in her family to graduate from college. "I want to give my 4-year-old son a good future."

Other students are equally thrilled to follow the Justice Academy's clear and intriguing academic pathways to law enforcement careers.

"My criminal justice classes are so interesting," said James Mott of Woodhaven, Queens, a criminal justice major at LaGuardia Community College in Long Island City. Mott has long aspired to follow in family footsteps and become a city police officer. Along with his part-time job as a security guard, his LaGuardia classes — covering subjects like due process, New York's judicial system and the criminal code — provide a foundation for police work. Mott is on track to earn his associate's degree this spring and then transfer to John Jay. He hopes that by 2012 he will be on his way to the NYPD Police Academy.

Mark Pabon is pursuing the forensics pathway at Borough of Manhattan Community College. "I always had an interest in chemistry, ever since high school," says Pabon, a native New Yorker who landed a Science for Forensics internship last year at the community college. "I learned about DNA analysis, pollenology [pollen analysis] and even

blood splatter," he said. "It was pretty cool."

At BMCC, Pabon and his fellow Science for Forensics students "are immersed in the study of science and math, and it's hard-core" he said. "This program has taught me discipline and dedication." A fan of the Showtime TV series Dexter, Pabon hopes to pursue a pharmacology career or become an FBI agent. He says that future students should know, "When it comes to forensics, it's not always what you see on TV. It's nitty-gritty."

After six years of military service, Sgt. Kevin Paulsingh was ready for something different. He had emigrated from Trinidad at age 5, grew up in Queens and, at 17 enrolled in the Army Reserve to serve his adopted country. His hitch included a yearlong deployment to Mosul, Iraq, with the 445 Quartermaster Unit out of Trenton, N.J., during the Bush administration's surge.

Paulsingh enrolled at Queensborough

EXPRESS

Student

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Graduate

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Career

**Deputy State Director
Office of Sen. Charles Schumer**

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Criminal Justice Careers



John Jay College's programs in forensic science and criminal justice are nationally acclaimed.

Community College in January 2008 after learning his accumulated military service was eight days shy of what he would need for Police Academy admis-

sion. He switched his major to criminal justice when QCC joined the CUNY Justice Academy program. He expects to graduate in June, enroll at John Jay and

earn his baccalaureate within two years. Now 22, he has set his sights on working with the FBI Police, the uniformed security police who protect FBI facilities, personnel and visitors and have certain enforcement powers; he has already received security clearance.

When Valentine Yeye enrolled at Hostos Community College, it was for a degree in dental hygiene, but, she said, "I changed my major to criminal justice soon after learning that it was being offered as a dual-degree program [with] John Jay College." Even as a girl, she had been interested in law enforcement, recalling a childhood video she made with her brothers. "I had to be the one running and arresting the bad guys."

Yeye plans to complete her B.S. in criminal justice administration and planning at John Jay, then pursue a master's and become an FBI agent. Aside from combating corruption and violent crime, Yeye is interested in criminal psychology, "fascinated by the development of

strategies that help criminals re-engage as productive members of society."

Marina Smelava also sees a future as a federal agent. Born and raised in Belarus, Smelava emigrated to the United States in 2005 and matriculated at Kingsborough as a journalism major. She couldn't believe her luck when she overheard that the community college was about to offer a criminal justice major in conjunction with John Jay. She quickly enrolled in introductory courses in criminal justice and American government. "Everything said there, pertained to reality—how things work in the real world," she said of her classes.

Now in her second year at Kingsborough, Smelava plans on transferring to John Jay after completing her associate's degree. "I see myself working as a federal agent," she said. "I know exactly what I want and how long it will take to get there. But I'm also excited about all the things I will experience during this long journey."