

TISCHELLE GEORGE, RESIDENT SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM MANAGER

NYCHA/ CUNY RESIDENT SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM

THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 15, 2011 – 5:30-7 PM

**MARTIN E. SEGAL THEATRE CUNY GRADUATE CENTER
365 FIFTH AVENUE
NEW YORK, NY 10016**

Good evening. It is an honor to stand before you today.

There was a time earlier this year when it seemed like we wouldn't be able to offer the Scholarship Program due to a lack of funding. But fortunately with the assistance of the New York City Council - the NYCHA-CUNY Resident Scholarship Program received two generous contributions from Council Member Letitia James and Council Member Robert Jackson. Thank you.

This year, we received an unprecedented number of applications, which is fantastic, but it was tough for the Selection Committee to narrow down our choices to just 11 winners. We also added a new scholarship, the Regina A. Figueroa Memorial Scholarship, with expanded criteria for disabled residents who are enrolled in CUNY colleges.

I owe a debt of gratitude to my colleagues on the selection committee for the compassion and zeal they showed in selecting the finalists. Thank you to:

Pat Maloney, NYCHA's Deputy Director of Social Services who regrettably could not be here with us today;

Migna Taveras, NYCHA's Senior Policy Analyst;

Andrea Baker, Executive Assistant to CUNY's Executive Vice Chancellor and University Provost;

Ian James, Executive Assistant to CUNY's Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs and

Zina Richardson, University Director of Career Development & Internships.

After careful deliberation, together, we selected the 11 men and women who we are honoring tonight.

To the Scholarship Winners:

Today we celebrate you.

We celebrate your decision and efforts to make a better life for yourself and your family by obtaining a quality and affordable CUNY education.

We celebrate you for your contributions to your NYCHA community.

And we celebrate your friends, family and loved ones for their unwavering support of this all-important chapter in your life, because without them you would not be the person you are today.

When I met Ti-Anna Lee after she had been named a recipient of the scholarship, she told me that when she applied for the scholarship and read her essay to her daughter Taylor, Taylor said, "Mommy you're going to win that scholarship." And she did!

It is that kind of belief and encouragement that gives you the strength to DO MORE and BE MORE than you thought you could:

Yes, I CAN study for one more hour.

Yes, I CAN juggle work, and school and family.

Yes, I can shatter EVERY stereotype ever whispered or shouted about the abilities of people who live in public housing.

I CAN. AND I WILL. And today we celebrate you, because you HAVE.

So thank you once again to all of the supporters of our scholars and the NYCHA-CUNY Resident Scholarship Program. We will continue to rely on you to lift us up to new heights.

And thank you to our Scholarship Winners. Thank you for helping us at NYCHA and CUNY make the connection between what we do, and who we do it for.

###