

'College Now' Enters Its 24th Year

By Cory Tischbein
Assistant Copy Chief

Over the years, the College Now program at Queens College has grown tremendously and continues to do so at a vigorous pace.

College Now began in 1983 as a small program allowing a handful of Brooklyn high school students to enroll in courses at Kingsborough Community College. Today, College Now is an expansive program enabling thousands of New York City public high school students to take classes and attend cultural events at any of the 17 City University of New York college campuses.

The College Now program gives its participants access to exclusive scholarships, dual enrollment programs and academic workshops. Any student who attends a NYC public high school is eligible and can benefit from the program's free courses — most of which award the student with college credit. An estimated 30,000 students from more than 280 schools take part in the program each year.

Maxi Goodman, coordinator of the College Now program at Queens College, explained that the program began at Queens College in late 2001. Daniela

Exandisco, who was then the coordinator of the program and is now the director, had one shared desk in Kiely Hall, one file cabinet and no clerical support.

Goodman said, "She [Francisco] slowly built up the QC program and got a staff, including me. We now have a thriving program through which more than 250 high school students per semester take college credit courses at QC. We have a very popular Saturday program with high-school credit courses offered on the campus, we sponsor a few high-school credit courses after school at a few of our partner high schools, we have two summer programs — one for college credit and the other non-credit — and we do professional development with high school teachers."

College Now students are placed into undergraduate introductory classes during their third or fourth year of high school. Each high school's College Now participants are sent to a designated CUNY campus where they attend classes. However, some schools, such as Queensborough Community College, conduct the College Now classes at the high schools. Among the schools partnered with Queens College are Flushing High School, Townsend Harris High School, John Bowne High

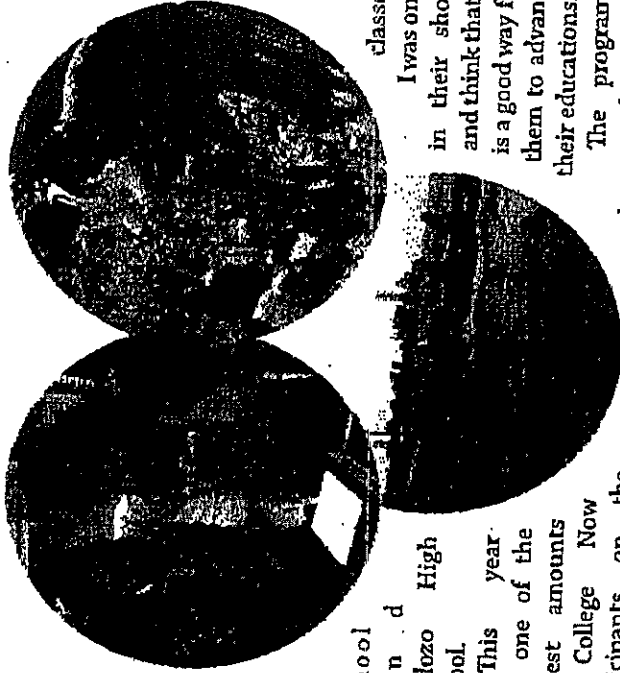
but was also very understanding when we brought any troubles we were having to him."

Marcos Jose Cortes Del Rio, current Flushing International High School and College Now student, agreed. He said, "Now that I have attended some college classes, I feel more prepared to assimilate to the level of responsibility a college student has. This is an experience that I will never forget."

"I liked being welcomed into the Queens College community. I enjoyed the College Now program. Having the ability to take advanced courses and gaining the opportunity to earn credits towards college and graduate early was great," said former College Now participant and current St. Johns University freshman Meaghan Mapes.

Goodman said, "Our aim for the future is to keep doing what we're doing, but to do it better. We're primarily serving high school students and we intend to do everything we can to ensure that they have a great experience at Queens College and succeed in their courses, whether they are college or high school level."

For more information on the College Now program, or to see if you are eligible to participate, visit www.collegenow.cuny.edu.



classes.

I was once in their shoes and think that it is a good way for them to advance their educations."

The program's aim, according to the College Now Web site, is "to help students meet high school graduation requirements and to ensure that graduating students are ready to do college-level work." College Now students seem to think this is an accurate description of the program.

Former College Now participant and current Townsend Harris High School senior Sasha Diamond said, "I was pleased with my College Now experience. I think at certain times, I was overwhelmed by all the work, but in a way that's really what taking college courses early is good for. Our professor, professor Puglisi, made the class and the work a lot more enjoyable than it may have been otherwise."

School and Cardozo High School.

This year sees one of the highest amounts of College Now participants on the Queens College campus.

QC sophomore Kathie Yip said, "I don't think I would mind having high school students in my classes. When I took my College Now class, it was actually in my high school. If they're [College Now participants] old enough to worry about their college credits to go as far as attending college courses, then they've got to be mature enough for the college experience — to a certain extent."

Jennifer Fasano, sophomore, said, "The College Now program is a great opportunity for high school students to take college courses and get a feel for what college is all about. I wouldn't mind having College Now participants in my