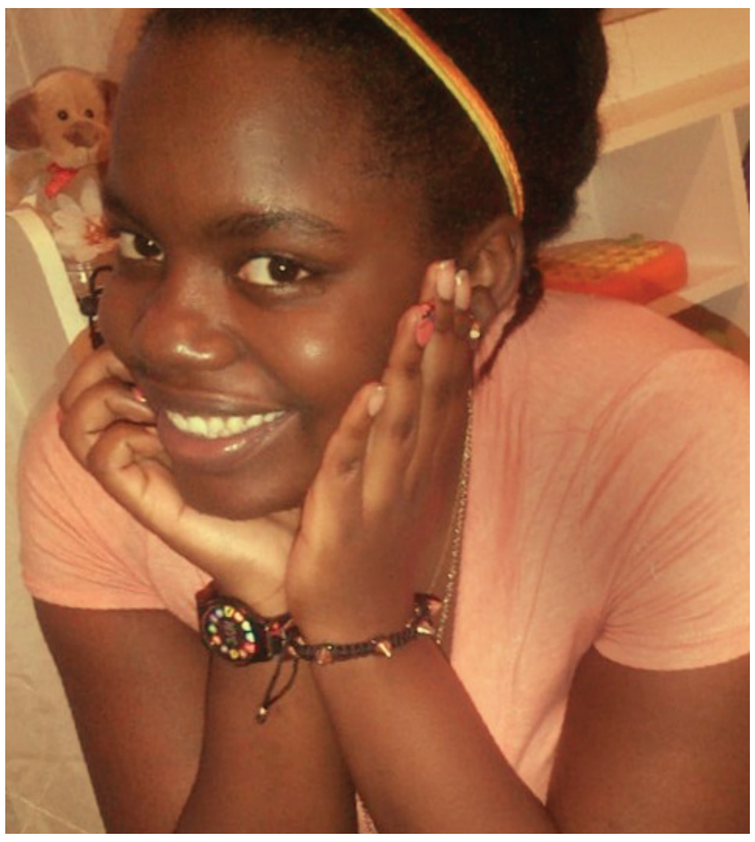
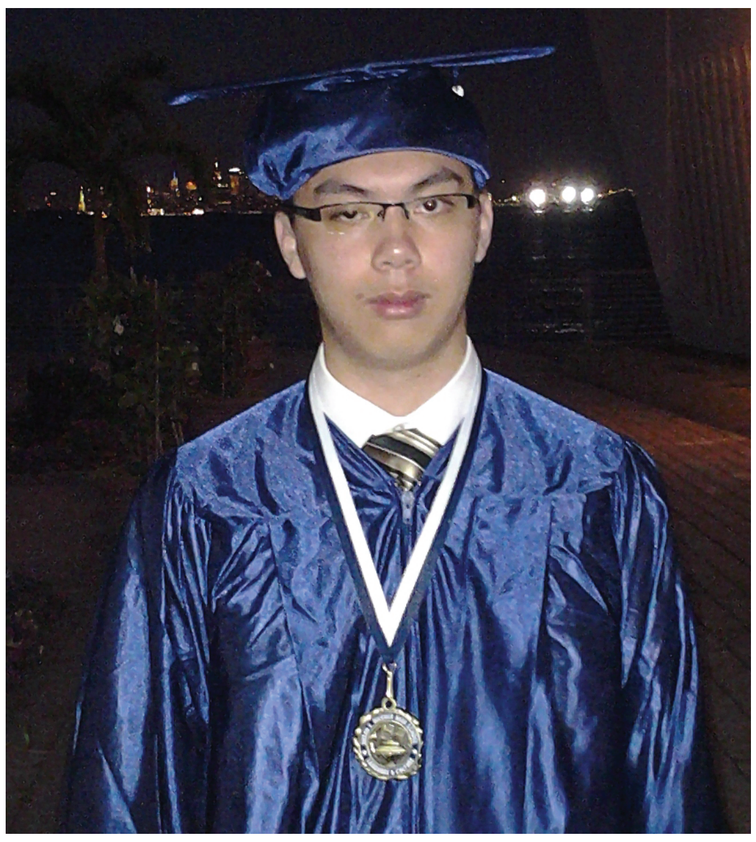
# DREAM, BELIEVE, SUCCEED!

Meet the Office of English Language Learners'

## Star Graduates





### Ann Kayana Blanchard

Academy for College Preparation and Career Exploration

Nominated by Roberta Chacon, ESL Teacher

***Ann Kayana's advice to students***

Coming to the United States and leaving my loved ones made me confront reality. I had to break out of my comfort zone and become independent. I've learned that, life is all about not knowing, having to change, taking the moment and making the best of it, without knowing what's going to happen next.

***Ms. Chacon on Ann Kayana***

Two weeks after the devastating earthquake in 2010 that closed all the schools in Port-au-Prince, Ann Kayana Blanchard and her family left Haiti for Brooklyn. Her teachers remember that she asked not only how to pass her classes, but how to excel in her studies... Ann Kayana's perseverance and hard work led her to graduate as valedictorian of her class.

### Zhao Qi

Susan E. Wagner High School

Nominated by Eusebio Martinez Jr., Guidance Counselor

***Zhao Qi's advice to students***

You need to ask more questions (don't be ashamed if you don't know something).

***Mr. Martinez on Zhao Qi***

This is an amazing honor for a student who came to this country for the first time during his freshman year....Even more impressive is that Zhao Qi took the ELA Regents exam for the first time after two years of ESL, and scored a 99 on the exam!!!!

### Elias Alvarez

Green School: An Academy for Environmental Careers

Nominated by Melissa Jimenez, Guidance Counsleor

***Elias's advice to students***

My social studies teacher Mr. Van Nort told me to have self discipline and Mr. Matt Finn my 9th and 10th grade ESL teacher told me to have self confidence...Always have confidence in yourself. You can achieve all your goals regardless of the language and how impossible the goal may seem...Honestly, when I got to the United States it was tough to understand and communicate. Besides it is not easy to get accustomed to a different culture. Nevertheless, if you are dedicated you will thrive.

***Ms. Jimenez on Elias***

Elias has taken the lead in many aspects of school life - academics, government, and service – Elias has repeatedly demonstrated the depth of his maturity, moral commitments, trustworthiness, and reliability.

NYC™ Department of Education
*Dennis M. Walcott, Chancellor*

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