



COMPREHENSIVE  
DEVELOPMENT, INC.

**LEARN TODAY,  
LEAD TOMORROW**

## **INSIDE**

- Expanding Options for Life After High School
- NYC's Newest EMT - Our Community in Action
- And more!



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CDI keeps growing. Last year we served more than 4,000 young people from all five boroughs. Our students range from 14-24 years old and represent native New Yorkers as well as those who have come to this country more recently. Over the past two decades CDI's services have become recognized citywide and nationally for their innovation, high quality and effectiveness.

I am proud of CDI's leadership. Our board is enthusiastic and energized and increasingly engaged in helping us build our capacity to support students. Michael Roberts continues to light the way for CDI to make a significant, lasting difference in young people's lives.

Omar Campos's story on p. 4 shows how CDI works with students while they are in school and sometimes even after graduation to help them find the path that most engages them.

We aim to inspire our students but I find that they are the ones who inspire us. I am also inspired by CDI's dedicated staff and you, who help make our work possible. Thank you for believing in the young people we serve.

*Pamela J. Craig*

**Vision**

Empowering New York City youth to create rewarding futures.

**Mission**

Comprehensive Development, Inc. partners with NYC public high schools to prepare young adults, ages 14-24, to secure a successful future for themselves and their families. Through this partnership, our students develop the capability to graduate from high school and make informed decisions on higher education and careers.

**MICHAEL ROBERTS, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR**



*Michael catching up with the Young Women's Leadership Group at The High School for Health Professions and Human Services*

**Learn Today, Lead Tomorrow**

When I began my tenure as Executive Director at CDI in 2016, our team focused on deepening our college and career services, increasing the participation of at-risk males, expanding alternative vocational and educational pathways for graduating students and building leadership and agency in all of the young people we serve. Since that time we have trained nearly 200 young people in Medical Assisting and Coding & Billing and most recently as Emergency Medical Technicians at the CDI Career Academy.

At the high school level we have created two fulltime staff positions dedicated to helping students with career development and job placement, trained staff to help promote self-agency and created the Men's and Women's Leadership groups. Most importantly we have worked in partnership with young people and empowered them by ensuring that they have information, options and access to making educated choices about their future.

One great advantage in my job is that I spend every day with youth who are ever hopeful, imaginative and optimistic about the future. That energy, if cultivated properly, can ignite an industry, a cause or a movement. Now, more than ever, we need to ensure that our young people have the tools and resources to be successful—not just in college and the workforce, but as citizens. In this issue you will have a chance to read about our incredible students, dedicated staff and active community who reflect CDI's core values. We can't do it alone—thank you and all of our supporters for providing the much needed resources to ensure that our students' futures can be so much greater than their pasts.

*Michael Roberts*



# New York City's Newest EMT!



Omar Campos begins a new chapter in his life

## “CDI helped me discover the kind of role model I want to be for my son.”

In his first year at Manhattan Comprehensive Night & Day High School, Omar Campos spent more time hanging out in front of the building than in class. “I came from another high school where no one cared if I was there or not, but CDI staff noticed. My counselor Ms. Gladys took the time to really talk to me. She encouraged me and saw potential in me when I didn’t see it in myself. I got myself together and graduated in 2012.” Omar went on to LaGuardia Community College, but wasn’t sure it was for him. “I had a hard time staying focused in class and I was struggling with the finances. Plus, that was when I became a single parent. I didn’t know what to do next so I went back to CDI and met with some of the career counselors to figure out my options.”

“Omar is like of so many of our students who are unsure of what to do after high school and have to maintain a balance between their life obligations and education,” Hattie Hill, CDI Director of Postsecondary Services at MCNDHS said. “After he left college, he came back to us and we helped to connect him to a restaurant job. He returned, this time looking for advancement. We suggested the CDI Career Academy.”

Omar first tried the Academy’s Medical Assistant program. “I was interested in healthcare but that program wasn’t really for me—I was one of the only guys in the course and I wanted something more exciting,” he said. At the same time though, something inside of him yearned for more. “I didn’t want to be like the guys in my neighborhood who’d been sitting on the same corner for years and I saw how

that could happen.” In 2017, it finally clicked for Omar when CDI reached out about a new EMT training program at the Career Academy, created in partnership with Borough of Manhattan Community College and Northwell Health. “When I heard ‘EMT’, I immediately got excited and I knew that was my second chance.”

Omar spent the first half of 2018 in rigorous training. “The ambulance rotations were intense!” At the same time he was balancing work and raising his son, now five.

“Having the individualized support of both his counselors and instructors was hugely important,” Sandra Morales, Director at the CDI Career Academy said. “Our counselors helped him manage his life issues, and the BMCC and Northwell teachers were male leaders who motivated and mentored him.” Frank Nuqui, one of Omar’s EMT instructors at BMCC, was at the testing center on the day of Omar’s state exam and didn’t leave until every member of the cohort finished.

Omar says that having that kind of support from every corner was key to him completing the program. His hard work paid off. He passed his state exam and became a certified EMT. Omar began his new job with Northwell in September. “CDI helped me discover the kind of person that I want to be. They never lost sight of me, even when I felt lost myself. They showed me the kind of role model I want to be for my son. I want to be there for him and be that support like CDI was for me.”

## Learning to Lead



Leadership groups from all schools come together for visits with corporate volunteers such as those at BNY Mellon, pictured above, as well as Credit Suisse, Accenture and Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center

In 2015, CDI began the Young Men’s and Women’s Leadership Groups to promote service learning, peer leadership and self-agency in our students. “These groups provide a place to speak candidly about things like healthy relationships, challenges at school, career aspirations and other topics,” says Fatimah Shalash, CDI Site Coordinator at The High School for Health Professions and Human Services. “Students leave as leaders and with a greater sense of their place in the world, both as individuals and as part of a community.”

The year culminates in a group-led service project. Last year, the men’s group hosted an all school games tournament. To take part, students donated gift baskets of toiletries and letters of encouragement to children in local shelters. “It was a lot to organize,” said Paul Thompson, senior at HPHS. “We had to plan everything - from the food to collecting the donations. I’m excited for next year’s event when I get to be the one who works with the younger guys in the group and show them how to get it done.”

“Getting a chance to talk to women in business who were so encouraging helped me imagine myself in a position like that for the first time. Oretha Sekyere about the career panel with Accenture”

## Building a Bridge to College

CDI alumni are helping graduating seniors make the transition into college with the College Bridge for All program. Camillo Noesi graduated from City-As-School in 2016 and now attends Brooklyn College. He returned to the CDI College & Career Office at CAS to work as a College Coach this past summer, “It’s easy to lose focus on everything you need to do between graduation and the first day on campus. I know from experience that it helps to have someone who’s been through it to show you the ropes. I explained what the bursar’s office is, how to save money on meals and all the other tips I wish I’d know when I started.”

College Bridge for All is a partnership between CUNY and the NYC Department of Education designed to aid students in the transition from high school to college. “Despite all the good work students do with us during the year to apply to college, the ‘summer melt’—3 months off without any structure—can throw them off track and delay enrollment. College coaches like Camillo help us make sure that students follow through on taking the next big step,” CDI CAS Site Coordinator Carolina Moquete said.



Students look to Camillo to get the inside scoop on college



# THE CDI COMMUNITY IN ACTION

## Our Board Leads the Way



Jeff Hellman accepts the award for Most Creative Spelling from Bee Master Bobby Blue • Ellen Taus shares professional expertise as she helps Sara Razzaq practice her interviewing skills • SoVonna Day-Goins delivers a powerful commencement address to the Manhattan Comprehensive Night & Day High School Class of 2018

## Creating a B-U-Z-Z



Dean Backer (center) and the Goldman Sachs team brought some fierce competition!



Michael Braun, Development Committee Co-Chair (center) and his team took home the gold

Our second signature Spelling Bee for Grownups was a great success thanks to leadership support from our Board and platinum donors Goldman Sachs and Credit Suisse. “What’s so great about the Bee is that it brings our community together—students, teachers, supporters and volunteers all in one room competing to take home a trophy. What makes it so fun is that you don’t have to be a good speller! We’re all in it together to have a good time while raising funds that go directly to CDI’s college and career programs.” Dean Backer, Development Committee Co-Chair said.



Credit Suisse volunteers help Men’s Leadership Group students perfect the Half Windsor knot



The Young Women’s Leadership Group collects and prepares toiletry donations for a local shelter

CDI serves **4,000** students and alumni each year who travel to our schools from all five boroughs.

CDI’s population is a snapshot of NYC public high schools:  
**24%** Black, **48%** Hispanic, **17%** Asian, **11%** White or other.

**61%** of the student population is female, **39%** male.

**92%** of our students live below the Federal poverty line and **83%** live in neighborhoods designated by the New York State Poverty Index as concentrated or high poverty.

**56%** of CDI students speak a language other than English at home, from Spanish to Dzongkha to Wolof.



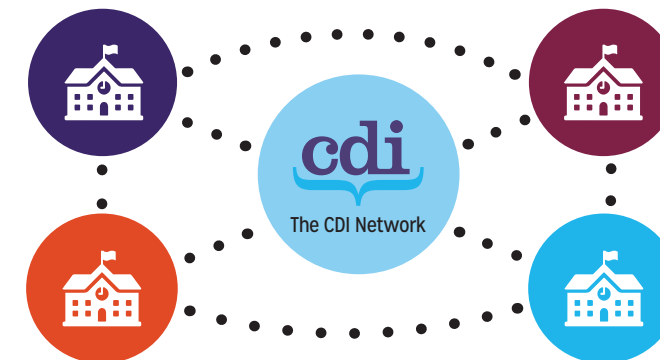
City-As-School students study SAT words for the Bee

### Manhattan Comprehensive Night & Day High School

240 Second Avenue  
Offers night and day classes to students ages 17-21 in need of a more flexible schedule.

### City-As-School High School

16 Clarkson Street  
Offers experiential learning where students ages 17-21 split their week between the classroom and internships.



### The High School for Health Professions and Human Services

345 East 15th Street  
Offers a strong focus on STEM academics and college preparation for students ages 14-18.

### CDI Career Academy at Borough of Manhattan Community College

25 Broadway  
A post-secondary sectorally based certificate program that trains CDI alumni ages 18-24.



# College Bound



Nailah Nunes, Bryan Rodriguez and Haley Lopez are excited about their first choices during College Application Week

Manhattan Comprehensive Night & Day High School opened its doors in 1989 as one of the first transfer schools in New York City. The school began working with high risk students who were in danger of dropping out and generally not thought to be “college material.” Teachers, CDI staff and volunteers saw things differently, and made college preparation services a key component of CDI’s mission to help students prepare for life after high school. Since then, thousands of our young people have gone on to two and four year colleges.

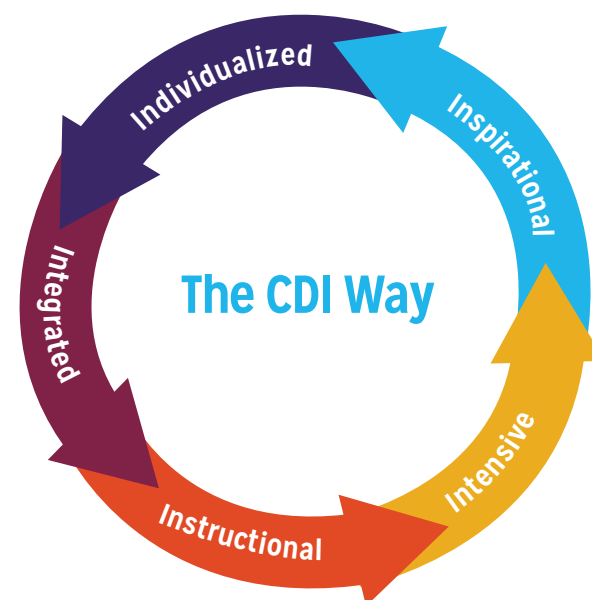
In 2012 when CDI expanded to The High School for Health Professions and Human Services and City-As-School High School we continued to follow that same model. College advisors work with students every step of the way, including identifying the difference between public and private institutions, helping them to make the best

college choice, apply for scholarships and more. “We counsel students and parents around all aspects of financial aid, including a financial literacy component so that they make fully informed decisions,” Patience Yeboah, CDI College Coordinator at MCNDHS said. “Taking on loans is simply not a viable option for many students.”

CDI’s goal is for college-bound students to apply, enroll and succeed in college. According to data from the National Student Clearinghouse that compares college enrollment and persistence nationwide, students from CDI schools enroll in and complete college at significantly higher rates than similar populations from comparable high schools.

While we continue to expand options for life after high school, college preparation remains a cornerstone of what we do. With your support, we can continue to send more young people to college!

**78%** of our graduates enroll in college



# Alumni Perspectives



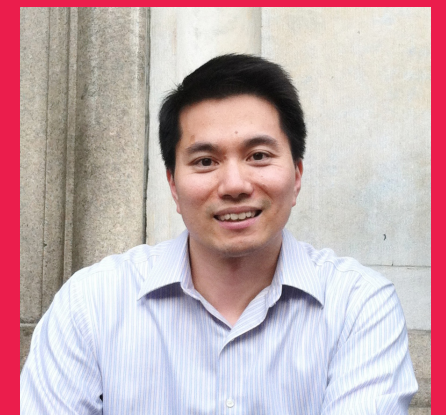
**“CDI gave me the resources, courage and connections to move on where others told me I couldn’t.**

Whether that was through an internship, a college advisor, or connecting me with someone in the field I wanted to pursue, they were always there.”

Joseph Evan Gray graduated from MCNDHS in 2014 and from the University of Rochester in June 2018 with an interdisciplinary major in Urban Studies. He’s currently pursuing a Master’s in Urban Planning at the University of Washington Seattle. Joseph’s goal is to help improve transit in the 21st century.

“My family had expectations for me—to work hard and eventually open a restaurant, and that was my goal. But CDI changed my perspective and I met people at MCNDHS who inspired me, including my wife. **I realized that I could go to college and change the course of my life.** CDI taught me to be resourceful, and that has always stayed with me.

Andrew Wang is a member of the CDI Board of Directors and MCNDHS Class of 1999. He is the Senior Vice President of Argus Information and Advisory Services at Verisk Analytics.



“My education is everything—especially as a woman from West Africa. With CDI’s help, **I graduated from high school and got my bachelor’s in Healthcare Administration from St. Joseph’s College.**

I’m working as a guest service coordinator at the Hudson Hotel. My goal is a career in hospitality and healthcare.”

Sunneva Baya came to the US from the Ivory Coast in 2011 and graduated from MCNDHS in 2014.





# Your Dollars Make A Difference!

CDI is grateful for the generous support of individual, foundation, corporate and government funding partners who help our students to become leaders.

This donor list reflects gifts and grants received from October 1, 2017–September 30, 2018

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Learning to Work

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Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act

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Immigrant Opportunities Initiative

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*Front Cover: Elizette Lakouetene, MCNDHS Class of 2018, spends a Saturday with the BioTech club examining a strand of bacteria as part of a gram stain project. Our three schools offer a range of STEM academics and extra-curricular activities. Elizette is currently attending CUNY Borough of Manhattan Community College and studying to enter the medical field.*

*Back cover: Brayan Avila and Savion Preudhomme, MCNDHS Class of 2018 and members of the inaugural Men's Leadership Group, on their graduation day. Brayan is currently working in maintenance and applying to college to study automotive engineering. Savion is studying Business Administration at SUNY Hudson Valley Community College and coaches youth football.*