

# **HORIZONS ACADEMY**

A program of the Jewish Community Council of Greater Coney Island, Inc.  
*Funded (in part) by the New York City Department of Youth and Community Development*

**JEWISH COMMUNITY COUNCIL**  
of Greater Coney Island

Funded (in part) by the New York City Department of Youth and Community Development,  
Office of Children and Family Services, and Con Edison

## Background

Horizons Academy is an initiative that was spawned by the Jewish Community Council of Greater Coney Island in 2007. The program was designed to encourage 10<sup>th</sup>, 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> grade high school students develop high-reaching, long-term aspirations focusing on successfully transitioning to college and careers following graduation.

Originally focusing solely on career counseling and academic coaching, with the support of funding, Horizons Academy has expanded its program to also include S.A.T. preparation, college counseling, tutoring, Leadership classes, job readiness workshops and internship placement assistance, computer studies and Meditation, Acting and Financial Literacy training.

- Hosted by Abraham Lincoln High School located in South Brooklyn, N.Y.
- Funded by the New York City Department of Youth and Community Development (DYCD), the New York State Office of Children and Family Services (OCFS), and Con Edison.



Horizons Academy Graduates

## Mission

Horizons Academy's main mission is to inspire high school students to remain in school, graduate with a high-school diploma and remain engaged in a post-secondary education, career training, the military or paid employment for one full year (monitored by Horizons staff) following graduation.

Horizons Academy encourages students to develop long-term goals through academic support, career counseling and leadership development services for successful transition to adulthood.

The program staff is trained to provide one-on-one support to students, enabling them to apply their previous professional training towards a successful future employment and/or college career.

103 students made up of Sophomores, Juniors and Seniors are eligible for enrollment for the September 2017 – August 2018 contract.

35 Students are receiving follow-up services during their first year of college (2017-18)

To date 905 non duplicated students have been served.  
Over 425 Jobs have been created for 325 students.

Student lecture



## Programs

1. **Summer Youth Employment Program (SYEP):** Summer Jobs for Juniors and Seniors are developed and supervised by Horizons Academy staff
2. **After-School Activities:** Students are given the opportunity to use after-school time in a constructive manner through Horizons Academy activities including:
  - **Small Group SAT Prep**
  - **Minimum of 9 one on one Guidance and Academic Counseling Sessions per year**
  - **Job Readiness – including Resume Creation and Interview Preparation**
  - **Job Placement – Summer Jobs and Spring Internships \*\*\* NEW**
  - **Financial Literacy Training \*\*\* NEW**
  - **Homework Assistance**
  - **Leadership building classes**
  - **College Counseling (small group and one on one)**
  - **Specialty classes including Acting, Meditation**
  - **Math and Science Subject Tutoring**



## Abraham Lincoln H.S. Technology Lab

In 2009, with the support from our funding sources, Horizons Academy achieved a major milestone in the creation of a state-of-the-art Technology Lab at Abraham Lincoln High School. The lab is instrumental in providing economically disadvantaged high school students with college and career preparation resources they would otherwise not have access to.

- 15 computer stations equipped with Microsoft Office, Adobe Suite, Encyclopedia Britannica, Win Way Resume Creation Software, SAT Prep Software, SAT Bootcamp
- 8 printers, some of which have color printing, scanning, fax and copy capabilities
- Accessible to students from 9:00 am – 5:00 pm Monday-Thursday



Tech Lab ribbon-cutting ceremony

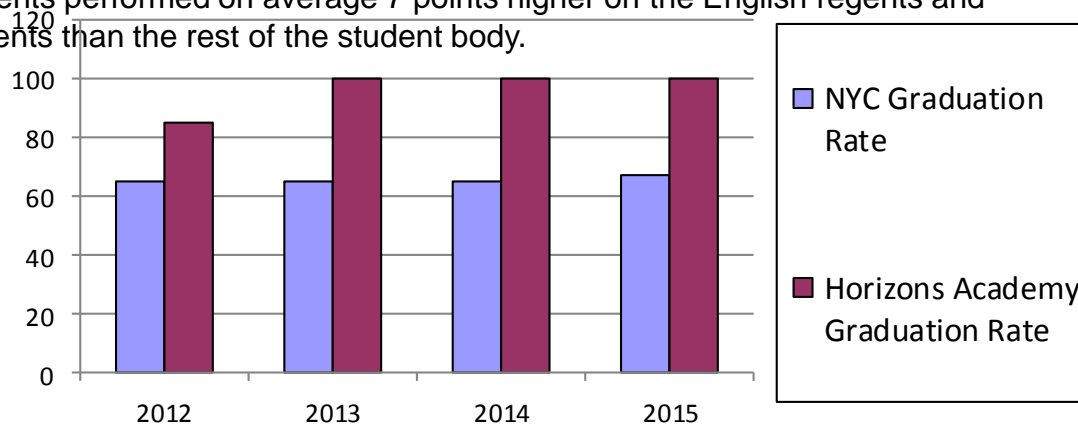
## Statistics

Students who are exposed to the Horizons Academy programs are achieving their goals with increasing success with each subsequent year:

- More likely to attain a high school diploma than the average NYC student
  - 87% attained a diploma in 2011
  - 85% attained a diploma in 2012
  - 100% attained a diploma in 2013**
  - 100% attained a diploma in 2014**
  - 100% attained a diploma in 2015**
  - 92% attained a diploma in 2016**
- Engage in post-secondary education, career training, military or employment following high school graduation
  - 78% of students in 2012 remained engaged
  - 95% of the students in 2013 remained engaged
  - 90% of the students in 2014 remained engaged.
  - 90% of the students in 2015 remained engaged

In a recent study, Horizons Academy students performed on average 7 points higher on the English regents and over 5 points higher on the Math regents than the rest of the student body.

**While the Board of Education Touted High School Graduation Rates Rising Above 65 Percent in 2011, 2012, 2013 and 2014, Horizon Academy Graduates Exceeded that Rate by at least 20%.**



# Faces of Horizons Academy



Alumni Visit December 2015



Summer Internship at Maimonides Hospital.



# Faces Horizons



Classroom discussions.



Trip to Off Broadway Show. Meet and greet with cast.



## Testimonials

“I didn’t even know that I could get job experience while in high school. I’ve learned so much and now I can’t wait to move on from high school into college.”

- Sonia Isaac, Student

“Through Horizons Academy, I was able to go to SAT Prep courses every day. I credit that to the 200-point rise in my SAT score.”

- Javlon Usmanov, Student

“Each week, I attend the Empowerment Program session, which allows me to clear my head and talk about things I never had an outlet to discuss. I love it.”

- Beatrice Eseku, Student

“The graduates overcame tremendous obstacles. They got turned around and now many are going to college.”

- Principal April Leong, Liberation Diploma Plus High School

“If it weren’t for the Summer Youth Program, I’d be doing nothing. It helped me with my job skills. Now, I’d like to give back by working to help the community one day.”

- Shenelle Thames, Student

### Horizon Academy's Impact on the Community is Receiving Widespread Media Attention

February 2008

Astella Action News

#### JCCGCI's New Horizons Academy Places High School Students On the Path to Career Success

By Bernard Shubert

In a concrete effort to address the prevalent phenomenon of students abandoning their high school studies before completion, the Jewish Community Council of Greater Coney Island has established Horizons Academy, an intensive college and career preparation program for 11th and 12th grade students, based at Lincoln High School. The new program, which operates year-round, utilizes a strengths-based, case management approach to help students in need of attention gain the academic and social skills that will enable them to graduate high school and achieve subsequent success.

Following an initial assessment, each student at Horizons Academy is assigned a "success coach"—a school counselor or clinical social worker—who meets regularly with the student to ascertain their progress and make recommendations based on their academic and career plans. The program's wide-ranging curriculum encompasses small group SAT/English and math preparation, college counseling, career workshops (resume preparation, interview skills, etc.), computer studies in such common office programs as Microsoft Word and Excel, documentary filmmaking, a guest speaker series, job shadowing, and field trips to cultural institutions, colleges, and job fairs. The students at Horizons Academy can also avail themselves of "Opportunity Knocks," a



Elizabeth Gavigan, Horizons Academy career guidance teacher, explains the finer points of job interview etiquette to her students

clearinghouse for internship, community service, scholarship, service learning, volunteer and other opportunities. Moreover, all Horizons Academy students are eligible for placement in Summer Youth Employment Program jobs during July and August.

Seeking to maximize its students' potential for post-high school success, the academy program offers a number of other future-focused services. These include an Internet-based mentoring program that links "at-risk" high school students with corporate professionals, an after-school legal outreach program that uses a law-themed approach to guide students toward top-tier colleges, and a specialized

program that infuses creative writing and poetry to refine students' communication and public speaking skills. In addition, Horizons Academy is currently developing a fine arts component, as well as the "Brainy Bunch," a service learning project that will set up its students as tutors and mentors for elementary school students at PS 329.

The students at Horizons Academy primarily engage in the special curriculum from 3 pm to 5 pm on Mondays through Thursdays, following their regular high school studies. A job developer is on hand to place them in weekend jobs wherever appropriate. Upon completion of the program and graduation from high school, Horizons Academy staff members provide a one-year follow-up, working with each student to ensure that they are enrolled in college or successfully employed (in either a regular position or an internship). The program, which is funded by the NYC Department of Youth and Community Development (DYCD), under its Youth Workforce Development program, has a capacity of 300 students. Anyone seeking information about enrolling in the program or employment opportunities, call the program director, David Anderson, at 718-449-5000, ext. 218.

In addition to Abraham Lincoln High School, Horizons Academy is now also serving 11th grade students in the Rachel Carson High School of Coastal Studies located in JS 303 at 521 West Avenue.

April 2008

Astella Action News

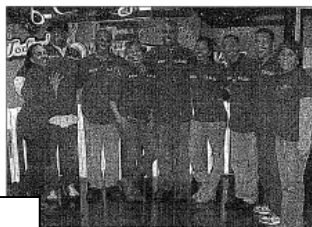
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#### The Coney Island Generation Gap and Horizons Academy Co-Host 1st Annual Coney Island Hip Hop College and Career Fair

Submitted by Horizons Academy

On February 22, the final day of a week-long series of events from school, the Coney Island Generation Gap (CIGG) and the Jewish Community Council of Greater Coney Island (JCCGCI) Horizons Academy co-hosted the 1st Annual Coney Island Hip Hop College and Career Fair at PS 129 Southside School on West 30th Street. The purpose of the fair was to help make a direct, positive impact on the post-secondary school and career plans of Coney Island youth between the ages of 14 to 22.

Despite a severe snowstorm that dropped almost six inches of snow on New York City in the hours leading up to the fair, more than 300 middle and high school students and their families attended. The students were met by the academy staff.



Students and staff at the Coney Island Hip Hop College and Career Fair. The academy staff and students were met by the academy staff.

of the Generation Gap staff

and organizers of the fair was initially positive. One parent, a 17-year-old student, said, "I appreciate this so much. It's an experience in Coney Island that I can't get anywhere else. It's a chance to see the future of Coney Island and to see the future of Coney Island."

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#### Summer Youth at Astella

By Beth Penney

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#### Back-to-School

Tips to Prepare Kids

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#### Free School At Back

Children who can't go to school

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#### NEW TECHNOLOGY LAB DEBUTS AT LINCOLN H.S.

After-school students at Horizons Academy can now explore their college and employment dreams in cyber space, plus, enjoy the fruits of their labors in a state-of-the-art technology laboratory they helped renovate at Abraham Lincoln High School.

The new learning room was celebrated with a ribbon cutting at Lincoln, 2800 Ocean Parkway, where students in the Jewish Community Council of Greater Coney Island-run Horizons Academy were, visibly, delighted with the result: a freshly-painted room with 35 computer workstations, a labyrinth of printers, scanners and copier machines, and a "full reservoir" of available college and career preparation materials for students to peruse. Horizons is funded by the

Department of Youth and Community Development, and runs programs for economically disadvantaged youngsters at Lincoln High School and Lincoln Diploma Plus High School in Coney Island.

Through SAT prep courses, math and science tutoring, and career service, Horizons helps prepare juniors and seniors for higher education, or entering the workforce, after graduating high school.

Plenty of "spirit" that can be "seen everywhere" accompanies the lab's arrival, said Acting Director Marissa Sperling, adding, "From the donation of the room by school officials' wanting



Lincoln High School junior Sonia Isaac checks out a new computer.

to provide the program with a permanent home, to Horizons Academy students using their free time to paint and clean the room, to the Abraham Lincoln alumnus who designed the artwork on the walls."



Horizons Academy student Dikens Alexis delivers a testimonial about the program.

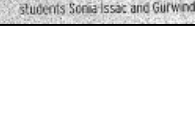


Group photo of students and staff at the ribbon cutting.

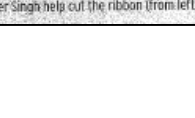
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