

AT A GLANCE

MOTT HAVEN — Now THIS is a commencement speaker.

Bronx native and U.S. Supreme Court Justice Sonia Sotomayor will deliver Hostos Community College's 39th commencement address on Friday, June 4, the school announced.

The ceremony will be at 6 p.m. in the Main Theater of the college at 450 Grand Concourse.

JEROME PARK — Catch the Golden Dragon Acrobats at 4 p.m. today at the Lehman Center for the Performing Arts.

The premiere Chinese acrobatic touring company offers an award-winning, family-friendly spectacle of acrobatics, traditional dance, colorful costumes, and both ancient and contemporary music and theater.

The Center is at 250 Bedford Park West. Call (718) 960-8833 or go to www.lehmancenter.org for ticket info.

BRONX — The city Department of Investigation announced last week the arrest of two women on fraud charges for allegedly bilking the city Housing Authority out of more than \$25,000.

Jacqueline Coleman, 44, of the Edenwald Houses, was arrested for claiming she was unemployed. Since her low rent was based on the assumption she had no income, DOI reckons Coleman defrauded NYCHA of approximately \$15,300.

Celia Aquino, 46, of Pelham Parkway Houses, allegedly hid the fact that she shared her subsidized apartment with another person with an income. DOI says Aquino swindled the city out of about \$10,074 in rent subsidies.

Both women were charged with grand larceny, filing fraudulent paperwork and other offenses.

Bureau Staff

SEND US YOUR NEWS TIPS

Bronx Bureau (718) 822-1174
bronxboronews@NYDailyNews.com

Brooklyn (718) 875-4455
brooklynnews@NYDailyNews.com

Queens (718) 793-3328
queensnews@NYDailyNews.com



Keith Tingman, Miguelina Diaz and Amon Frazier (l. to r.) will go to Washington for their Robert F. Kennedy Journalism Award. Photo by Marc A. Hermann

RADIO REPORTERS SNAG THE BIG PRIZE

BY ABBY LUBY
SPECIAL TO THE NEWS

THREE SOUTH BRONX teens are getting high praise for telling it like it is.

WNYC Radio Rookies Miguelina Diaz, Keith Tingman and Amon Frazier have been awarded the Robert F. Kennedy Journalism Award for outstanding reporting.

The proud young journalists will head to Washington on Wednesday to receive their awards from Ethel Kennedy, widow of the slain senator.

Last fall, the Rookies aired their reports as part of the WNYC radio series "This Is the South Bronx."

The short pieces are tough, personal stories dealing with poverty, loss and school struggles.

Keith Tingman, 16, produced "Incarcerated Parents," a heartbreaking story about his 10th birthday — the day he watched his mother get arrested after being falsely accused of stealing someone's wallet. He recorded his mother, Amanda, in tears recounting the humiliating experience. Keith said he fought the urge to break down, "but I wanted to stay strong for her."

He also interviewed his father, who served 10 months at Rikers Island for possession of stolen property, asking him to describe what it was like in jail.

"This wasn't an easy story to tell, but I wanted other people to relate to it because I know they've experienced the same thing."

Miguelina (Erikka) Diaz, 19, produced "Money Stress," a story about her mother and her eight siblings, who have always lived on welfare.

In her report, Diaz agonizes about scraping together money for food, clothes and rent, with little left over for luxuries like an \$85 prom ticket.

The story intensifies when Diaz discovers her little sister stole money from the downstairs beauty parlor. She ends her report with a reality check and a sign of hope.

"I wonder if the stress about money will ever leave my family. I don't think it's possible.... That means everybody has a job, everybody is comfortable. I hope it's possible for me after I graduate from college."

"Promotion in Doubt," by Amon (AJ) Frazier, 15, deals with the teen's struggle to pass in a school system no longer using social promotion.

He aggressively interviewed school administrators only to discover their views were vague on allowing failing students to move ahead with their peers.

"This project was a good way to express myself, a way to say things that are hard to say to other people."

The Radio Rookies program trains inner-city teens in radio journalism. Producer Kaari Pitkin said the Rookies learned to record life as it unfolds.

The teens heard about their RFK award through a personal phone call from Ethel Kennedy.

Keith said Kennedy "told my mom that it was an honor listening to my story and she wanted to meet me."

The Radio Rookies were selected from hundreds of entries. Other RFK prize winners this year include Diane Sawyer, ABC News 20/20, The Wall Street Journal, The Washington Post, Home Box Office and National Public Radio.

The Next Generation Center in Morrisania is pitching in to help the Radio Rookies and their parents travel to the awards ceremony in Washington.

The Rookies are drawing inspiration from the attention the award has brought.

Keith Tingman is already planning a new story about street violence, while Amon Frazier now has a future goal.

"I definitely want to be a journalist," he said. "It doesn't matter if it's on the Internet, radio, print or on TV, as long as I can get my stories out there."

The Rookies' stories can be heard on the Web: www.wnyc.org/radiorookies/bronx/.

FREE TUESDAY IN YOUR DAILY NEWS

THE BEST OF THE BRONX

BRONX BORO
NEWS
Your local newspaper from
DAILY NEWS
8750 Broadway