

IN MY WORDS

AS TOLD BY THE ALUMNI OF
MONROE COLLEGE

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Over the course of this project, the first of its kind for Monroe

College, the PCI Team had the most wonderful time speaking with each of you to collect your stories.

This book is the result of those conversations. These pages form a tapestry, woven from the collective history of the alumni of Monroe College.

Each story was collected personally, one-on-one, over the phone, from

each of you, to each of us. To learn more about this process, see the infographic on the next page. We hope you'll enjoy learning about each other as much as we did.

Finally, there are a number of topics that kept coming up over and over. We indicated them by placing the icons shown to the right on the pages of the people to whom the topic applies.

Enjoy!

The PCI Publishing Team

KEY WORDS

- buildings 
- college town 
- events 
- family 
- greek 
- military 
- people 
- places 
- scholarships 
- sports & athletics 
- travel & study abroad 



WELCOME



ALUMNI STORIES

CAREER SUCCESS

I went to work for Sanford Brown College, and I got really good jobs just from graduating from Monroe.
- Judy DeVone '07



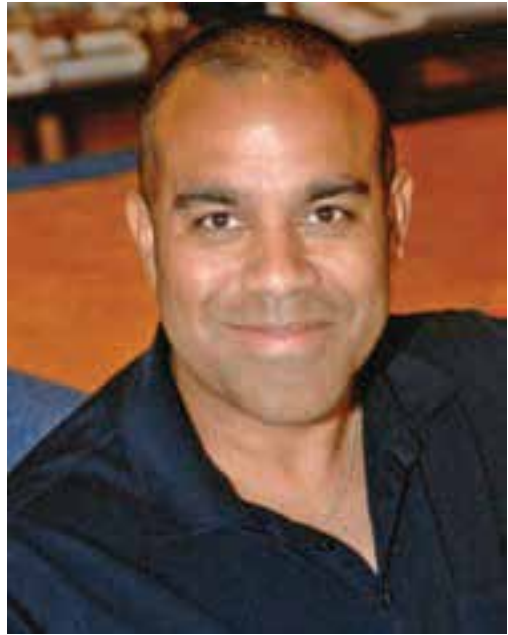
I'm currently a director of health and safety, and Monroe played a major role because my degree has gotten me so far.
- Nicole R. Tomlin '09

My whole complete lifestyle has changed because of the school and the academics.
- Lance Nathaniel Woods '08

I'm thinking about becoming a part-time professor myself because of the positive experience that I've had at Monroe.
- Niecia T. Bagot, CPA '13

I was promoted to a project manager a year before I graduated with my master's degree.
- Jennifer L. Serrano '07





FERNANDO PENA

Bachelors Computer Information Systems '00
 Interviewed on 09/03/2021

I STARTED AT A DIFFERENT school and my grades weren't that great. Monroe College was one of the few schools that actually looked past those grades. They looked at me as an individual. They gave me an opportunity to prove myself once again. I was working full-time at the time. Monroe had many different options that just worked perfectly with a working adult. A lot of us were in the same boat. We were all trying to maintain our lifestyles while also supporting our families. A lot of really great friendships were formed at that time. We were all trying to make ourselves that much better by attending Monroe and during the little bit of free time that

we had after work. I look back and I have no idea how I did it because I essentially supported the full-time class schedule, and I also went to work full-time. The fact that I was able to manage through that and maintain a pretty good GPA, which was a 3.8 or so when I graduated, really taught me that if I put my mind to anything, I could accomplish it. It gave me a tremendous boost of confidence and it really helped me to take the next steps where I actually completed my MBA several years later. Monroe made it easier for me to get into an MBA program afterward. Since then, my career has just taken off. They laid the foundation for my career. Then, once I

took it to the next level with that graduate degree, my career exponentially increased in terms of trajectory. I would say that Monroe really helped to start that whole process off for me. I would come after work and people would assume that I was a professor because I was wearing a suit. That would sort of crack me up at times. The good nature of all the professors makes me smile. I remember having professors from all walks of life. They were there to try to get us ahead. It was this little oasis in the middle of nowhere, so to speak. Monroe helped us move along in life and really grew us as individuals. Those are the things that I look so fondly back on.

class of
2000



2006 AKIL JOHNSON

AAS Criminal Justice '04, BBA Criminal Justice '06, BS
 Interviewed on 11/05/2021

MONROE COLLEGE CAME TO the Virgin Islands to do recruiting, and it stood out for me. As a child, I always spent Christmas and summers in New York, so it was a perfect opportunity to go back to New York while going for my education. When I got there, I was undecided, so they had me in information technology. I wasn't interested in it, so I started to look at the different degree programs. The Criminal Justice Program was newly introduced, and after looking at the career opportunities having a criminal justice degree would provide, it sparked my interest. Professor Wilford Pinkney was one of the hardest professors I had at Monroe College, and he said, 'Nothing in life is ever given to you. You have to work.' It was a senior-level course. We started with a class of 27 people, and there were only ten of us who finished the class. It was challenging at times, but he motivated me. He went back to college in his 30s and got his master's in his 40s. He was even pushing

for his doctorate at that point, so it was encouraging to know that there was no starting or ending point for getting your education. When I started, we stayed in apartments, and I had full access to our kitchen to cook. My second year was when the dorm was built, so we were the first students in the hall. Being in a building with your fellow college students and having full access to everyone developed longtime relationships and friendships. It was a positive experience, and I liked that Monroe provided independent living where we had our apartment. It taught me a lot about adulthood. After graduation, I moved back home because of the job market. My initial dream job was to be a probation or parole officer. It didn't happen, so I chose a different career path. I went into grants writing, and with my grants management experience, I landed a job with the Federal Emergency Management Agency. Monroe means community, family, and friendship.



2003 YOLANDA O. SANCHEZ

AAS Computerized Office Technology '03
Interviewed on 09/24/2021

I GREW UP IN A HOME WHERE work was a big priority, so I dropped out of high school at the age of 19 and started working. When I realized that the job I had was not the job that I really wanted, I was intrigued to explore Monroe because they afforded me the ability to obtain not just my two-year degree, but my GED while in the process. I feel like I went to college at the time that I needed to. Most students graduate from high school, then go straight into college. Monroe gave me that extraordinary experience in my early 20s, when I was mature enough to take my education seriously and go through with it. It was an extraordinary experience. College is much different from middle school, high school, or elementary school. I loved the staff; they were very helpful in assisting me. In the process of setting up and choosing my classes and my scheduling, the professors were very helpful in explaining all the academics, curriculums, syllabuses, and

requirements. They were very good at explaining. I learned a lot from Monroe. To this day, I remember my time at Monroe and it has contributed to my everyday skills. I'm very good with Microsoft Office, the entire programming: Access, Excel, PowerPoint, and Word. I use all those skills to this day. All of the professors left an impression on me. I took a tax class when I went back for my BA degree, and I did not understand math whatsoever, but he was extremely helpful in helping me understand. The first job that I received post-graduation was through Monroe College, and that started my career in the non-profit industry as an administrative assistant and office manager. With all of the positions that I've had all throughout my career, the employers all loved the fact that I had attend Monroe College. It's amazing how much of an impact Monroe really does have on people and how so many corporations have such great knowledge about Monroe.



2008 KAVITA ROSANNA NAUTH

AAS Criminal Justice '06, BBA Criminal Justice '07
Interviewed on 08/05/2021

WHEN I WAS IN HIGH SCHOOL, I WAS undocumented, so I had no opportunities to advance my academic career further. One day Lisa Scorca told me about the great things at Monroe College and how they would be able to offer me an opportunity to advance my academic career, so I filled out an application, and got an acceptance letter. I did not know how I could afford college, but I was able to write essays to receive scholarships to support my first semester at Monroe. I took advantage of the payment plans that Monroe offered, and they also offered me a partial scholarship, but it still left about \$3,000 to be paid, so I took a job as a camp counselor at a church in St.

Albans, Queens. I took accelerated courses, and I was able to get my associates in one year. I signed up for their Criminal Justice Program. I could not afford textbooks, so I would go to the library and pay five cents a page to photocopy the pages of the chapters that I needed. I finished in December 2007 and I walked in April 2008. I am very proud of myself because I did something that as an undocumented immigrant in this country did not seem possible, and I was the first one in my family to graduate with a college degree. In 2008 I was able to get an opportunity to work for Alpha Outsourcing Services Corporation, and after the project finished in 2010, I was out

of a job for about six months. In September 2010, I got an opportunity to be a receptionist at BDO. I talked to some folks on the floor, and I was able to maneuver my way into receiving a temporary position in that group. They took interest in me, so by February 2012, I was hired full-time by the company. I went back to school and did my master's while working full-time. It was hard, but it set me up for success. I have been working for BDO for ten years, and I have been promoted to the senior manager position. I could not have done it without Monroe's support.

editor's pick



“ I could not have done it without Monroe's support. - Kavita Rosanna Nauth ”



“Monroe provided me the strength knowing that I can do it with determination.”
- Jacqueline "Jacque" Cilia Albert

2010 JACQUELINE "JACQUE" CILIA ALBERT

AAS Criminal Justice '10, BBA Criminal Justice '16
Interviewed on 08/16/2021

I DROPPED OUT IN JUNIOR HIGH school, so I didn't graduate. At the age of 21, I was referred to Monroe College by a close friend, and they provided me with the opportunity to get my GED and my associate's degree at the same time. I took advantage of it instead of going to one of the GED programs. Monroe provided me the strength knowing that I can do it with determination. All my professors were great, and I really loved it. They were very down to earth, and Mr. Singh was one of the best. Jacquelyn Birmingham was also

one of my social worker professors who helped me. She was amazing. She helped me get an internship and gave me support telling me that I can do it. Monroe impacted me a lot after graduation. The experiences that I have achieved from there, I know I can take it with me towards my future. It is also something that I would want to provide my kids with. I want to make sure they are in a great atmosphere, and they have true educators who support and guide them through the process. I studied criminal justice for my associate's and my bachelor's,

and then I went for a minor in human services. I'm now obtaining my master's degree in early childhood education to help women who are in prison. I want to provide them with the education and teach them about the significance of early childhood and ways to support them and their children. Many women who come from prison don't have the proper resources or don't know how to adapt to the world especially if they have children, so it is a big transition for them.

2017 JENNIFER L. SERRANO

BBA Business Management '17
Interviewed on 09/29/2021



My princess pushed me through; failure was not an option when I had little eyes watching



I couldn't believe I did it!



I WANTED TO GO TO AN ACTUAL SCHOOL. I WAS A single mom with a small child, and I needed to do classes online. I was working full-time as an executive assistant for the chairman of radiation oncology and needed to do everything at night. That was when I decided to go to Monroe for the online program. I was doing an accelerated program for my bachelor's degree and went to the New Rochelle campus for tutoring. I was then promoted to a project associate and started running projects as well as the chairman's office at the same time. I was promoted to a project manager a year before I graduated with my master's degree. I was progressively climbing, which was good, that was the plan. For my master's degree, during the last semester, I was going to Monroe's Bronx campus for a class. It was a really great

experience. I'm glad that I got to participate and experience it. It was nice to know that I had finished. At work, I became part of the cancer service line administration team, and I'm currently a program manager, so my education definitely paid off. This is absolutely the direction that I wanted to go in. When I graduated I took a lot of information with me and I feel like it helped tremendously; it helped me move forward. I still work for the same hospital, in a more administrative position, and I have a better title. I'm making more money, which is amazing. Monroe means so much to me. If it wasn't for Monroe, I wouldn't be where I am or the person that I am today. I had to persevere and I cried a lot, but I also gained strength, an education, and learned time management. Monroe is my strength.



Graduation day in June 2017, bachelor's degree

“It's so good that I'm able to tell people how much I want to make instead of just settling for how much they're willing to give to me.
- Christina A. Ramos”

2017 CHRISTINA A. RAMOS

AAS Business Administration '15, BBA Business Management '17

Interviewed on 09/03/2021

FOR ME, MONROE COLLEGE was a school that I had looked at, researched, and found to be more about community, and less about a student ID number. I figured that it would be a good place to start. I was able to center my life around school, and then I was able to change my work schedule. I met friends that I still have today. It was probably the only time in my experience with college, that I ran into professors that actually cared, and that was awesome. I left with good memories, and I feel, if I would have taken advantage of more opportunities, I would probably have even better memories. Not too long before I finished my associate's in December 2015, I was able to get an administration job. From there, I was able to get other jobs and became an executive assistant; it felt really good knowing it's because of school. It's

because I took the chance on myself, that I was able to get a job like that, and people were willing to take the chance on me. I credit Monroe, but also myself for being able to put myself in that position and do better. It's so good that I'm able to tell people how much I want to make instead of just settling for how much they're willing to give to me. Monroe solidified my belief in myself. It told me that I can get the work done, and it showed me I am able to focus. I can be exactly what I want to be, and I can make that happen. I just have to stick to it. I was really proud of my achievements - I've made the president's list every semester, and then summa cum laude for both graduations. I earned two medals, and even became members of the Delta Mu Delta business association, and the National Society for Success and Leadership. I'm grateful for Monroe.

Happy; years later





2019 KISHON LINDSAY

BS Computer Information Systems '19
Interviewed on 08/19/2021

I'M ORIGINALLY FROM GRENADA, a small island in the Caribbean, and I'd always dreamed of studying in the US. I started off with an associate's degree in IT from the T. A. Marryshow Community College in Grenada, but my first job was at a local bank, where I decided to pursue a career in accounting and finance. One lucky day I heard on the news that the prime minister of Grenada signed a Memorandum of Understanding with Monroe College, which made tuition more affordable. I'd heard of the name Monroe College prior, so I thought it was time get back into IT. I looked into the online program and saw that it was way cheaper than physically coming to the US, so I signed

up, got accepted, and started. I did take a break for a year or so because I started a new job at an accounting firm, while also studying the Association of Chartered Certified Accountants Distant Learning Program from the UK, and was under extreme pressure and time constraints. I finished the coursework at Monroe when I came to the US a few years ago. I could've finished it quicker because I had a 4.0 GPA and was willing and able, but at the time, I didn't see any change occurring in my current situation. I waited until I was settled because I also started a new job in the US. The overall experience was great, and I really liked the online environment. The coursework was very relevant and some of

the courses were preparation for popular industry IT certification exams, which you could take to get extra credentials. That was a huge plus! The experience enabled me to better understand the systems used for accounting and reporting. It also led me to know what to anticipate from the various systems. Most of the time, when organizations put new systems in place that record and analyze data, they often don't utilize all the features in their day-to-day operation. Because of the skills and experiences learned while at Monroe, I am able to offer deeper insights and solutions with greater impact.



Chief technology officer at Montefiore Information Technology



42nd Infantry Division Command Sergeant Major

1999 CSM COREY K. CUSH

AAS Computer Information Systems '93, BBA Computer Information Systems '99

Interviewed on 08/18/2021



I GOT OUT OF THE ACTIVE DUTY military, and I used the Montgomery GI Bill to obtain my bachelor degree. While on active duty, my whole plan was to go to college and get my bachelor's degree. My parents couldn't afford to send me to college, so I went into the military first, earned the GI Bill and attended Monroe College. I had two stints with Monroe college in order to obtain my degrees. My first experience was through the associate's degree program, when Monroe went from Monroe Business School to Monroe College, and they didn't have dorms. It was a community college in a sense. Once I got my associate's degree, I came back in 1997 when Monroe offered a BA program. I went to school during the day and worked at night at that time.

Monroe gave me the foundation at the start of my Information Technology career. When I graduated with my bachelor's degree, I was already working but I used Monroe to garner great opportunities associated with a bachelor's degree. I was working for Prodigy (Internet Service Provider) at that time, and once I got my bachelor's degree, I secured another job with a company called Gen Re. That led me to work for NYC Health and Hospitals Corporation and later Montefiore and where became the Chief Technology Officer. I developed a program with Monroe, where I took on interns, and if it worked out they would end up becoming full-time employees. To this day, I maintain a good relationship with Monroe and all its alumni.





My kids were my inspiration for bettering myself; it is only right they appear here with me

2013 ATIBA "TONY" POLLARD

AS Information Technology '13
Interviewed on 08/19/2021



I WAS AT A PLACE IN MY LIFE WHERE I WANTED TO BETTER myself. Everything was going wrong at the time. I was not getting anywhere on my job, the mother of my two kids passed away, and I needed to make more money. I said, 'You know what, let me just sacrifice, go to school, work, and take care of these kids.' I was running around, and I hardly got any sleep, but I did it. I got a new position, and everything happened right away. I did not even tell anyone I was going to school at work. They knew I knew how to work with computers. Somebody left, and I said, 'Oh, I want to take that position.' He said, 'Oh, I would love to give it to you, but you need this. If you have it, I will give it to you,' so I just pulled out my degree. My math teacher stood out for me. I had him twice, and the way he taught me was so good. I thought I was not going to even pass the class, but I ended up getting an A. I did very well in that class and that was the surprising one. The teachers in computer courses were excellent. The teacher of the a class about movies gave so much wisdom about stuff you need to know besides the regular education and just life wisdom. He was very good. To be successful, you need to know how to interact, move, and navigate with people. The degree will get you the interview, but you have to also have other skills.



2013 RAYNELLE T. ENNIN (BROWN)

BBA Hospitality Management '13
Interviewed on 08/23/2021



I ENDED UP AT MONROE BECAUSE THEY HAD AN affiliation with the college I went to back in Tobago. I was doing services at the time, and they suggested that I go on with their scholarship. My sister already attended there. Monroe has become my second home. I was proud of the Residence Life team which gave me an even bigger sense of community and friendships. I'm still friends with my residents and some of the Residence Life team. It was a blessing, and I don't regret coming to Monroe College at all. It was the best time of my life. I had a partial scholarship there, but they did send me to the University of Toledo after I graduated with a full ride scholarship. I had my master's there, and Ms. Leslie Jerome encouraged me that it would be a good decision. I also met my spouse at UToledo. I was an RA at Monroe. I enjoyed mingling with the other students, and getting to know people from all areas of the world. I loved being a part of the activities because the RAs would chaperone the events and the off-campus activities. I still miss it today as an adult. I did well through the honors program, and I was a part of it. We also learned to do ballroom dancing and performed that for the school at the basketball games. I graduated with honors, and my GPA was 4.0. Professor MacDonald was in charge of the honors program and she also taught a lot of the English classes there. At first, I was not fond of her, but we did get to see the fun side of her. She's not mean, and she just wanted the best for us. Monroe College has helped me go to University of Toledo and get my MBA. It definitely prepared me for the real world. Being an RA and having responsibilities matured me. It has opened a lot of doors, and it fueled me to stay in the educational field. I am currently an associate director of a nursing college here in Columbus.



1997 ELBA KEITT (GONZALEZ)

AAS Computer Information Systems '97
Interviewed on 08/31/2021



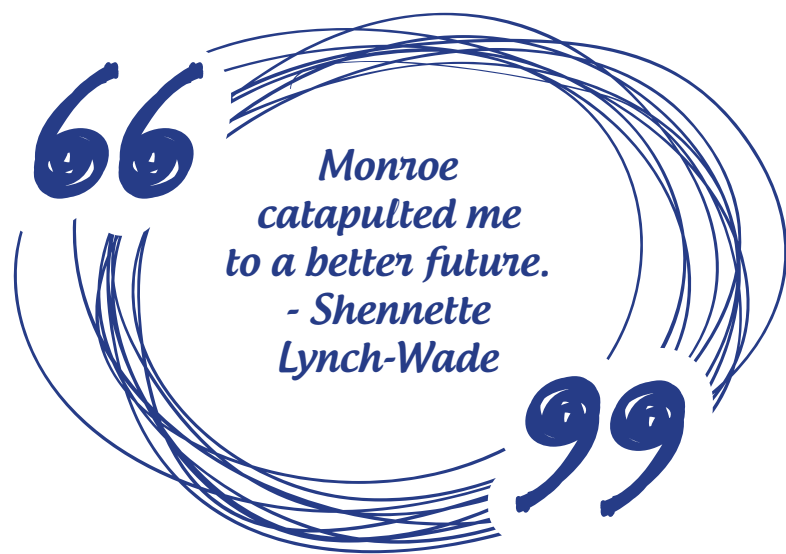
I ATTENDED MONROE with my best friend. We grew up together, and she was like a sister to me. We were always together, and we graduated at the same time. After graduation I didn't go into the field that I studied for, but it actually opened more doors for me. Instead of seeking jobs I sought careers with my degree. I went into private investigation. Now I have a construction company, and I have a partner who takes care of all the field stuff while I take care of the office stuff.

1998 SHENNETTE LYNCH-WADE

AAS Computer Information Systems '98
Interviewed on 08/19/2021

I HAD SEEN AN OPEN house in the Sunday edition of the Daily News. I went and registered at the New Rochelle Campus, but I attended the Bronx Campus. I lived down the road, so it was close by. I went in, and I wanted to do computer science. I walked to school. The only time I would commute was if I worked downtown on 5th Avenue. If I left from work, then I

would take the train directly to school. The professors made an impression on me. I liked my professor for English and the people who worked in the library. There was one professor who knew everything about computers. Monroe catapulted me to a better future. I moved from New York and live in Jersey now. I worked at Verizon. I did that for 16 years.



2004 REGINA ANNE WOLFE-PARKS, MPA

AAS Criminal Justice '04, BBA Criminal Justice '05
Interviewed on 08/18/2021

IT WAS NEARBY, AND I HAD MADE THE DECISION TO further my education proving myself that I could do it, which I was able to do. I graduated magna cum laude, and I was very proud of that. It was an achievement since I was in my forties already. The criminal justice system was great because I have been a fraud investigator for over 30 years.

2000 MARCIA J. MAYNE (PEADLEY)

AAS Business Administration '00, BBA Business Management '01
Interviewed on 08/20/2021

MY PROFESSOR IN college algebra class was encouraging. He said to me one day, 'You know what, even though you failed the tests, you always turn up your tests.' I never stopped from attending classes. I was working full-time and was a mother, so I was going home late at night. That was a big challenge for me, but I never stopped. My grades were very good, and I graduated as cum laude. I realized that

even though I was new to the country, I could be what I wanted to be. After graduating from Monroe I decided to go further and apply for a job in the Department of Education. I was able to get that job, and I even applied for another job. I'm in the school system now, so that has helped me to go further and know who I am. I can achieve anything in life as long as I have support.

2003 TINA BROWN

BBA Computer Information Systems '03
Interviewed on 08/18/2021



2021

I WENT TO MONROE College because I had started at a community college, and I found out I was pregnant with my son, so I had moved back home. I decided to go back to college. When I was trying to go back to school, Monroe was the only school that accepted the majority of my credits. I made great connections there. One of the highlights of my career was obtaining a job as the data center manager at Westchester

Community College, and I got that through a former classmate. After I graduated, I reached back and pulled some interns, and they had gone on to have good careers. Monroe reinforced my desire to stay in the IT field, and I got my master's degree in IT. Monroe means my completion. I bounced around to a couple of different schools, had my son, and never had completed anything. Then I got to Monroe, and I followed it through to completion. It was a big milestone for me in terms of finally completing my degree.

2001 REV. DR. MILDRED L. HEDRINGTON

BBA Business Management '01
Interviewed on 08/18/2021

MY SON WAS GOING TO SCHOOL, AND I WENT with him to sign him up at a college downtown. While I was there the teacher said, 'Why don't you take the test too?' I did and came up with a high score. She said, 'You have to get a degree.' They offered me to go there, but it was a two-year college, and I had to go to a four-year college. Monroe was the only one that was closest to me, and the one that took more of my credits from TCI. I started attending Monroe and was very pleased with it. One of the things that stuck out with me, when I think about Monroe, was the fact that I was an older student. I was already over 50, but they were inspired that at my age, I was still kicking it with education. I learned so much, and I am so glad that I was able to go to college. I got my own business and another job, so I really didn't have the time to go back, but I am grateful for what I learned at Monroe. After graduation I went home and I started my own business school called The Executive Ladies. It was changed to the Daughters of Reefer Hilton Healing Industries, and we worked with people who had nutritional problems. I also work in business administration and am working for the Department of Aging. I have a lot going on.

2006 QING "HENRY" HUANG

BBA Accounting '06
Interviewed on 08/03/2021

I IMMIGRATED TO NEW York City in May, 1993. Then I started working at a restaurant, and since I had an accounting degree in China, I got a bookkeeping job. When I was a bookkeeper, I decided to go for a bachelor's degree, so I went to Monroe, and Monroe accepted all my credit from my associate's. My schedule was at night because I was working

at that time. Monroe gave me a lot of first-hand experiences because a lot of professors were not from the school. They had their own businesses, and I got a lot of experiences from them. I graduated after two years, and I got a job at a CPA firm. Then I created a small business for tax preparation in 2015.



2003 SAMUEL A. JONES

AAS Computer Information Systems '03, BBA Computer Information Systems '06
Interviewed on 11/01/2021

I COULD GET MY STUDIES DONE at Monroe College while working, so I decided to attend. Two professors at Monroe believed in me and were key to my success. Monroe gave me a scholarship to attend Mount Saint Mary's

College. Monroe continued to monitor my progress while I was at MSMC. I got into the job I have currently because of my company's association with Monroe. I've been working there for 16 years.

2006 GARNEL H. DEMPAIRE

AAS Computer Information Systems '06, BBA Computer Information Systems '07
Interviewed on 08/03/2021

I WAS INSPIRED BY MY MOTHER. I was into the music business, and I had a certain passion for computers because I used DOS operating systems back then. I had a certain program that I used on my computer to make music. I was the youngest at the time, and everybody else was married. My sisters went to college, and they were very successful at Monroe College. It showed me that going to

Monroe enabled me to fish, but with a bigger net to fish with them. That is the analogy I use. My knowledge of computer information systems helped out a lot. The field of computing is abstract in a sense. I need to be familiar with how to do that. Monroe taught me what I needed to know through my professors. I was able to get married and provide for my family having that college background.

2005 MARCIA FORBES SHANNON

BBA Business Management '05
Interviewed on 08/03/2021



I KNEW THAT IT WAS COMPETITIVE because I know Caribbean students have a different mindset in terms of studying. It was an environment that would have been good for me. After graduation, I started my own business. The business background that I picked up at Monroe College allowed me to focus not only on the business, but also on the accounting component. The college has given me something that made me marketable, and I'm using it today.

2004 TONA O. HUTSON

AAS Accounting '04
Interviewed on 09/20/2021



2004 graduate

I WANTED TO advance my career. I wanted better for myself and my children. Monroe College offered the flexibility I needed, so I decided to attend. I lived in Brooklyn, worked in New Jersey, and went to school in the Bronx. Monroe was a great community; it was a family. The staff at Monroe were always accessible.

The professors were excellent; they took the extra time to help me through any difficulties I had. I made the Dean's List. Monroe organized a dinner ceremony for all the students who achieved that distinction. I graduated from Monroe in 2004. I received a promotion at my job in 2006, and have been getting additional promotions every since. I wouldn't have gotten where I am in my career without Monroe.

2007 IESHA WEBSTER

AAS Computer Information Systems '07, BBA Accounting '14
Interviewed on 09/14/2021



AT THE TIME THAT I attended Monroe, I actually was working at a real estate company. One of my coworkers was going to Monroe and she really liked the experience. She was encouraging the young employees at the time. I was a younger employee. She was like, 'I'm going to refer you to a school.' That's how I got introduced to Monroe. I was a working student. I worked a full-time job at a real estate company, so I would go to school after work. At first I just started off taking like two or three classes, and then I got serious about getting my associate's degree with the help of my coworker. I kept stopping and finishing, stopping and finishing. I stopped like three more credits before earning

my associate's degree. I started dating a gentleman and he found out I was three credits away from earning my associate's. He pushed me to go back. I left the real estate company and I was at another job. I was working as an accounting assistant. Shortly after that, I finished my associate's degree. Going into my bachelor's degree, I changed my major from computer science and was like, 'Let me think about getting a bachelor's in accounting,' because that's my present role at that new company. Without my coworker, without the guy that was in my life, I don't think I would have obtained my bachelor's degree in accounting. It was a major accomplishment for me at the time.

2014 CHRISTOPHER BRYANT

AAS Hospitality Management '14, BBA Hospitality Management '15
Interviewed on 08/04/2021



I WENT TO MONROE COLLEGE AROUND 2013 TO LEARN the field of the hospitality industry. It was memorable and a fun experience. The professors and fellow alumni that I went through this journey with made an impression on me. I wanted to go into the hotel business, but knowing that I didn't work in a hotel, I had to go somewhere else. I went from doing retail to restaurant, and now I'm finally in all aspects of the business. My experience with Monroe impacted my life after graduation. When I looked back on the things that I learned, it helped me on a day-to-day basis. I'm just thankful to have had the opportunity to get into Monroe.

2007 SERGIA MELENDEZ

AAS Medical Assisting '07
Interviewed on 08/05/2021



THEY TREATED ME SO WELL AND HELPED ME WITH my English, so it was a great experience. The professors did a great job in pushing me, so I really appreciate it. I became a nurse, and I'm now doing a training center and teaching people. I recommend Monroe College all the time. I learned everything over at Monroe College.



2007 JUDY DEVONE

BBA Health Services Administration '07
Interviewed on 08/04/2021



I WAS WORKING ON campus as the nurse doing the immunizations, and I said, 'Well, let me go and finish my bachelor's.' I registered while working there, and that inspired me to further my career. I loved the library, and the students were helpful with me because I

was older. I got such a good job when I left Monroe College. I went to work for Sanford Brown College, and I got really good jobs just from graduating from Monroe. I did what I had to do in my life, and I'm so proud to be a Monroe College alumna.

2004 NAJWA LYONS

BBA Computer Information Systems '04

Interviewed on 09/20/2021



AS AN IMMIGRANT, I HAD THE OPPORTUNITY TO go to Monroe. When I came into Monroe, I was pretty young. I graduated from Monroe before I was 21. I attended a community college beforehand because I graduated high school at 16. What do you do with a 16 year old? Do you throw them in the full college experience or do you slowly immerse them into it? I had an associate's degree before I came to Monroe, so I could come in, take the required courses, and finish my bachelor's in less than two years. Monroe afforded me the ability to do that because I was taking six classes per semester, and I was taking classes during the summer. I had the opportunity to do business laws and electives. I still use that experience now in what I do because I'm constantly ensuring that clients act according to compliance rules and the FCC. That experience and my elective ethics course still drive me now. The experience at Monroe is still a part of my day-to-day work. I don't just pick it out of the air when I need it. It's still relevant. Since I finished at Monroe, I went to Pace. I did a master's in computer science. Then I went to the University of Phoenix, and I did a second master's. I'm now a doctoral student doing my PhD. My degree from Monroe is still forefront on my resume. I graduated with honors. I have my plaque on the wall in my office, and my degree is framed. It was a valued experience I am very proud of, and the present value is still rising. I was the first of my siblings to obtain a bachelor's degree. It makes me smile that that was the first time I lived away from home, and I found myself as an individual. That experience taught me about who I am, what I'm capable of doing, and how strong I am as an individual. There were times where I was at my lowest point, but I survived, and I came out of it better on the other side.



2016 ARLIN ORTIZ

AAS Medical Assisting '16, BBA Public Health '17

Interviewed on 08/18/2021

MONROE COLLEGE WAS close to my home. I did my research and noticed how quickly the semesters go by. That was how I got my associate's degree and my bachelor's degree basically in one year together. When I did my associates, I loved the hands-on experience that they were giving me during the medical



assisting. I enjoyed having every professor, and I learned so much. If it wasn't for them, I would never be working where I'm at right now. Right now I'm working for Mount Sinai Hospital. I took everything that I learned from Monroe and incorporated it into my job. I'm actually trying to continue my education by doing the accelerated nurse program.

2015 EMILIO J. LAPIETRA, CFP

MBA '15

Interviewed on 08/20/2021

I CHOSE MONROE College because my father works there. I did my classes online. It was very informative and very flexible. I was working full-time also, so it was very good for me. I got my assignments and my exams, it was a tremendous experience. It led me to a real career path where I could be very successful. It opened up



a lot of work opportunities. After I received my master's of business administration, I got offered a job at the fidelity of investments, which I did very well. I was there for six years. Based on my MBA and my CFP, I've been hired as a vice president at Morgan Stanley. I believed my MBA at Monroe College opened these doors for me.

2015 WAN MAN LINDA AGNES LEUNG, MSN, RN

BS Nursing '15

Interviewed on 11/18/2021

IT WAS BECAUSE I NEEDED a bachelor degree. I was an international student, and I finished my associate degree, then I transferred. I love the most in the whole college, and it helped because I got my



bachelor's degree, and it is useful from my current position. I was promoted to the director of patient services in the home care agency, so at this position, BSN must be required. It impacted my current career.

2001 SANDRA E. SMITH

BBA Computer Information Systems '01

Interviewed on 11/10/2021



I WAS AT THE BRONX CAMPUS on Fordham road. My teachers were amazing. I was working full-time at the Administration for Children's Services. Back then in the days, there was an MIS Department, and I'm still working there today as a computer specialist. I started off as a coach and a computer aid. I am a computer specialist, and I've been going on for 26 years now. Monroe was a big instrument for me in maintaining and holding on to the service that I received from my BA in

computer information. I carry that with me through my life, and it's my life experience, and it's my life's work. Monroe put me at that point to stay where I'm at. It was just an amazing lifetime experience. I love Monroe College!

1987 JACQUELINE WHITE (WILLIAMS)

AOS Computer Information Systems '87
Interviewed on 08/18/2021

I ATTENDED MONROE COLLEGE BECAUSE I had limited opportunities. It impacted my personal life in a major way. I gained the confidence to set out a plan, make a goal, and execute it. After graduating, I did not work in my field at all. I took a civil service exam, and I recently retired from the city civil service in New York. I found a nurturing environment at Monroe and I volunteered as a tutor which added personal fulfillment and helped me ace my courses. I felt supported while I was at Monroe and feel my life has been enriched by the experience.

“After graduating, I did not work in my field at all. I took a civil service exam, and I recently retired from the city civil service in New York.
- Jacqueline White (Williams)”

2006 KENNETH D. JONES

BBA Accounting '06
Interviewed on 08/07/2021



A staff analyst at NYCHA; started working with NYCHA in December 2020

At the office at NYCHA after a meeting

I JUST WANTED TO FURTHER MY EDUCATION. I was out of school for a while. When I went back, I was 33 or 34 years old, and I just wanted to get my bachelor's. My time at Monroe College was very inspiring. I enjoyed my time there. I learned a lot. I earned my accounting degree. I was not really in that field right now, but I'm a staff analyst with the housing authority of New York City. I loved the job. It was a lot of responsibilities and everything, but I really enjoyed my time in my role.



2005 LAKISHA GAVIN

BBA Accounting '05
Interviewed on 10/25/2021

MY SISTER WAS ENROLLED AT MONROE COLLEGE, and she encouraged me to attend. I started out with day classes, but then I changed my schedule to night classes, which made it so much easier. It was hard for me at that time because I was in the shelter, working, and going to school. I had to overcome sleep deprivation; I was traveling from Queens to Manhattan, and to the Bronx, to take my kids to school. I worked in Manhattan and went to the Bronx to go to school. I transferred to the shelter in the Bronx, then I got an apartment. I made sure that I did what I had to do in school. I didn't stop. I didn't really tell anybody my situation because I was ashamed, but I broke down in class one day, crying and sleep-deprived. The professors I had were awesome; they really worked with me and told me not to worry. I started out as a business major, then I changed my major to accounting. After graduation, I was able to find something in my field by the grace of God. I'm still working in the accounting field.

2021 VARLENE ATKINSON

Interviewed on 10/08/2021

IT WAS ALWAYS MY dream to obtain my bachelor's, and I was able to make that dream a reality with Monroe. I'm also a business owner. I own my own catering company. That was my motivation behind finishing my degree: I wanted to apply what I learned at Monroe to secure my business and make it successful. I did my

courses online, so I've never been to the campus. I had one professor who stood out, and I had him for a few of my classes. He was always available and willing to help with any issue I had with the course. I learned to better manage my time and build stronger relationships. I'm proud to have completed my degree.

2003 MARIA VEGA

AAS Secretarial Science '90, BBA Business Management '03
Interviewed on 11/05/2021

I WAS YOUNG AND wanted to do something with my life. I had been working in a factory and finally said, 'I can't be doing this all my life.' I didn't want my kids to see me working in a factory. I had to find something

close, and Monroe was the closest. I found the people to be nice. It was very small. The biggest thing for me was graduation. Now I work in the Financial Aid Office at Monroe.



2020 BILLY GARCIA DOR

AAS Business Administration '20
Interviewed on 08/03/2021

A FORMER PROFESSOR REFERRED ME to Monroe College. I saw the readings, and my friends knew the administration. Monroe also offered my major. I felt so alive because it was what I wanted. It impacted my career and now my goal is to become a hiring manager. I am happy to graduate from Monroe.

2007 LEONIDAS "LEO" SOSA

BBA Accounting '07
Interviewed on 08/18/2021

I SAW THAT HENDRIX COLLEGE HAD AN EASY SCHEDULE for working individuals and professors. I met people and worked in the accounting firms that I was interested in. It changed my thought about the school's reputation. I enjoyed it at the time that I spent there as a basic white coworker. My kids were my encouragement to get my degree. I wanted to show them that I have a degree. I became a public accountant and worked a price for the whole scope of one of the top accounting firms in the United States. That was thanks to Monroe College. I went on to have my own business. Monroe changed my life greatly and opened a lot of doors for me. Doors that I never expected to open.

2010 ERINNE M. PERRY

AAS Accounting '10, BBA Public Accounting '12
Interviewed on 09/03/2021

I WAS NOT ABLE TO ATTEND ANY OTHER SUNY SCHOOLS because those classes started, but randomly I got a letter from Monroe College. I went to the school the next week, took the placement test, and started at Monroe. I loved being at Monroe. I loved having the trimester and I loved the environment. I had some great professors. Professor Nansen and Professor Gilmore in particular were very pivotal in me just choosing my career to become a CPA. Even after I left college, I still had their personal contact information so I could reach out to them for advice. That was very beneficial as I was growing and developing my career. Now as a professor at Monroe, I have the opportunity to pay it forward. I can give that back to my students, not just teaching them, but building relationships.

2011 MIA AMOUR ANDRILLON (MIA ANDRILLON)

AAS Baking and Pastry Arts '11, BBA Hospitality Management '12
Interviewed on 08/18/2021



I WAS ON A SOCCER scholarship at Monroe College. We started the soccer team in 2009, and I was the captain of the team. I loved the environment. I love the fact that it was an international school, so I was able to meet all types of people. I enjoyed learning the different cultures and different languages

that everybody spoke around us. I got an associate's degree in baking and pastry and a bachelor's degree in hospitality. I own my own business now. I also work in education; I am a substitute teacher from kindergarten through eighth grade and own my own bakery.

1990 RICHARD COBBOLD

AAS Accounting '90
Interviewed on 11/17/2021

I'M ORIGINALLY FROM Ghana. I attended an open house and got very interested. It was very close to where I was living. I went on to get my master's in accounting. I'm working as an assistant controller now for a company in Washington,

DC. I'm now a CPA candidate. I remember my first class with Professor Lamar. He kept me going. Monroe meant a lot to me. It opened my eyes to so many things that I didn't know, coming from Africa. They taught me almost everything I know.



2005 TRACEE SAWYER

BS '05
Interviewed on 09/20/2021

IT WAS THE CLOSEST and most inexpensive college to where I was working at the time. What made the biggest impression on me was the professors. They were very accommodating. I went to school at night, and most of the students had full-time jobs and were working professionals. I liked that the professors were cognizant of that and flexible. I would not be where I'm at in my career

if not for my degree and what I learned at Monroe. I've been able to move up quite a bit. I actually got a promotion right away when I graduated, and then a year after that, I got another high-paying position. I've been at that company since then and have been able to steadily move up to the point that I'm at now. I would not have been able to do any of that without the degree I earned at Monroe.



2011 BARBARA SAMUEL

BBA Accounting '11
Interviewed on 11/05/2021

I FIRST STARTED AT Monroe in 2003. I wasn't able to complete the program due to my being pregnant. I decided to go back in 2009, and I graduated in 2011. I was homeless for three and a half years and going through children's services with my daughter not going to school. I had a professor in a psychology class. He taught something in that class that I carried with me the whole time I was going through that process. The lessons he taught weren't for everyone, but thank God I got to take

them because I needed them to prepare me for my journey. I could apply my degree from Monroe into the workplace. I could apply everything I learned about accounting, business, and business law into my professional and personal life. When I first attended school for an associate's degree, I was making a minimum wage of \$7 an hour. I doubled it when I got my bachelor's degree. I went to making \$14 an hour, and I ended up increasing, so it increased my revenue.



2007 MIGDA LIZ RIVERA

AAS Criminal Justice '07, BBA Criminal Justice '08
Interviewed on 08/21/2021



I WAS WITH MY DAUGHTER, AND WE WERE talking about school. She was telling me about how her teachers were asking her what she wanted to be in the future. It was funny because she said, 'I want to be like mommy. I want to be a cashier.' That hit me. That was when I walked in, and I said, 'No, I need to go to college because I need to be her role model.' My speech professor made an impression on me. That class helped me out and empowered me. I had always been quiet and very shy, especially in public speaking, and it was all gone after that class. It made a big difference. I had the greatest experience ever at Monroe College. I have no regrets. Everyone was very helpful. I was able to do my associate's in one year and my bachelor's in one year, taking all the credits and everything. They took care of all my military background, and I was able to do Spanish club. I took regular Spanish and advanced Spanish, and that helped me. Taking my field experience and being a prior military member in the US Navy, I was able to do both five degrees each in one year. That was what I loved about it the most. The counselor I had and everyone from the assistant was awesome. I was able to get my Montgomery GI Bill on point and never had issues. My bachelor's kept me on top. I went into corrections after college because I majored in criminal justice. I was planning and working to get to the NYPD. I was fighting to get into PD, but instead of hiring 1,500 people, they were only calling about 500 at a time. I was going back and forth because I had to take the PD and repeat the exam because you had to take it every six months. I went through that for three years while I was in the process of school and everything. I took both of those and corrections, and the corrections called me. I did the whole process for both at the same time. I interned, graduated, and started with corrections. I was working at Rikers for two years at C 74 with the Adolescent House.

2005 TANESHA C. MARCELIN (POYSER)

BBA Business Management '05
Interviewed on 08/25/2021



I WAS CHOSEN FOR A HALF SCHOLARSHIP BACK FROM Jamaica when I was studying at a community college. That was my motivation for going there. My time there was great. Monroe was like a home away from home. I enjoyed the international student association. I was able to connect with different students who were also going through the same experience being an international student. The professors were great. They were helpful in terms of guiding and bridging the gap from graduating to going out into the work world, whether that was setting you up with internship experiences or assisting you with your resume and job hunting documents. Everybody kind of had a walk-in door policy, and that was very comforting. I could see my program advisor, Mr. Phillips, anytime. Dr. Altamirano was also very awesome. When I was a student, there was a program called Kiddie College. It was for students who were part of the evening school. They were career people coming back to school, and a lot of them had kids. They had the opportunity to drop their kids off in the evening and go to classes. I worked at Kiddie College, and we helped the kids with homework, supervised snacks, and all that. Then I remember passing inside my computer science professor's office one day, and I popped in just to say hello. I explained to him how I was not quite sure what I wanted to do. Then he was like, 'I saw you with the kids at the daycare. Why don't you go into teaching?' It was totally not even on my radar. I was like, 'Oh, teaching. What would I even teach?' He said, 'You have your bachelor's of business. You could teach business.' 'Really?' I took that 10-minute conversation and went down a really good rabbit hole. I started doing my own research and ended up applying to the University of Bridgeport to do my master's in education the next semester. Since that 10-minute conversation, I have been in 12 years of teaching business classes at a high school.

2008 ANESSA EMANUEL

AAS Medical Administration '08, BBS Public Health '17

Interviewed on 08/02/2021

WHEN I WAS IN MONROE in 2007 and 2008, I was going through a tough time, and Monroe helped me to get away from it. It was like an escape for me. I focused on my education to better myself and get to a place where I was self-sufficient that I did not have to depend on anyone else. I am very proud to say I am Monroe alumni. It is a private school, and it is a very well-rounded school. They can help you with any situation that you may have. They helped me with job placement and internships, and that was how I got my job with my education. I am able to do anything, and I can go anywhere. I spoke to school sometimes, studied my books, and did everything I

could to make sure I made it out of school. I was able to get my associate's degree from Monroe, got a job to get me out of the situation that I was in, and moved forward. I continued my education from the degree I had with my associate's. When I came back in 2017 for my second degree, my grades were pretty high. I am currently a hospital administrator at Weill Cornell Internal Medicine, and I am going back to school. It helped me to transfer a lot of the credits that I received in my bachelor's to a nursing degree that I will be going to start in January 2022. I will be going for a master's in nursing science.

2010 KAYTLIN JOHNSON

AAS Accounting '10, BBA Public Accounting '12

Interviewed on 08/25/2021

I HAD A LOT OF FRIENDS WHO WERE GOING, AND they were telling me that the curriculum there was really good. The biggest thing was that the whole committee at the Bronx campus was really committed to me getting my education and making sure I got my bachelor's degree. It has definitely paved the way for my career. Normal people in accounting will take a good three to five years to get a senior status. Because of all my classes and working with my professors, it only took me about a year to become a senior accountant, which is a big accomplishment. I moved around because some companies have closed down, but I had one company I was with for five years. Now I'm at another company, and I've been here for two years. Everything that I got from school has definitely helped because in accounting, a lot of it is not really training, it is knowledge.

“Everything that I got from school has definitely helped because in accounting, a lot of it is not really training, it is knowledge.”
- Kaytlin Johnson

2007 NATASHA NEYSMITH

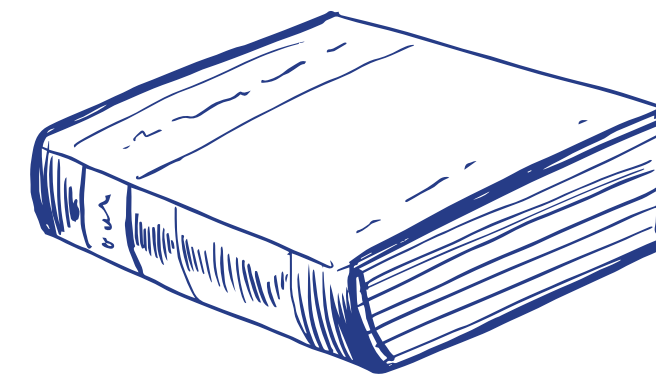
MBA

Interviewed on 11/17/2021



MONROE IS NEAR and dear to my heart. It is an organization that allowed me to stretch, learn and gain some really great friends in the process. My cousin attended Monroe, and she got her undergraduate degree there. She also works there. I lived not too far from the campus, and I worked in Lower Manhattan. Unlike other organizations and institutions, they understand and help you figure out ways to succeed. I am a proud Monroe alum, and I'm proud to be a part of their first MBA class. My professor kept me doing

the things I needed to do. I appreciate that. From day one, they were very good to me. I had great and encouraging classmates. By the time I went to Monroe, I had already been in the industry for over ten years. I was a marketing executive. Then I felt like I needed Monroe to solidify who I was in my own industry. Getting my MBA I learned everything I needed to know to succeed. I was able to let people know that I wasn't here to play. It also made me commit to continuous learning. I do still take classes to stay abreast of what I do is to stay ahead in my field.



1999 CATHY GONZALEZ

AAS Office Technology '99

Interviewed on 10/21/2021



IT WAS REALLY MY HUSBAND WHO DID ALL THE research and pushed me to go. He was the one who paid for everything. He didn't want to continue the usual cycle here in the Bronx for lower-income minorities. We wanted something better, and that's what got me into Monroe. I didn't go to many events because I had a daughter. I would take her to preschool during the day and go to class in the evening. The professors were great. I still use what I learned to this day because I work at Fordham University. It's helped me along the way to do the things that I've wanted to do. Because of my college degree, I was able to apply to the police department. I was able to apply to the department of corrections, where I worked for a while. Monroe, for me, meant having a future. Right now it means even more for my son's future. I'm so happy he decided to go to Monroe.

2008 LANCE NATHANIEL WOODS

AAS Criminal Justice '08, BBA Criminal Justice '09, BS
Interviewed on 08/09/2021



IT WAS THE SCHOOL FOR ME. THE WHOLE faculty was great. I had recommended people to go to that school. My daughter went there. It was the best thing for me. I made the president's list twice. I took criminal justice and still work for the city. My whole complete life style has changed because of the school and the academics. My daughters came to my graduation, and that inspired them to go to school. It was a blessing to my parents and was on the grace of God. My parents are still living, and they also came to my graduation.

2009 JOSHUA CHIDOZIE NWACHUKWU

AS Information Technology '09, BS Information Technology '11
Interviewed on 08/02/2021

IT STARTED WHEN I SAW THE AD ON A TRAIN, AND I saw Monroe College when I was downtown. They had an associate's degree where I could do something with the computer, so that was where the interest started. I enrolled the next week and passed it. Going to Monroe has been a great experience, and it worked with what I am doing here overseas. I have been the director of a microfinance bank, and I've been able to stabilize and do some work with the School of Education. Going to Monroe broke out so many potentials I didn't have, starting when I took classes with one of my professors in speech class. I now could speak in a crowd and talk to a lot of people from being a shy person. When it came to financial analysis, I had professors that helped me, and I had Professor Clifford Brozo in computer. I could mention a lot of professors, but a few helped me with my potential to actualize my dream as a director. Monroe has been that backbone. I wish I could have time to come over and talk to some people and alumni to share my experiences with them. From a person who couldn't express himself, I am now a person who could stand in directors' meetings and talk to a lot of people who are aspiring bankers media, and people who go on TV. I remember an essay in one of my classes in Monroe. I was talking about owning my own TV station one day and trying to compete with CNN. I am still in the process of getting there. Monroe helped me to reach that potential. The professors were well-grounded in the subjects that they were teaching to a lot of us. It wasn't like going to places where you felt like you were smarter than the professors. It was coming to a place where you have professors who were grounded in the course they were teaching, which is a big ground to where I am today as a director. Monroe has been my backbone, starting with my associate's degree, and it didn't stop there. I went all the way to my master's.

2010 ALFRED JAMES ROBINSON

AAS Business Administration '10, BBA Business Management '11, MBA '13
Interviewed on 09/30/2021

I HEARD A LOT OF GOOD things about Monroe College and about the staff. I was actually working and I thought, 'I need to resume school and finish it.' I picked up the phone and spoke with David Dawson, who was very pleasant and helpful. I felt like I was at a point where I kind of reached the ceiling in my industry as an operations manager. I enjoyed it and I wanted to keep going. I needed a degree, so that's what inspired me to go back to school at Monroe College. Professor Michael Altamirano made an impression on me just because of his background and the way that he taught. I had him for two

undergraduate courses at different points. He was in my capstone course, the final class I took for graduate school. He's probably the most memorable, but I think really the staff in general were impressive. It was really refreshing because prior to going to Monroe, I was in the CUNY system. The staff there made you feel like you are a burden when you had a question. At Monroe, I never felt like, when I had questions along the way, that I was ever burdensome. People actually were receptive and wanted to help. I was on a mission; I went straight through from AA all the way to MBA.

2011 XAVIERA "XAVI" CHALET RODRIGUEZ

BBA Health Services Administration '11, MBA '13
Interviewed on 08/04/2021

THE INSPIRATION CAME FROM MY AUNT Helen, who attended the Nursing Program at Monroe College, and after she graduated, she became a supervisor at a nursing home. A few years later I heard that Monroe would be a great choice for me, so I went ahead, applied, and enrolled in a bachelor's program. All my teachers were inspirational because they did not let us give up, and they kept pushing. Math was not my strong point, but my math professor tutored us to be able to get into the normal class. He knew his stuff, and he knew how to teach people. I was able to surpass the anxiety in the math area. I was in the healthcare field for a while, and I fell into a project with a good friend of mine. We went into business together, and then I found out that it was a hoax. They used me to build the business and then it all fell apart. It was the worst and the best thing that happened because then I went ahead and opened up a little company called Xavi's Corner Inc. My mother, my sister, and I have a corporation, and I am now doing concessions. I sell food at Roberto Clemente State Park, and this will be our third year there. I could not have done it without Monroe. If it was not for Monroe, I would not be in the position that I am today.

2013 VIOLET DANIELLE KAMEKA

BBA Public Accounting '13
Interviewed on 08/18/2021



I WAS TRANSFERRING out, and I graduated from a two-year school. I wanted to continue my degree in accounting. Monroe College was one of the colleges that I felt that I could do well at. I liked my professors, and I still remember my professor who was very helpful in my accounting classes. I also made lots of friends and good connections with my classmates. After graduation I got a job, and I do taxes

but not necessarily at an accounting firm. I worked for a company named Jackson Hewitt. I was already doing that for a couple of years before I started at Monroe College. As I got more education and more knowledge it helped me with the situation. It helped me to advise other people, whether friends or family on different things that they don't know about taxes.

2007 VIVIAN SANTANA

AAS Business Technologies '07
Interviewed on 09/30/2021



THE FACT THAT I WAS able to get a degree earlier, even though it took me a little longer, inspired me to attend Monroe College. I could do an associate's faster than four years. I had fun. Some of my classes were a little difficult for me, but I made it through.

Having to go to different buildings was interesting; Monroe College was growing. I went for business technology, and I wound up going into medical. It's kind of in the same field because I'm trying to get into medical administration.

1984 EZRA J. WALTERS

AAS Computer Information Systems '84
Interviewed on 11/05/2021



I WAS A COMPUTER operator in Manhattan. I went to Empire Technical School to do computer programming. I wanted to know more about it because it paid me well and I loved what I was doing. I went and signed up for Monroe College because they were using COBOL databases. I went at night from 4:00 to 12:00. I had a wonderful time. I had some classmates that

were wonderful. It was such a diverse group of people and a culturally rich environment. There are two people who I still communicate with. I graduated and taught for eight years. One of my students got me out of teaching, and I started working as a consultant in COBOL. I'm still writing COBOL code after 37 years. I just took a contract with a company in India. Monroe helped me to fulfill my goals.

2009 NICOLE R. TOMLIN

BBA Criminal Justice '09, BS, MS
Interviewed on 08/03/2021



I LIKE THE ONE-ON-ONE experience and the very flexible schedule given that I had to work full-time during the day and take courses at night. They allowed me to go to school part-time and then gradually eased my way into taking full-time classes. I also had time to study in between classes, and I was able to take my schoolwork with me to work. My oldest daughter at the time was still young, but I had a great support system which made it easy. When I got home from school at night, she was already sleeping. I get her ready for school, drop her off, and pick her up. I started out very young at a different college pursuing a degree in criminal justice, and I did not like the fact that a lot of the professors didn't have that personal touch with their

students, but Monroe gave us a more hands-on experience. The class sizes weren't that big, so we got the experience of being in the field of criminal justice. They treated us like cops, and that made it fun to obtain the degree. The same day of graduation, they announced that they were starting the first master's program in criminal justice, and I jumped on the opportunity and decided to go ahead and continue. I didn't take a break. I went straight through my master's, took it all the way until, and was able to finish the master's program early. I'm currently a director of health and safety, and Monroe played a major role because my degree has gotten me so far. I was able to navigate different parts of the jobs in different fields and go back to criminal justice.

2013 NIECIA T. BAGOT, CPA

BBA Public Accounting '13
Interviewed on 09/02/2021



I WAS LIVING AT THE time in the Caribbean, and Monroe College had an information session. I saw the ad somewhere in the newspaper, so I went to the information session. I wrote down my name, and the college reached out. It seemed very interesting to me because I did not really have knowledge of how colleges work in America. The student service person was very informative, and he helped me make an informed decision. I was migrating from another country to America on a permanent resident visa. College was the first thing on my mind. I wanted to become a CPA, but a lot of colleges were not offering a major in accounting with enough credits for me to complete my degree and to take the exam right after. Monroe College offered a major called public accounting where they were offering 150 or more credits, as opposed to 130 or 120. I opted into that accounting program, completed that program, and was able to take the CPA exam without having to complete my master's. During

the course and in conversations, professors encouraged me to go into a career and get my license. They pushed me to become a CPA and to attend job fairs. Through this, I was able to gain employment in my field as a consultant. Now I'm two levels from being a partner. My job is very good, and I'm paid very well. I have a lot of flexibility to do whatever it is I need in my life. I would definitely say that going to college was the biggest part of building the foundation so that I can have the comfort that I have in my life right now. Having the degree from Monroe impacted my career in a positive way. I was able to go to a private college where I was able to take classes that were small. The professors really helped and gave specific attention to me and gave great advice. I enjoyed the student association lunches that we had. I'm still in contact with some of my professors. I'm thinking about becoming a part-time professor myself because of the positive experience that I've had at Monroe.

1982 HELLEN THOMAS

AAS Secretarial Science '82

Interviewed on 08/04/2021



Going out for the evening



Returning home from being with friends

MY HUSBAND ALSO GRADUATED FROM MONROE, and I had friends that attended Monroe. What I was hearing from them was just wonderful news. I loved everything that I heard about them. Monroe was close to where I live, so it was a win-win situation for me. One best thing about Monroe at the time was if it was needed, anyone could get a tutor. I took advantage of that. To my surprise, I found out that I'm smarter than I thought. I was on the Dean's List. Monroe treated the students the best way. It motivated me to do my best. Once I saw that my grades were improving, I wanted to see how much further I could go with it. I guess it was because of the tutoring and the outreach of encouragement from all of the teachers, deans, and everyone they're reaching out to. Monroe helped me to prepare for the world that I was going out into in terms of getting a job. Monroe was the stepping stone to my job that I retired from.

1983 CAROL RIVERA (MAITLAND)

Interviewed on 09/03/2021



AT THAT TIME MONROE College was offering a GED, along with the studies. I wanted to accomplish my GED. It was very interesting, and I obtained a lot from it. I still use what I learned in the shorthand courses to make notes. I've been retired since 2011. My final job was as a case manager in a homeless shelter here in New York City. Before that I was the admin for the same company at a residential facility for people with an HIV and AIDS diagnosis. I was the

administrative assistant when I transferred. I enjoyed being able to help people because I know how difficult it was. Not everybody has empathy for people in that situation, but being there with my own children gave me an insight that I wouldn't have otherwise. I'm 70 and I'm taking free courses online for credits. People can learn things every day of their lives if they're willing to. It doesn't matter whether it's school learning or just daily life.

1998 EBONY L. MORRIS

AAS Business Administration '98

Interviewed on 08/18/2021



I WAS LIVING IN Harlem, New York, and they presented the most opportunities for me at that time, as far as flexibility with the classes and the time and the convenience of getting there. I was a teenage man, so I had two young sons, so that was very important to me, to further my education. To show my kids that it could be done. I was doing that while working full-time. My role also got flexibility with the night classes, the weekend classes, and things of that, to be able to still work and take care of my kids while getting my degree. It was a great experience. I've met some great people there who I'm actually still friends with to this day. It was a great experience while I was there.

I did an internship that was set up through the office. The internship actually landed me my first real corporate job. I started as an intern with Modell's Sporting Goods in their corporate office. That internship then led me to work for them part-time and then full-time, and I actually stayed and worked with them for nine years after that. That opened up a lot of doors for me as well. My real first corporate job working for a major corporation was a big thing for me. If I wouldn't have gone through the internship process, I probably would've never gotten that job, it was definitely a stepping stone for me, and it helped further get me into the workforce. I've always worked, but never in a corporate setting.

2020 CRAIG M. SWINTON

AAS Business Administration '10, BBA Business Management '20

Interviewed on 09/03/2021



I WAS INSPIRED TO GO TO MONROE COLLEGE BECAUSE my middle name is Monroe. I love Monroe College. I love everything about the school. My time on campus was amazing. I focused most of my time on studying because I was a working student. The professors were flawless in delivering their message through the semesters. It was very directly related to the real, professional world. Professor Ezra was my favorite professor. I liked his professionalism and the way he handled himself. He was very serious about teaching grammar. He was my entrepreneurship teacher and was just very well put together. He taught me how to organize all of my business needs. I had joined the National Association of Black Accountants, but I wasn't able to participate because of work. The culture of the school resembled the real, professional, working world which I think is very important for a young person. Monroe College does a very good job at that. As soon as I finished my associate's degree I opened my own business. I was very successful. Unfortunately I had to close the business down. I went back to school to get my bachelor's degree. I now work with a TV network. I'm on the executive team. That's all because of Monroe College. Monroe is a small place, but it's potent. It means everything to me. It prepared me for the workforce. It prepared me for life challenges. It brought the best out of me without forcing it out of me. It ushered the best out of me.

“ Monroe is a small place, but it's potent. It means everything to me. It prepared me for the workforce. It prepared me for life challenges. ”
- Craig M. Swinton

2016 ARTLIN HAWTHORNE

AAS Business Administration '14, BBA Accounting '16
Interviewed on 09/03/2021

IT WAS A CONVERSATION I HAD WITH MY MOTHER that inspired me to attend Monroe. I was looking at different schools and had a casual conversation with her, and she said, 'Why don't you go and check out Monroe?' The next day I sat down with admissions and everything went well. They were able to transfer my credits from the University of Phoenix, and it was a pretty straightforward, seamless process. The next thing I knew I was registered for classes, and I started my journey. I originally started out as a business major, but as I was taking courses, I started to like accounting; I ultimately changed my major to accounting. I've had many great experiences and opportunities because of my degree from Monroe. I've had the opportunity to prepare taxes for Jackson Hewitt and to intern for one of the big four accounting firms. I've also had the experience of working as a finance associate for over four years, and that's been a great experience. These are all things that I never saw myself doing or even had the thought to do. Monroe gave me the confidence and ability to approach and thrive in these situations. The one thing that always makes me smile when I think of Monroe is the atmosphere. If you have a question and they don't have the answer, they don't just shut you down; they steer you in the right direction. Everyone is so helpful - from the administrators to the teachers and staff. It's a family atmosphere; that's the thing I remember most about Monroe. It's a great school that motivates you to do your best and excel in your field. They encourage you along the way and let you know that you can do it.

1992 MATTHEW "MATT" JENNINGS

AAS Accounting '92, BBA Accounting '00
Interviewed on 08/06/2021



Knowledge mixed with common sense is the key to success

I CHOSE MONROE because of its diversity. Many of the professors when I was going there worked in the field of the subjects that they were teaching. They were professionals and were able to give us real life experience, and a lot of them were impactful on my life. They were very interested in making sure that everybody succeeded. There are

still several people from Monroe that I am in touch with. One of my classmates and I got our AOS degree together, and we were also in school together for our grad degree. Because of the school I was able to excel in my field. Right now I am a CFO at a property management company. I also own vending business, and I am about to open up a clothing store.

2012 ROBERT GONZALEZ

AAS Hospitality Management '12
Interviewed on 08/04/2021

I ATTENDED MONROE TO show myself and my children that you are never too old to go back to school. I was 37 years old back then. It was a very challenging to go back, but I made some new friends there who were taking the same courses I was taking, and we helped one another. It brought me back to high school again. Being in a group, coming up with projects, and presenting the projects to the entire class brought back a lot of fond memories. After graduation, I utilized that hospitality degree at the Marriott Hotel, the DoubleTree. From there, I did security for the 2013 Super Bowl. I transgressed to getting

a job at Norwegian Cruise Line and did two contracts, where I was stationed at Hawaii. Once I obtained my degree, I utilized that to my advantage. I am working now as a security guard for a construction site. I do plan to go back to Norwegian Cruise Line. I already did the first step to get my transit work ID card active again. From there, I am going to go to the coast guard and get that license up and running, I will go to the next job fair for Norwegian Cruise Line, and take the training with them to be stationed back again to Hawaii. I am very blessed. I'm very grateful that I got to go back to school and get a degree.

2014 JACQUES CHARLES

BAcc '10
Interviewed on 09/30/2021



Great day of success!

I WAS PLAYING SOCCER IN HIGH SCHOOL. MY coach told me to do the Jumpstart Program before graduation, and I did. I chose to major in accounting after attending an accounting course in the Jumpstart Program. I received my associate's degree from Monroe and then left to go to another university. It was not a good fit for me, and I realized how much Monroe supported its students, so I ended up going back. The professors and staff were awesome. My professors were so supportive. I am now a senior accountant at an S&P 500 company. I wouldn't be where I am today if it wasn't for Monroe. I'm glad to be a graduate of Monroe.

2019 AVERY WEST

AAS Computer Information Systems '19
Interviewed on 09/03/2021

I WOULD SAY MY parents definitely inspired me to attend Monroe College as well as just college in general. They were the reason why I was able to continue with my education. They pushed the idea that I could be one of the five people in my entire family to have a degree. I honestly didn't know what to expect at first. You always hear a lot of hearsay, 'Oh professors are just here to teach.' but it was completely different. I had a lot of professors - especially IT professors - that I managed to build relationships with. They always knew my name and

I knew theirs. I could rely on them when it came down to a lot of things throughout my whole college experience. They always tried to relate the learning experience to my real-world experience. Now I can say that I have a foundation - that I have somewhere to start on this journey to success. I have something that I can rely on in my degree, but also the knowledge that I acquired from my major. It's something to give me a sense of confidence. Now when I go out in the real world I can be able to give it my all and show what I'm capable of.



2019 JANELLE SHOULDERS

MPH
Interviewed on 09/03/2021

I WAS LOOKING AT different schools, still trying to decide my career, and then I saw Monroe College. I really liked what they were offering, and the tuition helped me make my decision as well. When I came to the school, I liked what I saw and that's why I decided to apply to Monroe. I worked full-time during the day and took evening classes up to my last semester. The hardest part was trying to remain focused on work, but a lot of the professors

were very understanding. If you explained to them that you're having an issue with doing the work, they helped you work around and get it done. There was one professor that helped me with my thesis, anytime I texted or called her she contacted me back. I currently work as a lead case management coordinator at a health insurance company. Monroe helped me learn not to be afraid to do things. I'm able to step out on faith and do things.

1985 GAIL HALL (HALL GRANT)

AAS Computer Information Systems '85
Interviewed on 08/25/2021

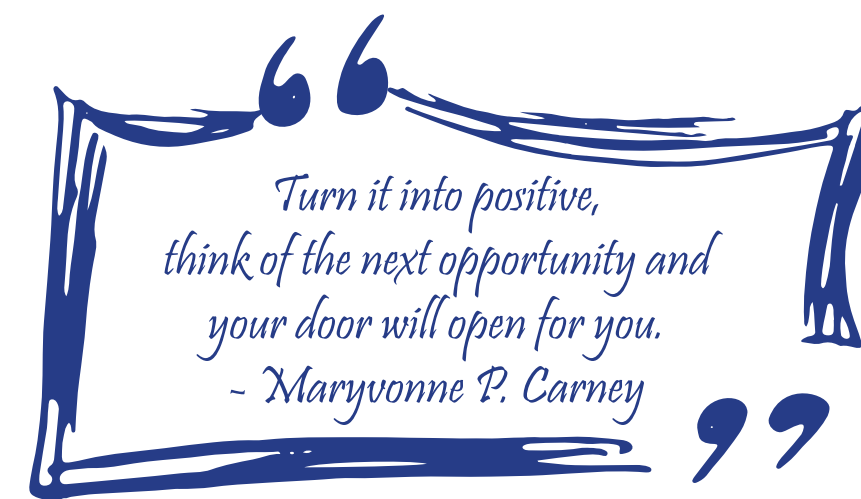
WHEN I ATTENDED Monroe College, it was more of a business institute. I wanted to get some certification, so I went for a records management certificate. Once I completed the program, I was so inundated with college life, and I wanted to get my degree. I was interested in computer science, so I went to that program. I'm a radio personality, and I've been in the music industry since 1977. I worked with the Internal Revenue Service where I was a taxpayer service representative. I have also been an interviewer and a teacher, so I taught tax classes. I switched and went to the Criminal Investigation Division, where I was a tax fraud investigative aide. I was an intern to become a special agent, because that was something that I

wanted to really do at that time. I was young, but the computers never left me. I became disinterested in that, then I decided to go to the Information Systems Division in Manhattan district for the Internal Revenue Service. I was a tech there who worked with the help desk and also did computer repair and software. I came back to the roots of my associate's degree in Monroe. They saw how I excelled in the other assignments without any prior training, so they took a chance on me. I did that and I was there for eight years. I went back into the music industry, then became an entrepreneur. I did marketing promotions, and we DJ'ed for the most promoted artists and their projects.

2012 MARYVONNE P. CARNEY

AAS Medical Administration '12, BBA Health Services Administration '13
Interviewed on 11/17/2021

MY ADVICE TO AN INCOMING STUDENT OF MONROE IS TO really make up your mind and know that you're going to go for a reason. Always have a plan A and a plan B. I always tell people that when somebody tells you, no, take it as the next opportunity because there's a lot of opportunity out there. Turn it into positive, think of the next opportunity and your door will open for you. That's what happened to me. Nobody would hire me at first because I had just graduated, until I went to Lincoln Hospital for the third time. I showed them that I was capable, and after being in the emergency room for one and a half years, I applied to a different position in the hospital. I got hired as a patient representative on October 14, 2018. As of May 2019, I became a city worker, so I'm permanent with benefits, paid vacation, paid holidays, benefits, and everything.



2017 STEPHANO BARDALES

AAS Culinary Arts '17
Interviewed on 08/20/2021



THE INSPIRATION FOR GOING INTO MONROE was pretty simple. I came out of the military in 2016. I was in the aviation wing in the Marine Corps, and I decided to change my career. I wanted to do something new and something different. I didn't want to be on the same career path. I wanted to challenge myself in a whole completely different field. When I found Monroe College, they had a program that wasn't so expensive. It was reasonable, and it got a lot of great talking points about it when I was reading academic reviews about the program. Almost every single professor I met helped me grow. I was so new to the field, and I learned a little bit from everybody. My favorite memory was when I was doing an internship inside the school. I have been pretty successful ever since I got my degree from Monroe College. I had an opportunity to do an outside internship, and I've been working with them for the last four years. That propelled me in the direction of where I wanted to be.



1989 NILDA VEGA

AAS Computer Information Systems '89
Interviewed on 09/17/2021



I WANTED TO GET A better job, so I decided to enroll. My friend talked me into going with her. I loved my computer professor; he was very helpful. When we didn't understand something, he went out of his way to help us. I was really bad at math, and my math professor pitched us this routine that has stayed with me forever. He was like, 'If you don't know your times tables when I call on you, we have to write it a hundred times.' By the time we graduated, we knew all the times tables by heart. They worked with me to get me where I wanted to go. I had a small child at the time. I would stay up until 1:00 or 2:00 in the morning, but I got through all

of my homework. I was almost 40 years old when I went back to school. There is nothing in the world that you can't do if you put your mind to it. I did computer science, but I went and worked as a teacher. I was a great teacher, and I worked with thousands of kids. I have pictures of all the kids I worked with - my world is the kids. I'm willing to help because I want the kids to get a good education and be able to move on. The college meant everything to me. I did my best, and that's all they could ask from me. When you go to school, you have to take it seriously. You have to put your all into it. I have very good memories of Monroe and with all the kids I worked with.

2005 CLARISSA GREENE

Interviewed on 09/30/2021



MY INSPIRATION TO attend Monroe College came from being a single mother. I was doing odd-end jobs, and that's not what I wanted for myself and my daughter. I didn't want to be a statistic on public assistance. My goal was to get an education so my daughters could look up to me and follow in my footsteps. I was also inspired by seeing my mother and my father, who came to America from the Caribbean, work hard to make sure food is on the table. That's what I wanted for myself, and I had to get an education to do that. I dropped out of high school, so I needed my GED. When I walked into Monroe's doors, I walked into open

arms. I was welcome there to pursue my career and education. When I started college, I had babysitting challenges. Thank God, my mom changed her schedule to work during the day, so she could watch my kids at night and I could pursue my education. My time at Monroe had a huge impact on my life; I graduated with someone who became a city worker, and she told me about other city jobs. I'm working for the city, and my daughters have never seen me on welfare. They saw their mom working and going to school, and now they are following in my footsteps. Both of my daughters have graduated from college.

2018 WENDY M. JOHN-PAGE

BS Public Health '18
Interviewed on 09/14/2021



THE REASON WHY I attended Monroe is that I wanted to continue my education. I had to put a hold on it when I had my daughter at 21. I put school on hold for a very long time. My idea was to be an RN nurse, but my family couldn't change their schedule around to accommodate me. I decided to do online learning. The closest thing I could get to doing the field that I wanted was public health. It took between two and four years.

I graduated before my time; I was supposed to graduate in 2019, and I graduated in 2018. It was a little difficult because I was getting back into the rhythm of everything. It was challenging at the beginning, but then I got used to it. I was working as a patient care assistant. I stayed for another two years until I resigned, and then I got a position as a case manager.

2019 GABRIELLA LILLIAN BARREIRA

AAS Culinary Arts '19
Interviewed on 08/18/2021

I STARTED MY CULINARY career when I was young. Back when I was six years old, I really loved cooking. My dad was in the culinary industry. He was an executive chef at a restaurant. He owned it with my godfather. Dean Frank Costantino from Monroe College came to visit my school to do a demo, and he was the reason why I wanted to go to Monroe. The program sounds so interesting, not only that it was affordable for me and my family, but he also made a big focus on his students in mentoring them and making sure that they had proper and detailed education. He seemed very invested with the students. I ended up going to Monroe in the fall of 2018, and it has been a



great experience. I was on the culinary team for 2018 - 2020. During my first year, I was on the apprentice team, and then in my second year I became the captain of the national team. Being on the team was also a great experience because it developed not only my culinary school skills, but also my leadership skills. I took my last laboratory class during COVID last September. I feel like I created a very big family in Monroe. I had a lot of challenges during my time there, but my mentors were constantly pushing me to do better, and that helped me to develop in the career that I have now. I just got a job in the culinary field as a chef.

1982 SUSAN GOLDBLATT (ROLDAN)

AAS Computer Information Systems '82
Interviewed on 08/20/2021



THEY HAD A ROBUST computer science program, and I only wanted to do two years to see if that was what I wanted to do. I knew about it because I lived in the neighborhood before they became Monroe College. I majored in computer science. I am very appreciative of Monroe and everything that they provided to me during my tenure at the school and even after school. After I graduated I was able to pull in some of the students in the computer science curriculum to come work for me in the

company that I was working for at the time. Now I am a management consultant. I own my own company, and I just launched my nonprofit company because of the COVID-19 pandemic. I am engaged with some individuals to start giving back. When I go to the campus now, it is tremendous. I think they are doing a fantastic job. It is always good to go back and see colleagues graduate. I have since recommended several people to attend Monroe.



1987 PAULETTE H. CHRISTIE-ROPER

AAS Secretarial Science '87
Interviewed on 11/05/2021



Monroe College helped me to advance in my career; it gave me a great foundation and confidence

I WAS A SECRETARY, BUT I WANTED TO upgrade and get my degree. I was also working at the bank, and I had two kids - twins. There were some late nights because I did it after work, but Monroe College was good. I enjoyed the school, did good in my studies, and got good grades. Monroe gave me a foundation to further my education. I went on to become an RN.



1995 STEPHANIE D. TRAIL

AAS Office Technology '95
Interviewed on 08/18/2021

I CHOSE MONROE COLLEGE to attend at the time that I chose that I just needed more experience in the clerical field because I was working in a hospital to just get more experience. I liked it. The teachers were very nice, the class settings were small and intimate. If you were having trouble with any type of courses you felt uncomfortable, you had your professor there to help you even quicker compared to a bigger college setting where you might be in an auditorium. They were able to like help me on the spot if possible, compared to having 500 students. It's kind of hard to give each one that ends with individual attention or assistance that they

might need. After graduating from Monroe, I ended up joining the New York City Department of Corrections. Having those secretarial and work skills, typing and all those skills; it allowed me to work in various areas that needed my assistance. Starting in Monroe, being a young single mom, and trying to get her life together, I felt that the course load was very easy for me to handle as well as being a new parent and gaining experience. I was also able to gain my GED. It helped me in a lot of ways; getting my high school diploma, getting more experience in getting better job titles and job offers. I just completed 20 plus years in corrections and I'm retiring on Friday.

1999 DONALD MARTIN

BBA Computer Information Systems '99
 Interviewed on 08/26/2021

I WAS ABLE TO TEACH for about five to six years. I was able to meet folks that I normally would not have met, so it came in extremely handy. I teach credit repair and debt reduction, and now, I'm doing cryptocurrency. I had a teacher who gave me A minus, and he was extremely proud of what I did. There was a guidance counselor, and he was very short and stature. He was urging me to continue on and stay in class. I got married after graduation. I had my wife to be, and my parents were also there in my graduation

ceremony, and I could see the look on their faces that they were more proud than I was. I was extremely proud because I was able to achieve a goal and stay with it. It was the main reason for college, not as much of a piece of paper, but to achieve a goal, and it sets you up in life to achieve some other goals. What made me smile was the bond that I had with not just my fellow classmates but also the guidance counselors and the staff teachers. It was a pleasant experience that I would do again.

1988 CARLOS W. SANTIAGO

AAS Accounting '88
 Interviewed on 08/23/2021



I STUDIED ACCOUNTING, AND it worked out well because I'm an accountant today. I've been with the same company now for over 21 years. Monroe College was the start of what has transpired all these years and where I am today. What made an impression on me was the staff and the students that I was able to converse and work with. They were all great. It was really nice. I really enjoyed my time.

2007 RAFAEL BURGOS

AAS Accounting '07, BBA Accounting '09
 Interviewed on 08/18/2021

IT WAS A GREAT EXPERIENCE TO GO TO MONROE College. The professors were great and were patient with me, and they went out of their way to teach me. They gave me confidence, and they were very professional and knowledgeable about what they taught. I earned a scholarship while I was there, so it was a very hard road, but it made me smarter than ever. I give all the credit to Jesus Christ as I asked Him to give me wisdom. I became a family member of Monroe College, so it was great.

2009 JUANITA RIVERA

AAS Computer Information Systems '03, BS Information Technology '09
 Interviewed on 08/18/2021



I SPOKE TO A FRIEND, AND AT THE time her sister was attending Monroe College. When I moved back to the Bronx, I remembered her mentioning Monroe and how it was a good experience. I appreciated going there along with the teachers. I like the classroom settings, and I did not get lost in huge classes. We were able to reach out to the professors at any time to ask them a question. I ended up working with Social Security Administration. Monroe helped me with having patience and perseverance to work with the public and assist them

I ended up working at Lincoln Hospital. Monroe helped me with having patience and perseverance to work with the public.
 - Juanita Rivera

2014 ANGEL C. TORRES

BBA Public Accounting '14
 Interviewed on 08/05/2021

MONROE WAS RECOMMENDED BY A LOT OF websites that I went to, and it was very close to where I lived at the time. When I did a lot of researching for colleges around the area, it seemed to be the best one. It seemed to have what I needed, it was very clean, and there were a lot of resources. When I went to visit them, they were very welcoming and comforting. It was a good experience from the beginning. The one I remember the most and am still in contact with is Dr. Keithroy Nanton. He was the best professor that I have ever studied under. Every time I saw if he was available for a class that I had to take, I would take him immediately. until this day. I kept in contact with him, and he was very encouraging. A lot of the professors were wonderful to work with. They were very friendly, professional, courteous, and that made it fun. I never had any complaints with any of the professors. They were not just putting a curriculum together. It was done in a way where it did not feel like a classroom. It felt like you were just hanging out with some friends and some people. It was a very pleasurable experience. I graduated about seven years ago, and the immediate thing that happened was I got a promotion and a raise at work right away, which was nice. I kind of amaze myself because I was working full-time, married, I had three little girls, and I went to school at night. I managed to take care of it in the two years, so it was very rewarding to me personally and career wise. If I can do it, then anybody can. A strategy that helped me along was knowing that you got two ears, and the closest mouth to your ears is your own mouth. Vocalizing a lot of what you learned in class helps you remember it. A big thing that I used to do was sit next to somebody who I felt would need my help. I was not only helping them, I was helping myself reaffirm what I learned.

1987 CECILE WALKER

AAS Secretarial Science '87
Interviewed on 11/11/2021



I'M ORIGINALLY FROM JAMAICA, AND I needed to get a good job with benefits and things like that. I had to get back to school while I was working. It was difficult, but I had my grades up and had good times with my classmates. I was so excited on graduation day when they called my name and I walked across that stage. That day was my greatest joy. It paid off because I got a job. I think mostly of my second job that I got through the New York State Attorney General's Office. I worked there for over 31 years. There were quite a few men and women who encouraged us. They understood that it was hard working and going to school. I had good times with my classmates and was very close with a few of them. I made the President's List and the Dean's List.

2020 CHERELLE L. MAYFIELD

MPH '20
Interviewed on 08/18/2021



WHEN I WAS FIRST applying to graduate school, I was looking online and reading up on different colleges. Monroe College seemed more family oriented. All the professors were great. The biggest challenge at Monroe was when we had to go remote learning in the middle of our last semester, because we were in the middle of writing papers. I did my capstone project on African American women under the age of 30 with breast cancer. It's a blessing that occurs because during

the pandemic, I was already working for the city of New York. I was dealing with people that were affected by Hurricane Sandy, helping them rebuild their own, teaching them about coastal storms, and living next to flood zones. When COVID-19 hit, I had a special project because my degree is in public health. I worked at the testing sites, and I started doing vaccines. My particular degree puts me in a situation where I can start practicing what I've learned from Monroe.

“My particular degree puts me in a situation where I can start practicing what I've learned from Monroe.”
- Cherelle L. Mayfield



2013 RAQUEL MARIE MORALES

BS Public Health '13

Interviewed on 11/05/2021

I WAS LOOKING INTO different options in the area to stay local. I spoke with someone there who was really amazing and helpful throughout the whole process. They really inspired me to pursue my career there. I enjoyed my time studying there. I was a commuter. I would take the bus to the Bronx campus, where most of the public health classes were. I adored most, if not all, of my professors. They were very personable. The program was strict, and the professors collaborated with me to push me forward in my career. They gave me opportunities and the best

feedback. I had a really great experience with the public health teachers as well. I interned in hospice, and that was very impactful to me. I did medical records and worked hand-in-hand in a clinical setting with the elderly who were ill. That has definitely given me compassion for the job I have. I'm a manager in the medical records field. When I speak to people who are incredibly emotional, I can really understand them. I felt like everything happened the way it should have. I loved the atmosphere of Monroe. There were a lot of familiar and friendly faces.

2013 ROLAND ALEXANDER BROWN

AAS Business Administration '97, MBA '13

Interviewed on 08/05/2021

IT WAS CONVENIENTLY LOCATED, EXTREMELY applicant friendly, and they assisted me with my military benefits. They walked me through and did the paperwork for me. I was an older student going back to school after 30 years. I had a lot going with talking to the professors about my past experience, and I was able to relate that to the younger students who were just getting into school from high school. The other thing is when other students were talking about changing colleges, I was able to talk to my counselors and determine why it was more beneficial for me to stay at Monroe than to transfer elsewhere. As an older student, it didn't really impact my career because I had already retired from two particular careers, and now I am starting a third. When you are young and going to college, you cannot connect the dots, but as an older experienced person, I was able to see what they were teaching and how it applied to me in the past and possibly in the future. I got my bachelor's and my master's degrees from Monroe. I wound up going to another college, CMU, for my master's in education, and then I came back to Monroe to get my master's in business. My third career was in corrections, so I pursued understanding law. My experience with working within corrections allowed me to teach criminal justice while I was in corrections as an instructor. I moved on to teach criminal justice as an adjunct professor in Monroe.

2017 SOULEYMANE BALDE

MBA

Interviewed on 09/20/2021



Graduation in 2017



Presenting during a team retreat in Tanzania

I ATTENDED FOR TWO reasons. One was the diversity of the school. There were people from everywhere. The second reason was that, at the time, I was living in the Bronx and working full-time. I decided to go to a school that was close enough to my house that I could go at night. The diversity also applied to the teachers. I had the opportunity to get some teachers from different backgrounds. Dr. Harris was the dean and was very interesting. I had another professor who taught economics, Dr. Rawana, and he was wonderful. I learned

a lot from him. Attending Monroe helped me a lot because I did my MBA, got to meet people from different backgrounds, and learned a lot of leadership skills while I was working full-time as an accountant. When my supervisor left, they decided, because of my academic background and experience, to offer me the position. I was the finance manager of my department. The director made the recommendation to make me the chief finance officer of organization, and that's impacted me a lot.

2021 JENNIFER SHAPIRO

AAS Medical Administration
Interviewed on 08/19/2021



Cheers to the class of 2021! Despite those hard times, we did it!

I HAD BEEN DEBATING ON RETURNING TO school for several years, but I was undecided on what I wanted to do with my life. I was quickly approaching 40 years of age when a conversation with my mom gave me the kick that I needed. Working in a hospital caused me to fall in love with the medical field and my union helped me discover Monroe College. I decided to follow my dream and finally obtain my degree. However, one degree was not good enough because I also enrolled myself into a program for MRI Technology simultaneously! Working full-time while pursuing multiple degrees is taxing, but it will all be it in the end.

1999 BONITA "BONNIE" M. TEN-POW (CHUNG), MSC

AAS Business Administration '99
Interviewed on 08/03/2021



I WAS MARRIED AND ATTEMPTED COLLEGE AT different times in my life. I decided to start all over again. What made an impression on me was the educational items and helpful nature of all the professors I had. I went to the College of New Rochelle and did a bachelor's in psychology. I'm in the business sector; now I am VP at a small actuarial company. Monroe College gave me a sense of purpose and something to strive towards. It created a goal for me to work towards and move to higher ground.

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Monroe College gave me a sense of purpose and something to strive towards. It created a goal for me to work towards and move to higher ground.
- Bonita "Bonnie" M. Ten-Pow (Chung), MSc
”



1984 LAURIE DENESE MELVIN

AOS Computer Information Systems '84
Interviewed on 08/04/2021

I WAS GOING TO LEHMAN COLLEGE, AND MY MOM GOT sick. I started working and then I eventually put my degree on the shelf. It got to the point where I wanted to go back to school and accomplish my associate's degree to start my career. I was very curious and interested in computers because it was just really coming about at that time. While I was at Monroe, I got into a car accident and I couldn't attend class. I had an instructor that came to me at home. He was the one that helped me graduate. It was really a good time in life with such a group of people and instructors. It opened doors for me for a number of jobs, and I went to my first job in Manhattan as a secretary.



2018 JEANPIERRE MOGOLLON

AAS Business Administration '18, BBA Business Management '19
Interviewed on 10/13/2021



IT WAS RECOMMENDED TO me by another graduate. I believe she graduated in 2017. The teachers believed in me. The teachers being from similar neighborhoods to where I come from gave me an incentive to continue going after my dreams and goals. I saw people of color teaching classes, giving recommendations, giving advice - these were the things I noticed the most. I studied business management. I went to the Club for Entrepreneurial Opportunities a couple of times, but I didn't do anything major because, during the time I was at Monroe, I had a full-time job. I definitely followed in my degree. I graduated in August of 2019. I had an internship with a venture capital firm for a couple of months. In April of 2020, I was an HR coordinator for

Kelly Services. After that, I got a call from one of my recruiters and got a job at Prada as an executive administrative assistant. That was incredible. I was there for one year and then left. I just started working at Louis Vuitton as a retail project coordinator.



“The professors were amazing. Everyone worked with me, and they made my transition just as easy as it could possibly be.”
- Paulette Morrison '05



“Myrna Garcia is outstanding; she was dedicated to our success.”
- Shermaria Leonce '21

“Those professors really cared and were genuinely happy for us when we passed the state board exams.”
- Bolanle Anita Fasasi '17



“I had a few teachers who made an impression on me. One was my marketing teacher, Jasmine Young.”
- Brenda Salley '18

FACULTY & staff

“The professors made an impression, and to this day, I get really excited whenever I see them.”
- Juan Santana, Jr. '88



2011 PAULA LYN-JOHNSON

Interviewed on 01/14/2022



I HAD JUST FINISHED MY BACHELOR'S DEGREE IN Jamaica. I spoke to my aunt in regards to further accomplishing my goals by coming here to do my master's degree, and she told me about Monroe College. I had a cousin attending there, so I got a scholarship and applied for my F-1 visa. I was never disappointed in Monroe. Professor Segura was one of my teachers, and he stood out for me. If I needed a friend, his door was always open. If I needed any help with my work or understanding anything, he was a great professor who would give us one-on-one time to make sure we understood the material. They had a competition I did two times about developing marketing strategies for companies. They used to give us the theme to come up with marketing strategies that the company can improve on in regards to different products. In 2010, two girls from Moldova and myself entered. The competition was in Atlanta, and we came up with a marketing strategy for

Walmart. We came in first in that competition; I really enjoyed being a part of that. Marc Jerome, Stephen Jerome, and Leslie Jerome stand out as mentors for me. I graduated with a 4.0 GPA and honors, and I retained a scholarship grade throughout my time. Monroe did a lot for me, and I'm so blessed that I could go. After graduating, I worked in the Administrative Department at Monroe in the Bronx office. I'm from New Jersey, so I came back to New Jersey and started a new career path. I'm a nurse, and I'm actually in school finishing up my BSN. My dream started at Monroe, and my emphasis was in healthcare. The next five years of my journey are venturing into the healthcare business, and I'm liking it right now. What really made me smile was enjoying my time with the staff. We used to get together and have brunch, and it was like family. I really enjoyed those moments.

2006 RACHEL J. KEMP

AAS Medical Administration '06, BBA Public Health '09
Interviewed on 09/08/2021



Working from home, 2020

MY CHILDREN WERE LITTLE AT THE TIME, AND THE classes were very flexible. I was on public assistance, and I did not want to go to that back-to-work program. It was not helping me. Before I found Monroe, I wasted a lot of TAP and Pell trying to find a school with the right fit for me. I wish I would have found Monroe first. I was walking one day, and I just happened to see the school. I looked it up, walked in, and they did the admission test right then and there. I enjoyed classes so much. However, procrastinated to the last minute to do my statistics class, and the math teacher that I had broke it down for all of us to understand. The best advice he told me was, 'Just remember your formulas.' I passed the class with an A. They always offered extra help when you need it. I enjoyed President Jerome greeting us every semester when we went to get our programs at the gym. Even when we saw him in the halls he always said, 'Hello. How are you doing?' In most schools, you don't even get to see the president. I have really

good memories. One person helped me make a career choice that benefits me even now, so I didn't suffer during the pandemic financially at all. She was one of the career counselors at the Bronx campus. She suggested that I do a work-study program. She helped me get into the Jacobi Hospital Admitting Department. I stopped working there and worked someplace else for a couple of months. Then the manager at Jacobi called and said, 'We have a provisional spot for you. I never forgot your work ethic.' I started in January 2008, and I took the exam for a clerical associate while I was working provisionally. I got hired for a regular job as a clerical while finishing my Bachelors.' I took the exam for Job Opportunity Specialist for HRA, and they hired me in 2011. I've been working there ever since and have even been promoted. I've never had to be on public assistance since then. I will never forget Monroe and all they have done for me.



JOSE L. PEREZ

AAS Culinary Arts '10, BBA Hospitality Management '11
 Interviewed on 08/03/2021



Got the job

I APPLIED TO A FEW COLLEGES, INCLUDING MONROE College, and my counselor in high school made me choose it. We reviewed a bunch of the colleges that I got accepted to. I didn't want to go too far, but I also didn't want it to be too close because I wanted to get the whole dorm experience and meet different people. My guidance counselor in high school helped me learn Monroe, and she coordinated a lot of the college tours there with a lot of different students and graduating classes. Monroe stuck out to me the most because it wasn't too far from where I grew up. The dynamic of the culinary program with the kitchen wise and the beautiful garden in the area won me over. Professor Tracy Zimmermann and one other professor in the culinary program were the ones I admired. They understood each other. It was my first time being in that dynamic with cooking and learning, and

class of
**20
 10**

they understood me and were very patient with me. They taught me a lot and recommended me as a PA as part of my learning experience. I had hands-on learning with them, not only learning the cooking but also educational stuff, as far as helping them grade papers, interacting with other students, and trying to guide other students into the right career path. Professor Zimmermann taught me a lot of different methods when it came to cooking and writing aspects. She also gave me some patience and vouched for me when they came for me to get my internship. Having the education I got from Monroe helped me with the work. My degree in culinary arts hospitality came in handy because the executives saw that I not only have the knowledge I have from working but also the knowledge from school. I'm a chef now, and I facilitate almost 90 cooks.

2013 DIANE GARRETT

BSBA Health Services Administration '13
 Interviewed on 08/02/2021



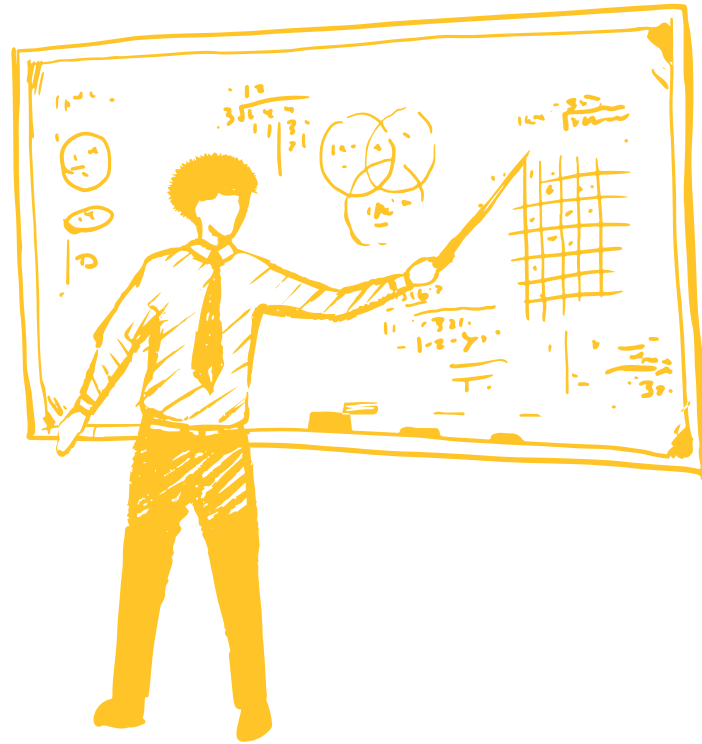
I WENT TO A NURSING SCHOOL WHEN I WAS younger, but then I ended up going through three pregnancies, so I never really finished. One day I said to myself, 'The kids are grown now. Most of them, except for one, are out of the house. I have a lot of time now.' I was working for Verizon at the time, and I wanted to retire and do something different. That led me to Monroe. My favorite memories were of the professors or instructors. I found them to be very patient. I had been out of school for a long time, so when I was going to Monroe, I was in my late 50s. There were a lot of things that I had to reteach myself, and they allowed me time to do that. I found that they were also very informative on the subjects that they taught because most of them had worked in the subject that they taught. I thought that it was excellent because not only could they teach me from a textbook, they could also teach me based on their own personal experiences, which they did share. The class sizes were never too large; the teachers could give individual attention if needed. They always seemed to team people like me who didn't have much knowledge in the field with people who either worked in the field already or people who were already knowledgeable in the subject itself. I found it very rewarding and informative. After graduating I ended up going for my master's degree at NYU. I went straight from Monroe to NYU. Monroe was my first step to success and to learning who I was and what I was capable of doing.



2014

CHEZ-BLANCHE "CHEZ" NAVIERE LYNCH

BBA Public Accounting '14
 Interviewed on 08/23/2021



MONROE COLLEGE HAD AN ARRANGEMENT WHERE the Caribbean was able to obtain scholarships to attend. The recipients were able to transfer credits from the local colleges and made it easier to attend a college. Dr. Keithroy Nanton was from my home country, and Dr. Anthony Abongwa impressed me with his PhD in accounting. There was something specific that he would say during one of his classes. He said that if there is ever a day he doesn't want to get up to come to work and teach, it is time for him to resign because he loves teaching and sharing knowledge so much. There was also another professor, and he was amusing. He kept us entertained in class. Monroe means a lot to me. They were able to fast-track my degree. The professors were always

available to get help, and they had a lot of resources. They made the experience enjoyable. I was a tutor in the accounting lab, so that helped offset some of the expenses. I was on the president's and Dean's List for six semesters. It made the experience better. The advisors helped a lot to schedule classes efficiently and gave us advice on how to get books if you weren't able to afford the college bookstore. It was a good experience. I am currently employed as an accountant in a small firm. What I learned from Monroe has definitely been applied to what I'm doing. I started my journey obtaining my CPA because of the education I received from there.

“ Monroe guided me to the next steps I had to take to make my vision a reality, and we're still on that journey together. - Christine Vargas ”

2021

CHRISTINE VARGAS

Interviewed on 09/04/2021

MY DAUGHTER WAS involved in a really bad car accident at the age of 14; she was fighting for her life in a coma. When she emerged out of the coma, we learned that she had a traumatic brain injury. She was totally disabled, and I had never known anybody with such disabilities. In that journey of getting to know my daughter all over again, I met other children and I noticed there was a lack of emotional and mental support for the parents. I knew that there had to be a way to help these families. I went back to school and got a degree in human services and psychology. I want to create a foundation where there is support for the parents and the families that are going through this. I called Monroe College, and I told them my story and vision. Monroe guided me to the next steps I had to take to make my vision a reality, and we're still on that journey together. Monroe is

not just a school; it's a family. They got to know me on a personal level through my story. I'm ecstatic to see what the future holds, and I've enjoyed every moment of it. When I graduated in June, the first thing I did was go visit my little girl at the facility where she stays right now. I walked in with my cap and gown to show her and the other kids that this was about them - the degree, the cap, and the gown. It felt so good. I still have some work to do, but I'm not afraid of the work. Monroe has been my backbone because there were so many times when I felt, 'Oh my God, can I do this?' I was very honest with my professors about how I was feeling, and they would wrap their arms around me and say, 'You've got this. We're right here.' I can't thank them enough; they're still there for me. I'm excited about January coming around the corner to finish my bachelor's degree.



When the fire within you burns bright, you become unstoppable

2001 AINSLEY RICKETTS

AAS Business Administration '01, BBA Accounting '02
Interviewed on 09/03/2021



WHEN I WAS A STUDENT I ALSO WORKED FOR THE college. I work in the bursar's office in New Rochelle. I also obtained my master's degree, so I have earned my associate's, bachelor's, and master's at Monroe College. The professors are great. When I started my computer class with Mr. Donovan, he's retired now, so he's not working here. I had so many great professors. One of my advisors was Ms. Hilary Sullivan. I will never forget Ms. Hilary's name. She's pretty great. She helped to get me where I am. I had three children - two sons and one daughter - that all came to Monroe. My two sons studied criminal justice. They are now New York police officers - New York's Finest. One worked in Manhattan, and the other worked in the Bronx. My daughter just graduated in 2019 and she's working in Manhattan with an accounting firm. They have all done very well. I say thanks to Monroe College and to Presidents Stephen Jerome and Marc Jerome.

1998 DR. NAQUAN N. BRYANT

AAS Hospitality Management '98,
BBA Business Management '03
Interviewed on 09/08/2021



I THINK WHAT INSPIRED me to go to Monroe college was the curriculum, to be honest. I liked the three semesters a year, and it was a local college. That was big for me. My time there was definitely a blessing. It's good when you're able to acquire your education and familiar surroundings, especially with people from similar backgrounds. There were two professors that stood out for me. Professor Maurice Green used to be in hospitality. He was just heaven-sent. Professor Green has been with me throughout my whole college life from the associate's to the bachelor's to the master's. I've actually met his children, and I've been to

his home. He's turned into a great friend. Then there was Dr. Jeffrey Smith who taught an eye-opening class called cultural anthropology. What stood out were his teaching style, his knowledge, and his personal stories and how they related to the students who were actually in class. That was big. His teaching style was more informal. It was more observatory. You were talking, he was observing you, and you really didn't even realize. He was able to tell you things about yourself that you probably didn't recognize. The biggest life lesson I would take from Monroe was don't take yourself too seriously. You can always start over again.

“ He was just heaven-sent. Professor Green has been with me throughout my whole college life from the associate's to the bachelor's to the master's. - Dr. Naquan N. Bryant ”

2002 AWILDA DIAZ-CORREA

AAS Business Administration '02,
BBA Business Management '04
Interviewed on 11/04/2021



I HAD WANTED TO GO TO COLLEGE FOR YEARS. My daughter was already in college and graduated the year that I applied for Monroe. It was my chance to go. What stood out to me was how wonderful the professors were. I went in after so many years of not going to school and found that they were willing to work with me on mathematics. The fact that I had teachers that could understand where I was and that were willing to help me get my degree was the best thing about it. Without that bachelor's, I would not have been able to continue my career. It allowed me to work in the investment industry for many years.

2000 MONIQUE ANDINO

AAS Office Technology '00
Interviewed on 08/18/2021



I NEVER GRADUATED FROM HIGH SCHOOL, and I saw that they were giving a program where you could get your credits and GED and then you go finish off with a degree. The professors were good. That's why I pursued the county. I got another associate's degree after I went to BMCC in 2017. I also took bakery and art classes in 2019. After that, I was enrolled in Lehman College in January of 2020. I only received like three credits, and I needed 45 credits to get my bachelor's degree. I'm on my way to getting it, and I will be doing it before 2024.

2016 JOSHUA "JOSH" M. SUTHERLAND

AAS Culinary Arts '16
Interviewed on 09/30/2021



MY MOTHER INSPIRED me as far as getting into the culinary field at Monroe College. She had me making breakfast when I was the youngest, so I always took that as an interest. I went over to Monroe and really enjoyed the program. The culinary and pastry altogether stood out to

me. It was a good experience. I met some good teachers who were very helpful. I was really motivated to really get that degree. The teachers and the experiences helped me to keep moving forward. That experience in the kitchen kept me motivated to keep going.

2010 CHRISTY MARTINEZ

AAS Criminal Justice '10
Interviewed on 09/13/2021



ONE OF MY FRIENDS inspired me to attend Monroe College; she had done a semester there and was taking the same course that I wanted to take. She influenced me to go. For me, it was a great time, and I loved everything about it. What stands out to me was the way teachers used to teach; they explained stuff from A to Z in a way I understood. Mr. Chin is a professor that stands out to me. He named everything

in detail. He would also speak more about his own personal experiences. I was going to start my bachelor's, but I was pregnant and I didn't continue. Now I'm working at my own personal business. Monroe is a good school, and it helps you. If something is not understandable for you, then they will walk the way with you to make sure that you understand what you're doing.

2005 GAILMARIE "GAIL" SANTIAGO

AAS Business Technologies '05,
BBA Business Management '07
Interviewed on 08/18/2021



Never stop learning because life never stops teaching

MONROE COLLEGE HAS THE TRIMESTER, AND I WAS getting the classes that I needed for my associates and my bachelor's. The teachers are understanding in the evening classes. They were hands-on and they got to know us including our weakness and strength. It was more important because a lot of us came out of high school, and it was very hard to adjust. It was a plus for me. I liked the entrepreneurship because it was a interesting class. A lot of people at that time thought we can do a lot as an entrepreneur. We try to do our own business as young minded people. I moved forward with the guidance and assistance in my everyday life, not only in entrepreneurship. One of my favorite professors was my computer teacher. When I had to do my hands-on class but it happened on my internship. She was good, as she gave me a challenge she made sure I would do what I needed on my internship without falling back on her class. Education-wise she was a good teacher. I worked with the city after my graduation. It was hard to find job in my degree range. I'm catching up to that.

2018 SAMMANTER BECKFORD

BBA Health Services Administration '18
Interviewed on 11/05/2021



THE SCHOOL I WAS attending was closing, and I felt like I wasn't receiving the proper education I was paying for. I set a goal to make sure I would get a better future for myself. When I went to Monroe for my BA, I did it online because I was working full-time. I was a single mom, and I couldn't go into the classroom. Once I finished my BA, I felt incomplete, like there was something else for me to do. I got my bachelor's in 2018, and in April 2019, I started back on my master's. It was hard in the beginning - I cried a lot. I was very close to dropping out of the program, but I was grateful that I had classmates who stood by me and helped encourage me. When it comes to graduate degrees, it's a different totem pole that you have to stand on, and sometimes you can't stand alone. When the beginning of COVID-19 hit, it stressed us out so much

more because we didn't know what we were supposed to do. We came together and pushed each other, and that's what drove me to the finish line. The professors cared for their students, and they're dedicated to helping teach their students. They treated us like we were their family, and they're dedicated to what their purpose is. It was a big accomplishment for me because I am the only female from my generation within my family to have a master's degree. I never thought I was going to be able to do it because I'm a teen mom, but I overcame those obstacles and did what I had to do. It has helped me financially to get a better job. It showed me that if I put my mind to something and I'm determined to do it, I'll get it. Mental health and hygiene is the field I want to be in because there's so much that needs to be done.

2005 SHINIQUA Y. MCCALL

AAS Medical Administration '05,
BBA Health Services Administration '07
Interviewed on 10/25/2021



I CHOSE MONROE COLLEGE DUE TO THE FLEXIBILITY during that time of my life. I was working during the day and had a son, so it was easier for me to do it at night. I also did a weekend class. Everyone, especially some of the professors, was very open and helpful. It was easy to communicate with a lot of professors. One professor in my accounting class taught us a lot of things, and some of those things I still use today.



2012 JABARI EDWARDS

BS Information Technology '12
Interviewed on 09/21/2021



IT WAS MY SECOND year of my bachelor's degree when I started doing classes at Bronx Campus. The professors, told me that, 'Hey, you're going to meet a lot of different situations,

environments, and set ups. Focus on your work here because it's going to give you the foundation for those different scenarios and environments.' They were right to this day.

2017 BOLANLE ANITA FASASI

AAS Nursing '17, BS Nursing '18
Interviewed on 08/18/2021



ALTHOUGH THE distance was really far, I chose Monroe College because I liked the fast track of the nursing program. It is not the traditional four year program, It is a three year program. I made a lot of friends in nursing and we actually still have a group chat were we keep in touch. I just spoke to one of my classmates a

few minutes ago. The professors really stood out to me; they went above and beyond and were always open to talk to you. I would never forget them because it is one thing to be a professor and it is another thing to be a mentor. Those professors really cared and were genuinely happy for us when we passed the state board exams.

2003

MONIQUE M. CURTIS

AAS Business Administration '03
 Interviewed on 08/16/2021



Real estate is my passion!

I THINK THE MAIN REASON WAS THAT I JUST LIKED the curriculum there and what they had to offer as far as the courses. I just felt like I would get the classes that were not going to be so big that I would not be able to get the individualized help if I needed it. There was a microeconomics professor who really gave me a different perspective on life in general and how I could use my education and skills that I was learning in his class. I am proud of my education.

2015

COLIN ANTHONY RISDEN COOTE

BBA Hospitality Management '15
 Interviewed on 09/30/2021



I WANTED TO LEARN MORE ABOUT THE business aspect of hospitality work, so I decided to attend Monroe College. I loved going to class. I made a lot of good friends at SUU. My favorite teacher was Professor Sharon Gellman. She opened up the doors of what hospitality work could be and where I could take it. She pushed me a lot and changed my life. I could go to her for anything, and she would always give me positive feedback. Professor Gellman has come to three of my restaurant openings. Graduating from Monroe opened doors to higher-level hospitality positions. I am currently in the process of opening up my own restaurant.

2017

JILLIAN VILLAFANE

AAS Business Administration '17
 Interviewed on 08/18/2021



MY COUSIN WENT TO MONROE COLLEGE. IT was nice. I had a lot of good teachers. My teachers were very, very attentive, and they cared. That was one of the biggest things that I liked about Monroe. I also liked that whenever I needed help if I went inside the school or the office, they were able to assist me. If they couldn't, they knew where to direct me. I liked that about Monroe as well. They educated me on paying my student loans and a lot of things that other schools didn't do. That was one of the best things I liked Monroe for. One of my last professors was Crawford. She was very good. I had another professor for marketing, and she was also really good. I had a lot of great professors, and I appreciated them. I think I got a great education from there. I learned a lot of valuable things.

2019

ASHLEY BARNETT

AAS Business Administration '19
 Interviewed on 08/16/2021



MY COUSIN HAD enrolled at Monroe College, and she let me know that it was fully online and I wouldn't have to go in the classroom. You could still get your degree. I just enrolled, and I have been here since 2015. It has been working for me because

the staff has been excellent. All my professors that I have had here have been amazing. They take time to make sure that you are well-rounded in every area of any subject. These professors are amazing. I'm just thankful that I'm here.

2018

ROOVERT "RIKO" PEREZ

BBA Computer Information Systems '16, MS '18, MBA '19
 Interviewed on 08/18/2021



I RETIRED FROM THE Marine Corps back in 2014 in November. After 20 years in the Marine Corps, it was hard to cope with civilization. I always loved computers, so I decided to go back to college. There were several teachers that were nice. One of my professors always

made sure that I participate on her own class. She gave me the opportunity for me to allow me to express myself among others. Even in the Marine Corps, the way I communicated was different than in the civilian sector. It was nice. It was a different experience, and I loved it.

2002

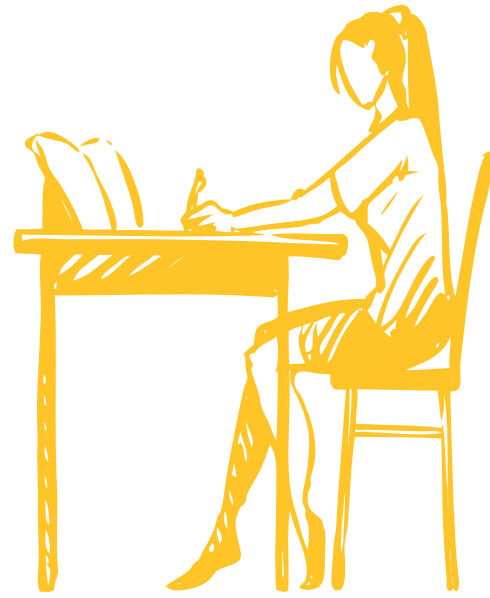
LYNDA ROSADO

AAS Computerized Office Technology '02,
 BBA Criminal Justice '14
 Interviewed on 09/20/2021



I HAD A FAMILY member who had gone there. She spoke so highly of the school. I was a young single mom, so when she told me about Monroe, I was convinced to check it out. The experience that I had was positive, and it stuck with me. The environment was always supportive there. I learned to appreciate it even more. As my own children grew up, I've gone with them for visits to colleges but nothing measured up to Monroe College. I was working on my associate's degree. I was in a really tough situation, and I was dealing with a lot of personal issues. I was in a bad situation. It was really difficult, and I was struggling. I remember speaking with one of my teachers. The staff

there were trying to help me overcome those challenges. They were so on top of things to find resources to help me. I thought that that was so amazing because I never even had support like that in my life. After I graduated, I moved to Florida. I finished my degree at Monroe online. It was an amazing time for me. It just shows that determination can really help you move mountains. I made it to the president's list. Six months after I graduated, I applied to law school and got accepted. I took the bar in Florida and passed it in 2020. My teachers were always so supportive, and I could not have done it without them being the way that they were with me.



2003 RHONDA BURGESS

AAS Business Administration '03,
BBA Business Management '05
Interviewed on 08/20/2021



I WANTED TO FURTHER my education, and I wanted to improve myself when it comes to my career. That was the reason why I went back to college after 16 years. The professors were excellent in their teaching ability. They made me very intrigued and opened my mind to be more creative and expressive. They made me in tune with what I needed. They were Professor Harvey Gilmore, Professor Joey Jackson, and Professor Cordero. I had my number one professor,

and he was my mentor. He was the reason why I went back for my master's. He was also the chairman of my sorority at Monroe College, which was Sigma Beta Delta. After graduation, I am still employed at the same institution at Mount Sinai Hospital. I am still with my same department, and I have been promoted to operation manager. Because I went to Monroe College, it gave me the tools which were business management.

2018 JANICE ALEXANDRA BROOKS

Interviewed on 08/18/2021



WHAT INSPIRED ME TO ATTEND MONROE College was actually convenient to go there because I used to work right there. It was very easy for me to travel twice. I went to a private school, and I wanted to go to another private school. The professors at Monroe College were all great. I never had an issue with any of them.

2019 CRAIG DUNCAN

AAS Business Administration '19
Interviewed on 08/05/2021



I WAS ALREADY IN AN INSURANCE CAREER, BUT I needed the degree to move up in the industry. The reason why I came back to Monroe College was to obtain the degree. My cousin was a graduate of Monroe, and she told me about it. I came to discuss it, and I was impressed. When I was first trying to get into the school, I sat with a dean, who was a Jamaican guy. He was wonderful. I also had Ms. Roxanne Virgo. My whole experience at Monroe was very good; I have no complaints. It helped me in my career. I moved up drastically since completing the degree. Everything was great, and I'm using almost everything I learned at Monroe on a day-to-day basis. I like the fact that the professors at Monroe work in the field. They hold these positions by day, so they have air to what is going on in the industry. I feel like what they teach at Monroe is very valuable.

2012 PHYLICIA ELENA SIERRA

AAS Criminal Justice '12
Interviewed on 08/18/2021



Patiently waiting to walk across the stage with my degree in hand

I WANTED TO GET INTO the criminal justice field, and I also heard a lot of students going to Monroe College because they liked the atmosphere better and the one-on-one work with the teachers. That was what drew me to the school. I wanted to be Ms. Sierra in the class and not student number 254. I liked the personal experience with the teachers. Professor Geoffrey Smith stood out to me. By the time I graduated, he actually



I did it! One of the happiest moments in my life

turned into a father figure in my eyes and counseled me through a lot of stuff. At the time I was a young mother, and he just opened my eyes to a lot of possibilities. He basically told me to keep my head in the game that I was a lot smarter than what I thought I was. Thanks to him I always kept pushing. I loved Monroe. I just want to thank the whole staff because they made my experiences the best.

1996 MILAGROS PEREZ

AAS Hospitality Management '96
Interviewed on 10/26/2021



I JUST WANTED TO finish schooling and get everything out into the open. I knew some people that went there, so I went to orientation and loved it. I had a great time there. I had an accounting professor, and the reason I got into

accounting was because of him. It's been great. I got my bachelor's in business administration. It took me to Florida, where I'm currently working right now. I've been here for almost 20 years. I've been with the company for seven years.

2016 GERMAINE F. TRAORE

BBA Health Services Administration '16
Interviewed on 09/30/2021



IN 2015, I GOT MY associate's degree. When I was looking for a school, one of my professors asked me which borough I was living in. I told her I was in the Bronx, and she said to go to Monroe College. The first person I interacted with was Tanya Allen. She was able to answer all of my questions.

I was just happy to get in and have somebody to talk to. Every time I had a situation, I could go to Tanya. My time at Monroe was great. The professors were always open and available for us if we needed anything. I studied and got my bachelor's in business administration.

2009 ROSA M. SANTIAGO

AAS Criminal Justice '09
Interviewed on 08/20/2021



I WAS IN MY LATE 40S AND JUST NEEDED TO DO something for myself. I was studying criminal justice at Monroe, and it was a big accomplishment. I had a better appreciation for school because I was older. I had great professors that I just bonded with, and I learned so much from them. I also met many different people, and I made some friends there. I always felt that the faculty were there for the students. I have been working for a nonprofit organization, and I have been there for 11 years. It was called Bailey Holthouse, and it was the first independent living facility for clients that are living with AIDS. I am a residential aide there, and I am monitoring residents to make sure that everything is fine. I learned so much from their stories. Being able to get my victory at that age was just a whole beautiful experience. I enjoyed my time and my role at Monroe.



1996 DANNY COCKRELL

AAS Accounting '96
Interviewed on 08/18/2021



I WANTED TO GO TO college. I always thought about going to college since I was a kid, and one of my very good friends got me a one day interview at Monroe College. Dr. Jacob Lamar was in charge of accounting when I was there. I had failed a political science class, and he pulled me into his office to say, 'You are now about to get your BA.' He said. 'After your

BA, are you prepared for the world? If you are not, then you are wasting your time.' That was the only class I ever failed. I use that every day as motivation to remember that it was a Black man to a Black man. If I am not ready to be a real Black man in this world, then I am wasting my time, and this is not a time to play. The BA prepared me for the world.

1996 SOPHIA C. FACEY

AAS Computer Information Systems '96
Interviewed on 10/19/2021



I ATTENDED BACK IN 1996 because of the small class sizes and personal attention. I went in and met with the staff, and that's what I walked away with. The entire faculty staff was always super supportive. It really left an indelible mark. Monroe laid the foundation for my accomplishments. I was offered the opportunity

to take part in so many activities. Because of that exposure, I was better prepared for what I'm doing and to be the person I've become. My line of work takes me around the world. I own and operate a travel agency. The biggest thing that makes me smile is the relationships that I formed.

2014 ANGELICA B. FRANCESCHI

AAS Culinary Arts '12, BBA Hospitality Management '14
Interviewed on 09/03/2021

ORIGINALLY I WAS DUE to go to the Culinary Institute of America, but my father - he's a single father - didn't really have the funds to go to that school. Monroe College became an option when I found out that a lot of the culinary professors, who work at Monroe, actually graduated from the CIA. I felt like I wasn't missing out on anything because they basically taught us everything they learned at the Culinary Institute. I got a great education at a really affordable price. My experience at Monroe College was amazing. I actually met a mentor there, Sharon Gellman. I think she still works in the hospitality administration office. Everybody there was amazing. All of the professors that I had, especially for culinary hospitality, were amazing. There was one professor who taught us how to do public speaking. One thing that I still use is called the elevator pitch and it's basically a 30-second speech where you can sell yourself, which I like to use when I'm on interviews. I

walk up to people that I work with now and say, 'Hey, if you could sell yourself in 30 seconds, what would you say?' There are just certain things that I still hold on to even after all this time. The cafeteria food still stands out in my mind, because the Bronx campus served some of the best cafeteria food I've ever had, and it was cheap. I could go in there and get a quesadilla for two dollars. I wish I could go back to eat the food! I'm not going to lie, I was not going back to school for my bachelor's degree. I was just going to do Culinary Arts, then I had a professor who told us honestly, 'Go for your bachelor's degree because you never know if you'll want to stay in the kitchen or go out into hospitality and tourism.' I'm actually a hotel manager because of studying hospitality. I did not think this would be my career today, but it's been a great, fun eight years and I feel like I'm pretty successful right now because of Monroe College.

1984 DR. DONNA TENNYSON, DBA

AAS Computer Information Systems '84
Interviewed on 12/15/2021

MY LOVE FOR education and learning began while I was studying for my associate's degree at Monroe College. I majored in accounting and computer science, and I was surprised to graduate with a 4.0 GPA. I received an award for Outstanding Academic Achievement during the graduation ceremony. I received an excellent education at Monroe that provided the

foundation for me to develop a career path that began as a junior accountant at PepsiCo. I became known for developing customized analysis that utilized concepts of both accounting and computer science. I honed my analytic skills to enjoy a career path that has been firmly entrenched in various types of corporate, business, financial, and procedural analysis.

2005 PAULETTE MORRISON

AAS Accounting '05, BBA Business Management '20
Interviewed on 08/18/2021



IT WAS A BEAUTIFUL EXPERIENCE AND WAS HARD AT the same time. The professors were amazing. Everyone worked with me, and they made my transition just as easy as it could possibly be. They were so hospitable, and they guided me to where I needed to be. My daughter also graduated from Monroe with me.

2009

ELIZABETH "LISA" CARRION

AAS Accounting '09
Interviewed on 12/30/2021



SOME OF THE professors were really good. There was tutoring when I had problems, and they would help me. They cared about my schooling. I really loved it. I still have contact with a few people. Monroe opened more doors for me, and I was very happy. I went to

college to invest in myself; I really needed to go to school and finish. I did accounting and finance, and I did two years. Most of the students were friendly, and I could talk to anybody. They wanted me to succeed, and that's what I loved about the college.

2008

JOANNE CHARISSE OTEY

BBA Accounting '08
Interviewed on 10/27/2021



MONROE COLLEGE MADE IT EASY TO ENROLL in college as soon as I moved to the US, so I decided to attend. I majored in accounting. I graduated at the top of my class. Professor Torres was my favorite teacher. He really pushed me, and I ended up getting my first accounting job because of him. I am now a medical practice manager. It was really important for me to graduate from college. Monroe gave me the opportunity to do that on my own terms.

2016 LATASHA BURL

AAS Business Administration '14, BBA Health Services Administration '16
Interviewed on 08/19/2021



IT WAS A SMALLER

setting, and the teachers knew you by name. When I first went, I wanted to try to go to a school where I could obtain my GED, high school diploma at the time, and college credits. Monroe seemed like it was pretty much doable, and they kept me engaged. When I first started at Monroe, I went into it more like I wanted to grow up, but I was on the cusp between still being a child and knowing I have responsibilities. I went to school, and I started taking remedial classes. Once I was able to go ahead and transition from the remedial classes, I ran into one of the best professors that I've ever met, and her name was Professor Blum. She was absolutely amazing. She kept me engaged, and she kept me wanting to grow and go. She was always just there, and the amount of motivation that she put in me made me come back every day. She believed in me, and it was the thing that she taught me along the way. As I grew, got older, and was able to fly on my own, I still went back to Professor Blum.

I had a situation where I didn't go back to school for a long time, but when I went back, I was able to connect with our dean. She was another person who really struck deep in my heart just for her to be able to listen and have some empathy and compassion. She was like, 'These are my students, and I look at them as my children in the School of General Studies. I'm going to do whatever I can to make sure that they succeed and they come back the next day.' When I came back to school after my whole little hiccup, I was able to connect with a few more professors, and one of them taught me so much about the medical field. They were the type of professors that really made an impact and really showed you along the way. After Monroe College, with my credentials and the school's great education, I landed a job at the New York City Council. I am the human resources coordinator in the staffing and recruiting division, and I make \$63,500 a year. Life is great!

2017

JOHAN A. BERMEJO

AAS Business Administration '17, BS '21
Interviewed on 11/05/2021



I WENT MAINLY BECAUSE they had a sports program. I was interested in business, and I saw that they had a good business program as well. I thought, 'Why not give it a shot over there?' Here I am later with my bachelor's. I was impressed by how the campus was run, and how well organized it was compared to other campuses I'd gone to. The professors were always helpful. Whenever I had

a question, they would immediately guide me to someone else that could help. If that didn't work, they would help me themselves. They also always had tutoring for each class. When I started working, I got a little bonus because I had my bachelor's. Monroe helped me out a lot during the pandemic because they offered online classes that helped me graduate as soon as I could.

2008

ROBERT "ROB" AMAYA

AAS Computer Information Systems '08, BS Information Technology '09
Interviewed on 01/14/2022



MONROE COLLEGE WAS THE ONLY SCHOOL THAT WAS flexible enough to allow me to enter for the fall semester in 2006. I enjoyed the fact that it was a small faculty. All of the professors were personable and helpful. The students weren't necessarily a young crowd - it was a mixture of everyone. It didn't matter whether I was super old or super young, I still had an opportunity to get a decent education at a good school. Geoffrey Smith is one of the professors I took many classes with, and those classes ranged from marriage and family to basic sociology. It was always a pleasurable experience. When I graduated from Monroe, I ended up getting into telecommunications, which can range from the cable company all the way to the phone company. Right now I'm working as an operating engineer in midtown Manhattan. Monroe's professors were very good at telling me that I need to network in order to be successful. I learned that that is a very important skill in trying to get a job or career.

2014

GJERGJ "GJERGI" CAMAJ

BBA Business Management '14
Interviewed on 08/26/2021



I LIKED A LOT OF THE PROFESSORS AT MONROE

College. Kathryn MacDonald was a great professor. She really tried to help the students and organized events, and she was hard-working overall. I was in the Honors Program, and that was interesting and good. It was also run by Kathryn MacDonald, and I felt like the way it was organized gave us a better sense of the business world. Monroe offered a certain type of flexibility, and they were understanding. I was able to take more classes than maybe regular colleges would allow me to. When I went to the guidance counselor, she would help me if I had some type of concern. There weren't many students taking the calculus class, but Monroe still offered that class even though there were just two students. I think that showed that they were trying for their students because not many colleges would keep a class open just for two students. I was able to work at Monroe in the Admissions Office, and I was offered the scholarship option. After graduation the Monroe family had this scholarship to attend the University of Toledo for a master's degree. Along the whole way the Monroe family was pretty much there, so I appreciate that.

2019 KIEL S. FRANCIS

AAS Business Administration '13, BBA Business Management '15, MBA '19
 Interviewed on 11/19/2021



I did it!



Making mom proud!

I WAS STILL IN HIGH SCHOOL BACK THEN, AND I WAS ABLE TO TAKE TWO courses at Monroe College for college credits. When I took them, I fell in love with the school and decided to go there. Once I graduated from high school, they offered me a scholarship, so I made my choice. I was in the honors program, and my favorite professor was the HR management teacher. My psychology professor was one of my favorites, too. They inspired me to go into the field I eventually went into. The class size at Monroe is amazing, and the professors and students are very friendly. My college experience was really good, overall. The professors and staff are really focused on making sure you succeed and they'll understand where you're coming from. They always accommodated us and understood when we had scheduling problems, and that is something very valuable.



2009 YELVERTON WILLIAMS

AAS Hospitality Management '10,
BBA Hospitality Management '12
Interviewed on 09/18/2021



Graduation day on Saturday on June 9, 2012; Jacob Javits Center in New York City

I ATTENDED MONROE COLLEGE FROM 2009 TO 2012.

I graduated with a BBA in hospitality management. During my time at Monroe, I was treated fairly and respectfully; if there was a problem, the professors and administrators staff would take time to listen, because they truly cared about the success and development of their students. There were many challenges along the way, but I've stayed focused in an effort to achieve my goals, because I knew that with a good education all things are possible. Monroe education has give me a competitive edge to be successful, either for employment or starting my own business. I enjoyed my term of being secretary of the PCMA Club. We had many exciting extracurricular activities for both social and cultural events. I am honored to be a graduate of Monroe College. Thanks Monroe!

2008 ADAMA SANOGO

MBA
Interviewed on 09/20/2021



MY FRIEND TOLD ME ALL THE GOOD THINGS

about Monroe College, and its faculty and staff, so I decided to attend. Going to Monroe was a great experience. Monroe was very welcoming. The Dean at the time was great. He was very accessible; I could go to his office anytime. He always held events and presentations about business. He was very supportive of business school students, and he inspired me to get into investing. The Office of Career Services was great; they got me an internship with UBS. That opened the door for me to get into financial planning and investment. I had a great time at Monroe; everything was good. It was a good place for me to be. It was amazing.

“The Office of Career Services was great; they got me an internship with UBS. That opened the door for me to get into financial planning and investment”
- Adama Sanogo

An author, mindset coach, entrepreneur, professor, and mother of two children



2009 SUJHEI T. PEGUERO

BBA Accounting '09
Interviewed on 10/11/2021

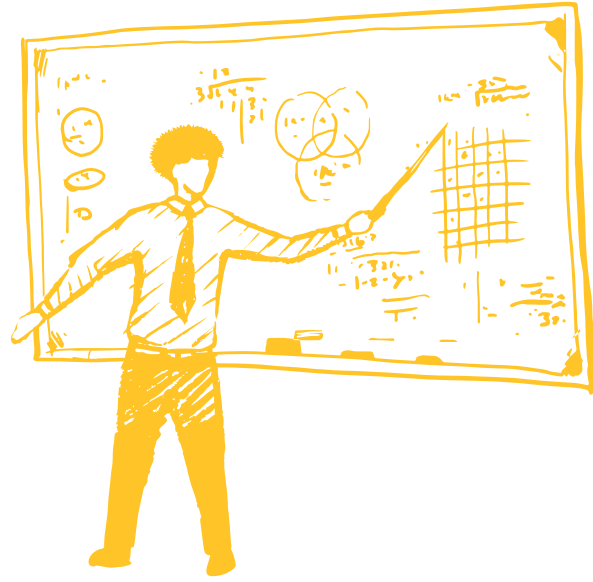


Finance coach, podcaster, public speaker, TEDx speaker, and event curator

I WAS A YOUNG, SINGLE

mom, and I needed a college that would allow me the flexibility of time. I did my research and I heard really good things about Monroe College. I had really great professors there. My Accounting 101 professor encouraged me to switch my major from business to accounting and finance; I'm forever grateful for that because it was a really great decision. Switching my major was a game-changer for me. I was able to find employment as soon as I obtained my bachelor's and ever since then, I've been in the finance accounting industry. I

met a lot of other students that were attending there, and two of them are still really good friends of mine. I was working while going to school in the evening. I had personal challenges to overcome such as finding time to study and staying focused, but I think I did pretty good. I am the type of person that likes to give back to the community and to institutions that have helped me so much, like Monroe. I am actually in conversation with the business school about teaching a course - that would be a full-circle moment for me.



2016 MONICA MIDDLEBROOKS

BBA Health Services Administration '16
Interviewed on 08/02/2021

I JUST HAPPENED TO BE WALKING PAST THE SCHOOL when one of the administrators told me to come in. We talked, and I said, 'I might be too old for this.' She said, 'No, you're not. Let me see what credits you have.' She asked me for all this information, and she found out that I used to go to Terrell College and that I came close to finishing, but I did not. She encouraged me to push through it. I had a business where I was taking care of kids, but I wanted to get more professional with it. My math teacher, Professor Saliou Fall, was amazing. For so long, I did not understand math. He explained it so well. I bumped into him by accident. One day, when my professor was out, he came in to substitute for that week. He explained in a week what I could not get in my head in two weeks, so I took all my math classes with him. He made it easier for me. He even taught me statistics, and I got it with him. I take care of children, but I do it on a business level in my home. It is rewarding because children are the most honest people in the world.

PATRICK B. RENE, MPH-RRT

Interviewed on 09/01/2021



MONROE COLLEGE HAD something that I'd never seen anywhere else: professors who were always available to help. Whatever I needed or whatever I asked, they always had the right answers. I don't know how they did that, but they were always ready to help me. Anytime I emailed, they always responded to me. They never left me hanging. That support helped me finish my degree because every time I went to Monroe, it was like they boosted me up. Believe me, if it weren't for the support of the research center, I wouldn't have finished my thesis. They were always there for me. They were never tired of my asking them questions about anything, and that's why it was so nice. The dean, Dr. Ramadar, was always ready to help. Dr. Brown, my advisor, was the best. She helped me with anything, and she knew how

to motivate people. If you saw a copy of my thesis, you'd see how I thanked those people. I was so happy to be at Monroe. I'm doing my doctorate now at Walden University, and I'm following Dr. Brown's advice about what to do if I want to move forward. After my first year at Monroe, I encouraged my wife to come to Monroe, and she graduated from there as well. I told my wife, 'If you have a goal to graduate with any kind of major, go to Monroe's website. If you see something you're interested in, please go. Don't leave it in your head. Just go tomorrow.' I told this to my friend's daughter as well, and she also graduated from Monroe. I'm proud of them. I would advise everybody, 'Wherever you are, wherever you come from, Monroe is the place to go. When you go there, believe me, you'll succeed.'

2014 MILASONE M. BLAND

BBA Health Services Administration '14
Interviewed on 08/18/2021



I CHOSE MONROE BECAUSE OF THE JOB MARKET. THEY were looking for people who have bachelors or experience in the health industry, and I wanted to work in health administration. What made the best impression were very informative professors. They knew what they were talking about. That stuck with me really hard, and they were very personable. They didn't come off as I'm the professor and you are the student. They treated me as a person, as a student was wanting to learn and to get more out of the subject matter. I was an old adult back then. I already have my associates. I was there to learn. I did all my work. I was on the president's list. I studied hard and graduated well in all of my studies.

1992 LINDA M. PAGAN

AAS Accounting '92
Interviewed on 08/05/2021



I HAD THREE CHILDREN and realized that I had to support them for the rest of my life. I went to college and utilized their place in the office. I worked for and went to school full-time at night. I balanced a stressful demanding life and the process required to be successful. I graduated as a Summa Cum Laude. I could still remember Professor Siegel and Professor Johnson who was my accounting teacher. They were very supportive. They were excellent communicators in

regards to getting the materials, and they were compassionate to their students. The professors were extremely competent in their field. I would say that the school maintained its professionalism outstanding. My education there had a positive impact on my life because when I graduated from Monroe College, two weeks later, I didn't go into my field of study. I went into the New York City police department, and it helped me advance during my career.



2020 MIRIAM V. ARANA

BBA Criminal Justice '16, MSCJ '20
Interviewed on 08/18/2021



I GREW UP IN THE BRONX, AND IT WAS THE SCHOOL closest to home. I met a lot of great people there. My goal was to grow within the company that I was working for, and that happened just recently. It gave me a lot of tools to grow within my career. I have been working for the same company for four or five years. My professors helped me with my job because they gave me the confidence to push forward, do my best, and give my all.

2018 BRENDA SALLEY

AAS Business Administration '18,
BBA Business Management '19
Interviewed on 09/02/2021

MY MOTHER INSPIRED me to attend Monroe College. Before she passed away, one thing she asked me to do was get my degree. I enjoyed myself at Monroe. The teachers were fantastic. They helped me out. When I had a problem, they broke things down for me. They always had their doors open and everything. I love Monroe - I'm wanting to come back to do my master's. I had a few teachers who made an impression on me. One was my marketing

teacher, Jasmine Young. Professor Jonathan Miller was another one, along with Professor Stephanie Cato. Life has been great after Monroe. I did an internship at St. Barnabas Hospital as a volunteer. I've learned a lot there. Even though my major is business management, I'm thinking of having my minor in health administration. Monroe is like a mini-United Nations. It has people from all different cultures, all different countries, and I got to learn from everybody.



Peace and blessings



2019 KRYSTINA WHITE (SHOULDERS)

AS Human Services '18, BS Human Services '19
Interviewed on 08/17/2021

I LOVED THE FACT THAT THEY HAD AN ECLECTIC AND diverse scheduling system being that I was already a full-time working mom. It was easier for me to go to school at night. The flexibility was good. I heard a couple of people talking about that program that they were able to get in and have no problems. I had four favorite professors - Professor Delpeche, Professor Bridgewater, Professor Giuliani, and Professor Trevor John. They made class more fun. Professor Giuliani always met the student's accommodations. If you needed to talk to him about anything outside of school, he was always available. He helped write my letter for my recommendation to go into the master's program for Monroe. He also tried to help me get a job and send my resume. He still reaches out to me. He worked for Child Protective Services, so he was very informative. I was a human service major, and I learned a lot about that realm. I was horrible at math, and Professor Bjorn Bridgewater made it very easy and comforting. Those professors really stood out to me. Monroe will always have a special place in my heart. I was just happy that Monroe was able to help me make myself better and make myself prepared for my field.



2016

PRICILLA M. MORALES

BBA Criminal Justice '16
 Interviewed on 08/04/2021



IN HIGH SCHOOL MY MAJOR WAS NURSING, BUT WHEN

I graduated, my mind shifted to criminal justice, and Monroe was the second school to call me, so I chose it over WCC. Monroe had a different environment compared to high school, and I enjoyed it. When I was in high school, I did not want to go to school, but when I was in college, I wanted to go every day. There were more resources and more people to go to if you needed help anytime that I needed it. When it came to doing assignments, I had Professor William Vericker, that every time I hear someone say mine, I automatically think of him, which is mind blowing. I got my DVA in three years instead of four. After leaving Monroe I went into becoming a teacher. I became a teacher for undocumented immigrant kids, and now, I hope to continue to pursue my career in the criminal justice field. The thing I like to brag about Monroe is the environment and the amazing professors that take their time to understand me. I would not change Monroe for anything in the world. No matter the price and no matter anything, my education was worth the price.

2017

MELISSA CRISSIDA RICKETTS WHITE

BBA Business Management '17
 Interviewed on 10/12/2021



I WAS WORKING, AND someone who went to Monroe referred me there. They said it was the best thing they had ever done. Based on their work ethics and personality, I looked into Monroe, and I never regretted it. I felt like a part of a functioning family. It had its hiccups, but the doors were always open. I never had an issue where I needed to reach out to someone and found a closed door. I could go into a professor's or dean's office and say hi. I was always welcome. Monroe was always

warm and welcoming. The professors always tried to assist me to the best of their capabilities. There were times when things were not only about school but for life in general. There was always someone to talk to, and that was what I appreciated the most. They were not only there for your academics, but they were there for your overall wellbeing. I had been an administrative assistant, and I went to Amazon for a short while. Monroe drove me to excel.



Based on their work ethics and personality, I looked into Monroe, and I never regretted it. I felt like a part of a functioning family.
 - Melissa Crissida Ricketts White

2017

HAROLD FICH

AAS Computer Information Systems '17,
BBA Computer Information Systems '18
Interviewed on 08/06/2021

I FELT LIKE I COULD DO MORE WITH MY LIFE, AND

I needed to go back to school to explore some new avenues. I was really interested in computer science at the time, and I had a family friend who was a dean. Alexander Canals helped me in the process to get into Monroe, and everybody was very helpful in guiding me down the path that I was going. Then I had a laptop that I started to upgrade by taking and adding parts. I told a professor who used the same type of computer about it. He brought me an extra Wi-Fi card for the next class session. Then I talked to Dr. David Shaw about personal projects, and I told him how I wrote JavaScript on my time to learn the ins and outs in the full stack software engineering game. He gave me a JavaScript textbook he had in his office to help with my studies. They helped a lot by giving me different resources and guidance on what and where to learn. They pushed me forward whenever I reached any roadblocks. I am a full stack software engineer now.



2020

SHENGNAN FOX (FU)

MBA
Interviewed on 09/03/2021

I HAD BEEN IN THE MILITARY AND WHEN I GOT

out I didn't have a job. I knew a lot of veterans who went to Monroe College. A coworker told me Monroe was a good school. I wanted to get my master's degree as soon as possible in order to get a better job. I was able to start quickly at Monroe because they had classes starting in autumn, winter, and summer. I used the GI Bill to finish my master's degree in three years. I loved the professors at Monroe because they were kind and very knowledgeable. The language barrier was the only challenge I had. I am an immigrant, so English is not my first language. Monroe helped improve my writing skills. They had amazing writing and reading specialists who helped me improve my writing a lot when I started there. Monroe is very different from other schools. At Monroe, everybody was helpful and supportive. They care about how I am doing even after graduation. All the teachers and staff working there care about how you're doing and how they can serve you to better, to help make you a success. That has been the most important thing for me and I'm very appreciative.

2018

LAUREM L. HUGGINS

AAS Medical Administration '18
Interviewed on 09/09/2021



Medical administration

I HAD BEEN TAKING CLASSES OVER THE YEARS, AND I

decided that I was going to settle down and get my degree completed. Monroe College was close by, and was reputable according to my information so it was an easy choice for me. I took online courses, and the teachers and professors were very helpful, especially my math professor. My advisor was extremely supportive and always available to me. If I had problems, she was always there to assist or direct me on how to go about resolving them, which was very helpful. Earning my Associates in Applied Science in Medical Administration made me feel as though I had accomplished something special. This was my personal goal. I wanted to make sure that I did something with my life. I felt good because I am the sort of person who always liked to study and learn new things, and they really encouraged and pushed me to do more. I do believe that anything is achievable if one is committed to it. One has to study, keep up with assignments, do research, and that takes time. In the end it was all worthwhile as it expanded my education and outlook on life. I would encourage everyone to strive toward their goal. It was a wonderful day when I learned that I had graduated Magna Cum Laude in this field.



2020

ALVARO NAVA

BBA Criminal Justice '20
Interviewed on 09/01/2021



RECRUITMENT ADVISORS FROM MONROE

College came to my school. I talked to one of them and she convinced me to go to Monroe. It wasn't that far away, and I could earn my degree in three years. I was a commuter student. I really liked some of the teachers there. With the faculty, if I asked them a question or if I really needed something, they were always there to help me. They always gave me great advice and tried to push me to be the best student I could be. Even the lady at the front desk was very nice; she really brought positive energy before I even started my classes. I went straight to college after high school. My classmates were mostly just out of high school, but I also had classmates of all ages; some of them could be my parents. I met people from all around the world, including Spain and Brazil. It was totally different from high school.



2019

LATOYA "TOYA" DIANE DIXON

AS Human Services '19
Interviewed on 08/18/2021



MY CHILDREN ARE IN

middle school, and I was the PA. The principal gave me the information about Monroe. She called and made the appointment for me to go in and see what it's about, then the next day I started. I'm still there now for my bachelor's. It was first to be a school late, but now it has changed. They do have a position because the counselor that they do have there is going to retire, so my hopes are that I will be able to take his place. It was a very good experience, and I enjoyed all the classes. The professors were great because if I needed any help or anything, I know I was able to go to the IC center to get the extra help and the little tutoring things. I was fortunate enough to get good professors every semester. All the professors I've worked with have been great and patient. If you don't get something, they're willing to sit there and explain it to you., you know. They really pushed me to do my

best. I'm excited when I get the same professor twice because they know me, and I know them. I know what they expect from me, and I know what to expect from them. I am so proud of myself because I've been on the Dean's List. I should be done by next year in April because I'm now taking three classes for the four semesters, and I have my last two classes for the winter semester. Dr. Faison was the one who introduced me to SAC. He was there always to encourage me if I had any problems or even if I needed help with another class, then he will be able to direct me. I also had a few other classes and professors including Dr. Solomon and Professor Smith. What puts a smile on my face is the fact that they were willing to be there for me, and give that extra support. It was like a family, and they made me feel comfortable. Even though everything has changed a little when it's virtual, the genuineness is still there.

2021

JAMIE A. ROBERSON

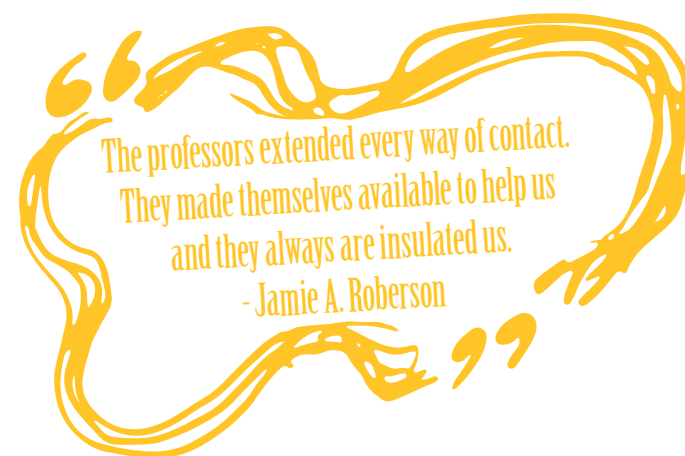
AAS Criminal Justice '19, BA '21
Interviewed on 08/18/2021



I WAS INTERESTED IN THE

criminal justice program, and as I read more about the program it made me realize that the professors worked in the field themselves. They were able to provide the knowledge from the textbook and apply that knowledge and experiences in their life. I wanted to pursue forensic psychology, but I was pretty much growing up interested in the law. It started from spending time with my grandmother. She was interested in a lot of law enforcement shows, and I grasped to it. I had a passion for the law and how it works. Some professors stood out for me because they made us apply critical thinking, and we think outside of the box. We

studied it enough to where we didn't have to use the textbook because their way of teaching made it easier for me to learn and retain the information. My dad was sick at that time, and I was the primary caregiver. I made him a priority because I have no family left, and I was able to make school a priority as well. The professors extended every way of contact. They made themselves available to help us and they always are insulated us. It helped me because I always utilize that when it was things that I didn't understand about projects or if I didn't have a clear understanding. I always had a way to reach out to the professors.



2021

SHERMARIA LEONCE

Interviewed on 09/04/2021



I'D HEARD A LOT ABOUT

Monroe College because I had a cousin of mine who did her nursing career there. I saw the commercials on the trains on my way to and from work. I was motivated to give them a try. What stood out for me is the faculty; the faculty is amazing and patient. My academic and admissions advisor were both great. I had the opportunity to meet with Valerie Daley daily to sort out financial issues. I would not have had my financial aid

come through if it hadn't been for her. I am still in the early stages after graduation, so I am not practicing what I studied, but I am looking to pursue it as a lifelong career. It was a shot in the dark when I applied for diagnostic medical sonography but I enjoyed the course. Myrna Garcia is outstanding; She was dedicated to our success. Every single one of my professors was great, I cannot say anything contrary to that.

2016

YASMINE T. MARSHALL

AAS Baking and Pastry Arts '16
Interviewed on 08/18/2021



IT WASN'T ANYONE THAT

made me go to Monroe College, but I saw that you guys had the baking and pastry that I wanted to go to school for. I applied, and I got in. I actually ended up liking my teacher. He was a great

teacher actually. Now I have my own baking business. He taught me so many different ways to become something into the world or become something in my life.

2019

KATREECE A. CAMPBELL

BBA Accounting '19
Interviewed on 09/30/2021



Culmination of Winter semester in 2018; conference evening for the Monroe College Honors Society



Bronx campus; the day I got inducted into Delta Mu Delta, International Honor Society for business

I MIGRATED TO THE US VERY SUDDENLY, AND

Monroe was one of the few colleges that accepted my Caribbean exam. It had small classrooms and a more intimate, personalized learning style. I really liked that the professors were personable, professional, and looked out for my interests. Each professor knew my name and could tell what my strengths and weaknesses were. I had to switch to the Bronx campus, and Professor Nanton was one of the main reasons I stayed on that campus. I tried NABA and was a part of the CEO Club, Monroe College Honors Program, and I also got inducted into Delta Mu Delta, the international honor society for business. It benefited me because I participated in conferences, did public speaking, did research, and had to better manage my time because of the additional classes. Professor Nanton's teaching style contributed to my ability to pass all four sections of the CPA exam on my first attempt during the pandemic, and I currently have an offer from PricewaterhouseCoopers where I will gain the necessary experience to obtain my CPA license.

2007

MITCHEL ALBERTO MARTINEZ

AAS Criminal Justice '06, BBA Criminal Justice '07
Interviewed on 09/03/2021

I WANTED TO GO BACK TO SCHOOL 30 YEARS AFTER

I graduated high school. I got this motivation to go work for the Department of Education, which is where I am now. I heard good things about Monroe College and its programs, and that inspired me to go there. It was really awesome. The professors were all great. I love the fact that it was close to a one-to-one kind of relationship. I did a criminal justice major. One of my professors was a retired correction officer captain. She had told me to go sign up for corrections, and I did and passed the test, but I changed careers. Another one was a police officer who was a Sergeant, and he had an awesome class there and I learned a lot through him. My proudest moment was when I graduated - it was great. My mother was a retired school teacher and was the only one with a college education, so to be the second graduate in the family was awesome. I would never go back, but I really enjoyed school. I got into it, and I got on the Dean's List, so I did very well. The classes were interesting and the professors were great; they made it so interesting and inspiring. I loved going there. I highly recommend the school. I work in the high school now and the students have college visits, so I tell a lot of the kids here to go to Monroe. It's a great school and a great environment. When we have the college fair and Monroe representatives come here, I make sure that the kids go, and I go and introduce myself and tell them good things about it. I'm proud to be an alumnus. When all these kids graduate and go to big colleges, it's a culture shock, and that's why I throw Monroe at them. The classes are small. There's more of a one-on-one connection between the teacher and the students. At Monroe, all staff, administration, and teachers are there for you 100 percent. You'll never feel lost or alone. They greet you with open arms. It's a great atmosphere to be in and they make you feel at home. It was home for me.

2009

JASON MISAEEL GARCIA

AAS Business Administration '06,
BBA Business Management '09
Interviewed on 08/02/2021



Jason Garcia, Class of 2009

UPON ENROLLING AT MONROE COLLEGE, ONE OF

the individuals that were two people who played a big role in me, really committed to it. It was Ms. Davies, which works for student services. I believe she was still there. Dr. Lee was the other one. When she was there, she was a counselor and a mentor. There was a mentorship there at Monroe. It made a big impact on me at a very fresh time and me enrolling into Monroe.

2019

LATANYA "TANYA" TERESA GOULBOURNE

AS Human Services '19
Interviewed on 08/02/2021

MONROE CHOSE ME;

Monroe had sent me an email about joining the Monroe College students. I went on the campus, and I had a look, and then I was interested in going. I had two professors that stood out to me. That would be Professor Dwayne McCullough and Professor Delores Patterson. I had both of them for more than one semester, so there was always a familiar face every time I had them another upcoming semester.

They helped me with all my coursework and helped me get through college. I'm going to finish my bachelor's degree this semester. I already had my graduation ceremony, and I will officially be getting my diploma after this week. I want to go back for my master's, but I want to take a little break because I have been in school since preschool. I want to take at least a year off and then get back for my master's degree.





2022 MYIKA D. D'ARBEAU (D'ARBEAU)




Tomorrow will be different!

WHEN I FIRST DECIDED to go back to school I didn't know where to start. When Monroe was told to me as an option, I did my research, and I must admit it was love at first sight!!! I was nervous at first because I was taking in the fast track program, and I was doubting myself and my ability to succeed. The professors and staff were amazing in helping me reach my goals and live out the passion I've always had. Monroe worked with me through every obstacle and every dark corner I turned. The

staff kept me motivated and informed about everything I was going to need to have a successful college experience. For that I'm forever grateful!!! Now that it's time for me to continue on with my Master's. I wish Monroe had the program for me because the anxiety I get from having to start over in a new school truly scares me, but because of the tools and support I received from Monroe I am more than positive I got this. Thanks Monroe, my new found Family!!


1988 JUAN SANTANA, JR.

AAS Computer Information Systems '88, BBA Computer Information Systems '02, MS '07  Interviewed on 08/19/2021

MY SISTER WENT TO Monroe, and I met some of the professors when I was in high school. My sister graduated from Monroe, so to me, it was the right fit and the right choice. I have no regrets. I love the school. I'm an adjunct professor, so I'm still involved with the school. I also completed my master's at Monroe. The professors made an impression, and to this day, I get really excited whenever I see them. One of them is Dr. Ephrem, who still works for the school, and Mr. Garcia who used to be a professor when I was going to school there. They both made a lasting impression and the people who I could always depend on. Monroe has always been very reliable to the point that when I

went in for my first interview in IT, I went back to the school, and the professors helped me get ready for the interview. To me, Monroe is like a family. With everything that's going on with COVID-19, whether we can go back to school to teach or if every class remains remote, I'll support it to the point that I wouldn't even consider teaching at another school. I've been approached by other schools to teach, but I wouldn't leave Monroe. To me, it means a lot to be able to go back in full circle, be able to teach at Monroe, and be able to provide the same quality I received when I was a student. Being able to provide the same support that I got from all my professors is priceless.

2013 DELORES HULL

AAS Accounting '13, BBA Accounting '17  Interviewed on 09/24/2021

A COUPLE OF friends of mine were at Monroe and were telling me that it was a good school to go to. I went to an open house in summer 2010. I loved the spirit of the professors and guidance counselors there. They seemed like they had nurturing, caring spirits. They really took the time to talk to me and encourage me to go, so I made the decision to and didn't regret it. It was challenging at times. I felt very proud of myself at the end. I loved the fact that I had professors that

challenged my thinking. Some also challenged me academically. I learned a lot of things I never knew. It was a great experience. When I came away from Monroe, I felt like a much more well-rounded individual. The professors would immediately try to help me find out where I went wrong and how I could turn it around. It was a good experience, and I always tell people who are looking for a good school to go to Monroe. It's been good having that bachelor's degree.



2017 NAOMI DESHOMMES

Interviewed on 08/18/2021



I WORKED FOR SANTANDER BANK, AND THEY HAD

a program with Monroe College, where if you wanted to get your MBA, you would be able to receive discounts. That was why I chose Monroe. My time there was very good. The professors were helpful, and you could contact them. I had Professor Young, and I still keep in contact with him. They were personable. Whenever you needed help with them, they would make themselves accessible, and they were always nice. They understood the work-life balance because I was older. I was working and going to school full-time, so there were some challenges, but they were willing to work with me. I really liked that. There were multiple locations for classes, and that made it very good for a working person. It helped make someone who was working full-time obtain the degrees that they needed in order to advance professionally. The communications I had with the professors were really good. I also had online classes, so I was able to go through a wide range of different classes. Even at the final award ceremony, I saw Dean Alexander Canals, and that was also another thing. There were thousands of students going through the school throughout the year, but the fact that Dean Canals remembered me was very personable. President Marc Jerome was very friendly. He was not somebody that just sat in his office. He was walking around the campus. People could see him, and he would say hello. That was refreshing. It was not a lot of institutions that made me feel like I was a part of the family. Monroe gave reinforcement to me, believing that I could do it. I was running away from doing an MBA, but Monroe made it possible because my years of experience qualified me to do the program I was in. All the additional knowledge I acquired broadened my perspective on different career paths. My sister threw me a surprise graduation party and got engaged right there, so it was a lot of memories.

1991 GLORIA GUZMAN

AAS Accounting '91
Interviewed on 08/18/2021



AT MY AGE IN 1991, I WANTED TO SEE IF I COULD

get a two-year degree. The accounting professor was fantastic. That is what made me go on to further my education. He was the one who told me that 'Baruch will be difficult, but you can make it.' He was correct. It was difficult, but I made it. I had to go part-time at night while working during the day. Monroe was easier for me because of the level of work that had to be done on an upper level than lower level; that is what made me decide and always wanted to have a degree in accounting.

2012 MIOSOTIS "MISSY" A. CRUZ, MBA

BBA Health Services Administration '12
Interviewed on 08/18/2021



MY PASSION FOR HEALTHCARE INSPIRED ME TO

attend Monroe College, and it allowed me to expand my knowledge. It granted me a degree in business healthcare administration, which allowed me to open up to other opportunities and other career advantages. I attended many different colleges because I didn't have any direction on where I wanted to be and what I wanted to do. My original career choice was to become a psychologist. Unfortunately things came into my life that I had to make a precedent moment and put my main career on hold because of the fact that the degree requirement had a lot of years of schooling. I had to find a quick entrance into the workforce that would allow me to provide for my children and take care of a home. When I got to Monroe it just pretty much held me by the hand and walked with me every step of the way. There was never a moment where I said, 'I feel alone in this school. I'm not a name. I am a number.' Everybody acknowledged me as a person, and that was one thing that I embraced from Monroe College. They acknowledge me as a human being. They were absolutely all great. I never came across a power moment with one of my teachers, administrators, security guard, or anybody. I never had a power moment with them or a moment where I said, 'Oh, this place is not for me.' I had a great experience. The experience was so great that my daughter graduated from there with her MBA. My son graduated with his bachelor's in information systems. I was promoting college even as an alumna for my children to pursue it.

1991 GINA IGLESIAS

AAS Office Technology '91
Interviewed on 08/18/2021



I HAD NOT GOTTEN MY

high school diploma when I was almost 30, and I was feeling really bad about that. When they offered college credits to get a high school diploma, it seemed like a good fit for me at the time, so I did it. I was one of the older people in the group, and I was a bit embarrassed to even raise my hand or to talk. I was in very basic courses because I had not been in school for so many years, and one particular instructor stood out for me. I said to her, 'I am really embarrassed. Please do not pick me to ask the questions about math in front of everybody.' She said, 'No worries. If you are

feeling this way, I am sure there are a lot of others here that feel the same way, so sit tight, and you will be okay!' Those words were so comforting to me, and it motivated me. My accounting professor, Mr. Abongwa, who was from Africa, was very caring and would tutor me early in the morning. He said, 'If you want to learn this, then I will give you some time before class.' I would come in and get half an hour or 45 minutes of tutoring, and I passed those classes with A's. There were a lot of caring people there, and that is what I remember most about Monroe.

2008 LOIS RAGSDALE

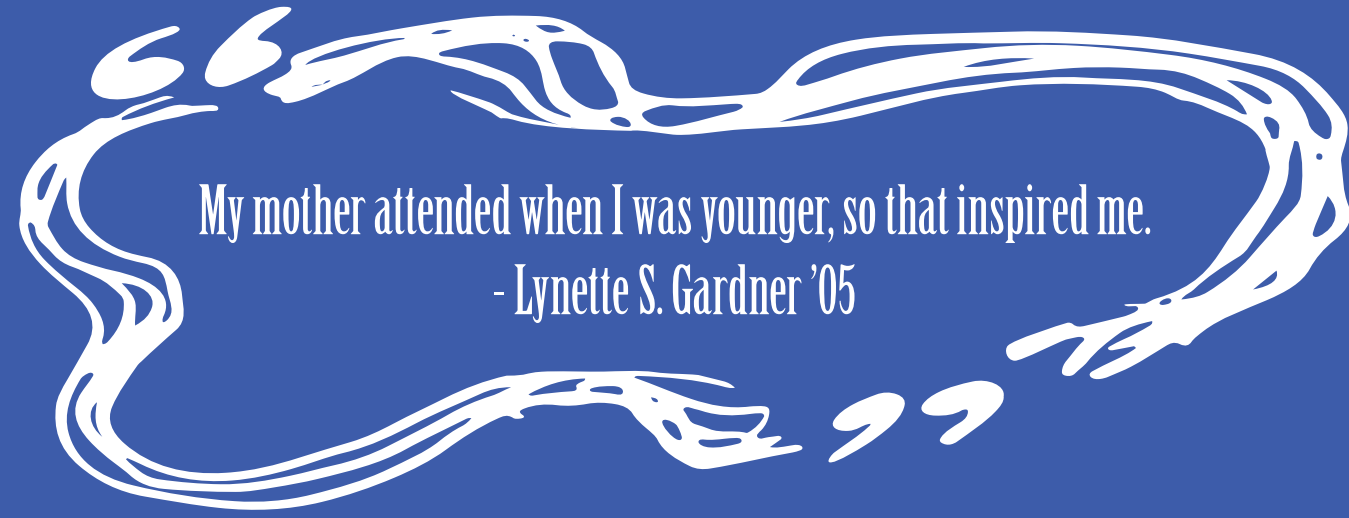
AAS Medical Administration '08, BBA Health Services Administration '10
Interviewed on 08/03/2021

I GRADUATED HIGH SCHOOL AND HAD a couple of jobs. I wanted to further my education. The staff was very helpful in helping me to prepare my resume and job listings.



FIRST-GENERATION

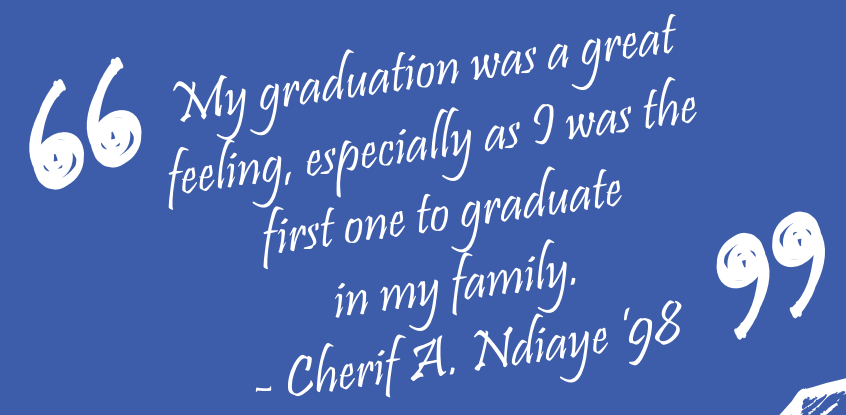
college grads & legacy alumni



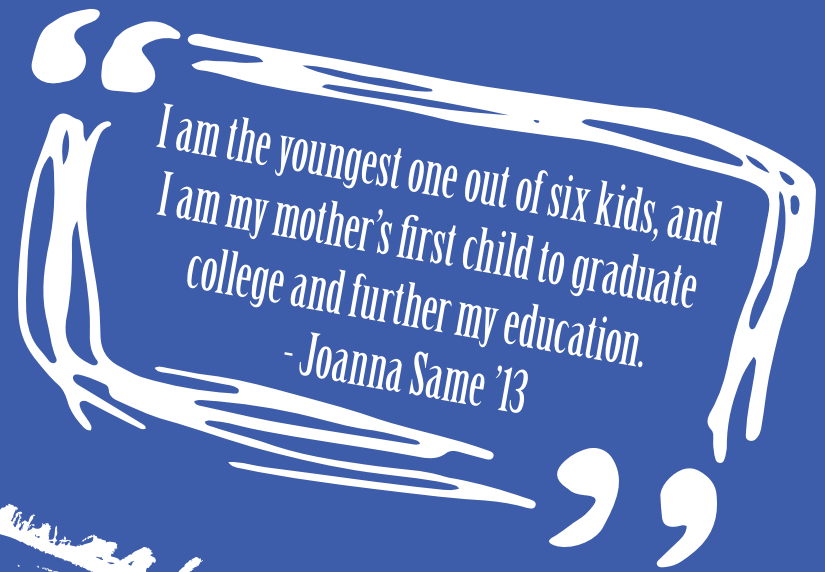
My mother attended when I was younger, so that inspired me.
- Lynette S. Gardner '05



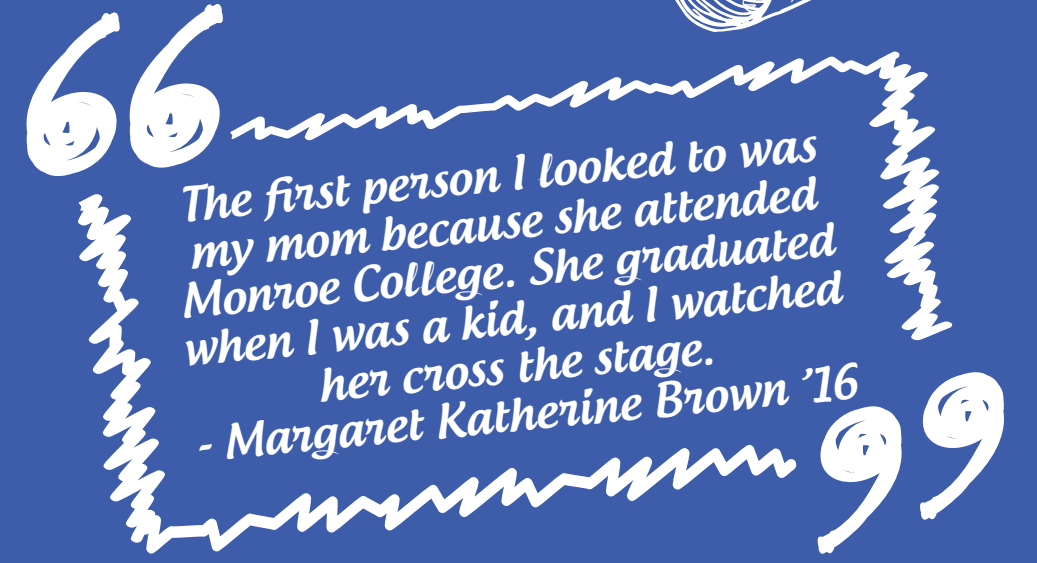
I was the only one that attended college and the first in my family to get a college degree, so it was a big deal.
- Cuauhtemoc Cortez '11



My graduation was a great feeling, especially as I was the first one to graduate in my family.
- Cherif A. Ndiaye '98



I am the youngest one out of six kids, and I am my mother's first child to graduate college and further my education.
- Joanna Same '13



The first person I looked to was my mom because she attended Monroe College. She graduated when I was a kid, and I watched her cross the stage.
- Margaret Katherine Brown '16

2004 DEBBIE ANNMARIE DURAN

AAS Business Administration '04
Interviewed on 08/04/2021



AT THE TIME I WAS LIVING in the Bronx. I went to Monroe to ask them about taking a test because I saw this thing online where you could go to school online at an upstate college. They said that I had to take the entrance exam at my closest college, and Monroe happened to be my closest college to where I was living at the time. When I was in the line at Monroe lobby, an advertisement came on the TV, and it was one of those with a graduation ceremony. There was a graduate in the line, a lady, and she was crying and she said, 'I am a single mother. I have four kids and two jobs. If I can do it, then you can do it.' I thought to myself that I was a married woman with one job and two kids. If she could do it, so I could. I turned around and said, 'Sign me up,' so that was how I ended up coming from Monroe. At the time I was living in Edenwald Houses. I never liked math until I came to Monroe because of the African teacher and his approach. I always got a couple of scholarships. I was a

first generation college student. I met a lot of great teachers at Monroe. I started my career in human resources in New York in 2007 and when the economy crashed, I moved away to live with my dad in West Virginia. I intended on going back to New York, but then I applied for a job with the state government of Maryland. My first job was as a class and salary analyst, then I moved on to human resources manager, and human resources director. I've now been at Morgan State University as their assistant human resources director for the last six years. In a few weeks I will be moving on to Baltimore City government as a senior classification and compensation analyst. I also had an immigration consulting company in downtown Baltimore City. I couldn't have been where I am today if those teachers at Monroe didn't believe in me more than I believed in myself. One even refused to allow me to withdraw from a class. I studied and did eventually pass the economics class. I salute Monroe.



2004 ALMA R. MONTOLIO

AAS Accounting '04, BBA Accounting '06
Interviewed on 08/17/2021



I WAS WORKING IN THE ACCOUNTING DEPARTMENT. My job gave me the opportunity to enroll at a school that had to do with what I did, and they paid part of the tuition. I was the first generation in our family to go to college. I came from the Dominican Republic and didn't speak English when I came here. I couldn't continue in college because there was no bilingual program in 1969, but I always wanted it. I finally had the opportunity, and I was almost 29 years old, but I did it. I was one of the oldest students in my classes at Monroe College. They inspired me, and I was an inspiration for the rest of the students. The professor loved me. I wasn't there to waste my time; I was there to take advantage of the opportunity that my job gave me. I started as a business administration, and my major was accounting. The math professors were all good. Algebra was one of the toughest. The professor would say, 'I will explain it to you once, and if you don't understand that, I will explain it to you twice. If you don't understand that, I will explain it again until you get it.' He helped us in every way. Even though it was a Saturday morning, we were all there. We got involved, and professors got involved with us. My liberal arts was my favorite, and he taught me a lot. Every time there was registration, there was one professor who was there to shake our hands the first day. That really motivated us even more. All of my professors motivated me and did good for me. All of them helped me in their own way. They made me feel good about myself. We were all different, and everybody was treated the same way with respect and courtesy. I had a good experience at Monroe, and I recommend it to everybody. I did excellently, and that gave me a promotion. It benefits me for the rest of my life.

Very grateful to Monroe College for all the help and support

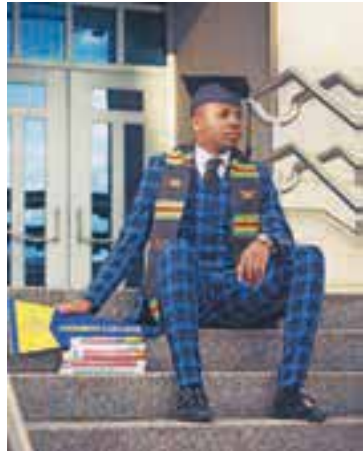


2020

NATHAN "NATE" A. SMITH

BBA Health Services Administration '20

Interviewed on 09/03/2021



I HEARD ABOUT MONROE

College from my principal from high school. It was a great place. I heard that they work very well with immigrants, and I'm an immigrant. It was a safe space so I fell in love. I also got a full scholarship and fell in love with that too. I was a bit nervous as to what to expect, but it was pretty welcoming. It gave us the chance to really get comfortable with our peers, get aware of all the opportunities, and all the help that Monroe gives. It was an environment where I feel like I could

have grown and that's exactly what happened. The dedication of the professors made a lasting impression on me. They really stuck by my side to help me grow and understand the topics. I had some really good professors who really stood by me and really made me feel like family. After I left Monroe, I went on to apply for different jobs that needed recommendations, so I reached out to a few professors who gave me good recommendations. I'm grateful for that. I had to commute to the Bronx near the south campus. Having to work late at night and then get up early to catch the shuttle for classes was a brick wall challenge for me. I live in the States, but my parents live in Jamaica. Wanting to make something good out of life so that I could take care of them and they could retire early was really a big push for me. I had a sister as well. My sister looked up to me and I had to set an example by being the first to graduate from college. I had to make that mark to show that she can do this too. If I'm a male in America that did it, she should have the upper hand because men are expected to not really become as successful as females. I wanted her to know that I did it being a male, so she could do it too. After doing some interviews, I got an offer from the Department of Education, so in January 2022 I'll start my training as a special education teacher.



2002 YAJAIRA ADORNO

AAS Business Administration '02, BBA Accounting '15

Interviewed on 09/03/2021

MY MOM ATTENDED MONROE UNIVERSITY FOR

a brief stint many moons ago but no one else from my family has attended or graduated. My experience was good. The class availability was very flexible for me as a person who worked full-time while I was a student. Most of my classmates were other adults like myself who worked or had families so it was really easy to find people that were a great support system at school; things like taking notes if I was absent or people to study with. My teachers were eager to support someone who had work and a family while attending college. In 2006, I was able to take on a fiscal officer position at a non-profit in the Bronx that had been established for 30 years. I was able to revamp their entire accounting system along with a team of consultants. It was the first time I had an opportunity to really dive deep into my field of accounting and finance as the fiscal officer there. After that, I was able to find a position at a charter school in the Bronx. While I was there, I was able to build an entire HR program from the ground up and manage it successfully for five years. My biggest achievement is where I am now and have been for the last five and a half years. I'm the associate director of talent and operations at a pretty large charter school network in New York. What I tell my son who's about to start the college journey is to think about what he wants to do for the rest of his life. Of all the possibilities and all the ways, he can branch out. Choose something that you really love to do so that the hard work pays off. Don't limit yourself, understand that there are so many ways to branch out, and don't be afraid of that.

2004 CANUTE P. MCLAUGHLIN, MS

AAS Accounting '04, BBA Accounting '05

Interviewed on 08/06/2021

MY DAUGHTER WENT

to Monroe College before me, so I attended there. I spent one semester in USL and six in the Bronx because I was working in Manhattan. I was from Jamaica, and I had experienced how to manage

my time since I was old and worked in accounting before I did CPA. Before I went to Monroe, I didn't have the tools and a degree, but I now have my master's. My experience being in college makes me smile today about Monroe.

2005 LYNETTE S. GARDNER

AAS Medical Administration '05

Interviewed on 08/03/2021

MY MOTHER ATTENDED

when I was younger, so that inspired me. During the time when I did attend Monroe College, I felt like because I've met and graduated from high school, that it was my obligation to receive my diploma and my degree, but be my main focus. I was proud of myself, but those two years went really quickly.

I made friends, and the whole experience of being on the Monroe campus was really nice. M means success. Some people say after college, you would not find a job in your field, but I believe it was a 70% chance after college that if you really wanted some road, it just brings success to me.

1998 CHERIF A. NDIAYE

BBA Business Management '98

Interviewed on 08/02/2021



I USED TO WORK IN NEW ROCHELLE, AND I WAS MANAGING

the Pizza Hut that was right by Monroe. Based on location it was pretty attractive to me, and most of the people that I knew went there, so I was inspired to go there. I was able to get a scholarship when I was there. The one thing that was attractive compared to any other school in New York was the fact that they went by quarter. I had two associate degrees and wanted to get my bachelor's as quickly as possible, and because they had quarters, I was able to get my bachelor's in one year. My graduation was a great feeling, especially as I was the first one to graduate in my family. It opened a lot of doors for me to do something more challenging that would build my career. About six months after I graduated, I started a job with Progressive insurance, and I have been there since. I am a claims director, so I have hundreds of people working for me in three different states.

2006 AURIS ALVAREZ

AAS Health Office Administration '04, BBA Health Services Administration '06

Interviewed on 09/30/2021

I DECIDED THAT I NEEDED TO GET MY EDUCATION.

I lived in the Bronx at that time, and I went to Monroe in the morning on Saturdays. My favorite professor was a math teacher. He cared for me as an individual, and he helped me. He was also very supportive. I work at a mental health institution, and I have applied my degree for it very much. Monroe College was my price. I have taught my children that having a college degree and pursuing your career is the most important thing in your life. I am the only one in our family that has a college degree.

2016 SHAQUAN R. LONDON

BBA Health Services Administration '16

Interviewed on 11/05/2021

I WAS A MOM OF TWO AT THE TIME, AND I WANTED

to further my career and finish something I started years ago. Monroe was easier to get to, flexible, and suited my needs at the time. I was the first in my personal household to go to college, but my first cousins went to college straight out of high school. I was the first in my family to have children and then continue school. It opened a lot of doors, but I didn't go into the field directly under my degree. Now, I'm more interested in utilizing my degree, so I started looking into master's programs. I'm still helping people but in a different aspect. I work with youth who are displaced from home in a diagnostic facility right now.

2013 ROSE D. NZARSE

BBA Health Services Administration '13

Interviewed on 08/05/2021



MONROE WAS CLOSER to where I'm living, and when I went to the website of Monroe, I loved Monroe, and everything was done quickly. I even sent my son there, Joshua, in 2015. Monroe was the best. If I had the money for my master's, I would go back to Monroe. My daughter

wants to go to BCIC, but I might take her to Monroe because I love Monroe. She turned 17 in April, and she graduated in June. I love Marc Jerome, the president, because he treats us like his own children. The professors are good.

2018 BRITTANY LAUREN HARRIS

MPH

Interviewed on 08/24/2021



AFTER MY UNDERGRADUATE DEGREE I KNEW I wanted to continue with my master's degree. I applied to a few schools, and then I saw these banners right on Fordham Road saying something about Monroe College. From there I was like, 'Oh, let me confirm that. When I get home I'll do my research in Monroe and see if they have a master's in public health.' That was when I decided to apply to Monroe. I was the first generation in my family to graduate from college. My master's degree was in public health and my concentration was community health.

2004 DR. SADIE LEE SOTO

AAS Business Administration '04, BBA Business Management '08

Interviewed on 08/23/2021



THE INSPIRATION WAS my children. I did not really think I would have obtained any degrees from the background of my family history. I have been the only person who's actually graduated high school and then moved on going to college, so my family was my inspiration. The professors were actually the key to muse, continuing to want to move further with my education. I have about four or five professors that really inspired me and I actually keep in

contact with them to this day. I struggled in mathematics, and the professor really took his time with the classes making sure that everybody was on the same page before he moved to the next topic, so he really helped us move forward. I actually want to start teaching. My long-term goal is always to continue educating and educating myself, so I actually want to be a part of a faculty at a university or college.



2004 CARENA L. ULUOCHA (JONES)

AAS Health Office Administration '04

Interviewed on 08/18/2021



Celebrating my first official Mother's Day in 2021!



Fun weekend getaway with the hubby; Labor Day weekend in 2021!

AT THE TIME I LIVED IN THE BRONX, AND WHEN I WENT to the open house, I liked the school because of where it was located and how easy it was to commute to. I also liked the vibe that I got when I was there. I liked the professors, and I liked the classes as well. I did not have any bad professors, and I felt like even though the school was big, I could speak to professors and get help when I needed it. I was the first in my immediate family to get a college degree. On the day that I walked and got my degree, I passed one of my favorite professors, Professor Jackson. It was an exciting and emotional moment for me because I was the first in my family. Having a degree helped me navigate my way through my career. I am currently working in a clinical setting from home, and I am able to utilize my degree for administrative stuff. My twin sister ended up going there, and she graduated with the same degree. Now she is back at Monroe continuing her education to get her bachelor's degree.

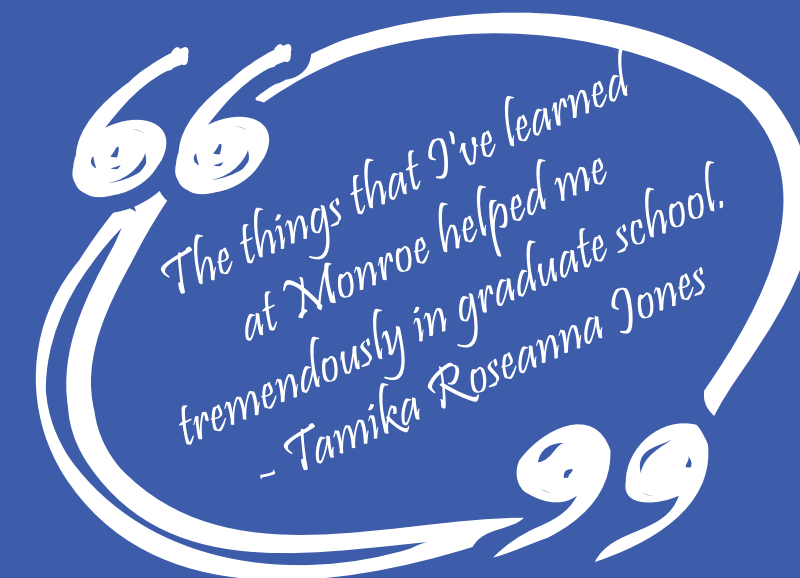
2006 TAMIKA ROSEANNA JONES

AAS Criminal Justice '06, BBA Criminal Justice '07

Interviewed on 08/18/2021



WHAT ATTRACTED ME TO MONROE WAS THE fact that they had smaller classes. I was really interested in pursuing criminal justice, and the high school that I went to in the city was really small too, so I felt at home going to Monroe, and I felt like the staff and the professors cared. I am the first generation in my family to attend college. I was able to go to a college that was fairly close to my home, and that experience in itself was really great. One of my favorite places was the bookstore because I got a chance to work there, and that was how I was able to meet a lot of other classmates. I took a break from school after I got my bachelor's, and then I went back to another school for a master's degree. The things that I've learned at Monroe helped me tremendously in graduate school.



2014 DEVIN U. JOHN (MAYEN)

BBA Business Management '14

Interviewed on 09/30/2021



I did it!



Getting excited for the official day; having fun and enjoying my last days in college

HAVING THREE FULL SEMESTERS IN SPRING, SUMMER, and fall was what threw me to Monroe College. My accounting teacher was my life path outside of college because his kids and my kids have played football since. They still play football together until this day. My degree helped me with wanting to elevate higher in my company. Being the first person in my immediate family out of my siblings to acquire a degree was one of the reasons I did it, and for my children to see that it is attainable.

2016 MARGARET KATHERINE BROWN

AAS Medical Assisting '16, BBA Public Health '17

Interviewed on 09/30/2021



THE FIRST PERSON I LOOKED THROUGH WAS my mom because she attended Monroe College. She graduated when I was a kid, and I watched her cross the stage. I went in and told her, 'I think Monroe would be the best fit for me because I've seen my mother successfully graduate from Monroe.' It was very funny because I have seen a bunch of the friends that I went to school with. They have a family who graduated from Monroe and lead out successful careers as well. I'm so thankful that I even had the experience that I had. Monroe has taught me all the things that have kept me safe throughout the entire pandemic. I was in public health and medical assistance. Having that experience with Monroe made me more confident in knowing that what I know makes me more ambitious. I've had a wonderful time in Monroe throughout every experience that I had; from the first time I walked in the halls all the way to when I finally graduated.

2011 CUAUHTEMOC CORTEZ

AAS Culinary Arts '11, BBA Hospitality Management '13

Interviewed on 09/07/2021



I CHOSE MONROE BECAUSE OF THE FLEXIBILITY. It gave me the ability to enjoy things I really liked at the time. I was working kitchens and cooking already, but I was also an athlete at the time. I was a soccer player and Monroe was one of the few schools that had the option to do both. I visit professors of mine because the culinary program was always very united and there was always a very close connection with everybody. The soccer team was also very close to me, so I go visit them too. Earning my degree was one of my greatest personal achievements because I come from a family that's from Mexico and I was one of four siblings. I was the only one that attended college and the first in my family to get a college degree, so it was a big deal. I did a lot of culinary competitions. There was always that sense of camaraderie between all the classmates. If there was some advice I had to give a new student I'd say to take advantage of the opportunity to learn and to absorb as much information as possible. Take advantage of the opportunities that are given in college. Monroe has such a family-oriented style of teaching and everyone is there to help. I can speak for myself because I used to work there as a professor.

2001 JUDITH-ANN HERNANDEZ

AAS Business Administration '01, BBA Computer Information Systems '02

Interviewed on 09/09/2021



WHEN I FIRST STARTED college, it was in 1991. I was attending LaGuardia Community College, and then I ended up getting a full-time job. I dropped out of college and started working. I had decided back in 1998 that I wanted to go back to school. I decided to go to Monroe College because of the flexibility and the programs that they were offering at the time. I'm the first one in my family to finish and graduate. I was able to complete my bachelor's quickly because Monroe had an accelerated program. At the time my goal was just to finish my associate's since I had dropped out of college for about eight years. Toward my last semester, I was asked if I wanted to become part of the accelerated program, and I did. The biggest impression for me, which is part of the reason why I'm successful today, is they give you opportunities. When I went back to college, I was almost 30 and I had always worked in retail. When I decided to go back to school and finish my associate's,

I ended up getting a job with the Federal Work-Study program. I worked in the financial aid office at that time. I would work in the morning and then attend school at night. What I enjoyed best about that is you had a great support system and the staff that worked in the financial aid office were extremely helpful. There were two staff members who were also students there. Even though they were full-time, they were students. They were very empowering in that office. Mr. Jerome was very friendly. He was in enrollment. He would stop by the office and he would say 'Hi,' and the people from the faculty would come in and say 'Hi.' They were always very friendly and very helpful. They were always available if you needed help. They invested in their students. One of my former employers went in one day into the office and he needed help with someone in his medical office. I've been in the healthcare field for 20 years and it's impacted my life extremely.

2013 JOANNA SAME

AAS Medical Administration '13, BBA Public Health '14

Interviewed on 08/06/2021



MY FRIENDS WERE already going there. Monroe was my next best option because it wasn't too close to home, but it wasn't too far from home. Professor Brown was a Jamaican teacher who changed my perspective. There were two more teachers I remember. I took an elective in criminal justice from one, and he was a detective. He changed my course there because he was just very down to earth and helped the students try to strive. He wasn't tough on us, and he made everything as easy as possible for us. Another one was Professor Campbell. She stood out to me and assisted with furthering my education within the medical field. I was a medical student. I got my

associate's degree in medical administration, and I got my bachelor's degree in public health. My whole family was there for me, and I was the first generation to graduate college. I am the youngest one out of six kids, so I am my mother's first child to graduate college and further my education. It was the proudest moment for me to be the one to do that for her. As of right now, I am a counselor. I was supposed to do public health to be an epidemiologist, but I ended up going straight to do my master's degree to become a clinical mental health counselor. Currently I am waiting to take the National Counselor Exam to get fully licensed, and that will be thanks to Monroe.

JUSTIN SECK

Interviewed on 08/18/2021

IT IS LOCATED IN THE Bronx, which is great. I was looking for a nursing program located in my area, so Monroe College was just a perfect fit. I also heard a lot of good recommendations from students who attended Monroe. I am the first generation in my family to attend college. Monroe is a private school, so when I first attended, I had to fund my tuition out of pocket. It was very challenging. I had to work a lot more than the recommended amount. When you start the nursing program there, they basically inform you that you shouldn't be working because the program requires a lot of time. Then at some point, I actually fell behind on my tuition payments, but they were very helpful. I spoke to one of my professors, and she

referred me to a gentleman in student services. He was able to work out a payment plan for me. I was able to do it and catch up in time for the next semester. When I started at Monroe, I was living with my ex-wife and a two-year-old daughter at the time. A few months later, we went through a divorce. It was another challenge there, which made it really tough. During the pandemic, I was taking care of my daughter and trying to do online schooling, which was very challenging as well. The professors are very understanding of everyone's situation. We basically work with everybody, and they make sure that most of the students don't get left behind. We worked together as students and helped each other out. It was a great experience.

2020 AARON SIN

AAS Culinary Arts '18, BBA Hospitality Management '20

Interviewed on 08/20/2021

MONROE COLLEGE WAS VERY CLOSE TO HOME. I knew some of the instructors that were teaching there, and I heard good things about it from my high school. On top of regular classes, Monroe had the ACF culinary competition, which was on top of the normal curriculum. I was able to do more than just classes and be able to have more knowledge in my degree of learning. I was the first generation in my family to attend college. I wanted to work in the culinary industry and the restaurant fields, and Monroe definitely helped me with that. The instructors and all the culinary students all worked and learned together. I have made great friends who also went into the restaurant field. I have all the connections there where I can work with them or give them advice. I definitely have some long-term connections that I will always have with me.

I wanted to work in the culinary industry and the restaurant fields, and Monroe definitely helped me with that.
- Aaron Sin

2011 MAKEDA SABREE

AAS Business Administration '11, BBA Business Management '12

Interviewed on 08/18/2021

I CHOSE MONROE BECAUSE MY YOUNGEST SON WAS GOING there at the time. We also had a few family members who were going there. When I did my MBA in 2014, we graduated with three generations. We had one graduation for an associate's degree, a bachelor's degree and a master's degree; that was myself, my youngest son, and my first granddaughter who graduated. We all graduated in the same year with different degrees and different levels. I think we are one of the first families that has done that at Monroe. My oldest daughter also graduated from there with her master's in science for criminal justice. My first grandson also attended Monroe for a few years, and my daughter-in-law also graduated from there with her bachelor's degree in information technology. There is quite a bit of history, and it was all documented. I started going there during the time of the financial meltdown between 2006 and 2010, so I was out of work. My youngest son started to attend Monroe, and we started helping him with his ideas as far as his papers and things that he would do. It sparked something in me because I was like, 'I can do this.' I could really channel my energy. During the time that I was trying to find a job, I could really utilize that time and go back to school, which is something that I had not done since straight out of high school. I took the time and went back to school; that was why I was very focused, diligent, and dedicated to what I was doing. I was able to take more courses and accomplish what I needed to accomplish at a faster rate. I started working in an office running a public school here in Mount Vernon while I was doing my bachelor's degree. It gave me proximity to home at the time. It was supposed to be a stepping stone to wherever I was going to end up, but I ended up staying because I got attached to the students, parents, and faculty.

2012 DAVID A. AVILES

AS Information Technology '12,
BBA Business Management '14

Interviewed on 08/31/2021



MONROE COLLEGE WAS MY mother's college. When I was researching schools that I would be most interested in attending in terms of the programming, her personal recommendation was to look into Monroe. At that time, Monroe was offering an opportunity to earn a GED while taking courses that would be applied toward an associate's degree. I ended up enrolling in that program back in 2010 and then successfully earning my associate's degree in 2012. I continued on to earn my bachelor's degree in business management from Monroe in 2014. Monroe was

one of the few colleges that was still offering that type of program. When I was speaking with the admissions counselor, I connected with them. I walked into that school not only feeling that I made the right choice, but I also felt that it was the right place as well. What stood out throughout my experience in that particular program was the level of effort that my academic advisor and the dean would go into in terms of ensuring that my classes were in alignment with the program. They made sure that I had the academic support that I needed to have to get through the classes. I don't regret my experience there at all.

2021 EVELIN MARIELA LUCERO

Interviewed on 08/25/2021



I FOUND THAT WITH MY MAJOR PUBLIC HEALTH, IT was very broad; I could do a lot of things with it. I didn't really discover public health until I was in the application process with Monroe. Thank God, I got a scholarship. I wanted to go where the blessings work, getting a scholarship and studying a course away from home. I wanted that experience, and Monroe offered the whole package to me pretty much. The opportunity was what inspired me to go there. I'm the first generation in my family to graduate college. Living at school was great. I got to make a lot of new friendships. I made a lot of great relationships with my professors; they inspired me to come up with a plan on what was next. I started off in public health, but then I found that I wanted to do social work. A lot of the professors I had guided me in terms of giving me great advice, telling me to get my master's, and giving me connections. I even found the church near Monroe, which was where I was living in New Rochelle. A lot of the students went to my church, and a lot of the people who worked there also attended my church. I ended up building relationships not just within the school, but also in the community, which was great. I ended up getting involved with the worship team. I also met my soon-to-be husband; he graduated in 2018 from IT at Monroe. He graduated earlier than I, but even when I was in school, he would come back to visit me on campus. He knew Monroe inside and out, so he gave me advice in terms of college. He went through a lot of the things that I was starting to go through in college, so he helped me a lot through that. It started off with a mutual friendship, and then we got much closer. I made friendships and met my college sweetheart, so it was a lot of great experiences. I grew a lot by being independent, being away from home, and being on my own. That was a blessing in disguise for me, for sure. Monroe mainly means growth in all areas of my life.

2020 ALYSHA H. CRUZ

AAS Criminal Justice '19, BBA Criminal Justice '20

Interviewed on 08/18/2021



2021 graduation

WHEN I WAS APPLYING TO high school, I did not get accepted into many colleges in the beginning. My mom went to Monroe and graduated with her BA as well. Monroe was very helpful and they were on top of everybody. I applied and then I got in. I remember at one point when I was in Monroe, I was super stressed. I was taking six classes, and I was working at the time. I had a class with all

my friends. We all had the same counselor, and we all had the same major. I had her in my bachelor's, so we had a long time with her. She was one of my personal favorite people. I remember right before I graduated, I got accepted into that YPG. I thought Monroe meant the world to me. I honestly could not thank these professors that helped me along the way.





I'm still in contact with everyone that I made friends with.
 - Cacharel "Cach" G. Berrouet, RN, REEGT '15

I made some friends with some teachers who are still my friends today.
 - Fiona A-M Morris (Thomas-Morris) '17



I still have friends that I met and our friendships are for life; it's truly amazing.
 - Naheem A. Olatidoye '07

What I liked most about living on campus was making lifelong friends from different parts of the country.
 - Raul K. De La Cruz '21



I met some good people there, and we are still friends. It was like a family at Monroe.
 - Jacqueline Whitehead '18

LIFELONG

friendships

2019 EDWIN ALCAIDE

AS Human Services '19

Interviewed on 08/18/2021



I DID IT FROM MY MOTHER WHO PASSED away at the age of 40. My father said I had to obtain my GED. In the following April, 2017, I enrolled into college basically as a promise to be the first one in my family to graduate from college. Being the oldest of eight children and having three children of my own now, I wanted that to be the new standard for my family. I just got caught up working and being that I had a child early. It was extremely important for me to do that. I was born and raised in Brooklyn, New York. I had to drop out of 10th grade and I've been working ever since. I thought it was important to create something extreme for my family in a positive way. It has been extremely rewarding as far as learning so much, growing so much.

2003 TAMMY BERRY

BBA Accounting '03

Interviewed on 11/17/2021



I WAS EARNING MY ASSOCIATE'S DEGREE AT a community college. I took an accounting class with a professor who also taught at Monroe College. At the end of class, I spoke with him about my interest in accounting. I learned about Monroe and decided to attend. Monroe had a lot of great instructors, and I enjoyed the classes there. My tax instructor left an impression on me. He was very good and made class very interesting. I am still friends with a girl I met in my Accounting 101 class. Getting my accounting degree at Monroe opened doors for me.

2017 NAHEEM A. OLATIDOYE

AAS Accounting '07, BBA Accounting '08

Interviewed on 09/11/2021



I CHOSE TO ATTEND MONROE COLLEGE BECAUSE, at that time, it was the only school that would allow me to start my education without having to go through so much paperwork back home. They allowed me to start the Career Pathway Program, which is a 24 credit program. I was going to a community college and they wanted me to do two to three years, and I said, 'No, I can't waste that time. I'm smarter than this.' I found the program with Monroe and I took all the required courses. All of my professors were amazing; I felt like I was home and it was more of a family-oriented institution. The advisors were there to support me on every level - mentally, financially, and physically. I reached out to so many students that either finished or attended Monroe and found it to be an amazing place. I'm the type of student that feels better and more secure in school. After I graduated, I was already working for Coca-Cola as a sales representative when I applied for a position with the company. There were two other candidates but I got picked. My boss said, 'Not only has he been working with us for over eight years - he has a bachelor's in accounting, and he's here with his MBA. Who would be a better candidate for this position?' My experience spoke for itself that time. Throughout my entire time, I was an internal auditor and I was covering the entire northeast region. I was the most educated person and the only Black person that could impress entire departments. My education was amazing and I loved it. A Black person like me needs an education to succeed in life - I have a family back home to support. Doing great, being great, and staying positive is what I have to be because I'm the head of a family. I have 16 brothers and sisters and we still have challenges. There's racism everywhere but you can't let that sit you down. If Obama became president, then that shows me there are opportunities out there. I still have friends that I met and our friendship is for life; it's truly amazing.

2001 DR. FIONA VAUGHANS

AAS Computer Information Systems '01, BBA Computer Information Systems '04

Interviewed on 08/19/2021



Graduation in 2020 just before the pandemic!

I ATTENDED MONROE COLLEGE BECAUSE OF THE EASE IN which I was able to understand and learn computer information systems. I was one of the first students that Monroe helped move from Jamaica to New York to do my studies. I was always interested in computer information systems, and Monroe College propelled me. It gave me a solid foundation that I can use and apply information systems all the way up to the PhD level. As a federal employee, Monroe College has laid a solid foundation where I'm able to build a Cybersecurity and IT career and lifestyle. I built lifelong friendships at Monroe College.

2014 ANNA-MAY JOSEPH

AAS Nursing '14

Interviewed on 09/20/2021



I WAS LOOKING FOR A NURSING PROGRAM, and I had always heard good things about Monroe College. My friend was in the Nursing Program and recommended it, so I decided to attend. I made lifelong friends at Monroe. We worked in the field together after graduation, and they will be in my life forever. I am forever grateful for them and the program that allowed us to build our relationships with each other. Monroe's Nursing Program, my clinical professors, and the knowledge I developed in clinicals prepared me to work in the field. I am currently working as a nurse manager.



1999

EDMUND "ED" K. DADZIE

AAS Computer Information Systems '99

Interviewed on 08/18/2021



I WAS BORN AND RAISED IN GHANA. I CAME TO the United States, and I lived in the Bronx. I had an aspiration of playing basketball in college. While I was playing ball with some friends within the Bronx area, I had an opportunity to play in some tournaments in the summer. That was when Monroe College came onto my radar. Coach Jackson was the head coach at the time, and he invited me to come to Monroe. I came there and fell in love with the school. I was enrolled that summer to become the upcoming freshmen for the basketball season. I failed the selection due to some technicalities. One of the guys who made the team that summer failed a class, so he wasn't eligible to play. I was the first person to be called back on to the team, and thankfully I made it. We lost only three games. We went to NJCAA Championship. We lost in the finals, but that was what put that program on the pedestal for Monroe for all these kids. I played soccer as well. I was working two jobs and playing two sports. I did computer sciences, so I was very busy. The coaches were all father figures to me. I came to school one time and didn't have enough to eat lunch before practice, and they took care of me. In my second year, I couldn't keep up with my tuition. An advisor called me one time and said, 'You are a good student. I don't want the financial burden to drop you out of school. After class come and meet me in my office.' I went there, and he found grants that helped me get through my sophomore year. When I was done with my associate's degree, I was able to get a full basketball scholarship. I ended up going to Union College in Kentucky. I played there and finished my bachelor's degree. Monroe was like a family; that is how close that college is to my heart. It has always been a home for me. I feel like that started my whole journey and molded me to become who I am today. I live in Pennsylvania right now. Whenever they come anywhere close to Pennsylvania, I make sure I go there and support them.

2001

JAMES R. ABRAHAM, SR.

BBA Computer Information Systems '01

Interviewed on 09/20/2021



My journey: US Army, which got me at Monroe College; graduation year; present day

I AM A VETERAN AND I LIVE IN THE BRONX, SO I decided to use my disability benefits to attend college at Monroe. I enjoyed the surroundings. My classmates actually made it fun, and the professors themselves were very interesting. I was always the spokesperson for any group presentations we had. It was all fun for me and it was a good learning experience. I feel my degree put me a step above my peers. I was kind of the IT guy for the company I worked for, and I worked around it while I was in the military. My degree made me a better person and made me want to learn more. I'm still friends with people I met at Monroe to this day. Monroe is a good place for learning and meeting good people.

2015

CACHAREL "CACH" G. BERROUET, RN, REEGT

AAS Medical Assisting '15

Interviewed on 09/30/2021



I SELECTED MONROE BECAUSE I DID HAVE A COUSIN who went there previously. I wanted something local and a larger school, but I would be getting more one-on-one attention. I liked that about Monroe. The professors were able to give me intimate experience with my learning process that I felt like I would not get anywhere else. The smaller class sizes made such a big difference in how I was able to interact with the professors and other students. I really enjoyed my time at Monroe. I'm still in contact with everyone that I made friends with. It was like an opportune family. There was a group of us, and I just felt like it was really good. It felt like a family-oriented experience because everyone that I made friends with became my family after we all kept in touch. It was wonderful to have that group of contacts. Monroe definitely did set me up for success. When I went to Monroe, I was initially going into any of the programs. I wasn't sure what to do when I decided to do the healthcare administration in medical assisting. It helped me when I ended up going to apply for jobs. I was marketable than the next person. I ended up getting positions where I was offered more money and was able to move up quickly. I have hands-on experience from my clinical rotations with Monroe.

2011

ZYAZZA S. HUNDLEY

AAS Criminal Justice '11

Interviewed on 09/21/2021



Postal proud

I CHOSE TO ATTEND MONROE College because of its convenience to where I was living, and also because of the criminal justice program. I got to meet a lot of diverse people. My professors were awesome and they were really flexible because I ended up getting pregnant while attending Monroe. If I had a doctor's appointment, they would email me my work and they would help me.

Professor Medina was a really great professor. He was actually still in uniform while teaching at Monroe. I passed the exam to become a police officer. Then I passed the test to become school safety and the correction officer, but I didn't take either road, and I ended up working up at the post office. Monroe also gave me lifelong friends.

2021 RAUL K. DE LA CRUZ

Associates 34 '21

Interviewed on 08/05/2021



Made it

IT WAS MY FIRST TIME AWAY FROM HOME, AND it taught me how to be independent. I also got to know New Rochelle and the Bronx. Then I played the center position in basketball. I also spent lots of time eating in one of the cafes on campus and hanging out in the dorms. What I liked most about living on campus was making lifelong friends from different parts of the country. Then Jeff Brustad and Dana Warner made an impression on me. The dean of the Bronx Campus was Ted Goldstein, and he put the battery in my back to finish up my degree. We had one-on-one motivational conversations, and he told me what I needed to do to finish and succeed. He counseled me and made things a little more personal.

2018 KAIEL BLAKE

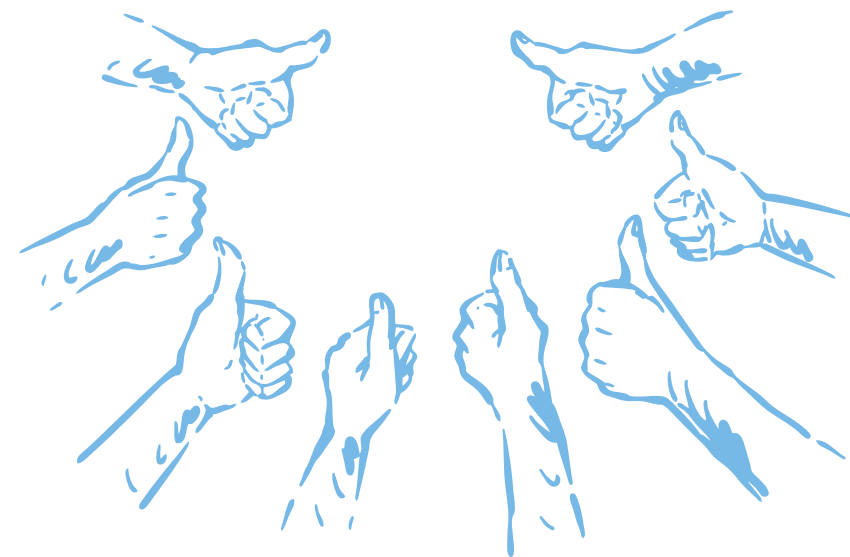
AAS Sports Management '18, BBA Sports Management '20

Interviewed on 10/25/2021



MONROE COLLEGE WAS ACTUALLY RECOMMENDED

to me by my aunt; she graduated with her bachelor's from there. It was in my budget, and it was close to home. Life on campus was pretty good. I played rugby at Monroe during my last year. Dorm life was very different from staying at home - I commuted at first, but then went to the dorm and it was much like living on your own. My commute was just way too far and too much for me; I liked living on campus, and it was much easier for me because I had late classes. My Spanish professor made a good impression on me. She steered me in the right direction to go with my degree. I am in the Army now. I have lifelong friends that I made there. We had the same classes and we played rugby together. Now one is also in the Army, and another friend is a cop in the city. I have some pretty good experiences and good memories from Monroe. There's always a Monroe event going on somewhere. I miss the rugby team; my best memories are playing with them there at Monroe.



2021 BOBBY DURAN

Interviewed on 08/10/2021



I WAS IN THE ACCOUNTS

payable department, and they were looking to promote me, but they were unable to do it because I didn't have an undergraduate degree in finance or accounting. My current employer pushed me to go to school, and my mentor at the time was very adamant about me going to school. That was why I went to Monroe College. One of the first things I noticed was when they told me that all my professors still worked in the field. It was great because everybody was still working, and it was like a mainstay, which was wonderful. My favorite professor was my organizational behavior professor. She taught us how to work in the workplace and always pushed us to be social. She also pushed us to be kind to each other, which was nice.

Dr. Alvarado, my capstone professor, was great. He taught us to be better leaders and gave us a lot of work. Now that I have an MBA, which is beautiful, I'm able to work for profit companies and diversity. I'm working for a real company, but I'm also doing the right thing, which was what Monroe pushed me to be. They taught me to make money but also to be good about making money to help people. I'm doing that now, which is very beautiful. I started in finance super late, but taking those classes, I caught up with everybody who had been at counseling for years and worked in finance for years. I was right there with them. Monroe built my confidence and gave me some friendships I hope to keep for the rest of my life.

2016 KATHERINE VASQUEZ

AS Human Services '16, BS Human Services '18

Interviewed on 10/26/2021



If you believe you can do it and try, you will succeed; you deserve greatness, so be great

I WAS LITERALLY JUST ROAMING AROUND. I LOOKED

at the school, saw the billboards, and decided to just wheel in and try my luck. I got accepted at Monroe. I still talk to my friends on Facebook and the phone. Professor Young was just amazing. He taught one of my psychology courses. Literally, the day after I graduated, I started working at my career job that I've been at for over three years. I work at a non-profit organization called Baltic Street, AEH Inc. as a senior peer specialist. I help the homeless population who suffer from mental illness get supportive housing and other services. We do wellness groups to help people mentally, physically, and emotionally learn how to cope with life Monroe is one of the best schools to go to because there is so much support and help there. Everybody wants everybody to succeed. Honestly, it was the best experience of my life.

2020

JACQUELINE WHITEHEAD

BS Human Services '18, MS '20

Interviewed on 08/18/2021



Bachelor's degree, yes!



My son came to support his mother

GOING TO SCHOOL BECAME FASCINATING. I HAD some awesome professors there like Steve Ippolito. He pushed me, and I took advantage of the constructive criticism. I had to push myself to become the best I could because I had teachers I was looking up to. I met some good professors there that will follow you through the whole process. I am going to go back to Monroe College once they do the master's for the course social workers. I would refer anybody there. Dr. Christy Faison was my dean when I was getting my bachelor's. He became my professor and became the doctor of most of the program. I met some good people there, and we are still friends. It was like a family at Monroe. They advanced all over the Bronx, and that was the best. The professors were outstanding. I appreciate Monroe College.

1993

LISSETTE SANCHEZ

AAS Office Technology '93, BBA Health Services Administration '07

Interviewed on 11/17/2021



I WANTED TO GO BACK TO SCHOOL AND WORK towards my future. That was what inspired me. I wanted to obtain a GED, which I was able to obtain the equivalency to through the associate's program. I wanted to have a better future for myself and my family. I had Professor Smith for social psychology, who was one of my best ever professors. He would say, 'Are you here in my class again, Ms. Sanchez?' I said to him, 'I'm going to follow you until I can't follow you anymore.' I learned a lot from that professor. He's amazing. He showed me so much. One of the things he shared with the class was saving money. We would take an envelope, and every time we got paid, we put something in that envelope. Put what you can in that envelope and save it for a year. Go back after a year and see what you have there that can help you with a vacation, some bills, Christmas for the kids, or whatever the case may be. That method has worked for me in so many ways. The first vacation that I took to Jamaica was through that whole process. It was able to cover my trip and then some. I still see one of the students. I was taking a communications class, and she was going for her bachelor's. She was over 60 years old. We became very close; she told me it's never too late, so she was very inspirational. She graduated alongside me and went to work with the veterans' hospitals in New York. Monroe has impacted me immensely. It's been very fruitful and a solid foundation. Going to Monroe anchored me, and I'm glad that I did go back to school because that solidified what my future was going to look like. I have a few family members that are attending right now. Going back to school was what I needed.

2018

ELIEZER "ELI" MARTINEZ

AAS Culinary Arts '18, BBA Hospitality Management '20

Interviewed on 08/18/2021



ONE OF THE BIGGEST REASONS FOR CHOOSING Monroe was because one of my old friends went to the same school for culinary arts, and he said that I should go if I have an interest in that career. I always had the interest of cooking, and I always loved being in the kitchen with my parents and my family. Most of my lifelong connections are with my professors. They made so much of an impact that I still talk to them. Right now, I am a culinary instructor in a high school. I did not think I was going to end up being a teacher, but I definitely ended up falling in love with teaching students about the importance of knowing how to cook. Some of these kids have the art and the knowledge to be great cooks. They just have to never give up. The biggest impact that I had was when I was a manager at Monroe College at the dining hall. We were basically running a restaurant by ourselves, and it was hard because running a restaurant by ourselves was not easy. It was definitely a challenge, but I definitely loved every second of it. It gave me the love of teaching because we had to help some students during the internship, so I fell in love with teaching through Monroe.

2017

FIONA A-M MORRIS (THOMAS-MORRIS)

BBA Accounting '17

Interviewed on 08/18/2021



THE COURSES WERE CHALLENGING, BUT I WAS ABLE TO DO very well. I learned some really great skills that I'm using today. I made some friends with some teachers who are still my friends today. I was in the National Society of Leadership Club. It is a club that empowers us to be leaders and develop leadership skills.

2021 LAURA GLOREE FULTON

Associates
Interviewed on 08/18/2021



WHEN I WAS IN HIGH SCHOOL, I GOT A PRIVATE interview with Monroe College and they were talking about all the help that they provided to their students, and so that was the reason why I attended Monroe aside from it being closer to home. I had all the help that I needed and if I needed advice, I had people to talk to. I still have a friend that I met there and we were still friends today.

2001 SANDRA RODRIGUEZ (CASTILLO)

BBA Office Technology '96
Interviewed on 08/19/2021



I WAS A HIGH SCHOOL dropout. When I found out that Monroe College offers the GED and associate's program, it really enticed me to enroll. When I first got to Monroe, college was not what people were telling me it was going to be. I was told it was going to be hard, you are on your own, you have to know what you are doing, and you will be just a number. At Monroe, they don't treat you as a number and you weren't just another face. They have a lot of workshops and tutoring. It was what really stuck with me, which is why I came back

to complete my bachelor's degree. As far as friendship, I remained friends with a gentleman. Both he and I took a couple of classes together and graduated the bachelor's program the same year. Monroe basically gave me the thirst and the thrive to continue and not to settle, it was life changing for me. My advice to anyone who is thinking about attending Monroe would be to stop thinking about it and just jump right in. I am pretty sure the culture has not changed, at least I hope not. It should only have gotten better.

“
Monroe basically gave me the thirst and the thrive to continue and not to settle.
- Sandra Rodriguez (Castillo)
”

1999 THAIESHA PETERSEN-GARDINE

AAS Office Technology '99
Interviewed on 08/19/2021



I WAS INSPIRED BY MY GODMOTHER, WHO IS AN alumnus. My grandmother was another inspiration as she went back to College as she became older and received her Bachelor's degree all while taking care of me. Going back to school was rough being a single mom, but with the encouragement from my family along with staff and with some of my fellow classmates and friends, I had a great experience. It gave me lots of leeway on advancing with my computer skills and taught me how to build within myself. They made sure that they showed me all the right tools I needed to go outside the world. Monroe means family and friends, and it was a stepping-stone for my life. I have been working in the same department under the same career oriented skills set for 12 years, and it follows beyond my degree, so it feels good to do that. I am also starting to look into going back for my bachelor's as I would love to further my education along with tighten up my skills.

2006 JACQUELINE C. STATEN

AAS Medical Assisting '06
Interviewed on 08/18/2021



I ATTENDED MONROE because of the convenience of location. At the time I lived really close to it. I didn't really want to go away for school. My mom also attended Monroe at one point, and at the time they were also offering a new program for medical assisting. We were the first class for it. My time there was great as

I made lifelong friends that I still communicate with every day. I also had some amazing professors. To me Monroe is the second step in my life path. I say second because healthcare and the health field have always been a thing for me; it started in high school. I went to a health-based high school to transition into the next step for college.

2018 ERICK F. PINEDA

AAS Business Administration '12,
BBA Health Services Administration '18
Interviewed on 09/30/2021

I DIDN'T REALLY HAVE THE BEST EXPERIENCE at the prior college I had attended. I heard that Monroe was a really good place to go and succeed. I went through the application stage, and they were very understanding and super helpful. I went to night class to get my bachelor's. The professors were extremely helpful and very understanding of any circumstances. They were very approachable and very professional. In fact, one of the professors wrote me a recommendation for law school, which I'm doing right now. There are a couple of people that I still talk to. They were in the same night program, and there was a feeling of camaraderie between us. It made me realize that I can reach higher education goals. I loved walking into the buildings. It fills me with nostalgia every time I think about seeing the students and chatting up the professors. The whole atmosphere of the community was something that you really won't see in other schools.

2018 LOK "LEA" KUI

MBA '18
Interviewed on 08/18/2021



My amazing career of more than 20 years



One of my greatest achievements!

I AM IN LAW ENFORCEMENT, AND AT THE TIME MONROE College was offering a discount for law enforcement and military. I had a full-time job as a federal agent, but I was seeking to obtain another master's degree in something completely different. I took up that offer, and when I met with the dean, I knew immediately that it was the right college to attend and to also represent. I don't think it makes a difference where you go, as long as you make the most of your degree, your professors, and your fellow students. To me it just clicked; I appreciated going back to class after so many years and really collaborating and learning from a completely different subject. My professors were all wonderful. They all contributed to my new perspective of going into something that's not criminal justice and law. I still stay in contact with some of my classmates, which is nice. They have all moved on, and it is lovely to see that they have excelled and done well too. We were all in the same program, but they were generally a bit younger than me. I was one of the older students, but it was really wonderful that I could still learn something from them.

2018 MICHAEL "MIKE" ANGELO RODRIGUEZ III

MPH '18
Interviewed on 08/18/2021



From work



Graduating from Monroe College

AT THAT TIME I WAS working as a case manager there in the Bronx. It was located pretty close to Monroe College. Coming out of work, I was trying to find the best location for me to give myself time to go to school at night and the right program to fit in my schedule as well. Monroe at the time was affiliated with my job. We got a discount on tuition, which helped greatly. They also had a program for public health. On top of that, I had family that went to Monroe as well. All that together just made the choice for me. It felt like the right school. I definitely met a lot of great people there. Now a lot of the people I graduated with now have city jobs or

work for the Department of Health. I developed a lot of good relationships with those people, and I still keep in contact with some of them. I had great professors there as well. One of my advisors that I had on most of my thesis was amazing. I probably could not have finished without him. I moved from New York to Florida because I got new job opportunities shortly after I graduated. I actually got a job in Miami. I worked as a project manager, and getting my degree in public health really helped a lot. Once I got my master's degree, it just opened up the door for another opportunity and built more relationships down here.

1991 ANGIE SMITH

AAS Business Administration '91
Interviewed on 09/10/2021

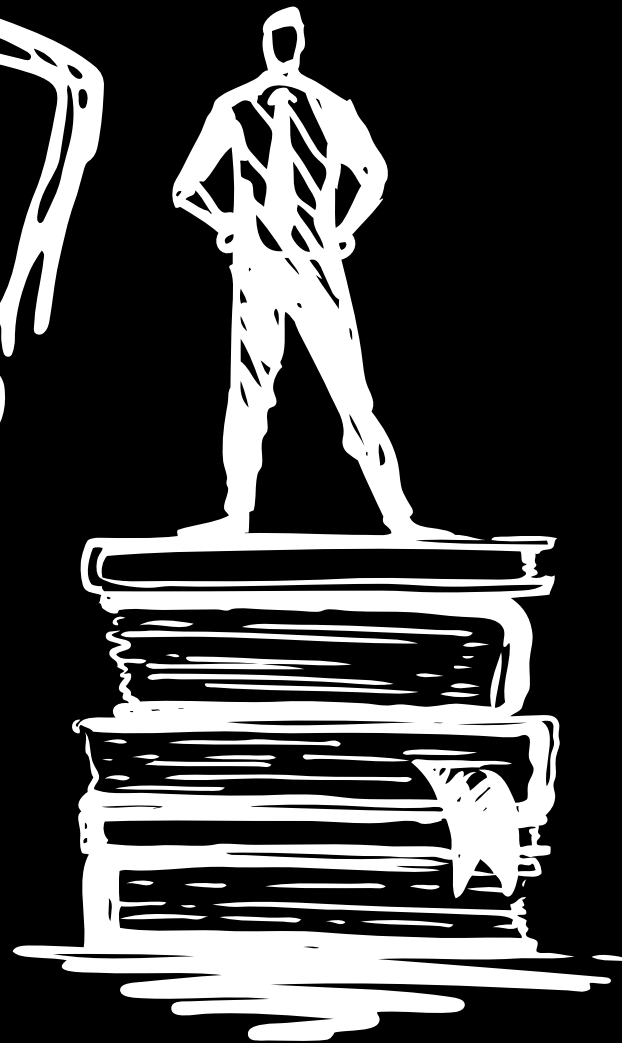
AT THE TIME, MONROE COLLEGE HAD A good reputation for business schools. Maybe my schedule was a challenge I had to overcome. I made friends and keep in contact with one or two.



STUDENT LIFE & Rich Traditions



I also liked my sociology and psychology classes. They gave me a lot of insight into people, myself, and culture.
- Monique Howe '00



I thought would be difficult for me, to be honest. Once I got there and got started, however, it was a beautiful experience.
- Ilyasah Young '05

It taught me to have conversations with people. It taught me how to debate in a more professional type of way.
- Dominique Storm Ambrister '10

I went to the Bronx location and took evening classes, so it was a little different because I worked full-time during the day.
- Tiffany "Tiff" M. Matos (Gajadhar) '03



CLARISSA E. WADE

AAS Health Information Technology '02

Interviewed on 08/09/2021

I CHOSE TO ATTEND MONROE COLLEGE BECAUSE IT was close by. I had never been to college before, so I waited until I was in my 50s. The professors were good, and I still remember some of them. The courses were good at preparing me. I got a job soon as I finished and graduated. The office sent out my resume, and they called me immediately for a job at Montefiore Hospital. I did enjoy the short time I was there. I was there for about 16 months to get that associate's because I did not take the summer off. I remember Mr. Marc Jerome was very pleasant. I made a few friends there, and they were younger than me. They were maybe in their 30s and some in their 20s. We used to meet and study

together before class. We got through it, and I will never forget it. It was a very good experience there. My niece had taken a course at Monroe, and she told me it was good. That was another reason that I chose Monroe. I applied for a job in a Jewish school in Mamaroneck, and I went for an interview. I said I was taking care of my mother, and that touched the interviewer. She said her mom was at the assisted living facility at that time. I worked there part-time, and I would go there in the morning because they started school early. We would get there at 6:30 a.m., and I would work until I had to go to class. They let me do that.

class of
2002



2005 LUCY R. GREENE

AAS Business Technologies '05,
BBA Health Services Administration '06, MS '11

MONROE COLLEGE HAS provided the opportunity for me to earn a college degree and pursue a nursing career. I earned an associate's in business technologies in 2005, a bachelor's degree in health administration in 2006, and a master's degree in criminal justice in 2011. My most memorable moments were attending my graduation ceremonies at the Jacob Javits Center, Columbia University and graduation galas at Maestro's Banquet Hall and Greentree Country Club. My memorable moments were at Eastwood Manor and Club 101 awards ceremonies to receive my President's and Dean's List awards for academic achievement. The professors and faculty who gave me encouragement and support were Don Genio, Janice Girardi, Lessie Branch, Alexander Canals and Stephen Jerome. My college friendships were with several of the Monroe faculty, Jeanette, Aby, Tangee, Charles and classmate friends, Michelle, Tamisha, Warren, Michael, and Vincent. I've enjoyed several trips at Monroe, the Mcdonald's Gospelfest, Hershey

Park, and Dorney Park. Monroe has changed my life after graduation and prepared me for a rewarding nursing career to become a licensed nurse to provide healthcare to patients. Monroe has taught me the importance of receiving a college education and earning a career. Monroe has given me the knowledge, wisdom, and understanding to become a mature, independent, and responsible adult. My motivation and inspiration to pursue my college education came from my family: husband G. Moore, son Xavier Sewell, and mother Luz Rodriguez. Monroe is a dedicated college and always supported their student's education and careers. Monroe has been dedicated to their student's lives and they care about their student's futures. I want to thank all the professors and faculty for all their encouragement and support through the years and for always being there for our Monroe students. I want to give thanks and honor to God for all my accomplishments and for blessing me with a college education and nursing career.



2006 ELIZABETH BURKE-DALZINE

AAS Computer Information Systems '06

Interviewed on 08/20/2021

I SELECTED MONROE BECAUSE I HAD A NIECE who was already attending Monroe College. That made it the easiest transition for me. I have someone who was already there at the college. We ended up having a lot of classes together. We were able to see classes together, and people called us the mother and daughter. It was a lot of fun. It would be the pleasantness of the professors and their willingness to help. They always seemed ready to assist with whatever problems we had or whatever assistance we needed. They were always there. Even if they weren't my particular professor, they would always help. I had one instance where I was having difficulty in a class, and I went to a professor. He was the professor of my

niece. He made the best time to help me. Other teachers were very understanding because there was a time when I had to take time out because of illnesses. The school and professors were very understanding. Some of the professors were working in the field, so it made easier for them to know. One of the professors was very outstanding. He said, 'You should always make it your business to know everyone where you work, even the janitors and the people who clean. You need to show them that level of respect.' I still carry that with me today, and I know everyone who cleans the floor that I work on. I know them by name, and we talk every day.



FUSEINI B. ADIVILA

AS Information Technology '15, BBA Computer Information Systems '17

Interviewed on 08/03/2021



After I graduated from Monroe in 2017, I chose to join the Army to serve my community and country



Being in the Army is a passion and not just a job; that is the way to give back to society

I HAVE A COUPLE OF FRIENDS WHO attended Monroe College, so they sat me down. They talked to me, they told me how great the school was, and how it has impacted a lot of lives. I thought it through about it. The guy walked in, and he took me through the whole process. Then I took a test because I had come from a foreign country, so I brought my certificate of evaluation. After I took a test, which I passed, I was given so many programs that I could choose from. I chose information technology. A lot of things have inspired me because I have a lot of relatives who have gone

through the school. To learn how to discipline impacted their lives. Because of that, I gave it a chance, and it impacted my life positively. When I graduated, I graduated in 2017, and the same year, I joined the United States Army. With the bachelor's degree, that put me in about four ranks above all my colleagues who were coming from high school. I am still working with the United States Army in the New York area. I am a national guard. My advice to students would be that after high school, there is still a long way to go. They shouldn't let only high school or GED be their

pedestal. They should take an initiative to come to Monroe College, give it your best time and best shot, and believe me, they will be able to make it in life successfully. It was not just about attending college, but about being serious with your study. At the end of the day, you should be able to impact your life and other people around you. They should be enrolled in Monroe College. I bet that they will have the best time there.

class of

2017

2014 TAMAR R. LANCASTER-PASSLEY (HOLDER)

BBA Criminal Justice '14

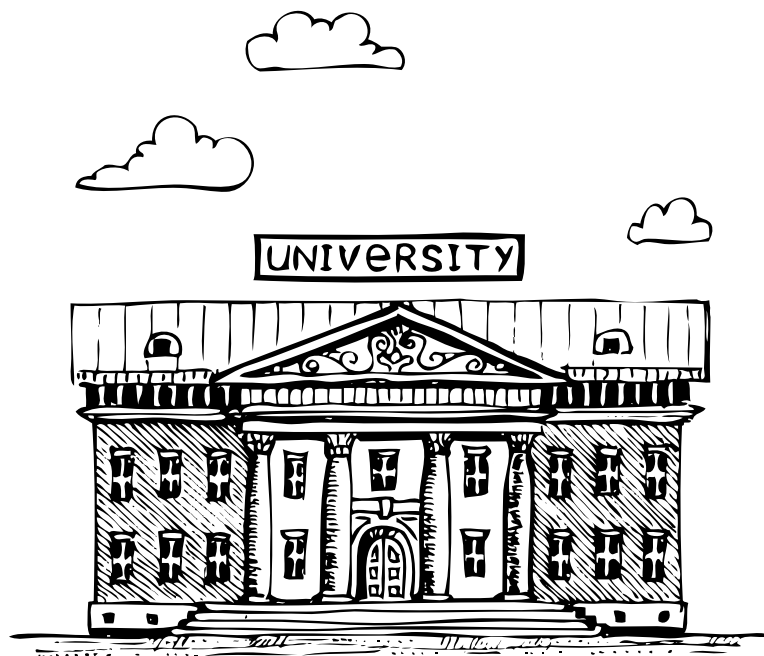
Interviewed on 09/30/2021



After completing my BA, I was advised not to stop there; now I have my master's degree in psychology



Award ceremony for dean and president's honor roll list; a very proud moment!



I FIRST ATTENDED ASA COLLEGE BECAUSE I WAS interested in a Criminal Justice field. Close to graduation, one of my professors referred me to Monroe College, explaining that it was a great option for furthering my learning in the Criminal Justice field. One major advantage that stood out to me was the option of online education, which is something I was very interested in. I was pregnant at the time and knew that having a newborn and traveling to campus may be hard on me the first year of his life. Choosing to attend Monroe College was one of the best choices I made. Honestly, I wished I knew about them from the start-it would've been my first option for college overall. It was better than I expected; the online program was amazing, knowing that I didn't have to travel all the way to the Bronx from Brooklyn was a huge advantage for me. Also, the professors were very effective with their communication. One professor truly stood

out to me, even when I moved on from her class. She would always check in to ensure that I was still on track and encourage me whenever I felt a little stressed with life and school balance. I had the opportunity to intern at the Department of Probation and formed a girls group called 'YES GIRLS' with another intern there. We received an award of recognition for that. One of the best feelings at Monroe College was when I finally got to meet her at the award ceremony for graduation along with all my other peers that I only had the opportunity to speak to through messages and forums. It was a very proud moment for me to receive an award for the President and Dean's Lists, especially with being a part of the online community. I went on to pursue my master's degree in psychology with a minor in life coaching and have been loving my career in the coaching field!



My experience with Monroe College has had a significant impact on my life and current success



Pioneering years in hip hop rap crew, Original Harlem World Crew 78-85; W 116th St. & Lenox Ave, NYC

1985 CHARLES MAURICE LEAKE

AAS Computer Information Systems '85

Interviewed on 08/06/2021

BEFORE MONROE, I WAS AS ACTIVELY involved in the hip hop industry with a club called Harlem World, which is located at West 116th Street and Lennox Avenue. It opened up in June 1978. The same year, I had graduated from Martin Luther King High School on W. 66th Street and Columbus Avenue in New York City. I started as a customer. I ended up being a member of the rap group Harlem World Crew under the name MC Charlierock. I was there from 1978 to 1985, and recorded the Hip Hop song Rappers Convention with

my partners Samuel Blocker, aka MC Son of Sam, Andre Harrell and Alonzo Brown aka Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde. Harlem World shut down in 1985. At that point, I realized that I had spent so much time doing that, but I didn't have anything to turn back on. I went out and got the most popular periodicals that were out there. I looked through them and said to myself, 'Whatever is in the most demand at this time is what I'm going to do.' At that time IBM had released their first desktop computer and people were looking for a computer systems

editor's pick



“ The educators were very well, polite and interested in making sure that they would teach us things that would help us move forward in our careers.

- Charles Maurice Leake ”

operators. I decided that is what I was going to do. I just did some research and I came up with Monroe. My time at Monroe was really great. I always did very well with my academics. I remember benefiting the most by helping other people and learning the things that we were being taught. I remember being part of the first ever basketball team that Monroe College had. The educators were efficient, very polite, and interested in making sure that they would teach us things that would help us move forward in our careers.



After every battle, there will always be a victory



I'm still fighting, but I am positioned for greatness

2002 MARINA CUMBERBATCH

AAS Business Administration '02, BBA Business Management '04

Interviewed on 09/04/2021



FROM A VERY YOUNG age, I knew that I was going to be a college graduate. While I was not the first in my family to go to college, I was the first one to earn a degree; I needed to show my family that we had better things coming. Almost six months after graduating high school while out shopping with my family, I decided to apply for a part-time job. They hired me on the spot, and I started working the same day. Shortly afterward, an unexpected promotion was offered to me that included a transfer to New Rochelle. I looked into Monroe College, which was directly across the street. I fell in love with the idea of a small school instead of a big university; that was part of the reason I

wanted to attend this school. While touring Monroe, I met Mr. Jerome and he was amazing. He shook hands, smiled, interacted with, and knew people by name. It was like going to a small church where everybody knew your name. I felt so comfortable, like I would be more than just a face in the crowd. I enjoyed the tour and decided immediately that Monroe would be the school for me. It was a unique place that fit my lifestyle and made it possible for me to work and go to school full-time. My experience as a visual manager led me to start my own event planning company. I also own a company called Proofread It, where I'll do final edits on anything that needs editing before getting

published. I met some amazing people, some of whom I may never see again. Monroe afforded me the opportunity to gain long-lasting relationships that go back 30 years. In 2012, I was diagnosed with multiple sclerosis and I thank God for the long-lasting relationships that I have. I'm glad I can reach out to people that I went to Monroe with - those relationships helped me get through that diagnosis. When I think about my time at Monroe, it makes me smile knowing that I said yes to college. If I hadn't gone to college, I don't believe I would've had the right words to tell my son how important it is to have an education



2006 PAMELLA P. NESBETH-CHARLTON

BBA Business Management '06

Interviewed on 08/18/2021



I'M ORIGINALLY FROM JAMAICA. I was working at a used car dealership. I repossessed a car for someone. He happened to be the principal for college there. He came to pick up his car, and for some reason we started to talk. He asked, 'Where did you study?' I told him about my high school. I held a major position there, and he was fascinated to know that. He said to me, 'Okay, I am going to come back and see you tomorrow.' The following day, he took a package for me, which was books. He told me I was registered, and that I was going to start classes that coming Monday. I went to the Caribbean Institute of Business. The principal there at the time was Patrick Walsh. I did a certificate there in business management. Once I was done, he told me to go to Monroe College. I knew nothing

about it, and I had no plans to go abroad to study. I've been out of school for so long. However, I decided to give it a try. That was how I ended up at Monroe College. I went there and used some of the credits that I got from the institution. I had some of the finest professors. I spent a lot of time at the library doing my research. I did my first research paper at Monroe. It was about teenage pregnancy, and it has changed my life. I was on the Dean's List for six semesters. I have certificates for every training that they put in. I did not have a bad experience with other cultures. I worked on equal workplace in groups. I graduated with a 3.9 GPA. The professors never gave up on me. They worked with me. The experience was valuable for me. I had a good support system at Monroe College.





Graduation speech to the 2018 School to Work Program graduates

2003 LOREN E. BARTLEY, PhD

AAS Computerized Office Technology '00, BBA Business Management '03

Interviewed on 08/18/2021



“
Monroe was the only college at the time that was offering immigrants the opportunity to attend college and pay as they went along.
 - Loren E. Bartley, PhD
 ”

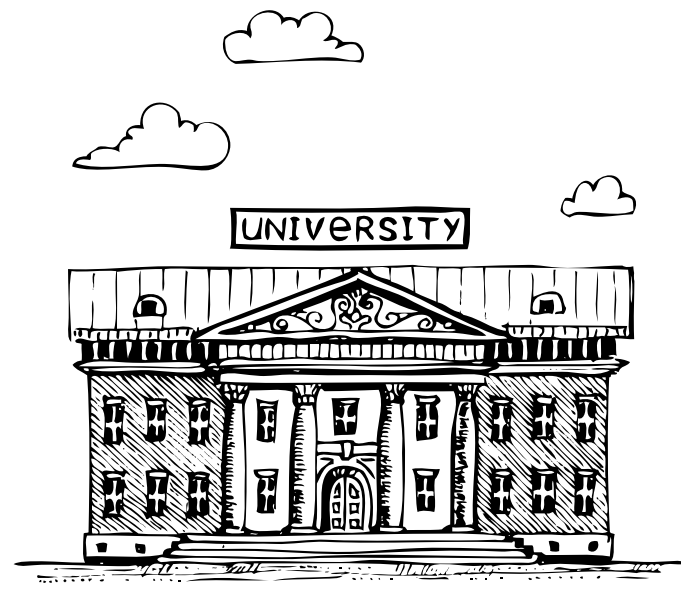


One of my proudest moments; graduated with a doctorate degree in human and organizational psychology

MY JOURNEY TO HIGHER

education has never been easy and many sacrifices were made. At the time, I did not have a Green Card, officially known as Resident Card, which I thought would be a major setback. However, I discovered Monroe College was giving immigrants the opportunity to pursue a degree while offering payment arrangements. During my time at Monroe College, I was working as a nanny in someone else’s home taking care of three children. I completed classes over the course of four years on Saturdays and one evening per week so it wouldn’t interfere with my job. I balanced it so well, my employer was unaware I was a student. I had a pleasant learning experience at Monroe College. I gained more than a good education. I received unconditional support from my professors who coached me to achieve my goals and passions. Ultimately, I paid off my school debt and graduated with an associate’s degree in computerized

office technology and a bachelor’s degree in business management. I had a supportive learning community at Monroe College and desired a master’s degree but there weren’t any programs available at the time. Not long after, progress was made in obtaining my Resident Card. I was accepted at the University of Phoenix where I graduated with my master’s degree in human resources management. My accomplishments fueled my desire to develop my career and I pursued a doctorate degree in human and organizational psychology at Touro University because my vice president of education at my previous job encouraged me to follow my dreams. It all began at Monroe College, and I am extremely grateful for the path taken to advance my career and for all those who believed in me. Although it was a challenging journey to get to where I am today, it’s been rewarding. I am a proud alum of Monroe College!



2002 GREGORY "GREG" C. DIXON

Associates Computer Information Systems '01,
Bachelors Computer Information Systems '02

Interviewed on 08/20/2021

I WAS GOING TO THE Wright Institute in New Brunswick. An ex-girlfriend who I was always friends with said, 'You should try Monroe College.' I had never heard of it, so I said, 'Yeah, I'll give it a shot.' I went, registered, and started right away. I went for computer science, but I loved all the social classes. That was more like a driving force in me because the professors were very passionate. I met plenty of great

people. A girl, who started at the same time as me, and I have always been friends. We stayed in contact. The proudest thing that I can say is that I graduated from Monroe College. Monroe College is a special college. It's very family oriented. One of the biggest motivations I got when I was there was when I made it to the Dean's List. They held a dinner every semester. The dean was just a great person.

SHANNA CRUZ

Interviewed on 08/03/2021



IT WAS EVERYTHING, the people, and the professors. I had one advisor while I was doing my associate's degree, which I loved. There were times my grade was lower, but I liked the encouragement, and positivity was what Monroe helped me a lot.

1997 EVELYN GRIFFIN

AAS Computer Information Systems '97,
BBA Computer Information Systems '99, MBA '07

Interviewed on 08/03/2021

BACK THEN IN 1996, when I actually entered the school, technology was something that I was passionate about. There weren't many women in the field, so that was where I started out in computer science. I found the population to be engaging. My professors were amazing. My biggest challenge was college algebra. To me, it became like a foreign language, but

my professors were unique and understood what my challenges were because I came from an era of social promotion. Whether you grasp the fundamentals or not in middle school and high school, by the time you reached the college-bound levels, the deficiency was already there. That was my biggest challenge being visually impaired, so I did things differently.

1998 ISOLIA P. HARRIS

AAS Computer Information Systems '98

Interviewed on 08/19/2021

I DIDN'T THINK I WAS SMART enough to do college, so I jumped on the challenge by going to Monroe. I saw a newspaper ad, and I was like, 'I'm going to go. I'm just going to do it. I have nothing else to lose, and if I can accomplish Monroe, then I can accomplish anything in life that I set my mind to.' I am social, but most of the time I was focused on accomplishing this goal of mine. At the time the basketball team just started for the girls, and it was conflicting with my job, so after a few practices I had to leave; however, I was on the volleyball team the whole time I was there. I had a whole page in the yearbook for that year. My

most favorite experience was the dance that they had because I never really had a chance to go to prom. They created that moment for me to be able to have something that was almost like a prom. Everybody came dressed up, and it was fun. That was the most memorable part for me. The support system in Monroe was very big, that's why I didn't quit. There was always some form of help. The students were willing to help when I didn't understand something. The staff was also wonderful because they were always like, 'Give me a minute. Once I finish with this person, I'm going to see you.' They were there for anything that I needed help on.

“ I have developed close relationships with several of my professors. - Nicholas "Nick" Scott Mayo ”

2012 ELAINE B. SCOTT

AAS Nursing '12

Interviewed on 08/18/2021

I WORKED AT A VA HOSPITAL, WHICH IS right at the top of it, so it was very convenient to go to school and go to work. That was one of the reasons why I chose Monroe. They also had an express program for the RN, which was wonderful. My experience there was great, and I loved it. They are so compassionate, and they look out for the students. It was just a great program, and I just like it in general. I would always recommend someone to Monroe because it has been good for me. The faculty is very caring and the program that I took was really geared towards success for the students. There is always someone that you can reach out to when you have difficulty. I have been a registered nurse for 22 years.

2008 NICHOLAS "NICK" SCOTT MAYO

AAS Business Administration '03,
BS Information Technology '08

Interviewed on 08/23/2021

I JUST FIGURED OUT that getting a college education would be in my best interest to obtain social mobility. There was another reason why I was very motivated to go to college, which is to help myself

recover from a traumatic brain injury. I had a traumatic brain injury prior to going to college, so I figured out that I needed to exercise my mind. I have developed close relationships with several of my professors.

2018 TRACY RANDALL

BS Criminal Justice '18

Interviewed on 08/03/2021

I HAD BEEN IN THE music business for 25 years. I wanted to change my life, and I decided that Monroe College was the place to be. I wanted to become a college professor. I felt that my life experience would make me a great professor. My life on campus was very limited because I was working

while in school, but I had a great chance to meet and network with the professors. It was different because I was an adult student. We talked differently, but I didn't feel like I was out of place. Monroe opened my eyes to a new way of thinking. It was a great place, and they gave me a second chance.

2007 GEORGE E. LORA

AAS Accounting '07, BBA Accounting '09

Interviewed on 08/19/2021

I SAW MONROE COLLEGE, AND IT WAS CLOSE TO where I lived. I also knew a few people that went there, so I decided to apply. There were a couple of professors that were very knowledgeable, and they were very helpful with the students. They gave a lot of feedback and were also very supportive. Professor Nanton is one that comes to mind, and he is an accounting professor. I was also working in the evening when I was there. I had met some good people on the way, and also a few of the professors. They made the time enjoyable.

2018 MIRIAM EDWARDS, CPA, EA

BBA Accounting '05, MS '18

Interviewed on 10/01/2021

I WAS TRANSITIONING from Jamaica, so I started looking for colleges. I checked three different colleges, and then I hit the bullseye at Monroe College. One of the reasons was because my husband was doing his associate's degree there. That gave me the incentive to join him at Monroe, and I did not regret it. I enjoyed Professor Keithroy Nanton and another accounting professor. They were fundamental in the accounting area. I was a strong accounting student somewhat before I came

here, but they cemented it. I did not come to do accounting, but when I started the first accounting class, I decided I wanted to switch to accounting. When I went to the tax class with Professor Hack, I was so elated because, coming from Jamaica, there is nothing that they call taxes at the end of the year. When I attended his class, I jumped at it and decided that I wanted to do taxes. The environment that Monroe College exhibits is one that you would want to go back to.

2005 KENDRA M. RICKS (LOCKETT)

AAS Criminal Justice '05, BBA Criminal Justice '06

Interviewed on 08/19/2021

I DECIDED TO ATTEND BECAUSE MY MOM AT THE TIME was experiencing some domestic concerns, and I want it to be closed. One role offered safety for me because it was still relatively close to home, but I was also interested in the criminal justice program, which they offered. They also offered a taste of what college life would be like in terms of being away on my own and just establishing who I was as a young adult. I met a lot of great people that I am still connected with to this day. It was also a learning experience from my professors, who were still acting within their role or their profession as they were teaching. Coming from my background, they helped me up. I'm a very timid person, but they have encouraged me to be bold in my studies, be bold in my communication and my writing, and made me feel more comfortable in my decision as to why I decided to go into criminal justice and pursue a degree in the first place. After pursuing my degree, I became a crisis counselor for a few years. I transitioned to a high school in Brooklyn, and I was also a counselor where I assisted children with their daily challenges and to help them cope with continuing their education without just avoiding the termination of their high school diploma or school. I am currently a patient care advocate, where I work for a fertility benefits company.

2006 EVELYN ORTIZ

BBA Business Management '10

Interviewed on 08/03/2021



IT WAS MORE LIKE A FAMILY AT MONROE. I WAS A PART-timer, and I was able to manipulate my school with my work for the city of New York. I used to go to the classes to tutor, which helped a lot in my math, so the tutoring was fantastic. As a part-timer when I was graduating, I did not believe in the accomplishment that I did. When they told me it was graduation, they told the individual when I was registering to pinch me because I could not believe it. My degree and my experience at Monroe helped me a lot in the stack. It helped me a lot in moving around in different areas within my job, and it made me more organized. Monroe means a whole lot to me because anytime there is an event, they always make sure that I am not left out.

2016 NATASHA M. HEMMINGS

AAS Medical Administration '16,
BBA Health Services Administration '18

Interviewed on 09/20/2021



I'M FROM JAMAICA, AND I migrated here in 2006. When I came here in 2006, I was trying to get into the Nursing Program, so I had applied to a couple of colleges. I came here the August of 2006, and I was searching between the time of January of 2007. I had applied to Lehman, Bronx Community College, and also Montereau. I heard that

Monroe had the LPN program at the time, and there were 30 students who were accepted. I did the test and 30 people got in. I had been offered to do Medical Assistance Program. I'm not advertising Monroe, but it's a very good college because I have referred a couple of my family members there, and they loved it.

2005 JOSE M. LOPEZ

AAS Business Technologies '05,
BBA Health Services Administration '07

Interviewed on 08/06/2021



Enjoying every single day of my life

Love to be close to the skies to think about how beautiful nature is at all times

I WAS WORKING FULL-TIME AT THAT TIME.

I need a place where I could choose my schedule and do it on the weekends and at night. The school was growing a lot, and we had different programs and financial aid. I really wanted to pursue a career because at that time I moved from Puerto Rico. I had to go to school and finish a career. I had two brothers, and they have been living in Puerto Rico all their life. I was the only one that decided to come here. It was great; I had good professors. They were there for the students. Everybody was very helpful all the time. I continued the BA, and I was done in 2007. I found a job in the same place where I did my internship. I was hired for a company, Visiting Nurse Service; I was there for almost a year. After I left VNS, I found the same job with another company.

1992 DENNIS R. MEJIA, CPC

AAS Computer Information Systems '92

Interviewed on 08/23/2021

AT THE TIME THAT I CHOSE to go to Monroe College, I was unemployed, and I had dropped out of high school a couple of years earlier. I needed a new path in life. I went in there and met with them. I went through with it and proceeded until I finished. I

made a lot of friends when I was there. I was a popular student and learned a lot about myself too. Monroe helped me get to where I am now. Having the degree, I was able to get some good jobs throughout my career.

2013 STEPHEN A. GORDON

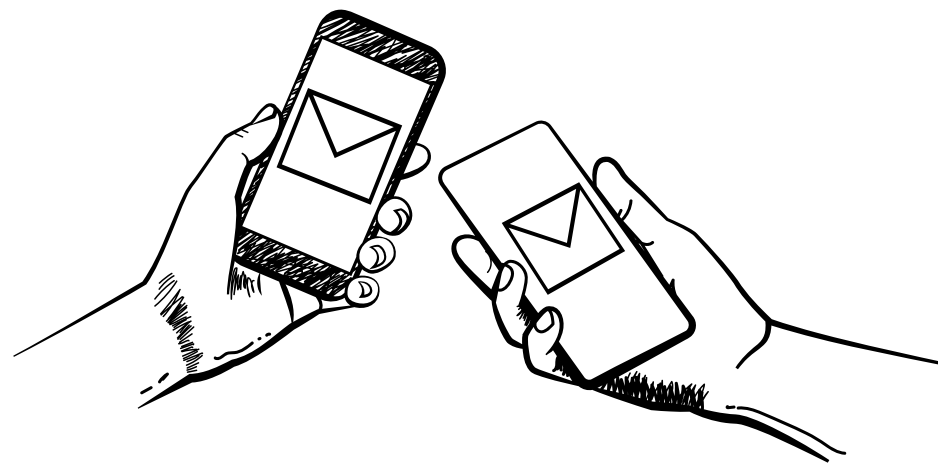
AAS Criminal Justice '13, BBA Criminal Justice '15

Interviewed on 08/18/2021

THE CRIMINAL JUSTICE program interested me at the time, and I did not want to go back to CUNY. I ended up choosing to go to Monroe at the time. I had enough credits to transfer, and they willingly accepted me. I enjoyed going to Monroe. The faculty was very

nice, and the classes were small. The courses weren't difficult, and it was manageable. It was a good school and a good campus. I was able to graduate and have a good enough GPA. I am still working on finding something in my career, and I am still pursuing my goals.

It was a good school and a good campus. I was able to graduate and have a good enough GPA.
 - Stephen A. Gordon



2000 MONIQUE HOWE

AAS Computerized Office Technology '00,
BBA Business Management '03

Interviewed on 08/18/2021

WHEN I FINISHED HIGH school, I really didn't know what I wanted to do. My plans for going away for college fell through. I was doing retail here and there, and then one of my friends started going back to college. I also knew someone who had gone to Monroe, so I looked into Monroe, and I liked what it offered. I loved the professors, and they were there for us. They made it easy and the material easy to understand. The class I remember the most was my math class. I started to understand

algebra, and it became easy. I still hold on to that knowledge now, especially for my kids. I also liked my sociology and psychology classes. They gave me a lot of insight into people, myself, and culture. My experience there was awesome. I tell people all the time that Monroe is a really good college. Monroe gave me confidence. Everyone was nice, and it felt homey. I left knowing that I would succeed. After I got my bachelor's, I moved up in ranks, and I'm still at that same job.

2019 TE'JANI A. D. JACKSON

AAS Criminal Justice '19

Interviewed on 08/30/2021

THE BAND DIRECTOR AT the time, Gary Hollander, came over to start the marching band at Monroe College. It was one of the many options that I had in my senior year, and because I had an injury two years before my senior year, I could not join the army. I had to fall back and go to Monroe.

It was not a bad choice. Some professors impacted my life. The groups of my friends that I knew from back home, and the ones that I met from other countries made it a good experience for me. That gave me a great experience there at Monroe.

2014 RANDALL SHAUNLEE THOMAS PRENTICE

AS Information Technology '14, BS Information Technology '16

Interviewed on 08/18/2021

I WENT TO MONROE FOR two reasons. One was they came to the college fair on my islands, and they had the courses that I wanted to study, and two was my mother moved away when I was a teenager. She moved to New York, so it was really to reconnect with her. New York was a big transition from the Caribbean. I had never lived in a big city before, and so what

made a good impression was my career advisor. She was amazing, and the coaches at the track club were all so amazing. I had some really amazing professors. My first Professor Brozo, IT 101, was really cool. I learned a lot in his classes. Monroe is a good and smart place to be because I get a quality education at a reasonable price.

2003

TIFFANY "TIFF"
M. MATOS (GAJADHAR)

BBA Computer Information Systems '03

Interviewed on 08/23/2021

I WENT TO QUEENSBOROUGH COMMUNITY College, and when I finished my tenure there, Monroe College made the best sense because they took all my credits. They also had a business program and very good reviews. I went in, and that was the best choice. I took a computer technology course, and the teacher there was very patient with us, even during midterms or finals. I remember one time when I looked confused, and he said, 'Just be patient. Just take your time. You know the answer. Just be confident.' That left an impression on me, and it was something that I continue to use in my personal life when I deal with others. He made sure we got it, and we understood. He didn't brush us off. If we had questions, he was patient enough, and he made sure to answer our questions to the best of his ability. I went to the Bronx location and took evening classes, so it was a little different because I worked full-time during the day. Monroe was helpful because I was able to share with other employees at the job I was in while I was going to school what I learned. I came and talked to my manager, and I said, 'This is what I learned, and this is what I am learning at school.' It helped them see that I was driven. I was working full-time, was going to school in the evenings, and was eager to learn. They were willing to take a try with me. I started as a receptionist, and they quickly moved me to be a client service associate in finance. Being able to have the ability with Monroe and having the flexibility and evening courses allowed me to work full-time. My job saw that I was dedicated and eager to show them what I learned in school with my business law and accounting class. Monroe was really helpful. I still work in finance at a private company as an operation specialist. Monroe gave me a sense of accomplishment.

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1994 KAREN MONTANEZ

AAS Secretarial Science '94

Interviewed on 08/27/2021

AFTER I HAD MY CHILDREN, I WAS TRYING TO finish school, and as soon as I got my GED, I went and enrolled myself in Monroe College. It was a life-changing experience for me. I got to work in banking and mental health, and it was very powerful for me. There were two people who were always there for me. If I was having any difficulty, they would guide me in the direction I needed to take next to make my achievements happen. I pretty much carried an A average until my last semester, and the rest of the time, I was on the Dean's List. I felt unity wrapped around, and somebody was there for anything that was needed.

1993 KERMIT T. DINGLE

AAS Accounting '93, Associates

Interviewed on 08/03/2021

WHAT HAPPENED WAS I graduated in 1985, and I didn't go to Monroe until 1991. I was playing in a basketball tournament in the Bronx, and the coach who was at that tournament saw me play and asked me if I wanted to come there to enroll at Monroe and play for him. When I went there, it was a great college.

The curriculum wasn't too hard, but you still had to put in the work to get out of Monroe. what you went there for. I really enjoyed it. I enjoyed the basketball team and the cheerleaders. I was an academic All American. Monroe College really did a lot for me, and I enjoyed seeing the expansion.

2019 VIOLET JULIET
HAVILAND, BSE

AAS Culinary Arts '19, BSE '21

Interviewed on 08/25/2021

WHEN I FINALLY STARTED ATTENDING, I PAID MORE attention, and I got used to it. By the second semester, I was doing what I was supposed to be doing. I focused on my classes, and I fell in love with what I was doing. It was wonderful, and I just had such a nice time.

2018 MURACE BARTLEY

MBA

Interviewed on 08/18/2021

I HAD A PREVIOUS experience with Monroe College through the University College of the Caribbean, which is now the University of the Commonwealth Caribbean. I was here on vacation in 2016 and decided to take the train to New Rochelle to find out how

I could register for the master's degree. One of the reasons why I loved being at Monroe was I got to experience different cultures in the classroom setting. Everybody got to share their ideas and experiences from where they worked or where they were from.

2005 ILYASAH YOUNG

AAS Medical Administration '05,
BBA Health Services Administration '06

Interviewed on 08/18/2021

AT THE TIME I JUST HAD a new newborn baby, and that made two kids. I moved to the Bronx about a year prior to my attending. I wanted to build a future for my children. I was a single mom, and I needed to go where it was convenient. It was close to my home. I lived on Kingsbridge Road in the university, and I went and took the admissions exam, passed it, and it opened up every door for me after that. I was very excited, and I was a little nervous at the same time because I was a little up in age. I was in my 30s, and I was a little intimidated because I thought it would be a lot of younger individuals. I thought would be difficult for me, to be honest. Once I got there and got started, however, it was a beautiful experience. The professors were amazing. I was an honor student, and I'm so grateful to have attended Monroe College. My mom wound up getting her associate's degree there. Her name is Veronica. I have a niece that is considering

enrolling there as a freshman. I have recommended it to a lot of people. When I got my associates, I was going to stop there, but the chairman of the medical department saw me. I was a good student and he said, 'Congratulations!' You're going to go register for your BA. I told him, 'No, I'm not.' He said, 'Why?' I said, 'I have to go find myself a job because I have kids.' He said, 'You go register right now because you're going to work for me.' I did work-study for him for about five months and I got a work-study off-campus. I was at a Jacobi Hospital in HRA Department. I did a work-study for the last three semesters of my degree in my BA, and this was the other part of the story. I told my supervisor at the department in HRA that once I graduate, the work-study program would be over for me. She gave me information and told me to send my resume downtown to HR. About 15 years later I'm still in the HRA, and I'm a supervisor.

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2020

FABIO ANTONIO MADDALONI

AS Diagnostic Medical Sonography '20

Interviewed on 08/17/2021

IT STARTED WITH MY parents, then I did some research. Monroe seems almost a family-oriented kind of college, so it enticed me to apply there. I was from White Plains, and that was only a 25-minute commute. Professor Myrna Garcia was great, and Professor Vargas was more like a supervisor, but he was very involved and

very inspiring. Being in the ultrasound lab with all of my classmates and a couple of my favorite professors made me smile. Then I earned my associate's in diagnostic medical sonography, and I got offered to teach ultrasound there. I also plan on enrolling when my schedule clears up a bit in my current job within the next year or two.

1993

JOANNA "MAMA JO"
SULLIVAN (STATEN)

AAS Office Technology '93

Interviewed on 08/18/2021

I NEEDED TO COMPLETE my career by enrolling at Monroe College. I was developing into being a woman, and I talked with the staff. They were very open-minded and understanding. We all got along. I met people that were in the same situation. I talked to

the mothers, guys, and the teachers. Everybody had so much love when I went to Monroe. I went through each day with love and support. We did things like bringing in lunch, dinner, and we used to have little get-togethers. We took the program, and they made us feel better.

2003 WILLIAM "BILL" W.
MCEACHERN, MBA

BBA Accounting '03

Interviewed on 08/05/2021

I WANTED TO FIND A college that I could afford to go to. I wanted to get my finish my undergraduate degree, so I transferred from Essex County College in New Jersey. Monroe College was near me. It was easy for my commute from work to go to school. That was what inspired me for convenience in the college. That was my inspiration, but once I got there, it went to another level. I had a lot to do with my work. I was working in accounting, and the paper mattered to me. It let me get a better salary. That was the

main reason to push forward and get an undergraduate degree. Monroe happened to be the college I chose. I joined the first graduate section of the King Graduate School. All of that worked out for me. I stayed at Monroe and got my master's degree. All of that made a great impact on my ability to earn a better income. I taught accounting at a city college in the Accounting Department. I was happy to see that they followed my footsteps and got a degree as well.

2005

KAREN LEWIS JONES

Interviewed on 08/18/2021

WHEN I WAS IN TRINIDAD, Monroe College came down and gave us an opportunity that changed my life, which I never even thought I would have. We came here without family, and Monroe served as our family. I did my master's degree there. I

couldn't find any other college that was homey. I always wanted to have my own business, so I went straight after working for a few years and into my own business, which was an insurance office. I have been working for 13 years.

2020

VAN T. CARLTON

Associates

Interviewed on 08/23/2021

I'VE BEEN COOKING FOR a long time, and I grew up in a household around other cooks. My grandfather was a chef. I also have cousins that are chefs. Most of my family were great cooks. As I got into it, I started creating my own recipes and whatnot, cooking for friends and working with friends over the years. Everybody called me a chef, but I really wanted a title. That is what made me come

to Monroe. I could finally get the education and got the title. For me, it was tiring because I was working, taking care of my family and going to school. I was running for maybe 18 hours a day. It was a lot of work. I was very tired, but I had a goal to accomplish. That is what made it easier, and plus, I enjoyed it. I enjoyed the classes, professors and fellow students.

2001

LORENA P.
ELKHALAFAWI (FRISCHEISEN)

BBA Business Management '01

Interviewed on 09/20/2021

I DID MY ASSOCIATE DEGREE AT ANOTHER institution. Most of my classmates transferred to Monroe College for their bachelor's degrees. It was how I got to know about the college. I came from Paraguay. After high school, I traveled to the state to study. At that time, my life was very busy. I was an immigrant. I worked full-time, and I went to Monroe full-time. I made good friends there, and we are still in touch. It shaped my vision of life. It also shaped me professionally because I learned a lot from my professors and classmates. I also have an MBA from Malaysia. I remember Professor Chowdhury was advanced in his age. There was Professor Hammer in economics, and sometimes the class got boring, but he found a way to spice it up. I was living in uptown Manhattan between my workplace and Monroe College, in the Bronx. It was always very hectic. I enjoyed the time during the breaks in the cafeteria. It was the only time I got to socialize with classmates and other people. I was the only one who migrated there, so I didn't have financial support. I did have a lot on my plate, but I was so grateful for Monroe College. It gave me the opportunity to grow. It shaped not only my personality but also encouraged me to seek opportunities. After Monroe College, I traveled to Angola, Africa, and worked there for less than two years. My body was not getting used to living there. I have to leave the country and come back to New York. I met colleagues, and they were all having their master's degrees. They encouraged me to continue my education, so I decided to go to Malaysia for my MBA. Everything that I learned in Monroe College was a big help for me to succeed in the program. My husband and I opened our own business in California. We have our accounting firm there, even though I'm staying in Paraguay. Monroe was my second home. I used to work in the hotel and hospitality business, but Monroe was a big break. It was an enrichment in life.



Educated and blessed



2010 CYNICE C. STEPHENS

AAS Medical Administration '10, BBA Public Health '11

Interviewed on 10/08/2021

IT SEEMED TO BE THE most affordable, and it provided the most convenient schedule for my work. I enjoyed the New Rochelle campus. When I got off on Sundays, the Bronx campus was an option, and I was able to online, so I loved the flexibility Monroe provided. My associates were in applied science, which was in medical administration. Then I had a bachelor of science degree in public health. I had two professors who were inspiring and motivational. They encouraged me to keep going and move forward. Both of them were at the Bronx

campus. I joined an organization during my last semester, and it was a good experience to be with peers and learn how to network. I gained employment, furthered my education, and got my master's. I had never known about public health until I discovered it at Monroe. I finished my graduate degree last year and did a dual degree program for both MBA and MPH. Monroe structured me to keep everything, and it prepared me to move forward in life. I knew that I would not have been able to obtain my master's degree if I did not go to Monroe.

2001 OMAR VALCARCEL

AAS Hospitality Management '01

Interviewed on 08/20/2021



WHEN I BEGAN AT MONROE College, a friend of mine was studying the field of accounting. I was looking for a place, and he said, 'I am studying here, check it out,' and that' was where I went. I did have a good professor, and he became the dean. He explained and tried to put in my mind how to approach the field of hospitality management. I fell in love with what they were pursuing, not only a degree but working with people. He was approachable, and his way of approaching the students and young adults was great. I was in the industry already, and unfortunately 9/11 happened when I was graduating. I went to the south and things took a turn for the better. I became a minister, and in the present, I am a full-time pastor of a church.

2018 DIGNA M. GAHONA

AAS Hospitality Management '18,
BBA Hospitality Management '19

Interviewed on 08/20/2021

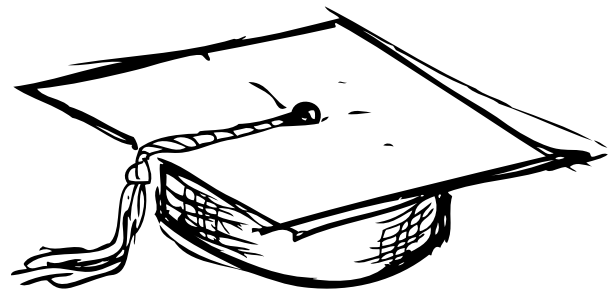
I WENT TO MONROE COLLEGE BECAUSE OF THE opportunity that I had to work in a kitchen. The teachers there were very nice. They were patient with us. Even though it was stressful sometimes, they were helpful. I didn't spend much time on campus. When I was on break, I used to come home. My time at Monroe helped me a lot to communicate with others. I was very shy before, and it helped me express myself to others. Monroe means the world to me.

2012 LORRAINE FERNANDEZ

AAS Culinary Arts '12, BBA Hospitality Management '12

Interviewed on 08/18/2021

I WAS ALWAYS INTERESTED IN THE CULINARY AND hospitality management business side. That was basically what inspired me to the role there and learn about business. I was really practiced that I was able to use. I was really excited. I was able to take away from my culinary degree and hospitality like the culinary classes went towards my bachelor's. I worked for the associated and went to those classes towards my bachelor's degree. I was doing well, so I thought that was really awesome.



2004 TOMMY CABRERA

AAS Computerized Office Technology '04,
BBA Business Management '06

Interviewed on 08/10/2021

BESIDES GETTING A DEGREE, I WAS looking to better myself and my life. I had a high school diploma at that time. I was at Vance Community College, but it didn't work out over there. I was looking into working in the hospital field, but I have no luck with that. I found a job on the Board of Education. I did both my associates' and my bachelor's at Monroe. I didn't do my master's at the time. Monroe was not offering while I was looking for. I had Professor Cordero. I took several courses with him. I still remember the state presentation that I had to do in front of the class. He made me feel calm because he saw I was nervous. He said, 'Take a deep breath.' It was challenging, but it was very rewarding. I don't have anything bad about the professors there. I was able to get a job while I was there. They had assistance for those that were looking for a job. I was sent on interviews, and they were helping me until the last minute. I was a very satisfied student. I was very happy, and I felt very comfortable while I was there at Monroe. I was very sad when I was leaving. Now I'm a teacher assistant.

2007 JOSEFINA COLUMNA

BBA Business Management '07

Interviewed on 08/18/2021

I GREW UP IN FORDHAM, and I used to always look at Monroe College whenever I passed by. I attended Bronx Community College, but I found that I needed to be in a place where the classes were smaller. That is why I chose Monroe. I had a great time. I learned a lot at Monroe, and I was able to finish everything. I felt that I had a one-on-one relationship with the staff, the professors, and even the president. I did meet some friends at Monroe, and we are still talking on Facebook.

I built great professional and personal relationships there. I had two professors that I really loved. One of them was my international marketing professor, and the other was my business professor. I did not have much campus life because I was always working, and I only came to classes in the evening. I found that the professors at night were more understanding because we came from work and were tired from the whole day. They worked with us to get us to where we needed to go.

1988 NORMAN LEON

AAS Computer Information Systems '88

Interviewed on 08/31/2021

I DIDN'T CHOOSE MONROE, IT'S THE ONE THAT CHOSE ME. I was walking down Fordham Road one day, going about my business. I was not thinking about college or anything like that, and came to see this lady named Sandra. She then said, 'Why don't you look where you're going?' Then I answered, 'To be honest, I wasn't going anywhere.' We started our conversation and invited me to her office, then I started hearing about college. She put it on my lap and told me to come back with the documents the next week. I brought the documents and got a postcard saying I was accepted; that's how I ended up in Monroe College. I found the people there to be very helpful for me. Professor McCaffrey, a computer teacher, impressed me the most. He was also the most helpful person. Everybody seemed to want me to come to that school.

2010 DOMINIQUE STORM AMBRISTER

AAS Criminal Justice '10, BBA Criminal Justice '11

Interviewed on 11/30/2021



'So let your darkest moments bring your most clarity'
- Joey Crack



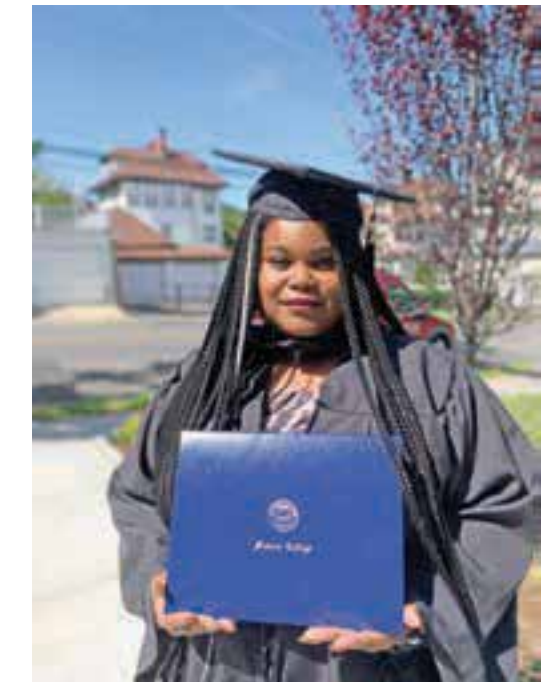
TWO OF MY COUSINS attended Monroe at the same time. My cousin realized that a person can obtain the GED and college credits at the same time. She helped me start the process of getting into the school. They were encouraging me together. During my time at Monroe College, it was all about school. I had an overnight job that I was working from 12 to eight, but I still maintained my grades and stuff. I've been through that college experience. I had a miscarriage and

have been through so many different trials, but the biggest thing was that I was able to overcome everything. I just made sure that I was on top of everything. It was a good experience. All my teachers were vouching for me in a good way. Monroe was the tool that I needed to mature myself. It taught me to have conversations with people. It taught me how to debate in a more professional type of way. I'm very proud of my degree. Now I have my own business. It helped build and structure the woman I am today.

2018 ASHLEY J. MATTHEWS

AAS Medical Administration '18,
BBA Health Services Administration '20

Interviewed on 08/05/2021



I WANTED TO ATTEND Monroe College for the culinary program, and then somewhere along the way, I decided I wanted to do more. Since most women in my family were in the medical industry, it prompted me to go in that direction. My husband went to

Monroe. I met him at church one day. His grandparents invited my grandmother, and he was eight years older than me, but I said, 'He's so nice. One day he'll be my husband.' I asked him what college he went to, and he said, 'Monroe.' He said it was a good college.

2012 SHAYNE DEAN GIBBONS

BS Information Technology '12

Interviewed on 09/30/2021

I ATTENDED A COLLEGE FAIR, AND MONROE was there. I sat with the advisors there and I was able to speak with them. They told me that Monroe had a very good program, they would take care of me very well. I learned that they have gone on to successfully complete the program and go on to do many things in life, so I did the same. I was able to get a partial scholarship from them. I liked all of it, like the life on campus, and I was quite pleased when I arrived at Monroe. They had a welcoming dinner and we could speak to the professors beforehand. I lived on campus for some time, and it was good and comfortable. It was such a friendly environment, and I also participated with the English as the second language program in terms of the Oriental students who were coming across. It opened a few doors for me because one of the things that every employer is looking for is some form of accreditation, and I can see Monroe definitely provided that for me.

2008 ODONIS VELEZ, SR.

AAS Criminal Justice '07, BBA Criminal Justice '08

Interviewed on 10/25/2021



Protecting President Trump while he was giving his speech at the United Nations in 2019



Marine with nine years of service to the US

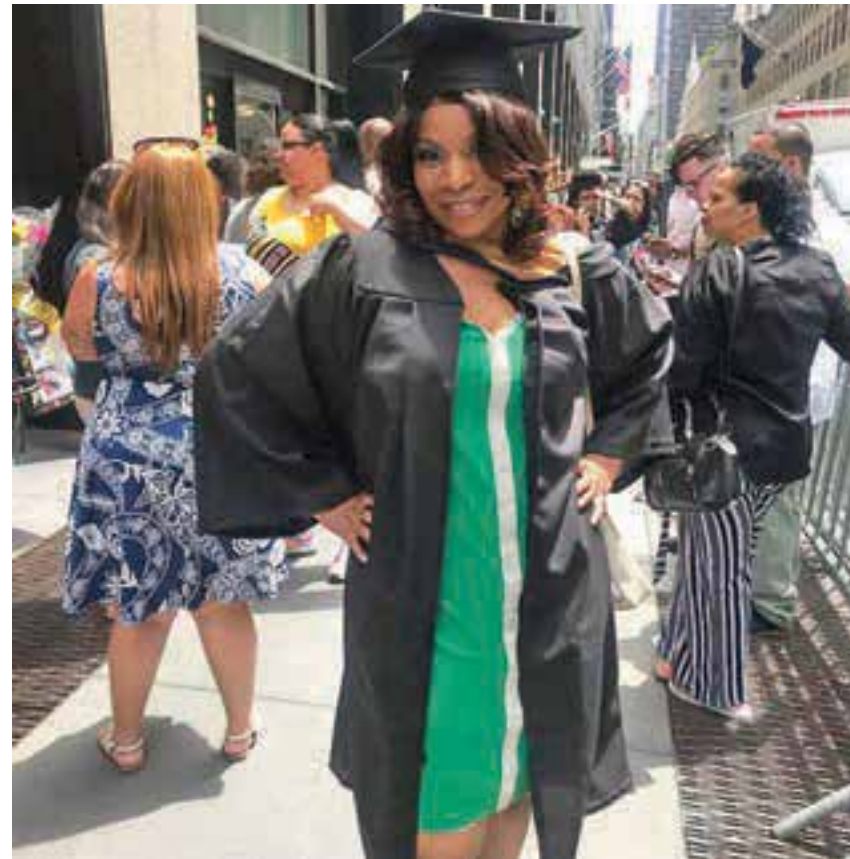
THE IDEA OF COMPLETING my education to tie it up with my resume was the main thing. The second thing that tied in close to that is that my cousin graduated from Monroe College, so it pinpointed the idea of attending there. I was able to achieve that, so I was very happy that I chose Monroe College. What made an impression on me was the proximity of the campus buildings; it was very

helpful. The facilities were good and were always kept clean, and the cafeteria was always stocked. One of my professors from the Psychology Department was great, and I took about three different psych classes with her. I took my degree because it tied into my background as a Marine. I had the opportunity to work at the United Nations, which was always a dream of mine.

2018 TANAYA DEVONNE SANTIAGO

BBA Health Services Administration '18

Interviewed on 08/04/2021



I ACTUALLY ATTENDED THE online Monroe community college dental assistant fast track course, and they were only two accredited in New York. It was a very lovely experience. I ended up spending longer than I expected. It was

comfortable at Monroe, very close-knit, and the professors were awesome. They were very understanding about work-life balance and having personal work experience along with their experience.

2012 DELISHIR W. L. ARCHIBALD

BBA Public Accounting '12

Interviewed on 08/23/2021

I LIKED THE ATMOSPHERE THAT MONROE COLLEGE provided, and I liked its location, which was in the New York area. I felt that was the best area for me because they had so many opportunities that would be available and around me. Monroe also had great integration with local businesses within that area, and it afforded me the opportunity to interact with professionals from various fields. I came straight from Saint Kitts, and I liked the community atmosphere. The administrators and personnel were easily accessible, and I could easily ask them questions and have an open rapport with them. I participated in other clubs that allowed me to interact with people in the US and across the world. I was about 45 minutes away, so that was close enough for me. Coming into Monroe I knew that public accounting was what I wanted to do, and I came from having work experience in that particular field. Monroe also allowed me the opportunity to delve into a hobby of mine, and that was something that I really enjoyed. All of my professors throughout my time at Monroe added various qualities to my overall development. After graduation, I returned home and got into one of the most prestigious organizations within the Caribbean, the Eastern Caribbean Central Bank. My experience at Monroe has prepared me not only to go through the rigorous interview process, but also within my department and the institution as a whole. Monroe was a stepping stone to where I wanted to be and go in my career, and it cemented what I wanted to do with regard to accounting. Monroe helped shape me and prepared me to go out into the world and make myself appealing to an institution.

2017 JANET BLIGEN

AAS Criminal Justice '17

Interviewed on 08/17/2021



Me and Janeen; nothing but smiles that day! Lots of love, too!



It was great to share my accomplishments with my family! Valerie and me

IT WAS EASIER FOR ME TO ATTEND BECAUSE IT WAS close to my job that I was working at home, so I commuted. I worked during the day and was only able to attend school at night. My sister and I both went to college at the same time, so we both have our degrees; we are twins. I'd recommend Monroe College to other people and my family; I'd told them that it was a good opportunity. It was really flexible and convenient.

2015 SHAWN JARRETT

AAS Criminal Justice '15, BBA Criminal Justice '16

Interviewed on 08/02/2021



AT THE TIME I WAS LIVING IN THE BRONX, AND I

transferred from Florida to the Bronx to study criminal justice. I picked to study criminal justice at Monroe since it was so close. I was able to take a lot of classes, so I was able to finish my bachelor's degree quicker. I did six classes my last semester, but the majority of the time, I was doing five classes a semester. It was perfect for me. Professor Sherman Browne was my favorite professor there. He said, 'If you want to do something, time is what's going to stop you.' He always emphasized that. He was in criminal justice and taught criminal justice research methods. Monroe College impacted my life after.



2014 KAYHEEM LEWIS, SR.

AS Information Technology '14,
BS Information Technology '16

Interviewed on 08/18/2021



MONROE COLLEGE WAS VERY AFFORDABLE COMPARED to other colleges, and my girlfriend at the time was attending Monroe. I chose the school because of the prices, and they had an IP program that I wanted to join. When I was attending Monroe, it was very straightforward. It wasn't complicated. Everything was very simple. All of the professors were really nice to me in my experience. I didn't have any professors who were bad, mean, or rude. The environment felt great to me. I did a lot of my schooling in Rochelle. Then when I finished, I transferred over to the Bronx to complete my It program. It felt a little bit different going to the Bronx from Rochelle, but it was still a nice learning environment for me. I met some very intelligent professors. After my degree, I joined the Army. It allowed me to join the Army at a higher rank. I am currently retired and in the process of retiring out of the Army by next month. Because I have a degree, the Army allowed me enroll me into classes to get my certification. I already received certification for Microsoft Office Suite. I still have many more courses to do, which are going to run all the way into next year. From my experience, if I have to tell somebody to go to a school, I will tell them to go to Monroe.

2012 ANYA WALLACE

Interviewed on 09/21/2021

AFTER I COMPLETED my undergraduate degree, I decided to pursue my master's and I was looking at schools close to home in the Caribbean. I found Monroe College in Saint Lucia, and then I realized that they also have a branch in the US. I was already familiar with the US and I just decided that it would be nice to go back to the US to pursue my master's degree. There were a few people who I knew that already attended Monroe, so I asked them about their experiences; they had only positive things to say, so that helped me make my decision. I started off living on campus, and then I decided to commute back and forth from Long

Island to New Rochelle. My classes were basically during the nighttime, so I got a job during the day. I was working at the academic center. That not only helped me develop certain skills that went along with my degree, but it also helped me to form relationships with people as well. I worked with a dean in the academic center and she helped to boost my skills in terms of how I network with the outside world. When I came back to Dominica, I found my dream job as a finance manager at a resort. Monroe College is like a family to me. I formed so many great relationships, and the education they provide is top-notch.

2015 DESTINIE INFANTE

AAS Business Administration '15, BBA Business Management '18

Interviewed on 09/08/2021

I ACTUALLY HAD AN education counselor at my old job who sat down with me and helped me through the whole process. She talked to the administration at Monroe and found all the programs they had, and that's what started it off. I would have to say it was definitely the professors that made an impact. I'm not really a social person, but I feel like my college experience actually helped me out with that. My favorite professor was my communications professor. He helped me explore everything that I needed to know about myself to be able to communicate - not only at work or for projects, but with just learning how to communicate in general. That's what I appreciated most about my college experience. I was basically on my own and at that time, and I was learning how to be an adult by myself. I felt like that was my main challenge: learning how to juggle school and work while living on my own and providing for myself at such a young age. I'm actually proud that I managed to do it without deciding

to quit. I feel like Monroe helped me realize what I want out of a career. I've been stuck basically doing the same thing since I graduated high school. I started working with kids, and that was all I've ever known. Monroe pushed me to try new things and to figure out where I wanted to continue. Did I want to continue on this path or did I want to explore other opportunities? I feel like that's what gave me more of the strength to move on and try to work in different places to see where I'm more comfortable. What makes me smile about Monroe are the professors and the classroom experiences. I feel like, with me not being a social person, a lot of the time I had really good professors that made me open up. I've actually experienced friendships with different people. Not only that, but I've actually learned not to take myself too seriously when I'm dealing with other people. I learned how to laugh more in certain situations. I feel like that's really what impacted me.

2013 JOEL L. BUNCHE

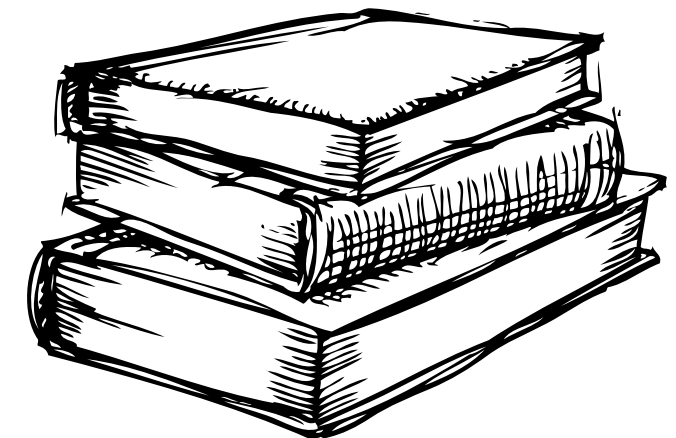
AAS Business Administration '14,
BBA Business Management '16

Interviewed on 08/04/2021



MY MOM PUSHED ME TO go to college. I ended up giving it a shot. It was summer, and I walked into school and met Dr. Ray gave me a chance to enroll there. I had a full year of federal aid. I took my education seriously,

and it changed my life. I've grown up so much in college, and I met amazing people. I still keep in touch with some great people that I could talk to still. I joined a lot of programs, especially for entrepreneurship.



2014 ROSARIO SERNA

BBA Health Services Administration '14, MBA

Interviewed on 08/18/2021

I HAD A FEW COWORKERS WHO MENTIONED that they were going to school after work. It was very interesting that the professors were really good, and I could have one on one with them, which caught my attention. I decided to check it out; I fell in love with it; I felt I had to study again. I finished my master's with two surgeries on my breast due to cancer. I was able to maneuver my last semester because I was not let it go being sick, but I had great classmates who helped me a lot. The professors were willing to work with me as long as I kept up. The professors were down to earth. There are people who know that we are coming from work and know that we have families as well, and they try to maneuver and work with you as best as they can to make us get better grades for you not to give up on anything. Monroe helped me a bunch. I was in a company for ten years. When I got my master's, I decided to take another step and move forward with another job that gave me more benefits that were going to be more in the medical administration part in the hospital. It opened many doors for me, and I'm very happy about that.



1992 ROBERT ANTHONY COPLIN

AAS Business Administration '92,
BBA Business Management '04

Interviewed on 08/19/2021

I CHOSE TO WORK A MYRIAD OF JOBS AFTER HIGH school and became disappointed at not being able to achieve the things in life which I had always dreamed of. A relative of mine got me a job at Montefiore Hospital in the Hematology Department. It was interesting work and I had the honor of working under the leading hematologist in the United States. I decided to return to school, went to Hunter College where I studied business for two years. I met the woman who would become my wife there and after numerous vocations I was fortunate enough to land what I thought would be a temporary job as a tolls collector at the George Washington Bridge. I worked at that position for three months before taking applying for a position at the World Trade Center as a records management clerk. I advanced to become a records manager. The Port Authority offered a program where they would pay 80% of my tuition cost if I returned to school, and I jumped on the opportunity. I chose to attend Monroe College. I acquired my associate's degree and it inspired me to continue to get my bachelor's degree. Steven Sternberg was one of my professors, and I had him for two classes. He and I still keep in contact. I was still working at the World Trade Center for the Port Authority at the time and wanted to improve my ability to provide for my family. Working full-time and raising a family as well was challenging. I had to work especially hard in order to handle both endeavors, but my desire to improve my standard of living for my family and myself motivated me to complete both degrees. I was in the World Trade Center on the 69th floor on 9/11. With the blessing of the All-Mighty, I survived without being injured. This experience will remain etched in my memory for the rest of my life. After receiving my bachelor's degree I continued working for the Port Authority until retiring in 2010. I wrote three novels featuring a group of predominately Black superheroes known as The Upholders.

2017 FRANCISCO JAVIER FARIAS

AAS Culinary Arts '17, BBA Hospitality Management '19

Interviewed on 08/25/2021



I CHOSE MONROE BECAUSE of their Culinary Program. I liked Monroe because I could get my degree in a year and three months. Since I lived 20 minutes away from the school, I was able to have my classes while hanging out with friends and help out in the after school program, so it was a good experience. I joined the Culinary Club, where we sold some popcorn in my first year to raise some money for ourselves, and then we did fresh-made jams for Thanksgiving. I also liked the Multimedia Club, where we did a talk show, and we got people to come in and ask questions about topics in the school. I also liked the internship when I was there, and one of my favorite professors there was Chef Moon.

2015 DANIEL KOFI LANYAN

AS Information Technology '15,
BBA Computer Information Systems '17

Interviewed on 10/27/2021



I WAS INSPIRED BY how fast Monroe's courses were for me to get my bachelor's. Monroe was our last intern hour international student. I was coming to this country within just a year, and I didn't have to wait because of Monroe. It was an immediate admission. Monroe was close to my workplace and where I lived. My time at Monroe was one of the best times from my middle school days. The students were friendly and the administration was very helpful. I was assigned as a counselor right away.

The counselor was very knowledgeable of what courses to take and the resources I needed. The process was easy when it came to the student loan application process. I have a great counselor who walked me through everything in five minutes. My time at Monroe prepared me very well. I had a higher GPA, and I got admission to Lima College to pursue my master's in education. I'm in the last semester of my Bachelor's of Science in Special Education from Lima College.

2014

KATHERINE VARGAS

AS Information Technology '12,
BBA Business Management '14

Interviewed on 09/30/2021

I HAD A FRIEND AT THE TIME THAT attended Monroe College. She was in the medical field and she recommended that I inquire and see if it was something I was interested in and that it was very close to my house at the moment, because I was able to walk to the school is why I started there. What made an impression on me was the flexibility of the school since I was working throughout my whole time in college. I am able to take morning or evening classes when needed. I liked the fact that my schedule did change at work for a semester, and it worked out for me. I had a Dean who was very helpful every semester. I didn't have enough to purchase my books and he would be nice enough to lend me the books that were available in his office every semester, then I would return them. I think it was two to three semesters in a row where he did allow me to use the books and I would have returned them to him at the end of the semester. It was hard because I was working on no sleep because I was a full-time employee, a full-time student, so it was time management, but it worked out. Before I finished, I was able to land a job, which is where I am working now.



1994

SANDRA C. KELLY, MED

AAS Accounting '94, BBA Business Management '98

Interviewed on 08/19/2021



I RELOCATED FROM ST. CROIX IN THE US VIRGIN ISLANDS TO New York City. I always wanted to do accounting. At the time the schedule at Monroe was the opportunity to go there with my family. I went evenings and Saturdays, and I did well. Each semester was on the Dean's List. I worked hard, and it paid off. I got along with a lot of professors. They were caring and helpful. They were encouraging, and they made it possible for me to do the work. I enjoyed my time at Monroe. After I finished my bachelor's, I was working in social services with the city of New York, but I got some inspiration to be a teacher. I went back to Mercy College, and I did my dual certificate in education for two years in middle school. Five years ago I did regular and special ed. Now I'm working in a program for children on the autism spectrum. I have been there for seven years. What makes me smile is the camaraderie. There was a little cafe where my friends and I would meet. It was warm and friendly. My daughter went to Monroe, and she did a BA there. After my husband retired he went back to teach there, and he was there for a little while.

2020

PEDRO "MANNY" M. GONZALEZ

AAS Computer Information Systems '20

Interviewed on 08/24/2021



I ALWAYS HAVE WANTED TO GO TO COLLEGE, AND I NEEDED IT somewhere convenient. I looked at Monroe College it was in 2008, and I couldn't get in for some reason, and I also lived in Queens. I was forced to go to another school in Queens. I didn't get the finishing of my degree and ASCO school in Queens. It was in 2019 that I finally got in at Monroe College. I've been through some stuff, and it wasn't easy at all but I liked the faculties. A lot of my colleagues there were very supportive, and they were helpful. I grew from there, and it was a nice experience for me. I would say that Monroe College was everything to me. It opened the door for a better life. It was an opportunity to pick myself up from where I was, whether it was high or low. The opportunity was there always, and they welcomed me with open arms.

1990

KYM SHARISSE LAWRENCE

AAS Computer Information Systems '90

Interviewed on 08/04/2021



Feeling and being successful after graduating from Monroe College



Continued my education after attending Monroe College

I WANTED TO GO TO college after high school, and they had the major that I wanted. Monroe College was not too far, and I had very interesting and fun classes. The people were very close-knit, so I found it very at home. My major was computer science, and I enjoyed system design. That particular teacher

made it even more interesting. I was also on the Dean's List. I was interested in learning and they made their environment so much fun. It was smaller, so it was more family-oriented, and they took time with each person. I really appreciated the time that I spent and what I had when I was there.

1988

WINONA DAVIS

AAS Computer Information Systems '88

Interviewed on 08/19/2021



Living the dream



Life is wonderful

I WAS A YOUNG SINGLE MOTHER OF FOUR, AND I wanted to prove something to my children in the future. I wanted to give us something to look forward to. The best thing to do is to go back to school, get an education, and a career. I would show them that there is more to life than just hanging on the street corner. Monroe College laid the groundwork for me. I did not know what to expect when I graduated. I did not even know if I was going to graduate because there was a gap in time after high school. I made the President's List, and then graduated later on. Today is a new day and we live in a different world, a COVID-19 world, I have skilled up. My goals are to insure continuous employment and continue to show my children to keep going and don't give up. Life is an opportunity to take your place and remember to give back. The more you give, the more you're blessed. Onward and Upward!

“The whole faculty from professors to people in the offices were great. I was impressed by the friendliness and their willingness to help you.”
- Allison Aponte-Almanzar

2019 ALLISON APONTE-ALMANZAR

AAS Baking and Pastry Arts '19,
BBA Hospitality Management '20

Interviewed on 08/18/2021

I AM ORIGINALLY FROM THE DOMINICAN REPUBLIC.

When I came here, my goal was to start going to college. I heard of other colleges but they were too far, and they were extremely expensive. I did not participate in any sports or anything, and I was not included in any team. Monroe College was a great experience for me. The whole faculty from professors to people in the offices were great. I was impressed by the friendliness and their willingness to help you.



Class of 2020

2018 ELIZABETH MENDY

AAS Medical Administration '18,
BBA Health Services Administration '20

Interviewed on 08/17/2021

WHAT INSPIRED ME TO choose Munro was the learning environment. In high school, I had the opportunity to take the classes that they volunteered for people in high school to have an idea of what college looks like. I fell in love with the learning environment and just how college life would be. That inspired me a lot. The first two classes I took were the intro to hospitality and the New York experience. I had really enjoyed the classes, and I learned a lot. It was amazing because I was on the track and field team across the country. I had a very amazing experience. I had the opportunity to meet people all around the world from different countries. I walked with people from South Africa. I had the opportunity to learn and know people's ethnic values, the places they're coming from, and what kind of foods they eat. I really liked the diversity. I was studying for my associate's. I was studying medical administration, and I did health service administration from my bachelor's. Right now,

I am looking forward to coming back for my master's degree in the same health service administration. Professor Lewis Riley who taught me medical terminology was really amazing. She just made the learning experience enjoyable for me. She explained and she made sure she covered the topic. Then she would ask questions, and we do quizzes at every end of the topic. It helped me to stay up on my studies and encouraged me to read the materials. My favorite memory is going to the nationals. We were able to go to nationals across the country. It was amazing. I had to travel out of state, meet other people from different schools, and compete. The other thing that I have joined, which was like a minor for me was the honors program. I liked how everything was set up in the gym every year, how we have the opportunity to walk down the area of Westchester, even though I'm not from there. I liked the structure and how we have to go to different buildings for our classes and everything.

2019 MEIKEL TAMARA GORDON

AAS Criminal Justice '19

Interviewed on 08/20/2021

I WAS AT HOME AND FELT REALLY DEPRESSED

one day, so I said, 'I need to do something with my life.' I wasn't working, and I didn't have any money. I said, 'What am I going to do with my life? I'm getting older. I need to go to college because things are changing these days, where you need a degree now to have a job. Why not pursue something that I watch every day on TV that I enjoy? Let me sign up for college.' I found Monroe College, and they called me literally the next day. I didn't even think I would get a call, but they did. I said, starting my first semester, 'This is what college life is. This is everything I've wanted.' It was a community of people to help build me up and encourage me to keep going. That was why I loved Monroe. One thing that stood out to me was Monroe didn't feel like an ordinary college. It felt more like a family. They would check on you, call you, and make sure you were doing good. If they see that your grades are slipping, they will make sure that you get in line. I really admired that because I never really had that growing up. Having that at Monroe felt like I had people I could call my family. I am working right now with the disabled and the elderly as a home caregiver, and I do my hours with them until I can get a job in criminal justice and use my degree to its full potential. Monroe means happiness. I am still going to campus every day. I always looked forward every day to going to Monroe, being happy, being in the environment that makes me feel comfortable learning everything that I can, and being around families. It was genuine being at Monroe. I felt happy and felt like I could be myself. It changed my life because I met the most amazing professors and people with stories that you could never even think of. It means a lot to me.

2019

CHRISTOPHER OLIVO

AAS Criminal Justice '19

Interviewed on 08/26/2021



IT WAS CONVENIENT for my work schedule. I tried to follow as much as I could in my mother's footsteps. I did online classes, but the teachers that I had were good. They made themselves available, even though it was online. They were very quick when it came to questions being asked. They made sure I had to a break-in, and they helped me as much as they could. It had helped me to learn more about the criminal justice system. I learned more based on the work that was

given to me instead of me learning on hand. I was able to understand more as to why some people would categorize as such reasons and the level of criminal activity. It put more understanding as to why someone would be charged a higher crime for something they did so petty, but in reality, there were things that follow it. It was that followed behind. After I graduated from Monroe, I was doing public safety, but now I'm a police officer.

2019

PIERINA PAULA DE LA ROSA

AS Human Services '19, BS Human Services '20

Interviewed on 08/20/2021



I LEARNED A LOT OF things that I did not know, especially the psychology class with my favorite professor. The professors were nice to me as well as my classmates. I felt like it was a home. I had a master's that I liked and was looking for. My favorite professor is a lady who was in the psychology class. Every day I learn something new. To me, learning is fun. When I had any request or concern, the

professor, ladies in the office, and counselor, helped me. They made everything easy for me, so I could complete my degree. Monroe impacted me a lot. I got out of work and went straight to Monroe. I miss those moments, the campus, and what school was like now. It was a beautiful experience. Monroe means everything. I always loved Monroe because I finished my education there.

2000

ALEIDA M. PERALTA

AAS Accounting '00, BBA Accounting '02

Interviewed on 08/05/2021



The employee of the month is me



I'm a greater believer in luck, and I find that the harder I work the more I have of it

I WAS A MOTHER OF THREE, AND I WAS HAVING A HARD time finding jobs in the community back then. I was studying English. It was very difficult, and it was very hard for me to find a college that would recognize my credits since I came from the Dominican Republic. One day I decided to go to Monroe College, and it was wonderful. The college opened the doors for me, and it helped me a lot in my development in my career. A lot of the professors were very helpful. I had a good experience with all the professors in the college. A lot of my background at the college was accounting. I work with a federal government, and I am an operation supervisor. The only reason I was able to obtain that job was because of the time that I spent in college. I became very aware and expert in accounting, and it was a way to prove myself to attain the CPA. I went to some of the reviews in college back in 2001. Monroe means family, and it was a wonderful environment. They made me feel at home. It was a very wonderful experience, and Monroe is a very good college in the middle of the Bronx.

2017

VICTORIA D. SANTIAGO, ESQ.

BBA Criminal Justice '17

Interviewed on 09/30/2021



I LIKED THE DIFFERENT programs that they had. I took a tour of the school, and I spoke with some of the professors. I definitely liked the professors that were there. Everyone was very supportive, and I liked that I felt personal when talking to the professor. The student teacher ratio was just very attractive, so getting that time to maybe get with a professor was really very valuable to them. I was definitely involved in a lot of the clubs. We took a tour to see the Penn State Prison, which was a memorable moment for

me. It was a lot of fun, and one of the highlights for me was, I competed in the mock trial in the American Mock Trial Association. It was the first time Monroe ever competed in, and it was a lot of preparation, where we spent hundreds of hours. The highlight and even more interesting was, I was later a judge in that competition. I judged several panels of students from different schools because they invited me as an alumni to judge the con. I was a scoring judge, which I found a lot of fun and rewarding.



2020 SHELLY GRAY

BBA Public Health '20

Interviewed on 08/18/2021



I WAS TRYING TO GET ENROLLED IN A COLLEGE

at that time, and I was a nontraditional student. There were a couple of schools I applied to, and I never got in because of the requirements, and they did not coordinate with my schedule for work. When I reached Monroe College, they got back to me and had the ball rolling on the same day. They were accommodating with what I wanted to do. My admission process was not smooth, but the admission counselor went above and beyond to get me situated. My favorite professor was Professor Loriann Holmes-Wheaton, and I had four semesters with her. She was wonderful. Another professor was a big influence on me, and she was really good. It was a high standard of teaching. I did my first two years at Monroe, and I relocated to Staten Island. I transferred to the College of Staten Island and spent one semester there. I cried my eyes out, and I went back to Monroe the following semester. I lived in Staten Island for two and a half years, but I traveled to Monroe on a daily basis to go to class. That was how much they had given me. I had great professors and a good standard of education. Monroe made an impression on me. The classes were what I liked about it. They weren't big, and everything was accommodating. I spent one semester at CSI and went back to Monroe even though I had to travel two and a half hours on a daily basis. I was willing to do that because I knew I was going to get the proper education that I deserved and what I was paying for. The diversity and the friendliness of the professors make me smile about Monroe. Even though I was a nontraditional student, I never felt out of place. I felt like I was a part of the school, and I was doing what everybody else was doing, trying to get an education.

1998 TAKESHA L. WILSON

AAS Business Administration '96,
BBA Business Management '98

Interviewed on 08/18/2021



WHEN I WAS YOUNGER

and came out of high school, I started to work. I didn't go right off to college and have that whole college life experience, but I wanted to further my education. I decided to enroll in Monroe College to get my associate's degree. It was very welcoming and very committed to assisting me with my needs, wants, and goals. It was close to home, and it offered what I needed at the time, so I enrolled. After I got my associate's degree, Monroe started to increase their degree programs and things like that, and it was a blessing to me to know that a bachelor's degree was being offered because I felt at home there with the faculty and staff. I felt at home and a part of a family, so it was a no-brainer to continue my bachelor's degree. I was a loner, and I learned when I was there that I was also a halfway people-

person because everybody there embodied and embraced that. I became part of that. One thing I learned about myself was that I didn't want to be in a shell. I wanted to be amongst peers and professors, and I didn't want to be offline. I appreciated being in the classroom and being around people. I've had a work ethic since I worked in high school, and that grew stronger. I was able to get my education while doing that and being a mother, too. Monroe offered that flexibility, especially for parents and career people. Knowing that I was able to get an education keeps me going in the field that I'm in. Monroe means determination, family, strength, and growth. No matter how old you are, where you start, and where you want to go, all the opportunities are afforded to you if you are a student at Monroe.

2020 TORRI L. BRAITHWAITE

AAS Criminal Justice '20

Interviewed on 08/18/2021



MY BEST FRIEND WENT there. She graduated before me, and it inspired me to look more into Monroe because they already had criminal justice and everything that I needed. I had a lot of nice professors. They basically pushed me, and they became my favorites. I am in the midst of graduating, and I was already working with the board of education. I'm going back to Monroe for my bachelor's degree,



so this time around, I'm looking to get my bachelor's degree with a minor in psychology at my job because I wanted to switch over to guidance counseling. Everybody is so familiar and fond of Monroe that it opened up a lot of doors too. Monroe means structure. You can trust everybody. Nobody's going to sit there and let you fail. It's like a family. Everybody makes sure they are on the same path.





2012 MUSLIMAH LATEEFAH SIDDIQ

AAS Baking and Pastry Arts '12

Interviewed on 08/20/2021

I WAS A SENIOR IN high school, and I was trying to find what college to go to that had like culinary courses or pastry courses. I got accepted to New York City College of Technology, and that was the school that I wanted to go to, but there were so many steps in trying to

get classes. They wouldn't let me take any classes that had anything to do with my interest in baking. I decided to check out Monroe College and see what they have. I thought this was the perfect school for me. I decided to go to Monroe instead of New York City College of Technology.



class of **2016**

“It changed my life. It was one of the most positive things that I ever did for myself. It just taught me how to think differently.
- Gabrielli "Gabby" Pichardo **”**

GABRIELLI "GABBY" PICHARDO

AAS Business Administration '16, BBA Accounting '18

Interviewed on 12/14/2021

I WAS PROBABLY AROUND 18 or 19, and I was working at Starbucks as a supervisor. I felt that at that point if I went to school, it would have been easier for me to go up in management. I took the step and I enrolled. It did take me a while to finish, but I was a single parent. It was a little bit harder for me to do full-time. What made an impression was definitely the professors, the small classroom sizes, and getting to

know other students. It was always a positive environment. It gave me hope that if I continued going on that path, being surrounded by people that had a similar mindset was very helpful. I think it prepared me. It changed my life. It was one of the most positive things that I ever did for myself. It just taught me how to think differently. So It changed my life for the better.

2006 JAFFET BOSQUET

AAS Accounting '06, BBA Accounting '07
Interviewed on 08/18/2021

I WAS REALLY INVOLVED. I USED
to play soccer, and I got two trophies.



2000 APRIL GREEN

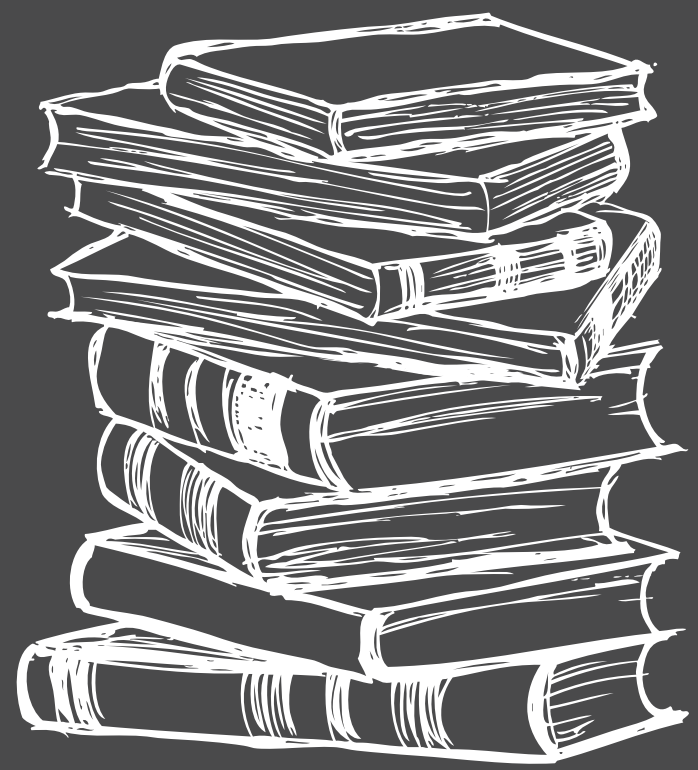
AAS Computerized Office Technology '00
Interviewed on 08/03/2021

IT WAS CLOSE TO HOME AT THE
time. I studied office technologies, and I
enjoyed a class that was called Finite Math.
They did a good job because I was able to
complete it. The things that were taught
to me have stuck with me over the years.



“
I liked the fact that Monroe was very hands-on with their students.
- Latoya Cruz (Passley) '03
”

“
Then I became the first elected president for the Monroe College Toastmasters Club.
- Dr. Jerome L. Rice '99
”



“
I went from being a person who never got more than a 1.5 GPA to someone who appeared on the President's and Dean's Lists six times.
- Jose L. Rivera, BS, CASAC-T '10
”

“
As I got older, I decided that it was time for me to change my life. I decided to go to Monroe, and that was the best thing that I have done.
- Maria Baez '85
”

MOMENTS in time



“
I also had fun in the IT Club. We had trips to haunted houses and the Empire State Building.
- Gregory Cruse, Jr. '08
”

2002 SEAN I. LEE

BBA Computer Information Systems '02



Educator, mentor, and change agent

I WAS ALWAYS LOOKING FOR AN experience to go to college in the US originally coming from Trinidad and Tobago. Monroe College was one of those schools that visited the island regularly. While I was pursuing my associate's degree, I learned about Monroe College's international student recruitment and was very excited about that opportunity. I attended the New Rochelle campus and met the other students who were not only from Jamaica and the US Virgin Islands but also from the Bronx and different parts of New York. I also became an RA before the end of my time at Monroe and had additional leadership opportunities as an instructor at the Learning Center. I have a lot of fond memories from

Monroe. I knew that I wanted to earn an undergraduate business degree. I focused on information systems because having a computing background is always useful. Degree in hand I returned to Trinidad and worked for a Stockbroking firm as their IT manager and a trader before returning to the US and getting married. Since then I have gone on to graduate work in creative writing and, more recently, completing a master's from Penn State in education, a field that I'm still in. I think where I stand now is connected to my undergraduate experience. Graduating with honors from Monroe certainly opened my eyes to the endless opportunities that are made more accessible through education.



2003 AMEIL A. SLOLEY

BBA Business Management '03
Interviewed on 08/18/2021



A long and beautiful relationship working with the Alumni Association Board and Mrs. Jerome



Throwback alumni event with Roberta Greenberg

THE CONVENIENCE AND availability of evening and weekend classes inspired me to attend Monroe College. When I was attending Monroe, I was a single parent, so I needed to be a full-time worker and student. Monroe offered me the opportunity to do both, and I got it at an excellent time. By the time I showed up at Monroe, I had already been to four other schools, so Monroe was my fifth attempt at getting an education at that level. I wanted to be a nurse, and I was a fourth-year nursing student, so I had all of the college experience. My first impression of Monroe was that it was the place for me to go. Monroe provided a flexible and enough schedule between online classes. My daughter was able to come to classes with me on Saturdays, and the school at that time had babysitting services. If my professor would allow it, and I had a good behaving child, they could sit in the classroom. I had a really good child who sat in every class with

her headphones on and a pile of work she needed to complete while I was in school. I have always qualified for the President's and Dean's Lists every semester because I was performing so well. I loved the mission of the school and the character of the people who run the school. I spoke the language of someone born in 1970, and I can relate to everyone sitting in the room, which gave me a unique perspective. I completed my degree as cum laude with a 4.0 in a year and a half. I did classes two nights a week from 6:30 to 9:30 and all day Saturday. After becoming involved in the alumni association and being on that board, which I still am today. I am the president of Monroe College Toastmasters Club, and I teach in the School of Business. I uniquely come with a 360-degree approach to every scenario at the school, and I continue to support the school. I still believe that they are capable of succeeding and being amazing citizens in society.

2015 VANESSA EVA ORTIZ

AAS Criminal Justice '15, BBA Criminal Justice '16, MS
 Interviewed on 08/02/2021



WHEN I WALKED BACK INTO Monroe College in 2014, it was the right time, and it was love at first semester. The professors along with the faculty were very caring and very top-notch. They made sure that I was going to get through the course and all the material. All our questions or concerns were always answered and validated. There were two professors who stood out the most. One was Guylaine Harrison, who is a well-known professor, and now the dean. She definitely helped me throughout my journey from undergraduate all the way to graduate school, so that was a beautiful relationship. The other one was Dr. William Vericker. Once I got to him in the graduate program, it was like getting another mentor like Harrison. It was remarkable. Monroe events were always beautiful. They had internships and college fairs, and we had the ability to be hands-on in the real world. The mock

interviews they did were not only with professors, but also with the dean. They took their time, came to the class, and made sure we were prepared for that real-life interview. Monroe was amazing for that, and I thank them for everything that I have today career-wise. I was able to get my associate's degree in one year, and my bachelor's degree the next year. Two years after that I was able to get my master's degree at Monroe, where I was awarded the Student Dean's Award. I did an internship with the New York City Department of Probation, and that went really well. It also put my foot in the door for the position I currently have. I'm a court liaison for an alternative to the incarceration program, and I have been doing this since 2018. I classify Monroe as my family; they have changed my life. Once you get started at Monroe, they are going to make sure you finish, and not leave you behind.



Honors ceremony in June 2018



Student Deans Award in the School of Criminal Justice, 2018

2015 CHRIS R. VILLA

MS
 Interviewed on 09/03/2021



I ATTENDED BECAUSE IT WAS A BRAND new program, and I liked the way it was put together by Dr. Frank Costantino. He wrote the program at the King Graduate School Monroe College as a subsidiary of his culinary arts program. I was a culinary arts instructor in the Alabama two-year college system, and I wanted to advance in rank. The way to do that in education is by getting a higher degree. I wanted the biggest bang for my time, and I wanted it to be fun and not just purely online. It had the two-week residency, where they put you up in New Rochelle during the summer and then come home and do a lot of online and Skype. You finish with your thesis and a final two-week residency in New York. I was truly interested when I first heard about it. The program had been put on hold because there were financial aid issues with international students. Dr. Costantino said, 'Instead of just starting purely online, let's wait an additional year, and let's do it right.' It added more value, respect, and trust because they didn't want to start off just for the sake of their deadline. We were treated like royalty when we first arrived in New Rochelle. Dr. Frank and his staff took great care of us. I can't wait until there's a doctoral program. We were his very first cohort. There were eight of us. Everybody helped each other during that middle part, with the writing and statistics, but the instructors they brought in to teach when we were on campus were phenomenal. I wound up in between jobs and went ahead and did the program. I graduated in 2015 with that degree. Shortly thereafter, after doing consulting work and teaching ServSafe classes all over the Southeast, I'm now the lead instructor at a career tech center in Hoover, Alabama. I'm a huge fan, and I promote it to high school students that want to enter the hospitality industry. I let them know that college is not the golden ticket, but it definitely unlocks doors.



Graduation day!



Empire State Building tour!



2006 ROSANNETTE L. KIRBY

AAS Criminal Justice '06, BBA Criminal Justice '07, MBA '12
Interviewed on 11/05/2021



I WAS A YOUNG MOM AND HADN'T finished high school. After my kids had grown, I was pushing them toward education so much that I felt it was my duty to go back and finish my education. I needed to show them that not only could I 'talk the talk,' but that I could 'walk the walk.' Monroe was within walking distance. When I graduated, my oldest son graduated with me as well. I was in my 40s. It was a challenge, but I held my own. My kids used to laugh at me and call me a teacher's pet. Michele Rodney was my criminal law professor. I would write something and give it to her, and she would look at me and say, 'No, I'm not taking this.' She pushed me

enough to know that I could do things. I will always admire her because she would say, 'I see the potential in you.' She saw it before I really saw it. Because of the background I had, I was able to go into teaching. When I moved to Atlanta, I started teaching as a long-term substitute. I was teaching English and math. The subject of cybersecurity came up, and no one wanted to teach it because it was new. I thought back to when I did criminal justice and thought, 'Wait a minute, all I have to do is some research and I could get this together.' I did the research and put the lesson plan together. I'm now a city council member. I work with citizens and the community and can apply a lot

of what I learned. I'm from Antigua and was just appointed an Officer of the Most Illustrious Order of Merit there, which is an international honor. Monroe helped me to move forward and do these things. I am proud of my accomplishments and happy to be of service to my community and my country. I am an accomplished public relations professional, motivational speaker, teacher, a successful entrepreneur, and a council woman. I have a personal passion for education, my personal mission is to place emphasis on the value of education by giving a chance to the youths in my community, hoping they will make a change to our future.



1996 MYRTHA ACOSTA

AAS Business Administration '96,
BBA Business Management '98
Interviewed on 08/19/2021

I WOULD SAY THAT IT WAS A BEAUTIFUL experience for me because as I got my bachelor's degree, I achieved a lot of my goals and many of them, even though I'm elderly now. I am grateful to Monroe College. It helped me out a lot and I'm very happy about it. When I went there I was already doing banking at that time. I started doing banking using my high school diploma. They wanted me to go to college, and to study something else. They wanted me to have an associate's or a bachelor's degree for me to get promoted. They said I could have a better job, so they helped me out with tuition and everything. I was very happy about it, and I wanted to be one of the students at Monroe College. I liked the teachers there, and I liked the students while I was with them. I never had any complaints, and I don't have anything negative to say about this college. I remember one of my professors in psychology because he helped me out a lot at that time. He was such a nice person. After getting my degree I changed my career. I went into the Department of Education, and I am about to retire now. I worked for them for so many years.

2013 JENNIFER L. DUNN

AAS Medical Administration '07,
BBA Health Services Administration '13
Interviewed on 09/20/2021

I CHOSE MONROE COLLEGE BECAUSE IT WAS flexible. It worked with my work schedule and the fact that I had a family. I love the way they accommodated the students. They had resources for anything that you struggled with and they were very family-oriented.

1993 VALERIE E. RICHARDSON (ROSS)

AAS Office Technology '93
Interviewed on 09/03/2021

I LIVE RIGHT DOWN THE STREET, AND MONROE WAS really convenient and also inexpensive. My major was office technology. The psychology curriculum impressed me, I really enjoyed that class. It shaped the way I viewed things. I thought out of the box after taking that class. I had a family, so my time was very limited. I practically lived up there when I wasn't doing anything with my family. The security guard was like, 'Do you have a cot in there?' I did home care before I retired, that was my last job. I did many jobs. I did managerial things. I had many trades.

2010 JOSE L. RIVERA, BS, CASAC-T

AS '10, BS '11
Interviewed on 08/06/2021

I HAVE DEDICATED MY LIFE TO VOLUNTEERING to fight crime and helping females suffering through domestic violence. I have been a member of the community since I was 11, but I noticed that I found myself lost in what I fought. This was until one day my sister presented me with the opportunity to go to work, go to school, or just leave the home. I went to Monroe College. I prayed for it one day, and I met the right person who helped me get through college. She became my wife and she never judged me. She would stay up with me during late nights and help me do my projects. I went from being a person who never got more than a 1.5 GPA, to someone who appeared on the President's and Dean's Lists six times.

2019 IRMA MILIANO GIANNI

Interviewed on 08/25/2021

I DISCOVERED THAT DR. FRANK COSTANTINO was the dean of the hospitality and restaurant program, so I decided to come to Monroe College. It brought me to another level. I am a teacher, and I teach hospitality management. My way of thinking is now is different from before. Everything about Monroe College makes me smile. I enjoyed everything, from day one to the last day.

2003 LATOYA CRUZ (PASSLEY)

AAS Computer Information Systems '03,
BBA Business Management '04



Hi there

MY COUSIN WAS ATTENDING Monroe at the time, and she really got me connected with an advisor to get the process started. I remember Professor Michael Altamirano, was such a beacon of knowledge. I went on to pursue my master's in public administration. I currently work for Monroe College. I liked the fact that Monroe was very hands-on with their students. It gives me that family feel, especially being an International student at that time, I needed to feel as though I was safe and with family. Each student can freely express any concerns or issues and be confident in knowing that they will be addressed. It was one of the best qualities that Monroe has, the personal touch that they offer.



2007 SHEENA MOULTRIE

AAS Computer Information Systems '02,
BBA Business Management '07
Interviewed on 08/18/2021

SOMEONE TOLD ME I SHOULD TAKE A LOOK AT it, and that was what led me to Monroe to complete my degree. I didn't do my master's at Monroe, but I was working full-time and starting a new job when I was doing my master's. One of the things I loved about my role was that they had professors who had daytime jobs, and their day job consisted of what they were teaching us in the evenings. I used to go on evenings and weekends, and I would have to sit in a class for three hours. It was really good having real-life interactions with the professors and getting their feedback on what was going on in contingent with whatever we were focusing on in the class. All of my professors were really good. Whenever I needed additional help, they were always there to help out. Everyone was really good to work with. I was trying to figure out what career I wanted. I was a gift coordinator at the Metropolitan Museum of Art, so I had no idea what direction I wanted to go in. Going into Monroe I was focused on business, and during that time, I was able to get a job in a hospital. My associate's in computer science really helped me out with learning more data and learning more information with the computers. I was granted more access to things that other people wouldn't have access to because I knew my way around computers. As soon as I received my bachelor's, I received a promotion at work to an office coordinator. Anything that I had learned in school and my associate's, I was able to take that information and use it at my job when I started out in the healthcare field. It helped me work my way from being a temp in a hospital. I continue to grow in the healthcare field to get to this position.

1999 DR. JEROME L. RICE

AAS Computer Information Systems '99,
BBA Business Management '00, MBA '08
Interviewed on 08/04/2021



Thank you Monroe College for instilling in me a can-do attitude in education

DURING THE TIME I ATTENDED MONROE, I was a correctional officer. The location and flexibility of the classes were the reasons why I attended. There was some passionate faculty staff like Ted Goldstein. They monitored my travel throughout and made sure that I stayed on my path to graduate wherever that may be on associate's, bachelor's, or master's degree. I liked that the faculty staff was passionate about helping me complete my goals. Then I became the first elected president for the Monroe College Toastmasters Club. We took the chance to start it, which eventually helped the students today with public speaking and presentations. I watched Monroe College grow from two buildings on Jerome Avenue to New Rochelle. I also loved that they extended all of their branches to the international students.

2000 ANDRES S. M. TOSCANO

AAS Computer Information Systems '00,
BBA Computer Information Systems '08
Interviewed on 09/02/2021

AT THE TIME, WHEN I WAS ALREADY OUT OF HIGH school, I started looking and Monroe was close by my house. They accepted me to start right away, so I didn't want to wait. I lived in the Bronx, but I chose to go to the New Rochelle campus. I wanted to try something new and get away from the Bronx. I remember the school was very small. We only had one building. I got my associate's, and I left. When I came back to finish my bachelor's, the school had grown. They had three more buildings in the same area. I was surprised. I was shocked. Everything was just restructured. It was like a new school again. I wasn't going back, I was starting over again. That's what it felt like. I did night school, so I didn't really do many school programs or clubs. I did some weekends, and that was nice. I saw the school grow. Cliff Brozo was a teacher of mine and the best person I've ever met. He's the best teacher I've ever had. If he's still there, he deserves a big applause for all he does. When I was earning my associate's degree, I was looking for a job. I went to the job office, and they set me up with the Bank of New York to run statements. It was part-time, and then they promoted me to full-time six months later. Within a year, I got promoted again. I was there this whole time, 13 years, at the Bank of New York until they started laying off everybody. I moved up to a supervisor position with them, and I was a lead clerk. I work in a technology department, MIS, in a school upstate in Brewster, New York. I support a school with over 600 staff members and over 300 students. Where I'm at now is Green Chimneys. My first day was the day of the pandemic. This pandemic really gave me a crash course into remote learning. It was a big change for the school, and it was a good thing.

2000 SEETA SEEPERSAUD

AAS Office Technology '00
Interviewed on 12/22/2021



I HAD JUST ARRIVED IN THE US, AND I WAS WORKING AS a cashier in a store. I was standing outside, waiting for the manager to open the store. I was working four days a week, six hours a day. While I was standing there, I looked down and saw a little piece of paper that said Monroe College application. I picked it up, and I filled in the information. I sent it, and they responded to me. They sent me a packet about orientation. I'm happy. I'm proud of the way it started out and how I ended up going to Monroe. I finished up in December 1999, and my graduation was in June 2000. I showed up to my interview with MCU. I did a little bit of research, and I found out what MCU was about. I grabbed it, and 21 years later, I'm still with MCU.

2007 JANIE R. HEMMANS

AAS Business Administration '07
Interviewed on 09/03/2021



MY MOM INSPIRED ME TO ATTEND Monroe College. When I attended Monroe, I wanted to be the parent that practices what they preach. I had three small children at that time. I had goals. I was always a giver. I'm still a giver because I put my bachelor's on hold as well. Going to Monroe was a great experience. During my experience, I had some ups and downs because life keeps evolving. In 2005, I lost my grandmother. Many things set me back. Sometimes I had to take a class, or two. From the time I started, I changed degrees. I went from accounting to business because I was going to find the best fit for me. The counselors I spoke to, and even sometimes

some of the staff were very encouraging. They would say, 'You'll always look at that position that you're taking on as a job. You won't find a career unless you endured the sin.' In 2007, I was supposed to take my finals. My mom called and offered to keep my kids while I studied. She always called to check on me. I was packing up my books, and I received a call from my sister-in-law and a cousin of mine. Her voice was very frantic. She said, 'Mom had a heart attack. You have to get to the house.' I didn't know what to do. I was scared. I was worried about the kids and school. I went to the hospital, but my mom was gone. My mom was so proud of me. She gave me an

abundance of support. I went to Monroe and I worked two jobs. The experience that I learned at Monroe and from my mom is that no matter what you're doing, you can apply real-life actions with it and get a better result. My professors made a big impact on me. I spoke to someone who helped me with financial aid, deferment, and they let me take my exams three weeks prior to my graduation. I was able to walk and I was happy because I saw so many graduates. I became an assistant teacher in 2013. I returned for winter classes. I'm still waiting to accomplish that goal. I'm still waiting to get that degree. I'm on that path and I'm proud of myself.

“ I was able to walk and I was happy because I saw so many graduates.
- Janie R. Hemmans ”

2006 BENITA R. CRISTIAN

AAS Accounting '06
Interviewed on 09/03/2021



Associate in Applied Science, accounting major; graduation, June 3, 2005

I DECIDED TO ATTEND MONROE

College because studying there was very fast; the semester lasted three or four months. It was a little expensive for college, but everything was okay. The staff was very nice, and they assisted me in getting the help that I needed. I would highly recommend Monroe College to other people. The teachers were really nice. I have no complaints. They helped me apply for employment. I started working in the Department of Education as a teaching assistant in August 2006. Monroe College taught me how to apply for a job. Everything was fine. I really enjoyed attending Monroe. I started my career in January 2004 and graduated on June 3, 2005. After graduating with an associate's degree in accounting, I continued to attend Monroe College in order to graduate with a bachelor's in accounting. The accounting teachers were very prepared to help their students achieve their goals. That helped me a lot. At Monroe College the teachers are highly prepared and know how to teach and help students achieve their goals; I really enjoyed attending Monroe College. I recommend it!

1989 JAMES JOHNSON

AAS Accounting '89
Interviewed on 11/10/2021



I HAD TO WORK, BUT IN MY OLDER

years I said, 'I have to get a degree.' At that time, Monroe was the place to get that. I went there and enjoyed it. The teachers that taught Accounting 101 were excellent. Because I was in the field of bookkeeping at the time, it worked beautifully for me. I did it at night because I couldn't go during the day since I had to take care of my family. I really enjoyed my experience at Monroe. I had a really good time and was doing great. The professors were well-versed in the knowledge that they were teaching us. It really opened my head up, and I absorbed everything I could. I was able to become a controller of a footwear manufacturing company, where I supervised 12 people in the accounting department. To this day, I'm a public accountant. I have my own little practice. It all started at Monroe. They gave me the foundation and energy to do that. I am where I am today because of Monroe College.




1985 MARIA BAEZ

Interviewed on 08/19/2021 

I HAD A GREAT UPBRINGING, AND MY PARENTS were great. I had my daughter at 21, and she changed my life. I said, 'I can't be hanging out and doing things I'm not supposed to be doing.' I dropped out of high school, and I thought I couldn't do it because it had been so long. As I got older, I decided that it was time for me to change my life. I decided to go to Monroe, and that was the best thing that I have done. They were so helpful with my financial aid, and they did everything that they needed to do to help me. I needed to change my life to give me and my daughter a better life, and I could not have done that without the help of Monroe. I started working in the community later on to become an elected official. I represented 160,000 individuals from the same area that I grew up in. I was able to give myself and my daughter a lifestyle that I would not have had any other way. Monroe changed my life. They help so many individuals; the opportunity that they give everyone is just unbelievable.

2008 GREGORY CRUSE, JR.

AAS Computer Information Systems '08,
BS Information Technology '09 
Interviewed on 08/18/2021

I HAVE ALWAYS BEEN FASCINATED with New York. Monroe also gave me a scholarship. I liked what I saw and what they were offering, so I said, 'Why not?' I still keep in contact with my roommates and quite a few people that I started out with Monroe. One of my closest friends from Monroe lives literally one stop away from me, and he helped me move into my current apartment. I also had fun in the IT Club. We had trips to haunted houses and the Empire State Building. We did paintballing, snowboarding, and skiing. I got to experience all of those because of Monroe, and I met other people along the way during those trips. It was awesome. My favorite professor would be Professor Jewett. He was serious, but he was down to earth and a cool guy. He was an outstanding guy to talk to. He was upfront. He never sugarcoated anything. He always kept it real with you and his constructive criticism helped me a lot, not just in his classes but in any other class that I took. The teacher and the staff were always welcoming. Career services are always there to help you. They genuinely want you to succeed.

2016 ABIDEMI ADEBISI OJERANTI

Interviewed on 11/17/2021 

I ENROLLED IN MONROE College through a reference at that time I was new in the country. I came to the United States, so the family who I stayed with, one of their daughters is an alumna of Monroe. That's why she recommended the school to me. Monroe opened opportunities for me, so I was able to seek a job after graduation.




Class activity



Graduation day

1987 LECLAIR GLOVER

AAS Secretarial Science '87
Interviewed on 08/11/2021 

I WANTED TO HAVE A HOME business, but at that time my son was young, so I wanted to stay home. I wanted to do hair and went to Wilfred Beauty Academy. I was walking up towards Jerome Avenue and I looked up. I saw Monroe and walked in. They explained the program to me and what they had available. At that time it was computer science, accounting, and secretarial science. They explained also that this was going to be the first year they were going to offer an associate's in applied science so that if I wanted to go to a four year, I could transfer. I decided math was not my strong suit, but the one job I always said I would never ever do with that was a secretary. It was the best choice for me. I was good at it, and I had more authority than I ever thought. I did not know what being an admin was about. I did not understand it, but once I got into the field, I realized I was very much an organizer and absolutely loved it.

2020 JULISSA STEFANY MATOS

AAS Business Administration '18,
BBA Business Management '20
Interviewed on 09/03/2021

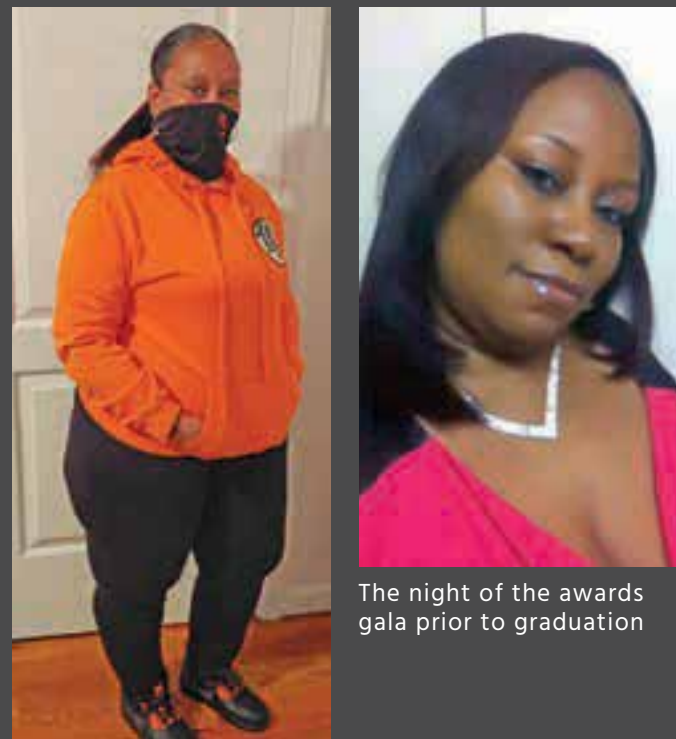


MY BROTHER ALSO went to Monroe College, and we were able to graduate together in 2018. He's in the Army, and he got another deployment before he graduated. He had to come back, and when he came back he was in the same class with me - which was an amazing experience. My brother is like my best friend. Monroe was the place for me to go. Back in 2006 I went to apply, but I didn't have my immigration status up to date. I was able to finish my GED and my degree at the same time at Monroe which was an amazing experience. In 2016 I started my journey with Monroe. It was meant to be. I feel like Monroe got me to accomplish two different goals that I had at the same time and it made my experience even better. Lisa Jackson, who was part of the Career Pathway Program, was an amazing help to me through the process -

like getting my classes and my schedule to work for me. All of the professors were amazing. I can't complain about any of them. They were very supportive. The way they explained things to me when I didn't get it was amazing. Professor Williams was very good. Monroe College's impact on my life has been great. Now I know where I want to focus on my career, and I look forward to continued improvement. I'm working on my own business thanks to what I learned at Monroe. I'm helping others open their businesses as well. I'm putting into practice everything that I learned. Monroe is like family. You don't feel like you're going to college - it's like you belong to a family. President Jerome gets involved with the students. That makes you feel more secure. It's not like you're just paying to go to college. You belong there.

2011 NIKKI A. PURCELL

AAS Medical Administration '11,
BBA Health Services Administration '12
Interviewed on 10/08/2021



The night of the awards gala prior to graduation

Now

I WANTED TO ATTEND MONROE BECAUSE

it was something I wanted to do before I had my kids and I kept putting it off because I was working crazy hours. When my oldest kids were getting a little bit older, I said, 'I'm going to do it. I have to do it.' Out of all my siblings, I'm the only one who finished school. I enjoyed the hours and the classroom time, it felt like it went by so fast. I enjoyed the instructors, my classmates, and the colleagues that I had at the school. I enjoyed everything about it.



2019 **LADY L. CASTILLO**

AAS Criminal Justice '19
Interviewed on 09/01/2021

THAT WAS MY FIRST TIME TAKING online classes. I was going through a lot because I work in a hospital. I was in my last semester for my bachelor's degree in criminal justice.





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