

PTS NEWSLETTER

PIERRE TOUSSAINT SCHOLARSHIP FUND — ARCHDIOCESE OF NEW YORK

S U M M E R 2 0 2 4 E D I T I O N

A WORD FROM THE DIRECTOR



Director with PT-MC Scholars in New Orleans for a Pre-Dental Conference

The end of another academic year is upon us and it's been quite a busy year. Scholars traveled to Washington D.C. for the National Black Catholic Congress last summer and again in the Fall for the Ignatian Family Teach-In for Justice. Some PT-MC Scholars attended a Pre-Dental conference in New Orleans, Louisiana and

others attended the Healthy Churches 2030 Roadmap Tour Conference in Birmingham, Alabama and Richmond, Virginia. We traveled to Lourdes, France for Our Lady's Pilgrimage in July and then to Lisbon, Portugal for World Youth Day in August. It's been a wonderful year and I look forward to continuing the momentum as our new class of scholars joins us this summer. With new scholars and a new academic year comes new opportunities. Be sure to look out for information regarding scholar travel, service projects, educational events and programs, and be sure to take advantage of all that's afforded to you. Always know that we are here to support you on your academic journey and beyond! To our scholar graduates, I wish you abundant blessings and much success! Please stay in touch with us and your fellow scholars and never hesitate to reach out if we can support you as well! Know that you're all being prayed for daily! Until next time...work hard & pray often! - Leah



(L) Director with Scholar, Hope D., on a Pilgrimage in Lourdes, France; (R) Director & Chaplain with Scholars in Portugal for World Youth Day.

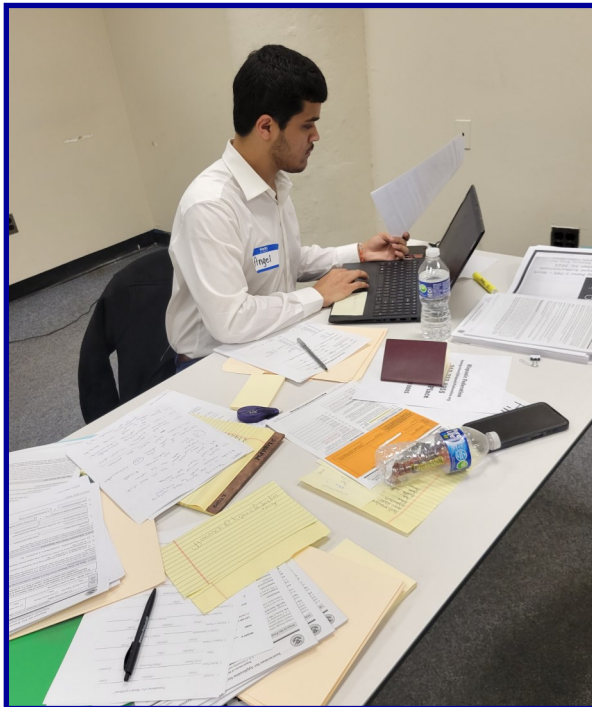
Annual PTSF Awards Dinner



The Pierre Toussaint Scholarship Fund Awards Dinner, “Celebrating Diversity in Leadership,” was held on Monday, November 6th at Guastavino’s in Manhattan. Vincent D. Rougeau, College of Holy Cross President was the Honoree. Alumni & Scholars assisted throughout the evening.



Hispanic Federation Scholar Volunteers



Social Justice Coordinator, Colin B., and scholar, Angel, volunteered at the Hispanic Federation’s Immigration Clinic to support recently arrived migrants in obtaining Employment Authorization Documents. Angel assisted in filling out forms for migrants with asylum seeking status - a task that immigration attorneys normally complete.

Scholars Friendsgiving



Fr. Kareem Smith, Program Chaplain and Pastor of St. Michael the Archangel Church, hosted the Annual Scholars Friendsgiving gathering at his parish in Co-op City in the Bronx. Scholars and Alumni enjoyed a fun-filled evening.

Winter Workshop



The Winter Workshop was held on January 4th at the New York Institute of Technology (NYIT). This year three different workshops were held in the morning and three different workshops were held in the afternoon. Scholars chose in advance which workshops they wanted to attend, with one option being a Red Cross Certification Course. Scholars also donated over 200lbs of food to the NYIT 'Grizzly Cupboard' supporting students in need.

Mental Health First Aid Training



Mental Health First Aid Training was held on January 11th for any scholar interested in being MHFA Certified. Over 20 scholars and some specially invited high school seniors participated in this full day training, facilitated by the Director of Behavioral Health & Social Work at SOMOS Community Care, Mrs. Riquelmy Lamour.

MLK Day of Service



On Monday, January 15th scholars participated in the MLK Day of Service in collaboration with our service partner, Catholic Charities of NY, by volunteering at the UJA Federation of New York (United Jewish Appeal). Working at the Met Council, scholars assisted in packing food essentials such as Halal food boxes, emergency food boxes, and spice kits. They also packed non-food essential products like literacy kits for New Yorkers in need.

Archdiocesan Black History Month Mass



Scholars, Tyler G. and Denzel H., participated in the Annual Archdiocesan Black History Month Mass at St. Patrick's Cathedral on Sunday, February 4th with Principal Celebrant, Archbishop Charles G. Palmer-Buckle the Metropolitan Archbishop of the Cape Coast, Ghana. Scholars and Alumni also participated in the Family & Leadership Prayer Brunch that was held on Saturday, February 3rd at St. Paul the Apostle Church in Manhattan.

Meet & Greet with MLK III @ St. Thomas Aquinas College



Alumni Scholars, Malaika D. and Tyler G. attended a lecture and private meet & greet with Martin Luther King, III, the eldest son of the Civil Rights Activists, Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. and Coretta Scott King, on February 12th at St. Thomas Aquinas College in Sparkill, NY.

City College Black History Month Mass



CCNY Catholic Club
invites you to
B.H.M. Holy Mass

When: Thursday Feb 29th 12:15 - 1:15pm
Where: At the Church of the Annunciation
88 Convent Avenue. New York, NY 10027

✉ ccnycatholic@gmail.com 📞 (347) 570-8091

City College Scholars, Daniel G. and Tyler G., attended the CCNY Catholic Club's Black History Month Mass held at the Church of Annunciation on Thursday, February 29th.

Pre-Dental Conference in New Orleans



Scholars, Abeni T. and Carol R., along with Alumnus, Darling M., attended the American Dental Education Association (ADEA) Go-Dental Recruitment Event in New Orleans, LA on March 9th. This event is geared toward high school, community college and four-year college students interested in dentistry. It offers individuals interested in dentistry the chance to meet admissions officers from U.S. and Canadian dental schools and attend presentations to help them be successful applicants.

PT Scholars Food Pantry Grant Awards



 Pierre Toussaint Scholars Program
FOOD PANTRY FUND

The Pierre Toussaint Scholars Program – Food Pantry Fund is now available to help support archdiocesan parishes during this time of need after the Christmas season. To apply for a **one-time award for your parish food pantry**, click the link below to complete the online application by the **March 1st deadline**.

FOOD PANTRY APPLICATION

“... share your bread with the hungry, bring the afflicted and homeless into your house; clothe the naked when you see them, and do not turn your back on your own flesh... If you lavish your food on the hungry and satisfy the afflicted; then your light shall rise in the darkness, and your gloom shall become like midday.”
Isaiah 58: 7, 10



FOR QUESTIONS, EMAIL OBM@ARCHNY.ORG

Congratulations to the parish recipients of this year’s PTS Food Pantry Grants:

- St. Mark the Evangelist Church, Harlem
- St. Luke’ Church, Bronx
- St. Paul & St. Ann’s Church, Congers
- Church of the Ascension, NYC

Thanks to the dedicated work of our Scholar & Alumni Committee:
 Naana A. ‘26, Mary Lou D. ‘21, Tyler G. ‘23, Gabriela G. ‘23
 & Angel M. ‘26


St. Nicholas Project Adopt-A-Family



During the Christmas Season, the PT Scholars Program participated in the Catholic Charities St. Nicholas Project’s Adopt-A-Family Program. Our adopted family was persecuted in Haiti because of the father’s work in advocating for the LGBTQ community. Thus he had to flee with his family, including his wife and four children. Scholars, Alumni & Board members generously donated over \$240 in gift cards and over 187 items including coats, winter wraps/clothing, pajamas and toys for the children. Five big bins were prepared, one for each family member.


Mass of Deliverance for Haiti





 ARCHDIOCESE OF NEW YORK
 CULTURAL DIVERSITY APOSTOLATE
 Black Ministry


MASS OF DELIVERANCE
 for the **People of Haiti**
 A Mass to pray for peace in Haiti amid the ongoing turmoil.



SUNDAY
APRIL 21
10:15 AM

Celebrant:
H.E. TIMOTHY CARDINAL DOLAN
 Location:
ST. PATRICK'S CATHEDRAL
 501 Ave. New York, NY
 Live streamed on YouTube @SaintPatricksCathedralNYC

All Are Welcome!



Scholars, Malaika D., Sophonie B. and Aniya J. attended the Mass of Deliverance for Haiti at St. Patrick’s Cathedral on Sunday, April 21st. Followed by a reception in the Cardinal’s residence.

Other Happenings with Scholars & Alumni...



Director visited Scholar, Brooke B., '25 at Spelman College in Atlanta, GA.



Director with Alumna, Alexandria D. '22, and a sorority member at her initiation reception to Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Incorporated.



Director with Alumna, Mark A. '19, on February 29th, at the New York Stock Exchange Member Book Signing Ceremony where he was officially initiated and reserved his place in American history by adding his signature to the New York Stock Exchange Constitution, a tradition that began in 1792.



Director with the REAL DIRECTOR, Br. Tyrone Davis, and PTS Board Member, Tiffani Hinds, at the Brooklyn Diocese's VBCC Youth Leadership Ambassador Program Dinner where Brother was being honored.



Director with Scholar, Jason D. '24 & EOP Director at the SUNY Stony Brook EOP Awards Ceremony.

IMPOSTER SYNDROME PRESENTATION by Chelsey Leveque '23

Earlier this year, I had the pleasure of attending the Eastern Psychological Association Conference (EPA) in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. EPA is the oldest regional psychology conference in the United States, having been established in 1896. Its main goal is to spread expert knowledge to further psychology as a science and as a profession. Social, clinical, cognitive, and developmental psychology are a few of the sectors that the conference brings together each year, allowing members to share their unique perspectives and scientific research. By creating a diverse community filled with a plethora of knowledge and interests, EPA continues to connect and inspire students and professionals alike. I was initially invited by my alma mater, Manhattan College, to submit my capstone abstract for the annual conference, and was thrilled to find out that it was accepted. **With the support of the P.T.-Mother Cabrini Scholars Program**, I was able to share my research with a larger audience and receive helpful insights to enhance the impact of my work. Entitled "Does stereotype threat heighten imposter syndrome in students from historically marginalized communities?," my capstone research explores the interplay of stereotype threat on feelings of fraudulence in college students of color.

The term imposter syndrome or imposter phenomenon (IP) was first coined by psychologists Dr. Pauline Clance and Dr. Suzanne Imes in the 1970s to describe intellectual phoniness or professional/academic fraudulence. Those who experience the intensity of IP may withdraw from their academic pursuits, experience persistent feelings of inadequacy, and even display an unhealthy pressure to succeed. Research has shown that feelings of imposter syndrome are often amplified in people of color as a result of common stereotypes and microaggressions that pervade everyday life. According to Dr. Claude Steele, stereotype threat, or the fear of confirming a negative stereotype about one's social group, can have a stigmatizing effect on attitudes and actions even in situations where stereotypes are not spoken aloud. He, alongside Dr. Joshua Aronson explored this from an academic perspective and found that stereotype threat increased anxiety and negatively affected the test performance of African American participants. **Knowing the impact of this phenomenon, I was driven to investigate its influence on one's perception of self and their capabilities.**

For my research project, participants were asked to complete a survey that included an experimental narrative aimed to induce IP, the Clance IP Scale to measure feelings of fraudulence, 14 SAT/GRE Verbal Reasoning Exam questions to check manipulation, and a post-test evaluation to gauge participants feelings of self. Participants' levels of imposter syndrome were measured prior and following their assignment to an experimental condition (i.e. Stereotype Threat, Values Affirmation, Control). Those who were assigned to the Values Affirmation Group were tasked with completing a short activity aimed to reinforce self-worth, followed by neutral instructions, similar to the Control Group. On the contrary, individuals assigned to the Stereotype Threat Group read instructions suggesting that the forthcoming exam questions would assess their intellectual competence. Participants in this group were also made aware of the historical discrepancy between BIPOC students' performance on standardized tests compared to that of their White counterparts. I hypothesized that this threat would increase feelings of IP in participants of color thereby interfering with their exam performance and their feelings of self. Moreover, participants in the Values Affirmation Group were hypothesized to report the least amount of IP overall.

Upon gathering all of my results, the findings revealed that the relationship between stereotype threat and imposter syndrome was not evident in the present sample. Instead, there was a significant main effect for time indicating that regardless of condition and race, all participants reported higher levels of imposter syndrome at the end of the survey. This was definitely a big surprise! This led me to conclude that the length and difficulty of the exam questions explained why participants experienced increased feelings of fraudulence.

Although my findings did not support my hypotheses, **I was glad to have been able to share my research with others at EPA.** I even spoke extensively to a professor from DePaul University who gave me valuable feedback and encouraged me to rerun my study in the hopes of getting more significant results. It was truly refreshing to connect with and learn from individuals who are equally passionate about psychology! This experience not only broadened my perspective but also reinforced my commitment to contributing meaningful research to the field as a whole.



ARCHDIOCESE
OF NEW YORK

Meet

PIERRE TOUSSAINT

and the Archdiocese of New York's

PIERRE TOUSSAINT SCHOLARS



*This #BlackHistoryMonth,
we honor the Venerable
Pierre Toussaint!*

Credited by many with being the father of Catholic Charities in New York, he was instrumental in raising funds for the first Catholic orphanage and began the city's first school for black children. He is the only lay person buried in St. Patrick's Cathedral.

In 1983, The Pierre Toussaint Scholarship Fund was established to provide scholarships to graduating high school seniors of diverse backgrounds from public, private, and parochial schools throughout the Archdiocese of New York. Swipe to meet one of our recipients.



ARCHDIOCESE
OF NEW YORK



**PIERRE TOUSSAINT
SCHOLAR**

Malaika Dewes

Malaika is a passionate advocate for health equity and has embarked on a journey of exploration and discovery in the field of science. She is currently pursuing her graduate studies in Health Policy and Management. Upon graduation from her Master's program, Malaika plans to pursue a Doctor of Public Health degree.



**PIERRE TOUSSAINT
SCHOLAR**

Mary Lou De Jesus

Mary Lou is a loud and proud South Bronx native! She has earned a B.A. from an Ivy League institution in Biological Sciences and Public Health and is a co-founder of the Association of Filipino Scientists in America. Mary Lou's dedication to her community drives her to pursue a career in medicine. She is currently applying to medical school.



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**PIERRE TOUSSAINT
SCHOLAR**

Chelsey Leveque

In May of 2023, Chelsey earned her Bachelor of Science in Psychology with a dual Minor in Chemistry and Biology. Chelsey is now a post-baccalaureate fellow conducting neuroscience research. She is working with a multidisciplinary team studying the genetic underpinnings of psychiatric disorders.



ARCHDIOCESE OF NEW YORK
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Black Ministry

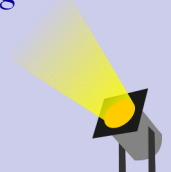
During Black History Month the Archdiocese of New York highlighted Pierre Toussaint and the Pierre Toussaint Scholars Program. And on February 11th, the International Day of Women and Girls in Science they spotlighted the Pierre Toussaint - Mother Cabrini Scholars on the archdiocesan social media outlets.

Alumni Scholars in the spotlight were:

Malaika D. '21,

Mary Lou D. '22

Chelsea L. '23.





CONGRATULATIONS TO OUR 2024 GRADUATES

GABRIELLA B.
FORDHAM UNIVERSITY GRADUATE SCHOOL
OF SOCIAL SERVICE (NEW YORK, NY)
MASTER OF SOCIAL WORK
PARISH: ANNUNCIATION - OUR LADY OF FATIMA,
CRESTWOOD

HIGH SCHOOL: MARIA REGINA HIGH SCHOOL
UNDERGRAD: IONA UNIVERSITY

“The Pierre Toussaint Scholars Program has been an incredible support for me for the past five years. It has connected me to a community of faith based and service driven individuals, like myself. It has given me the opportunity to give back to my community. I have been able to strengthen my skills and faith by connecting with other individuals who share the same commitment to faith and to serving others. I wish my fellow scholars and graduates the best of luck!”

(POST GRADUATE PLANS: “I am in the process of studying for my licensing exam and applying to various social worker positions throughout Westchester County and New York City.”)



MALAIKA D.
SUNY DOWNSTATE SCHOOL OF PUBLIC HEALTH
(BROOKLYN, NY)

MASTER OF PUBLIC HEALTH
PARISH: ST. JOSEPH & ST. BONIFACE, SPRING VALLEY
HIGH SCHOOL: RAMAPO HIGH SCHOOL
UNDERGRAD: SUNY ALBANY

“The Pierre Toussaint-Mother Cabrini Scholars Program has been a cornerstone of my college experience, providing invaluable support and enriching opportunities. Through this program, I had the incredible chance to travel to West Africa, which broadened my perspective on global cultures and history. Attending the Balm in Gilead Healthy Churches Roadmap Tour in Alabama further underscored the importance of health and community in our spiritual lives. These experiences have not only enhanced my academic journey

but also deepened my understanding of my heritage and community service. To my fellow scholars and graduates, I wish you all continued success and fulfillment in your future endeavors. Let’s carry forward the lessons and values we’ve gained and make a positive impact in our communities.”

(POST GRADUATE PLANS: “I will be matriculating into the Doctor of Public Health (DrPH) program at New York Medical College this Fall.”)

CONGRATULATIONS TO OUR 2024 GRADUATES



**LETICIA F.
BINGHAMTON UNIVERSITY COLLEGE OF
COMMUNITY & PUBLIC AFFAIRS**

(BINGHAMTON, NY)

**MASTER OF PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION
PARISH: OUR LADY OF VICTORY & SACRED
HEART, MOUNT VERNON
HIGH SCHOOL: THE MONTFORT ACADEMY
UNDERGRAD: BINGHAMTON UNIVERSITY**

“Being part of the PTSP Family these past five years has been one of the greatest blessings of my life. I will always remember all the incredible memories I shared with my fellow scholars, from our meet-ups throughout the year to our days of service. The most special memory I will take with me though was being able to pilgrimage through Portugal during World Youth Day. Thank you PTSP for being my second family! I wish all, the current and future scholars, all the best in their life journeys and look forward to hearing about your successes and accomplishments!”

(**POST GRADUATE PLANS:** “After graduation I will be embarking on a year of service at a non-profit organization named Program for Torture Victims in California, aiding and serving victims of human rights violations, particularly migrants and refugees.”)



SELENA P.

**MERCY UNIVERSITY (NEW YORK, NY)
MASTER OF SCIENCE IN HR MANAGEMENT
PARISH: OUR LADY OF MOUNT CARMEL, BRONX
HIGH SCHOOL: AQUINAS HIGH SCHOOL
UNDERGRAD: ST. FRANCIS COLLEGE**

“The PTSF has been a highlight in my life. Not only did it help me in my education but allowed me to be part of a family. Today I stand proud as a Latina who wants to make a change and support people who look like me through my profession in Human Resource Management. I am beyond grateful for all the opportunities, resources, and support that I have received from the program. To my fellow scholars please use all the resources that you are provided with. I not only dedicate my degree to my family but to the PTSF as well, who helped me be where I am today.”

(**POST GRADUATE PLANS:** “I will work as a Surgical & Finance Coordinator at Medical Associates of NY, a department at Mount Sinai.”)



CONGRATULATIONS TO OUR 2024 GRADUATES

SYNNIE C.

**CORNELL UNIVERSITY (ITHACA, NY)
BS IN GLOBAL & PUBLIC HEALTH SCIENCES
PARISH: ST. NICHOLAS OF TOLENTINE, BRONX
HIGH SCHOOL: ACADEMY OF MOUNT ST. URSULA**

“Pierre Toussaint has offered me a community of scholars and support throughout my college journey. The program introduced me to a vibrant community of fellow scholars who shared similar ambitions and challenges. This community became my support system, offering guidance and encouragement. This sense of belonging fostered within this group was invaluable, especially during times of academic or personal struggle. Moreover the program instilled in me a deep sense of motivation and accountability. Knowing that others believed in my potential pushed me to strive for excellence in all aspects of my college experience. Overall, the Pierre Toussaint program not only aided in my academic pursuits but also enriched my college years with a network of support, motivation and a sense of belonging.”

(POST GRADUATE PLANS: “After college I will be working as a Dermatology Medical Assistant in Soho, NY, prior to applying to medical school.”)



JASON D.

**SUNY STONY BROOK
BS IN BIOLOGY INTERDISCIPLINARY CONCENTRATION
PARISH: ST. NICHOLAS OF TOLENTINE, BRONX
HIGH SCHOOL: CARDINAL HAYES HIGH SCHOOL**

“The Pierre Toussaint-Mother Cabrini Program supported me to become the individual I am today. This community gave me a second family and encouraged me always to seize opportunities and pursue my career goal of becoming a physician. Without the PTS program, my college experience would not have been the same, as this program provided an abundance of advice, resources, and aid that paved the way for me to be the successful person I am today. I am truly proud

to be a Pierre Toussaint-Mother Cabrini Scholar and honored to promote healthier churches, families and communities.”

(POST GRADUATE PLANS: “I will take a gap year to study for the MCAT exam while continuing my research in Ecology & Phylogenetics at Stony Brook. I will also continue my work as a Emergency Medical Technician or Scribe.”)

CONGRATULATIONS TO OUR 2024 GRADUATES



DRAMANE D.

CORNELL UNIVERSITY (ITHACA, NY)

BS IN INDUSTRIAL LABOR RELATIONS

**PARISH: ST. JOSEPH OF THE HOLY FAMILY,
HARLEM**

HIGH SCHOOL: REGIS HIGH SCHOOL

“The Pierre Toussaint Scholars Program has been an invaluable support system throughout my college journey. It’s more than just a scholarship; it’s a community of like-minded individuals dedicated to academic excellence, service and leadership. The program has provided me with mentorship and opportunities for personal and professional growth that have been instrumental in shaping my college experience. The chance to engage with various service projects such as gardening, reconstruction and even summer retreats has not only allowed me to give back to communities in need, but also deepened my understanding of social responsibility. It is important to create positive change that uplifts and empowers individuals as well as communities.”

(POST GRADUATE PLANS: “At this moment, I am considering full time offers based in NYC. I plan on a position in consulting/audit related professions.”)



MELANIE H.

BINGHAMTON UNIVERSITY

(BINGHAMTON, NY)

BS IN BIOLOGY

PARISH: OUR LADY OF GOOD COUNSEL NYC

**HIGH SCHOOL: NYC LAB SCHOOL FOR
COLLABORATIVE STUDIES**

“The Pierre Toussaint Scholars Program has been an amazing opportunity for me over the past four years. When I first started as a freshman in 2020 I had no idea what to expect from college life and academia and therefore I felt a bit isolated especially because the pandemic had a pretty significant impact on my mental health. I think over time as things started to get back to

normal I found myself starting to socialize again and feel comfortable making friends. There were definitely many ups and downs in college but I think knowing that I was not going through these challenges alone helped me feel better about the process. It was intimidating going into college but when I met two other scholars who were older than me and attending the same school I felt a little better. Over time I was able to make more friends in the program and although we are studying at different schools and have different majors, we can all come back to this community.”

(POST GRADUATE PLANS: “I plan to work for a year while I apply to vet schools.

I recently interviewed with Cornell Weill Medicine for an Animal Care Technician position.”)



CONGRATULATIONS TO OUR 2024 GRADUATES

NATHANAEL P.

**BROWN UNIVERSITY (PROVIDENCE, RI)
BA IN INTERNATIONAL & PUBLIC AFFAIRS /
DATA FLUENCY**

**PARISH: CHRIST THE KING, BRONX
HIGH SCHOOL: REGIS HIGH SCHOOL**

“My time in college has been a period marked by intense growth and transformation in ways I cannot even begin to articulate. As I saw my circumstances, perspectives and individuality change throughout the years, I was at times lost and worried as I was excited and hopeful. New beginnings would bring sad goodbyes and with the pressure chamber that is college, becoming an adult, and frankly life, at times it could feel like I was a powerless victim to this cycle. But, as semesters concluded and I yearned for a pause, a moment to step back and reflect, I found the Pierre Toussaint Scholars Program to be my haven for retreat, reflection, and rejuvenation. Bringing me back to New York and my roots, encouraging me to write reflective literatures, and reminding me of the importance of my faith, I owe much of my success and sense of being throughout this rewarding yet tumultuous process to PTS.”

(POST GRADUATE PLANS: “I will be working as an Analyst at Deloitte GPS.”)



OMAR R.

**COLLEGE OF THE HOLY CROSS
(WORCESTER, MA)**

BA IN POLITICAL SCIENCE

**PARISH: ST. FRANCIS XAVIER, NYC
HIGH SCHOOL: XAVIER HIGH SCHOOL**

“PTSP is like a family to me! Through the program I was able to go to D.C. and Portugal with other young brilliant Catholics. These experiences were definitely the highlight of the program as I got to embark on deep spiritual and sociopolitical journeys where I questioned what I am doing to make the world a better place. I hope that other scholars take advantage of these opportunities because they truly are life changing. I’d like to thank everyone who made PTSP feel like the family it is. I can’t wait to see how the rest of my fellow scholars & now alums go forward to help change the world!”

(POST GRADUATE PLANS: “I am going to be a summer intern for Congressman Hakeem Jeffries and begin preparation for the LSAT and application to law school.”)

CONGRATULATIONS TO OUR 2024 GRADUATES



JOSEPH S.
WORCESTER POLYTECHNIC INSTITUTE
(WORCESTER, MA.)

BS IN MECHANICAL ENGINEERING
PARISH: ST. PATRICK'S CHURCH, BEDFORD
HIGH SCHOOL: IONA PREPARATORY SCHOOL

“The Pierre Toussaint Scholars Program has been an amazing support for me during my time at WPI. I am grateful for all of the opportunities and support the program has given me. Being a part of the program has helped me to remain dedicated to the faith and service during my time in college. I enjoyed attending the winter workshops and summer retreats, as well as having the opportunity to serve on the Food Pantry Committee. The Pierre Toussaint Scholars Program has been a blessing and I am thankful for all of the amazing people I have been able to meet and work with through the program! To the incoming class of scholars, do not be afraid to reach out to the program and be willing to give of your time. Congratulations to the class of 2024 and know I will be praying for you all! Continue to glorify God through your lives!”



(POST GRADUATE PLANS: “After graduation I will be joining staff at the Fellowship of Catholic University Students (FOCUS) as a missionary. I will work with a team of other missionaries and a university’s campus ministry to share the Gospel with college students!”)



EMERYC S.
NEW YORK UNIVERSITY (NEW YORK, NY)
BA IN PUBLIC HEALTH & ANTHROPOLOGY
PARISH: ST. RITA OF CASCIA, BRONX
HIGH SCHOOL: XAVIER HIGH SCHOOL

“Pierre Toussaint was a pivotal part of my collegiate undergrad career. When I started college I wasn’t as close to God due to my transition into adulthood; however, Pierre Toussaint reminded me that this was the exact time to get closer to him. From workshops to retreats I was able to get a better idea of what it means to walk by faith and not by sight, as well as what it means to be a person of service.”

(POST GRADUATE PLANS:

“I am applying to graduate school and am hoping to start in August.”)

NIGERIAN FIELD VISIT by Emeryc Sogbossi '24

In January 2020, I had the opportunity to travel to Nigeria and further progress on my project aims. The opportunity was priceless and an essential part of my journey as an aspiring physician scientist.

The parent study *Community Mobilization for Improved Clean Cookstove Uptake* (CFCS), led by my mentor Dr. Gbenga Ogedegbe, focused on the effectiveness of Community Mobilization (CM) in both adoption and sustainability of improved cookstoves; with the end goal of controlling blood pressure (BP) along with consequent cardiovascular diseases (CVDs) and non-communicable diseases, the project oversees 32 peri-urban communities in which these CM strategies are implemented.

As a derivative of the parent study, one of my NIH-sponsored grant's aims focused on the intervention subset of this project which included, but not limited to the training of community mobilizers, community health officers (CHOs), community health extension workers (CHEWS), health education officers (HEOs), and environmental health officers (EHOs). The process entailed familiarization and engagement with stakeholders, implementation of research training programs for both clinical and non-clinical staff in local settings, survey data collection and analysis.

During the week-long experience on site I found myself stationed in Ikeja, a spirited town located on the mainland of Lagos. On the first day, I was introduced to the field team and was tasked with data entry of household surveys into REDCAP. This task which I familiarized myself with at the IEHE office, demanded a thorough understanding of the coding software along with analysis for locating potential errors within the survey (for example someone answering cooking related questions that were meant to be skipped per the survey directions). Following my data entry input, I facilitated the training of our 4th cohort of implementers by distributing pre-evaluation assessments on hypertension knowledge. I was able to have my own learning moment when one of the facilitators, Mrs. Joy demonstrated how to the

implementers and I, how to physically use the CF-CS. The rest of the evening was spent learning about anthropometrics and BP measurements for primary preventative care purposes; post training surveys were then handed out and collected by my colleagues and I.

The subsequent days consisted of more REDCAP data entry along with some data analysis of the pre and post training surveys. On the day 4 there were a lot more learning moments as I got to learn more about *Addressing Climate Change FOR Improved Clean Cookstoves*, a study integration that allows the parent study to go a step further by adding black carbon (BC) measurements in conjunction with particulate matter (PM) in order to fully understand the HAP emissions that have a greater impact on increased BP. During this session I familiarized myself with Berkeley Air, an organization focused on the widespread adoption of clean and efficient household energy solutions. I expanded my network by working under Dr. Michael Johnson, technical director of Berkeley Air, and learned the protocol for measuring household concentrations of PM 2.5 and BC. An important takeaway from this session was not only that BC is a direct result of incomplete combustions of wood and fossil fuels, but that it has significant direct impacts on our climate, agriculture and human health. My sixth and seventh days were spent in Ketu, one of the peri urban communities of our study; there I was able to interact with our study participants and learn more about their experience with the LPG stoves. As Demi, my colleague, was translating to English the answers to my questions in the non-English speaking households, I found myself immersed in Yoruba culture. To my surprise, the setting differed from that which I was used to in Ikeja. The community was a bit more peaceful and the houses spaced out. Getting from one household to another however was rendered facile thanks to our community mobilizers (Mrs. Kasali and Mrs. Mary).

Conducting Data entry: The subsequent days consisted of more REDCAP data entry along with some data analysis of the pre and post training surveys. On the day 4 there were a lot more learning moments as I got to learn more about *Addressing Climate Change FOR Improved Clean Cookstoves*, a study integration that allows the parent study to go a step further by adding black carbon (BC) measurements in conjunction with particulate matter (PM) in order to fully understand the HAP emissions that have a greater impact on increased BP. During this session I familiarized myself with Berkeley Air, an organization focused on the widespread adoption of clean and efficient household energy solutions. I expanded my network by working under Dr. Michael Johnson, technical director of Berkeley Air, and learned the protocol for measuring household concentrations of PM 2.5 and BC. An important takeaway from this session was not only that BC is a direct result of incomplete combustions of wood and fossil fuels, but that it has significant direct impacts on our climate, agriculture and human health. My sixth and seventh days were spent in Ketu, one of the peri urban communities of our study; there I was able to interact with our study participants and learn more about their experience with the LPG stoves. As Demi, my colleague, was translating to English the answers to my questions in the non-English speaking households, I found myself immersed in Yoruba culture. To my surprise, the setting differed from that which I was used to in Ikeja. The community was a bit more peaceful and the houses spaced out. Getting from one household to another however was rendered facile thanks to our community mobilizers (Mrs. Kasali and Mrs. Mary).

A common theme that I noticed when obtaining responses from participants was the appreciation for the LPG stoves due to how quick they allowed cooking to be. The women in charge of cooking were grateful for this as it allowed them to prepare meals for their kids before school and to not use unclean fuel unless necessary. On the other hand however, all but one household still used wood fuel for their cooking. When asked why, the women would blame the size of the LPG stove. They stated

that wood fuel based stoves were set up in ways that allowed mass cooking and proceeded to show us their cooking sets. For women who cooked to sell, using the LPG stove wouldn't be viable as refilling these LPG stoves was already costly enough. Using the wood fuel based stove alone however would have been harder due to the speed of the LPG stove. Thus many people resorted to stove stacking for time savings purposes. In regards to the iButtons, all households confirmed that they were using it. Due to its fragility, the item was taped up to a rock, with many layers of the tape for insured protection. On rainy days the responding women would bring the iButtons in their houses. An older woman stated that she would also hide it from her kids when they were out playing.

My interaction with the study participants allowed me to critically think about the dilemmas they face and what turns our study can take in order to properly improve results and consequently render dissemination of these cookstoves a proven sustainable option. Additionally the overall visit enhanced my ability to engage with stakeholders, as well as collecting and analyzing data. By working with both clinical and non-clinical staff, I was also able to better my teamwork skills. Lastly, my most important attribute, my philosophy of service was further developed by working with underserved communities and walking them through a journey of increased life expectancy.



A WORD FROM THE SOCIAL JUSTICE COORDINATOR

PT/MC Scholars Getting Involved in Immigration

The anxiety. The type that plagues a graduating student desperately searching for that first job offer, any offer - something to which I and many other law school graduates can relate. And I imagine those same thoughts of uncertainty are familiar to, for example, a graduating Healthcare professional hoping for a residency, or an unpaid intern, hoping that her employers hire her as they hinted they would. Though in retrospect the outcomes are much less dire than we believed, in those moments the crises felt existential: What do I do to pay my bills? What happens when the loans are due? Is there something more I could be doing with my days? Could this have anything to do with my own skill? Am I even "life-ing" correctly?

Can you relate?

The anxieties are only compounded when such decisions have a direct impact on your own family; the people you hope to support and protect. If you add a lack of resources, forced displacement, subjugation, insufficient laws, culture shock and a language barrier, the challenge becomes nearly impossible...

When migrants who are pending proceedings or otherwise given some legal status in the United States, the current immigration policies disallows these migrants ("parolees" as per the immigration policy) to obtain an Employment Authorization Document (EAD) for 5 months after being granted temporary legal status. If a migrant were to attempt to work in the U.S. before their EAD eligibility, they risk denial of legal status eligibility for up to 10 years. And after that 5-month wait, migrants must then complete an I-765 form, replete with all the complexities you might imagine a government application to be.

This is where the PT Scholars program stepped in. Scholar, Angel Madera, helped family after family fill out their work authorization while translating along the way. Starting with the parents and working his way down to all the eligible family members, Angel spoke with each individual and earned their trust. The most impactful moments were the sighs of relief that each person released when Angel got to tell them "you're all done!"

Let's declare, "WE CAN RELATE."

PT/MC Scholars will be putting on an immigration resource fair for migrants soon. **If you are interested in volunteering in some way, use the QR Code to find sign ups.** Otherwise, please see Angel Madera for more information.



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PTSCHOLARS

WORLD YOUTH DAY: A PILGRIM'S EXPERIENCE



My World Youth Day experience was so memorable that even if I lost my memory today, my experience would still be there. From the moment we gathered with the Archdiocese of New York's larger group, I could feel God's presence. He was there surrounding us.

Attending World Youth Day was a once in a lifetime experience. It was an adventurous, educational, and spiritual experience all in one. Being surrounded by millions of pilgrims was beautiful. At times I even teared up seeing the different cultures overlap. As a young adult, it warmed my heart to see millions of other young adults who hold the same faith as me.

The overnight vigil was the highlight of my World Youth Day. Our group walked for several miles to get to our camping site, being sure to hydrate on this pilgrimage. We then camped out Saturday evening and Sunday morning Pope Francis said mass. It was one of the most beautiful and fulfilling experiences. It is hard to picture yourself there however, if you close your eyes for a minute and picture millions of pilgrims from all over the world listening to Pope Francis, singing, praying, and worshipping. The pilgrimage emphasized the spiritual journey and demonstrated my sacrifice in attending World Youth Day.

Attending catechesis which are pretty much workshops led by Bishops from all around the world on different topics. Our first catechesis was hosted by the Bishop of Barbados and our second was hosted by a Bishop from Nigeria. They both began with praise and worship where pilgrims sang songs and worshipped to prepare our hearts and minds to receive



the message from the Bishop. These sessions provided us with opportunities for theological reflection, welcomed questions and encouraged spiritual growth.



Two phrases that stood out to me from World Youth Day were, "The only time it is permissible to look at a person from head to toe: when we want to help them to get up," and "In life nothing is for free. Only the love of God!" These were said by no other than Pope Francis himself. Attending World Youth Day has strengthened my faith, helped me to gain a connectedness to other Catholics worldwide and deepened my understanding of the role I play as a Catholic today.

-Ameera Hassan '22/'23



IGNATIANT FAMILY TEACH-IN FOR JUSTICE 2024

SPEAKERS

TEACH-IN
Registration

The Teach-In is a space for prophetic voices for solidarity with the economically poor, the marginalized, and the Earth who have an openness to an Ignatian approach to faith and justice. Get ready to be challenged, engaged, and inspired to be agents for justice and solidarity.



FR. BRYAN MASSINGALE



SR. PEGGY O'NEILL, S.C.



RUBEN GARCIA



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The Pierre Toussaint Scholarship Fund (PTSF) and Program were established in 1983 and are administered by the Archdiocese of New York, Office of Black Ministry. PTSP provides support & mentorship to graduating high school seniors of diverse cultural/ethnic backgrounds, from public, private and parochial schools throughout the Archdiocese of New York, to assist them with the educational fees and expenses associated with their college studies. Students selected for the PTSP are chosen based on their strong academic record, their active participation with their parish and school communities, and their demonstration of good character and sound leadership ability. Scholarship awards are renewable for subsequent, consecutive years of undergraduate and graduate studies, based upon the scholar continuing to meet certain academic, service & program requirements. PTSF also provides the scholars with ongoing mentorship and advisement: spiritual, educational, professional career, and personal. To obtain more information regarding the program and /or to support the Pierre Toussaint Scholarship Fund, contact the office at 646-794-2681 or via email at obm@archny.org.

The Pierre Toussaint Scholars Program and the Pierre Toussaint - Mother Cabrini Scholars Program (for scholars preparing for careers and ministries in fields of healthcare & social work)

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