



Seniors Enrolled in New Jersey SEEDS' College Preparatory Program Celebrate Commencement

June 12, 2014 – Newark, NJ – Monday evening, 29 high school seniors graduated from [New Jersey SEEDS' College Preparatory Program](#) (CPP). The Commencement Ceremony was an opportunity to celebrate the culmination of the scholars' three-year commitment to advancing their educational opportunities.

"Since enrolling in the College Preparatory Program, our scholars have spent more than 700 hours with SEEDS," explains President Ronni Denes. "They have a deep understanding of the importance of college to their economic mobility and were willing to spend each Saturday during the past three school years and two weeks each summer advancing their education. They engaged in rigorous academic classes and students worked closely with SEEDS staff and volunteer mentors to complete college applications and navigate the financial aid process."

"I am so proud of our CPP seniors," says Barry Ford, Dean of the College Preparatory Program. "They are incredibly committed to furthering their educations, and their hard work has paid off. I'm pleased to announce that the CPP Class of 2014 received 144 acceptances from 55 colleges and universities across the country."

The College Preparatory Program was launched to expand academic opportunities among students in SEEDS' partner high schools – Orange and Trenton Central. The goal of the program is to increase the number of high-achieving, low-income students who aspire to, enter and graduate from competitive colleges. Over the past three years, 88 College Preparatory Program scholars have graduated from the program and are persisting in college at a rate of 96 percent, versus a national persistence rate of just 31 percent for students with a similar economic profile.

This year's graduating class will attend twelve distinct higher education institutions. Of these colleges and universities, 83 percent have been ranked "Most," "Highly," or "Very" Competitive by *Barron's*.

"Thank you to all of those who joined us, and to the families, mentors and supporters for their continued dedication to our students," continues Denes. "Because of their encouragement – and that of the educators and administrators at both Orange and Trenton High Schools – our scholars are ready to continue with the next phase of their educational journeys."

Congratulations to the College Preparatory Program Class of 2014.

Orange High School

Hilda Agyekum – Hobart & William Smith Colleges
Cyrain Anderson – Union College
Krishaun Bryan – Undecided
Serena Constant – Rider University
Kristen Davis – Rutgers University
Alexia Grant – Allegheny College*
Yvonne Mickens – Allegheny College
Tarrayah McGill – Rider University
Chinwendu Obi – Colgate University
Athena Smith – Rowan University
Jameek Snype – Rowan University
Lidya Tesfaye – Allegheny College
Avionne Wallace – Boston College

Trenton Central High School – Main Campus

Keyosha Bauldock – Rutgers University
Jason Bolanos – Undecided
Anthony Castillo – Rider University
Hellen Estrella – Denison University
Lesther Flores – Colgate University
Nu-Kermeni Kermah – Fairleigh Dickinson University
Wit Yee Kyaw – Denison University**
Edgar Medina – Richard Stockton College
Alejandra Rangel – Rider University
Melanie Rodriguez – Rowan University**

Trenton Central High School – West Campus

Tennisha Burrell – Rutgers University
Ivan Chicas – Dickinson College
Denzel Railey – Undecided
Kristy Saldana – Colgate University
Legacy Watkins – Dickinson College
Najae Williams – U.S. Army

The annual College Preparatory Program Commencement Ceremony was held Monday, June 9 at [The Newark Club](#). Family members, mentors, donors and friends were on hand to celebrate with graduates. For more information, or to receive high resolution photos, please contact Theresa Murray at tmurray@njseeds.org or at 862.227.9145.

About New Jersey SEEDS

Since its inception in 1992, New Jersey SEEDS has provided educational access for highly motivated, low-income students and created a viable path for them to achieve their full potential. SEEDS strives for a world in which young people's initiative, creativity and intellect can flourish without regard to socioeconomic status. To date, nearly 2,000 scholars have benefited from its programs. For more information, visit www.njseeds.org.

New Jersey SEEDS is grateful to the following corporations, foundations and individuals for providing major support for the College Preparatory Program this year: AT&T; C.R. Bard, Inc.; Paul and Elizabeth DeRosa; Elizabeth and Baret's O. Benjamin Charitable Foundation; Harbourton Foundation; JPMorgan Chase Foundation; Brian and Sandra Maher; Mary Owen Borden Foundation; Novartis Pharmaceuticals Corporation; Novo Nordisk, Inc.; Orange Orphan Society; the Overdeck Family Foundation; and Southwest Airlines.

*Student currently attends Union High School.

**Students currently attend Hamilton High School West.

Theresa Murray
Manager, Communications & PR
New Jersey SEEDS
862.227.9145
tmurray@njseeds.org