

STEM Education Expert Dr. Cora Marrett to Deliver Address at City Tech's June 3 Commencement

Brooklyn, NY—May 15, 2014—City Tech (New York City College of Technology) will mark the annual rite of passage for graduating students at its 74th Commencement Exercises on Tuesday, June 3, beginning at 11:30 a.m., at the Theater at Madison Square Garden, 2 Pennsylvania Avenue, Manhattan.

President Russell K. Hotzler is expected to confer 2,548 degrees, including 1,257 associate and 1,291 baccalaureate. For the first time in the history of the College, baccalaureate graduates will outnumber associate graduates, which is the result of the addition of several new BS and BTech degree programs during the past ten years including those in Applied Mathematics (BS), Biomedical Informatics (BS), Emerging Media Technologies (BTech), Health Services Administration (BS), Mathematics Education (BS), Mechanical Engineering Technology (BTech) and Radiological Science (BS).

Delivering the commencement address will be Dr. Cora Marrett, deputy director of the National Science Foundation, the independent federal agency that supports fundamental research and education across all fields of science and engineering.

The top two students in the 2014 graduating class are valedictorian Maritza Lopez, who earned a baccalaureate degree in Health Services Administration, and salutatorian Milica Jevtic, who earned a baccalaureate in Computer Systems Technology.

Dr. Cora Marrett, Commencement Speaker

Dr. Cora B. Marrett is Deputy Director of the National Science Foundation, the independent federal agency that supports fundamental research and education across all fields of science and engineering. As the former Assistant Director for Education and Human Resources (EHR), Marrett led NSF's mission to achieve excellence in U.S. science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) education at all levels, in both formal and informal settings. Marrett earned NSF's Distinguished Service Award for her groundbreaking leadership as the first Assistant Director for the Social, Behavioral, and Economic Sciences (SBE) directorate.

From 2001 to 2007, Marrett was the University of Wisconsin System's Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs. She also served concurrently as Professor of Sociology at the University of Wisconsin-Madison. Before joining the University of Wisconsin, she was the Senior Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs and Provost at the University of Massachusetts-Amherst.

Marrett holds a Bachelor of Arts from Virginia Union University, a Master of Arts and a doctorate from the University of Wisconsin-Madison, all in Sociology. She received an honorary doctorate from Wake Forest University in 1996, and was elected a fellow of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences in 1998 and the American Association for the Advancement of Science in 1996. In May 2011, Virginia Union University awarded

Marrett an honorary degree as a distinguished alumna.

Maritza Lopez, Valedictorian

Maritza Lopez endured a hardscrabble childhood growing up in an immigrant family in New York City where she learned from an early age to advocate for her father—often hospitalized with complications from diabetes—in the labyrinthine and often impersonal health care system. It was an encounter with a radiologic technician, whom she observed treating her father with gentleness and respect, that sealed Lopez’s decision to enter the medical profession.

Completing an Associate Degree in Radiologic Technology and Medical Imaging in 2012, Lopez was immediately hired by Mount Sinai Beth Israel Hospital as a licensed radiologic technologist. “At work, for the few minutes or hours that any patient is in my care, I am not just a health care provider, I am their friend. We share laughs and smiles even when they seem impossible to create,” says Lopez, who later discovered that the technician who inspired her was a City Tech alumnus.

Although gainfully employed at Mount Sinai, Lopez continued her studies at City Tech while maintaining her outstanding academic record: membership in the National Society of Collegiate Scholars, receiving the Philips Award for Outstanding Academic Achievement, and participating in the Honors Scholars program and the CUNY Pipeline Honors program. She also found time for community service, tutoring a high school student who struggled with math and helping him pass the Math A Regents Exam.

Lopez subsequently earned a Baccalaureate Degree in Health Services Administration, which, she said, “has aided my understanding of the health care field not only in the United State but all across the world.” Currently she is planning on applying to graduate school and pursuing a career as a physician’s assistant. “The greatest gift I take away from being a student at City Tech is the luxury of understanding that I am not a product of my circumstances. Instead, I can pave my own path,” says Lopez.

Milica Jevtic, Salutatorian

Milica Jevtic, a budding academic, is a Serbian who was born in Cuba. She lived in Denmark and Italy before moving to the United States just three years ago, and, not surprisingly, speaks four languages. As the daughter of a diplomat, she learned to adapt to new environments with poise and grace although at times she felt isolated, misunderstood and occasionally, says Jevtic, “faced discrimination from students and teachers, from people blinded by prejudices, too narrow-minded to see the riches of diversity.” Fortunately, Jevtic found her place at City Tech where, she explains, “diversity is a driving force and its professors and students the embodiment of ethics and integrity.”

As a Computer Systems Technology major at City Tech, Jevtic excelled. She was involved with the Teaching Assistant Scholars (TAS) Bridge-to-College Pipeline program in which she taught calculus to incoming CUNY college freshmen and was a

Peer Leader in algebra, calculus and trigonometry courses at City Tech. But perhaps it was her participation in research as a NOAA CREST (Cooperative Remote Sensing Science and Technology Center) Research Scholar that gave her insight into how much she enjoyed being part of an interdisciplinary team, which is where she has set her sights career-wise.

While at City Tech, Jevtic was a member of the National Society of Collegiate Scholars and the Honors and Emerging Scholars program; she presented her research at conferences and has published her artwork as well her scientific research. Jevtic is also an international award-winning competitor in another one of her passions—karate.

Jevtic plans to pursue a doctorate that would allow her to combine her passions for technology, art, science and business. “I would like to use my analytical thinking and problem-solving skills to help others, to give back to society and create something new and useful in an intelligent and efficient way,” says Jevtic.

City Tech (New York City College of Technology), of The City University of New York, is the largest four-year public college of technology in New York State and a national model for technological education. City Tech has an enrollment of nearly 17,000 students in 65 baccalaureate, associate and specialized certificate programs.

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