



## **City Tech COMD Students Take On Small Project, Reap Big Rewards**

New York, NY—April 22, 2019—Entrepreneurs from low and moderate income areas of New York City are getting help from student photographers thanks to a new partnership between the Communication Design (COMD) department at New York City College of Technology (City Tech) and non-profit organization Start Small Think Big (Start Small).

Students in the COMD 3530 Advanced Studio Photography class are contributing their talents this semester by taking product photos and headshots of Start Small's clients, entrepreneurs from underserved communities running microbusinesses throughout New York City.

Operating in New York City and the San Francisco Bay Area, Start Small helps under-resourced entrepreneurs build businesses in underserved areas, so that owners can increase their personal financial security and stimulate economic activity in their communities.

Earlier this semester, Start Small entrepreneurs visited the photography studio at City Tech and had headshots taken by students, which they will use on their websites, brochures, and other marketing materials. The department's studio environment and equipment is designed to mirror the professional environment B.F.A. students will encounter when they enter the field, making this a rewarding experience for everyone involved.

"This unique opportunity allows the students to get real world experience while donating their skills to a good cause," said Mabell Fernandez, Market Access Program Director at Start Small.

"City Tech is committed to increasing the variety of voices in professions that utilize creativity, technology and design. We deliver on that by bringing the profession outside into the classroom," said COMD Professor Robin Michals, who is working with Ms. Fernandez on this initiative.

The entrepreneurs are gaining valuable marketing assistance, while the B.F.A. students get hands-on experience working with small businesses. Furthermore, the partnership delivers on the Communication Design department's goal to provide a public path to a creative career.

For more information about this collaboration, watch the following video created by fellow City Tech COMD students: <https://youtu.be/iMGw4YrluGo>.

### **Photos:**

- #1 - Entrepreneur: Jamila Zomah, Africandishout  
Photographer: Ivan Vargas
- #2 - Entrepreneur: Lisette Rodriguez, Sugar Nest LLC  
Photographer: Angel Diaz

- #3 - Entrepreneur: Nicolas Pineda, Zocal  
Photographer: Emmanuel DeWalt
- #4 - Entrepreneurs: Leslie and Asantewaa Mullen, MaahWaahs Catering  
Photographer: Daniel Singh
- #5 - Entrepreneurs: Vivienne Aerts and Ted Steinebach, ChocoJazz  
Photographer: Da Ming Chen
- #6 - Entrepreneur: William Diaz Jr., ESC Cabling  
Photographer: Simone Haylett
- #7 - Behind the Scenes. Photographer: Robin Michals
- #8 - Behind the Scenes. Photographer: Shadin Rish
- #9 - Behind the Scenes. Photographer: Shadin Rish
- #10 - Behind the Scenes. Photographer: Shadin Rish

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**About City Tech's Department of Communication Design (COMD)** Founded in 1946, City Tech's department of Communication Design has prepared students for creative careers in advertising, graphic design and communications media for nearly 70 years. The department is committed to increasing diversity in professions utilizing creativity, technology and design by providing students of all backgrounds with a public path to careers with traditionally high barriers of entry. Its curriculum integrates fundamental theory and concepts with applied technology, while building a culture that encourages creativity, collaboration and conceptual thinking.

**About City Tech (New York City College of Technology)** City Tech, of The City University of New York, is the largest four-year public college of technology in the Northeast and a national model for technological education. City Tech has an enrollment of more than 17,000 students in 29 baccalaureate and 27 associate degree programs and was recently ranked ninth among more than 2,000 U.S. institutions in overall economic mobility for its students ([www.equality-of-opportunity.org](http://www.equality-of-opportunity.org)). For more information, visit [www.citytech.cuny.edu](http://www.citytech.cuny.edu).