



**Hostos** Community  
College

120 E 149th St., Room 214 E Bronx, NY 10451

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**Contact:** Néstor Montilla (718.518.4355; [nmontilla@hostos.cuny.edu](mailto:nmontilla@hostos.cuny.edu))

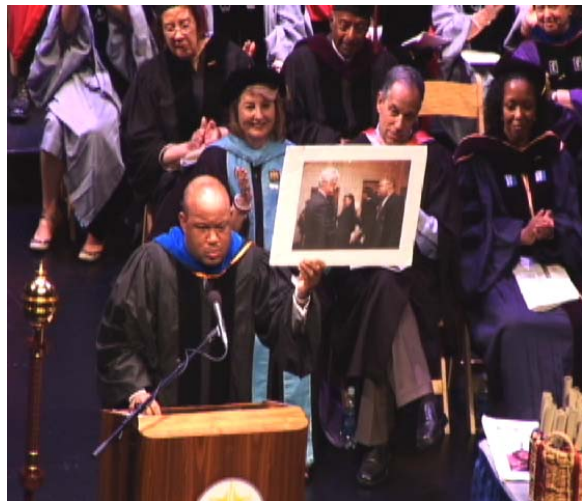
## **HOSTOS COMMUNITY COLLEGE HOLDS THIRTY-SEVENTH COMMENCEMENT EXERCISE**

*Political Anchor and Award-winning Journalist Dominic Carter  
Addresses Class of 2008*

Eugenio Maria de Hostos Community College held its thirty-seventh commencement exercise on the evening of Wednesday, June 4, 2008. At this event, Hostos President Dolores M. Fernández stated: "This is the fortieth year of this college's existence, so in addition to celebrating our graduates' accomplishments, we are also continuing our celebration of the ruby anniversary of our jewel in the South Bronx. Forty years ago, this area was an international symbol of urban blight; today it is a thriving, resurgent community, due, we believe, in part to having a college of excellence in its midst."

The guest speaker at the ceremony was Dominic Carter, a political anchor, author, and award-winning journalist who hosts "Inside City Hall," a public affairs series on NY1 News. Carter is also the author of *No Momma's Boy: How I Let Go of My Past and Embraced the Future*, a memoir in which he reveals how and why his late mother, who endured a lifelong struggle with paranoid schizophrenia, abused him during his childhood.

In spite of his troubled past, Carter went on to attend the State University of New York at Cortland and became the first member of his family to graduate from college. After speaking about his experiences, Carter told the Hostos class of 2008, "Always believe in yourself and be willing to work for it, and then you can achieve."



Dominic Carter showing a picture of him and President Bill Clinton at the White House.

A preliminary report from the Registrar's Office indicated that the number of graduates is continuing to increase at Hostos. The number of students expected to graduate on June 4<sup>th</sup> was approximately 270. Combined with the 170 students who graduated in January 2008 and the 62 graduates from September 2007, the estimated total number of Hostos graduates for the 2007-2008 academic year is 502.

The report also indicates that of the students scheduled to receive their degrees in June, most are female (79.8%) and the largest percentage of graduates (30.6%) is from the Liberal Arts A.A. program.

The preliminary report also shows that the number of graduates from the Dental Hygiene and Nursing programs increased in comparison to the number of graduates from June 2007.

The Spring 2008 class of 2008 valedictorian is Phu Pham, who came to America from Vietnam with his parents and five siblings when he was five years old. In the fall of 2006, Pham enrolled at Hostos and majored in accounting. Starting as a volunteer in the Alumni Relations Office, he was soon hired as a college assistant. During the summer of 2007, Pham worked in the administration of Ambulette Services provided by Lincoln Hospital. He has been accepted as an accounting major at Lehman College of CUNY, where he will begin classes in the fall with the expectation of graduating in 2010. Pham has been hired as an accounting assistant for Asia Society.

The salutatorian of the graduating class of spring 2008 is Ayine Ernest Ayeta, who majored in electrical engineering and plans to transfer to a four-year institution, where he will continue to study toward a bachelor's degree. While at Hostos, Ayeta participated in the Honors Program and the Ambassadors Program. He was treasurer of the English Club, and a member of Phi Theta Kappa Honor Society, the Engineering Club, and the men's soccer team. Ayeta also received several academic and athletic scholarships and awards: CUNY Bronx Scholarship (2007); Gold Medal in Mathematics (2007); Hostos Athletic Scholar (2007); CUNY Athletic Scholar, honorable mention (2008); and Hostos Scholar (2008). Originally from Ghana, Ayeta immigrated to the United States in November 2005 and settled in New York City. Currently he resides with his cousins in the Bronx.

In addition to valedictorian Pham, salutatorian Ayeta, guest speaker Carter, and President Fernández, other participants in the commencement ceremony included the Honorable Freida D. Foster-Tolbert, representing the Board of Trustees of The City University of New York, and Mr. Allan H. Dobrin, CUNY's Senior Vice Chancellor and Chief Operating Officer.