



Throwing a Lifeline – The Carroll and Milton Petrie Foundation’s Life-Changing Generosity



Beth Lief, Executive Director of the Carroll and Milton Petrie Foundation

Alexis Hernandez takes the train from Harlem to Kingsborough Community College every morning, and yet he does not begrudge his long commute in the slightest: “I chose KCC because I wanted a change of scenery, a change of culture.” With a GPA hovering just below 4.0, Alexis has clearly made the most of his cross-borough odyssey. Yet this past Fall, Alexis almost had to drop out of school due to a financial emergency that was outside of his control: “My mother is my hero, and she has fought her whole life for me to have a good life and a bright future. So when she lost her job, it became impossible for her to pay rent, let alone help me with paying for tuition.” To make matters worse, Alexis’ credit card was already in arrears after using it to purchase a computer for schoolwork.

Thankfully, Alexis found a lifeline through an emergency grant funded by the Carroll and Milton Petrie Foundation.

The Carroll and Milton Petrie Foundation’s Student Emergency Grant Fund provides assistance to KCC students in good academic standing who are facing short-term financial emergencies. “Our mission is to help underprivileged students to become happy, successful and empowered members of society,” says Beth Lief, Executive Director of the Foundation. “This is why our foundation is such a staunch supporter of CUNY. We see in these students not just the future of our city, but the world at large.”

The Carroll and Milton Petrie Foundation first came to Kingsborough's aid during the harrowing aftermath of Hurricane Sandy, when countless students were left displaced and without the resources they needed to continue attending classes. "Colleges like Kingsborough are engines of opportunity for students without means," says Ms. Lief. "This experience after the hurricane inspired us not only to continue supporting Kingsborough, but to support other CUNY community colleges as well."

After receiving his emergency grant, Alexis was able to pay off enough of his credit card and other expenses to stay in school. Though currently a Liberal Arts major, he ultimately plans to pursue a career in nursing, a goal which stems from a lifelong desire to help others. Though his road to graduation has not been easy, Alexis finds inspiration in his mother's determination, the promise of a Kingsborough education, and the life-changing generosity of the Carroll and Milton Petrie Foundation.

"I am so grateful to be a student here," says Alexis. "I've had my share of obstacles, but everyone at Kingsborough has been so helpful, friendly and encouraging. There are a lot of students like me at Kingsborough, who take their studies seriously but are going through tremendous struggles. Words cannot express how thankful I am for the grant I received. I will never forget this generosity, and I plan to pay it forward in my own life."

Every month, the Kaleidoscope presents a different facet of the Kingsborough experience—inspiring professors, student success stories, alumni testimonials, exciting new programs, news-making events and much more. We hope you enjoy these stories, and we also encourage you to share *your* unique KCC perspective with us. *Whether you are a current student or an alum, a faculty or staff member, a retiree or a distinguished donor, [you can also share your story!](#)*

Help our students overcome their obstacles and achieve their dreams! Support Kingsborough today: <http://www.kbcc.cuny.edu/sub-administration/collAdvancement/Pages/WaystoSupportKCC.aspx>.

