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**MAYOR BLOOMBERG CELEBRATES GRADUATION OF 2011 CLASS OF NYC
LADDERS FOR LEADERS YOUTH**

216 New York City Youth Complete Professional Internships with 72 High-Profile Organizations

American Airlines Awards Eight Interns with Round-Trip Airfare for College Tours

Mayor Michael R. Bloomberg today recognized the 2011 class of NYC Ladders for Leaders, a program that provides professional internships to New York City high school and college students, at a graduation reception at Gracie Mansion. Launched in 2006 by Mayor Bloomberg, the program is a joint initiative between the NYC Commission on Women's Issues and the NYC Department of Youth and Community Development to empower highly motivated New York City youth from diverse populations with the tools, resources, and professional experience to pursue a college education and explore future career opportunities. The 216 students participating in the 2011 class of Ladders for Leaders were given the opportunity to complete professional internships with 72 partnering organizations. The Mayor also announced the winners of the American Airlines College Tour Competition, which provides awardees round-trip airfare to visit the prospective colleges of their choice outside of the New York metropolitan area. Mayor Bloomberg was joined at Gracie Mansion by Commission on Women's Issues Chair Anne Sutherland Fuchs and Executive Director Briana Collins, Department of Youth and Community Development Commissioner Jeanne B. Mullgrav, American Airlines- New York Vice President Art Torno, and program graduates Jessamine Fazli and Matthew Delfino.

"Our City's future depends on how well we prepare our next generation of leaders," said Mayor Bloomberg. "By ensuring that young people have access to high quality employment opportunities, Ladders for Leaders is helping New York City build a brighter future."

"After six years, Ladders for Leaders has continued to successfully benefit the motivated and talented youth of New York City," said Chair Anne Sutherland Fuchs. "These internships are once-in-a-lifetime experiences that will serve as a building block for our graduates as they go through college, their careers, and the rest of their lives. We thank our many partners and American Airlines for opening the path toward higher education, through which opportunities are endless."

(more)

“Today is a significant day for our Ladders for Leaders participants,” said Commissioner Jeanne B. Mullgrav. “They are not only graduating from our program, they also are taking their place among the ranks of our distinguished alumni. These motivated young people work at the highest levels of the public and private sectors throughout NYC. They excelled in every task, embraced every challenge and learned the new skills and confidence they will need for tomorrow.”

At the graduation reception, the Mayor also announced the eight winners of the American Airlines College Tour Competition, which provides round-trip airfare to select NYC Ladders for Leaders participants to visit colleges throughout the continental United States. The 2011 winners, each of whom received a round-trip ticket for themselves and for an accompanying parent/guardian, are Natalia Bikowski, Bernice Chan, Jessamine Fazli, Yan Jun Lu, Daniel Pena, Marisch Perera, Tamara Taylor McDonald, and Jieying Wu.

“American Airlines is proud to be a part of the Mayor’s Ladders for Leaders program for the fifth consecutive year, supporting a new generation of leaders among New York City high school students,” said Art Torno, American Airlines Vice President – New York. “As usual, this year’s pool of candidates was impressive and made the decision extremely difficult. We hope the visits will inspire these students to relentlessly pursue scholarship, innovation, leadership and community service during their time in college, and we look forward to hearing about their future achievements.”

The recipients of the American Airlines College Tour Competition are:

- **Natalia Bikowski**, a 16 year old Brooklyn resident entering her senior year at Eleanor Roosevelt High School. Natalia is interning at Macy’s and will be visiting the University of Chicago and Northwestern University, where she hopes to pursue her interest in social sciences.
- **Bernice Chan**, a 17 year old Brooklyn resident entering her senior at Stuyvesant High School. Bernice is interning at the NYC Department of Health and Mental Hygiene and will be pursuing a liberal arts education at Williams College.
- **Jessamine Fazli**, a 17 year old Brooklyn resident entering her senior year at Friends Seminary. Jessamine is interning at Kaplan and looks forward to exploring the pre-med and foreign language opportunities at Harvard University or Middlebury College.
- **Yan Jun (Daisy) Lu**, a 16 year old Brooklyn resident entering her senior year at Brooklyn Technical High School. Daisy is interning at Draftfcb, and is excited to pursue creative writing at Reed College, Williams College, or Stanford University
- **Daniel Pena**, a 17 year old Queens resident entering his senior year at Forest Hills High School. Daniel is interning in the Legal Department with the New York City Transit Authority, and looks forward to exploring the law and science programs at Cornell University, Western New England College, Georgetown University, or Middlebury College.
- **Marisch Perera**, a 17 year old Staten Island resident and graduate of the CSI High School for International Studies. Marisch is interning with the New York City Bar Association and looks forward to visiting Stanford University.
- **Tamara Taylor McDonald**, a 16 year old Brooklyn resident entering her senior year at Catherine McAuley High School. Tamara is interning at NY Law School, and plans to visit Anderson University, Spellman College, or Texas Southern University.




- **Jieying Wu**, a 16 year old Brooklyn resident entering her senior year at Brooklyn Technical High School. Jieying is interning at the Catholic Medical Mission Board and is interested in pursuing medicine at California Institute of Technology or Stanford University.

NYC Ladders for Leaders interns completed a pre-employment training program over the course of six-months before being selected by partnering companies who also donate funds in support of participant salaries, workshops, and scholarships towards college. Participants also have the option of enrolling in free Kaplan SAT preparation courses. Throughout the summer, interns attend workshops on topics such as financial literacy, leadership, health and gender issues, peer pressure, and career exploration.

The NYC Ladders for Leaders program is supported in part by Accenture; AHRC; American Airlines; American Cancer Society; American Century Investments Foundation; Aspen Institute; Avon Foundation; Baby Buggy; BBH; Bloomberg L.P.; Brooklyn College; Brooklyn Navy Yard; Carver Federal Savings Bank; Catalyst; Catholic Medical Mission Board; CBS Corporation; Central Park Conservancy; Citigroup; City of New York; Continuum Health Partners; CUNY College Now; CVS; Delia's, Inc.; Dow Jones; Draftfcb New York; Empire State Building Observatory LLC; Ernst & Young LLP; The Estee Lauder Companies, Inc.; Everyday Health, Inc; Federal Reserve Bank of NY; The Fresh Air Fund; Friends of the High Line; Gartner; Geneva Worldwide; Girls, Inc.; Gotham, Inc.; Greater NY Chamber of Commerce; GroupM; IBM; Interpublic Group (IPG); The Leona M. and Harry B. Helmsley Charitable Trust; JPMorganChase; Kaplan, Inc.; KPMG International LLP; Laura Devine Attorneys LLC; Leukemia & Lymphoma Society – NYC Chapter; Macy's; Metropolitan Transportation Authority; Microsoft; The Metropolitan Museum of Art; Municipal Credit Union; National Grid; National Urban League; New York City Bar Association; New-York Historical Society; New York Law School; New World Foundation; New York State Banking Department; NL Financial Alliance; NPower NY; Ogilvy and Mather; The One Club; RCN Corporation; Tai Ping Carpets; Tishman Speyer; UBS; Verizon; Warner Music Group; Women's Venture Fund; Young & Rubicam Brands; Ziff Legal Group.

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