



# Public Schools of Plainfield New Jersey

## Office of Community Engagement

Gloria Montealegre, MPA  
1200 Myrtle Avenue  
Plainfield, NJ 07063  
(908) 731-4333 Fax: (908) 731-4336

## **PLAINFIELD HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS AMONG THE WINNERS OF THE GATEWAY REGIONAL CHAMBER OF COMMERCE VOCATIONAL SCHOLARSHIPS**

*Students received funding and additional mentorship*

Plainfield, NJ- May 2, 2019 – Three Plainfield High School students were honored today at a special Scholarship Awards Reception hosted by the Gateway Regional Chamber of Commerce at Union County College. The students were part of the group of recipients who received the Gateway Regional Chamber of Commerce Vocational Scholarships.

All the students received awards of \$1,000 that will go directly to the institution of their choice for their post-secondary education.

The Plainfield High School students include Erick Ramirez Jacinto, who plans to attend New Jersey City University to study engineering, Tiana Sizer, who plans to attend Rutgers-Newark majoring in Video Production and Elementary Education and Brian Brako who will be attending the Teterboro School of Aeronautics to become an Aeronautics Engineer.

The students were selected from their applications and recommendations from their counselors.

The Gateway Regional Chamber of Commerce has been providing scholarships for the past 40 years to students who have gone on to vocational careers such as welding, culinary arts, nursing, biomedical engineering and many other professions that are career-oriented.

“The reason why we do this,” said James Coyle, President of the Gateway Chamber of Commerce for the past 23 years, “Is because our members need well-trained qualified staff and we want to increase the employability of our students in Union County.”

Coyle said from time to time the Chamber has had students from Plainfield who apply and have won scholarships, but this year Plainfield has gotten more active in the Education Development Branch of the chamber. “This year 25% of the scholarship are going to students from Plainfield are we are very excited about that.”

Brain Brako, a senior at Plainfield High School, said he is very appreciative of this award “This scholarship for me is a big step forward and something that I can use to further my plans for my career in the future. Being an aeronautics engineer working on airplanes, this scholarship will

definitely help me pave the way, and help me pay for school, so I can do what I plan to do in the future.”

In addition to the monetary gift, the Gateway Regional Chamber of Commerce will provide students with mentors who will support them throughout their education and beyond according to Lynn Chrystal, Workforce-Education Committee Chair.

Brako said this is definitely a great idea and he is going to contact his mentor and one other mentor in the group, Alan Haveson, who has worked in the past making airplane parts and working on planes.

About Plainfield Winners:

**Erick Jacinto**

Erick Jacinto’s counselor Ms. Jessika Herrera said, Erick is an impressive young man who overcame many obstacles including a language barrier. As his counselor, I am not only excited to see his future accomplishments, but am proud to say that Erick is an example for all students. Erick’s success story helps understand that we can bridge the gap between language and college admissions. Ms. Herrera said that Jacinto’s resilience kept him focused on pursuing his ultimate goal. He has superseded all expectations, learning English quickly while practicing his skills at school and work. He is now eloquent in both English and Spanish. He is an insightful, sensitive, and deeply self-aware individual driven to explore life but main focus is in his career. He has the stamina and characteristics of a future leader.

**Tiana Sizer**

Tiana Sizer credits her technology achievements to her mentor, Ms. Vilbrun-Etienne, Vanguard Technology Coach & Career Education Teacher at Plainfield High School, who inspired her creativity and is a role model of strength for her. Ms. Vilbrun-Etienne said, Tiana is an outstanding student who is extremely gifted in creating and producing television. She is also as a business-marketing developer. Currently Tiana produces a weekly online program, called “BrookLyn we go HARD.” Tiana led the creation of the name, mission/vision for the program, which she produces with her Plainfield High School classmates.

**Brian Brako**

Brian Brako’s counselor Ms. Vanetta Solomon said, “His interest lies in the challenge and knowledge that his efforts will make a positive impact in the daily lives of travelers everywhere. Knowing that greater rewards come from greater efforts, he anticipates a role in securing our safety in the most efficient means of travel.” Brako credits his accomplishments to his teachers, counselors, family, and his experiences at UCVTH and Rutgers Upward Bound where he received great academic support and social skills that are now helping him to become a great student.

For more information call 908-731-4333 or email [gmontealegre@plainfield.k12.nj.us](mailto:gmontealegre@plainfield.k12.nj.us).

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PHOTOS ATTACHED



Plainfield High School students l-r Erick Ramirez Jacinto, Tiana Sizer, Brian Brako, James Coyle, Pres. Of Gateway Regional Chamber of Commerce.



Plainfield High School students l-r Erick Ramirez Jacinto, Tiana Sizer, Brian Brako



L-R PPSD Counselor Mr. Lee Best, Mr. & Mrs. Sizer Jordan, Tiana Sizer, Plainfield BOE Member Carmencita Pile, Erick Ramirez Jacinto, PHS Bilingual Academy Educator Dr. Johanna Amaro, PHS Counselors Norma Rivera and Vanetta Solomon.