

SCHOLARSHIP AWARD SPOTLIGHT

For his sincere commitment to Minds Matter, outstanding leadership, and dedication to personal excellence, Alex Flores is the 2006-2007 Minds Matter of NYC Scholarship Award winner.

Alex joined Minds Matter as a high school junior in 2005. He says he realized that it would be soon before he would graduate, and that college was becoming a possible reality. After his acceptance into the program, Alex proved his commitment through his almost perfect attendance and the hours that he often put in with his mentors after Saturday session.

Managing a full-time school and work schedule did not deter Alex from diligently completing his Minds Matter assignments. And although he was accepted to college early in his senior year, Alex continued to show up early, stay late, and participate in all program activities. Through his tremendous work ethic, pleasant demeanor, and natural leadership abilities, Alex gained the respect of his peers and served as a role model to all of the program's participants.

In addition to the regular breakfast bagels at session, Alex's favorite memory of his Minds Matter experience was his summer program at Phillips Exeter Academy. The summer program "gave me a positive attitude towards college; it made me realize that I had what it takes to make it to college," he says.

During his two years at Minds Matter, Alex formed a strong bond with his dedicated mentors, Jacob Sacks and Lolita Cipriano.

"I felt as if I was able to tell them anything and everything," he says. "They were like my parents; always checking up on me and willing to help me in any of my problems. If I could tell my mentors one thing it would be, 'Alone we can do so little; together we can do so much. We did it together—THANK YOU!'"

While actively participating in the Minds Matter program, Alex balanced his personal interests in athletics and arts. Alex served as the captain of his school soccer team and was a member of the track team. He also pursued his natural talent for drawing and worked various jobs to save for college.

Alex is currently a freshman at Stonehill College in Easton, Massachusetts, interested in studying criminology. After college, he plans to give back to his community as much as possible both through his career and through extra volunteer activities.

Applicants of the Scholarship Award have to demonstrate team leadership, garner positive mentor feedback, and have high attendance rates in the Minds Matter program. In addition, Award applicants have to complete an essay that is evaluated by a full panel of judges.

