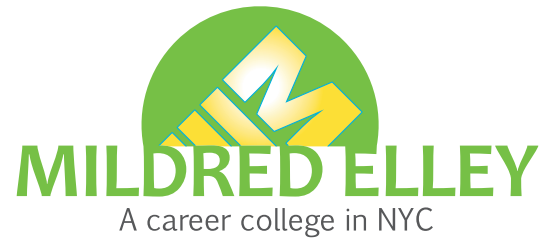


# The Augusta

## Newsletter



### Letter from the Dean

#### Dear Students,

I hope that this letter finds you and your families healthy and in good spirits.

The transition from face-to-face, in-person learning to online learning has likely been more challenging than anticipated. I have heard from a number of you about just how hard it has been. However, you showed tenacity and grit and did not give up!

As hard as it has been for students to make this transition, it has equally challenged faculty to shift their mindset to online and remote instruction. Faculty value interactions in the classroom and miss face-to-face conversations. They miss you, their students, coming into a classroom laughing, and leaving knowing you learned something new that day. Like you, they have had to navigate unfamiliar territory to continue to provide high levels of academic engagement.

At Mildred Elley, we are mindful of social distancing, wearing masks, and washing our hands regularly throughout the day. The CDC, the Governor, and Dr. Fauci, Director of the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases, tell us to practice these points. I encourage you to do your part as well.

We are following these instructions on campus and have less occupancy at the College. Tutoring and counseling have remained fully on-line, while other resources such as library, financial aid, advising, and career services are back on ground. Students are coming onto campus for small group labs, to use computers, and other services.

I miss the excitement of seeing students in classes and I miss the fanfare of graduation.

To all of our graduates, we have not forgotten you. You each deserve to celebrate your academic accomplishments, and as an institution, we want to honor this great milestone. Please know that we are planning a virtual graduation to recognize you.

These are difficult times for all of us. None of us has ever experienced anything like COVID-19. We will get past this. It is my hope that we will come out stronger and wiser because of the transitions we had to make quickly and without a roadmap.

I am thinking of you, hoping that every one of you is healthy. Please take care of yourselves, your families, and anyone else that may need assistance in your communities.

We want to stay connected to you during this time. Please stay in touch with us, and be sure to check your Mildred Elley email regularly.

Be well, my friends,

**Dr. Jill Carol Maggs**  
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# Reflections on the Pandemic

*“Sometimes you find yourself in the middle of chaos, and sometimes, in the middle of chaos, you find yourself.”*

— Boonaa Mohammed

## Ketty Gracia

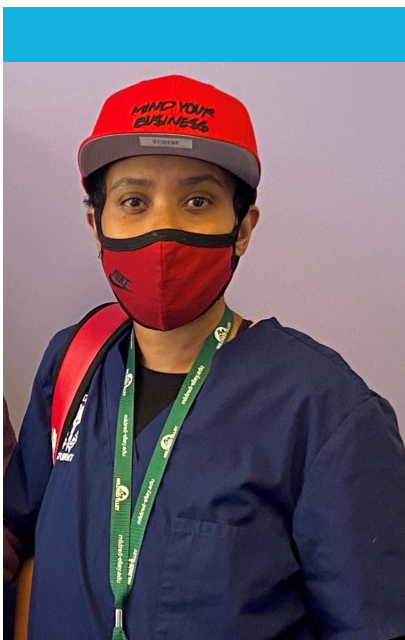
I was born in Puerto Prince, Haiti. I moved to the United States and have been a Medical Assistant for over twenty years at Bethel Nursing Home in Ossining, New York. I liked working at Bethel in the beginning and my role was always expanding. I would watch the nurses and help them when I could. That is how I knew I wanted to be a nurse. A graduate from the LPN program at Mildred Elley told me what a fantastic school this is, so it was an easy decision to enroll.

The pandemic did not affect me as much as some of my friends. I never stopped working at the Nursing Home. My schedule did not change; in fact, my hours increased.

The strangest thing for me about the pandemic was driving to work. I live on the upper West Side of Manhattan so traffic is always a problem. During COVID, I was usually the only car on the street. If I saw another car, it was probably a police car. It was great not to deal with traffic.

I like on-line learning. You do not have to leave your house. I have a disabled son so during the pandemic I spent more time with him. When I was home, I was taking on-line classes, doing homework, or talking to my son.

I hate wearing a mask. It is itchy and it makes me hot. I will be glad when we do not have to wear them anymore.



## Katrina “Kat” Anderson

I grew up in the West Village, but I live in Harlem now with my two dogs and two cats. Living through the pandemic was not that hard on me. I think other people suffered more. I had my furry friends and I had Mildred Elley. I stayed occupied with my studies. During the pandemic, I was especially thankful for school. It kept me occupied. I never got bored. I do not like on-line learning. I prefer in person because you can interact with others. I like chatting with classmates and my professors. I find it easier to ask questions in person. The pandemic was out of everyone’s control. We all had to go with it and do the best we could.

Everyone complains about wearing a mask. I do not mind it that much. I see it as a fashion accessory. I have over 50 masks including one that says Mildred Elley. I like to smile. I also like that with a mask on people do not know if I am smiling.

When I came to Mildred Elley, I started in the Medical Assisting program. I was happy when I could come back to campus and complete my EKG and Phlebotomy Labs. It is great to be back! I am transferring to the Massage Therapy Program because I want to make my own hours and start my own business. Massage is not my final destination. I just need to make some money before I can pursue my ultimate goal of being an anesthesiologist. I have many interests and Mildred helped me to explore a few of them. I will never stop learning.



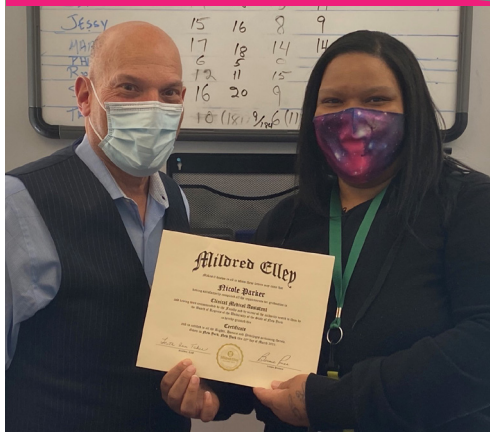
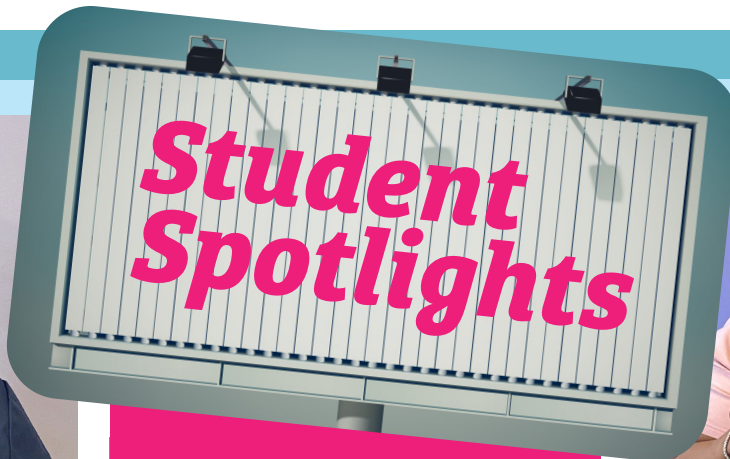


## Ikeria Taylor

Everyone tells me I have an unusual life, but to me it is just my life, the good things and the bad things, I have experienced them all. I became a ward of the state at age 16. I was in Foster Care and lived in all five boroughs of New York. When I was old enough to get out of the Foster Care system, I adopted my sister because I did not want her to be alone. My husband, who is a security guard for New York State Homeless Shelters, and I have three kids together. Including my sister, we are a family of six. My husband is my greatest support.

I stopped going to High School and it took me five years to earn my GED. It was a real struggle, but I knew that I had to do it because I wanted to go to college. I knew education was important. I was not sure what career I wanted, but I knew I wanted to help other people. I know what it is like not to have anyone help you. **When you help someone, even some small act of kindness, maybe something that means almost nothing, can change a person's life. That is power.**

Mildred Elley is my second college. I graduated from DeVry with a degree in Medical Billing and Coding. After graduation, I wanted to go deeper into the medical field. I researched on my own and discovered Mildred Elley. I am graduating from Mildred in September. I am not stopping here. This is just another stepping-stone towards my success.



## Nicole Parker

It was quiet when I walked into the Penn Foster classroom. I was there to do something for myself and my two children. I wanted to be a high school graduate. I thought, I am too old for this, but I am not giving up. I need this. I need a better life. The Penn Foster curriculum was not difficult, but self-paced learning takes a lot of discipline. You have to stay motivated and keep yourself on track. Our Professor gave us pep talks from time to time. A year later, I had achieved my goal. I was a high school graduate. I reflected on how far I had come. I clean houses for a living and I like that job, but I knew I could do more and earn more. I enrolled in the Clinical Medical Assisting Certificate Program (CMA) at Mildred Elley. I already knew many professors and some students in the College. I had been walking the halls for a year. The CMA was challenging. I felt myself growing in new directions. Every time I hit a road bump, I would reach out to my Professors and they helped me through. **My advice to students is NEVER GIVE UP! It is never too late to get an education and to better your life.** Now I am in constant contact with Career Services. They are sending me out on interviews. I cannot wait to start my career in the medical field.



## Carlet Cueary-Asotie

I was born in St. Catherine Parish, Jamaica, in the county of Middlesex. It was in Jamaica that I first got a taste for the medical field. After graduating from high school, I went to work for Dr. Reddy. He was a doctor from India and had a small office near my home. I started out as a receptionist and worked my way up to office manager. Dr. Reddy exposed me to many medical procedures such as giving vaccinations, using an EKG machine, drawing blood, and more. I fell in love with medicine. When you are from a small place there is less opportunities. The United States and American culture fascinated me and it became a dream to study medicine there. Several things aligned and on July 10th, 1993, I moved to New York. I met my husband here. He is from Nigeria. Together we discovered America. We live in Brooklyn now with our two children. My goal is to become a nurse and I plan to continue my education after graduating from Mildred Elley.

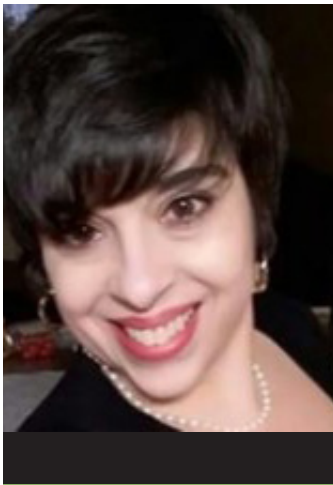
In life, it is important to focus even when you feel blocked. We have limited time on earth and it is your dream you need to accomplish not someone else's. I was nervous when I came to Mildred Elley. I focused on my studies and I have been on the Dean's List once and the President's List four times. These achievements have given me more confidence in myself and it is that confidence I give back to my family and my community.

**My advice to fellow Mildred Elley students is, whatever life gives you - push through! You can do it! You've just got to manifest what you want.**

*\*A student receiving a GPA of at least 3.5 to 3.79 and earning six credits will be placed on the Dean's List. A student receiving a GPA of 3.8 or higher and earning six credits will be placed on the President's List.*



**When you** walk across the stage at graduation that is not the end of your relationship with Mildred Elley, but another beginning. The dedicated staff in Career Services are here to make your resume shine and prepare you for in person and virtual interviews. We have relationships with employers in all five boroughs. Whether you are looking to land a better job, negotiate a promotion, or enter the work force for the first time, Career Services is here for you! Reach out to Lisa Rini and Ashley Kuzmech. They want to see you excel and will help you every step of the way.



My name is **Lisa Rini** and I've been a Career Services Coordinator with Mildred Elley since 2017. I have been working in higher education career services for many years and passionate about assisting graduates in their chosen career. Prior to that, I've held positions with law firms, legal/medical employment agencies and corporate recruiter.

I am originally from Brooklyn, NY and currently live in Staten Island with my husband Charlie and my dog Rocco!

**lrini@mildred-elley.edu**  
or 212-380-9004 Ext. 1630



My name is **Ashley Kuzmech** and I'm a Career Services Coordinator here at Mildred Elley! I'm originally from Long Island and recently graduated from Baruch College with a Major in Human Resources and a Minor in Sociology. Additionally, I have experience with advisement, marketing and recruitment! I am looking forward to getting to know you better and to help support you throughout your career journey. If you have any questions or concerns please do not hesitate to contact me:

**akuzmech@mildred-elley.edu**  
or 212-380-9004 Ext. 1630



### Just A Girl Trying To Make It: **Karina Quinones**

I got into massage because my sister would ask me to rub her back. She would say this hurts or that hurts and I would massage her.

Later on in life, I became a hip-hop dancer. I love to project my feelings into dance. Dance lets you be somebody else. It is an elegant escape. I was always into self-care. When I became a dancer, I would pull a muscle and need a massage. Massage is a way of healing. I am super excited to get started in my career. Going to Mildred Elley and earning a Massage Therapy A.O.S. Degree is the best decision I ever made. Mildred Elley Career Services hooked me up with two jobs! I am on my way! I have a career.