

Getting Down to Business



Thathsara Palliyaguru, BMCC alumna

JULY 14, 2014

"I learned about BMCC when I was growing up in Sri Lanka," says 2014 business administration graduate, Thathsara Palliyaguru.

"A family friend had come to BMCC and won the statewide robotics competition, and he was saying how wonderful the professors and staff are, and how BMCC helps you with all aspects, not just academia."

Palliyaguru, whose first language is Sinhala, one of the official languages of Sri Lanka, studied English and French in high school.

"I really like interacting with different cultures," she says. "I would love to work in the international division of a corporation, one day."

Having graduated with honors from BMCC, she's headed now for Baruch College, CUNY, to major in international business with two minors; French and finance.

All-State Community College Academic Team

This past spring, she was selected to be part of the All-State Community College Academic [Team](#), 2014, attending the ceremony in Albany.

"We were all selected based on our community service and academic standing," says Palliyaguru, who was also awarded the Abner B. Rosenfeld Award at BMCC's 2014 Honor's Convocation. She was active in the BMCC Business Enterprise Club, and as a CUNY Service Corps fellow, held an internship at the Staten Island Chamber of Commerce.

She remained on the Dean's List throughout her time at BMCC and volunteered to represent BMCC at career fairs, guiding students through the event. She is a recipient of the BMCC Foundation/Money Works Scholarship, the CUNY Academic Excellence Award for International Students and the BMCC Certificate of Merit.

Chat team

Thathsara Palliyaguru also worked at the BMCC Help Desk, and as a team leader with a CUNYFirst group, helped implement a chat feature on the BMCC website, creating a script for staff answering the calls.

"I plotted the script and adjusted the questions based on relevancy and frequency, increasing or updating them to reflect real users' questions," she says, and lists her team members: Sebastian Suarez, Cigdem Metin, Maria Hosford and Kinesha Durant, all working with BMCC Welcome Center Manager Jonathan Rosser, and the Office of VP Marva Craig.

As hard as she has worked, Palliyaguru, who lives with family on Staten Island, has also found time to explore the New York City area.

"My friends and I go kayaking in the Hudson, or walking in Central Park. Recently we went to Bear Mountain to hike," she says. "I love it here. I love the energy."

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STORY HIGHLIGHTS

Thathsara Palliyaguru was a member of the Phi Theta Kappa NY State Academic Team and a recipient of the Abner B. Rosenfeld Award

She volunteered at career fairs, was a peer mentor and completed the Goldman Sachs Leadership Program

With a CUNYFirst group, she helped implement a live chat feature on the BMCC website

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