



# Scepter

The Students' Voice

Kingsborough Community College

November 2014

The City University of New York

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## Kingsborough Hosts its Inaugural Diversity Symposium



President Farley Herzek spoke at the opening ceremony of the Diversity Symposium.



Mathew Galarza, Rashidi Ashman and Rudy Muradov spoke at the student panel.



Desi Robinson, host at WBAI 99.5 FM spoke at the event.

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## The Need For Awareness of Racism in Society

BY WILL JAIME

In the 1950s, racism was a lot clearer. Significant images like fire hoses, nooses, police brutality and even the use of police dogs made racism blunt and visible. Now, we have things like stop and frisk or people who express hatred for President Barack Obama with no basis whatsoever.

The session was represented by many kinds of people from many different backgrounds. They spoke on what racism looks like in 2014 and how after progressive movements and the election of President Obama, where racism still exists. Desi Robinson led the discussion.

Talks were about how people should have conversations regarding racism. People have to assure others that they won't be vilified if they admit that racism still exists. Further, many don't know how to tell white people they have privilege without them taking it the wrong way.

*They spoke on how Affirmative Action is a slippery slope that can go from being a positive thing for a community to a*

negative thing very quick. At what point has affirmative action done its job? When does the hiring or college recruitment of a certain group get to be excessive to the point where Caucasians feel as though they're being discriminated against?

If someone were ever convicted of a felony, they'd be stripped of your voting rights. There is no fair representation when a person cannot be part of deciding who goes into office.

With a felony on your record, jobs become harder to obtain. There is also a significant amount of African-Americans that are being funneled through the judicial system at a much higher rate than Caucasian-Americans.

The group agreed that providing examples or scenarios to people would really show prove to them the disparities and inequities that African-Americans are faced with on a daily basis. They went on to agree that racism is institutionalized and that institutions don't disappear.

*This nation was essentially built on slave and immigrant labor; however, when it comes to 2014, there's a strong disconnect with the accomplishments*



Juan Morales-Flores and Kevicha Echols at the closing remarks to wrap up the Diversity Symposium

of both African-American and immigrant efforts in general. It becomes difficult to shine light on positives when the positives are drowning in an ocean of negatives.

Robinson feels as though people aren't aware of how to create a dialogue within their community.

"I would love to see the line for sneakers as long as the line to vote," said Robinson.

Roberta Winters, a speaker, had a suggestion that everyone seemed to agree upon.

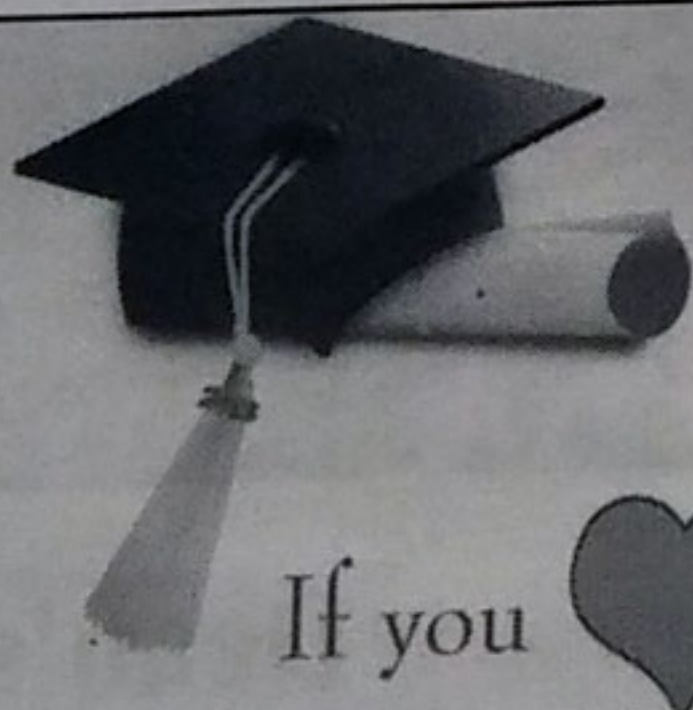
The American Dream needs to be, at least for now, an America that we can all be proud of – a country of true freedom,

opportunity and equality. We need society to care more for people to help provide basic human rights. There needs to be standardized support in communities – building stepping stones towards a new American Dream.


"We need to redefine the American Dream," said Winters.



Desi Robinson engaging the attendees and students in the west room of the second round table session at the Diversity Symposium.



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