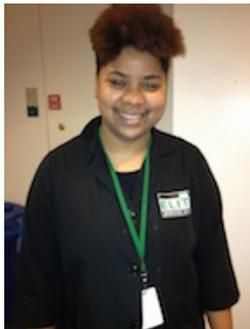


User Scenario - 1st Generation Student

Scarlet



Eight months ago Scarlet was a university student in the Dominican Republic. She was living there when she received a call from her mom in the Bronx, telling her that her paperwork had finally come through – she had received US permanent residency status! She immediately scheduled a flight to NYC. She is 26 years old and was in her third year of university studying graphic design. She has big dreams of finishing her education in the US and getting a good job. She knew she would need to work to contribute to her mother’s household, and to pay for her education, but how this would all work out she hadn’t a clue.

The first step in the process was to get documents from the university in Santo Domingo transferred over. The process turned out to be long and expensive. After arriving in NY she found part time work with a cleaning company 20 hours week. The income was not enough so she took a second job. She now works cleaning offices and a health club - total 69 hours / week, for minimum wage and has been for 8 months. She has saved enough to start community college next month. She will attend Hostos CC, as it is convenient, accessible to public transport, and it is the only place she knows about. None of her credits from the university in Santo Domingo were transferrable. This was unexpected and upsetting as education there is free. It would have been a big help to carry over credits.

“It is much more expensive here. That is why I have to work. It is free there but it can take years to get a degree. Sometimes teachers never show up to class and students just sit and wait. It is just the way it is. There aren’t any good jobs over there either. This is why I came here. I want a better job than this one. I plan to study business administration.” She anticipates getting at least partial tuition assistance based on need. She won’t stop working but will work less. “I need to work probably 20 hours/week. I have to contribute to my mom’s bills and pay for school expenses.”

When Scarlet arrives at CC to register she learns that she is eligible for almost full tuition assistance. She was prepared for this financially. She is also told that she is eligible for a grant to pay for her books and her transit card every semester. Wow. That is news to her. She is told she will receive a Smartcard by mail within a week to use for these purchases. Upon receipt Scarlet notes on the card it says “Supported by ProjectED”, with the web address. She checks out the ProjectED site. She learns about the campaign’s cause via posted stories, images and videos. “There are so many stories like mine, now, and in the past.” She learns about the crowd fund and the corporate partnerships. She follows and shares the project on FB, posts a selfie on Instagram holding the Smartcard, her new school ID, #ProjectED, #costofcollege, letting friends know she just texted a \$10 donation herself, to join the crowd! Scarlet shares on FB that books are expensive, and with this grant she can work less hours. She will have more time to study, and will take an additional class each semester. Life is good! Inspired by the cause and excited for Scarlet’s new chapter, friends make small donations knowing they are matched. Some of them are inspired to post links to ProjectED’s website on their social media as well.

Scarlet plans to visit with an advisor who can help her map out her path. Based on this new development she hopes to finish CC faster, and transfer so that she can earn her bachelor’s degree earlier than expected!