



SCHENECTADY CITY SCHOOLS

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55 adult students will walk across stage in GED graduation ceremony slated for Wed. evening

(SCHENECTADY) – Fifty-five students who earned a GED (General Educational Development) certificate will cross the stage in a cap and gown at the Washington Irving Adult and Continuing Education Center graduation ceremony on **Wednesday, June 8, 2011, 5 p.m.** at Washington Irving. There are nearly 100 GED certificate recipients, ranging from 16-62 years of age, all of whom were invited to participate in the ceremony.

Guest speakers include:

- Gary McCarthy, Acting Mayor of Schenectady
- James Tedisco, Assemblyman
- Ronald Lindsay, Vice President of the Schenectady City School District Board of Education

The achievement is a significant educational accomplishment for most of the students, who for various reasons did not graduate from high school. In order to earn a GED certificate, students must pass a test battery covering five areas including language arts-writing, social studies, science, language arts-reading and mathematics.

Washington Irving serves as a testing center. The adult education center provides an array of classes, GED preparation and study classes, daycare services as well as other services to help adults achieve their educational goals.

Last year was the first year that a ceremony resembling a graduation was held for the successful GED candidates. The excitement and celebratory atmosphere was similar to that of a high school graduation. Friends and family members were on hand to cheer, congratulate and support the adult students, some of whom overcame significant hardship and obstacles to realize this achievement.

.....A national award winning district

Jesse Roylance, director of Washington Irving Adult and Continuing Education Center, said there are dozens of wonderful success stories. “Orachorn Meyer, a student from Thailand worked her way through our ESL (English as a Second Language) program from non-speaker to fluency,” said Roylance. Meyer later enrolled in the GED program and successfully earned her GED in May. She was honored by the New York Association of Continuing and Community Education (NYACCE) as a finalist for their “Student of the Year” award.

Leah Johnson, a blind student, is the second student at Washington Irving over the last 14 years to take the test in Braille and earn her GED. “I can not begin to tell you the challenges faced by this young lady and her teachers,” said Roylance. “We have so many stories here.”

About 250 guests are expected to attend Wednesday’s celebration.

A reception will be held for the students and their families immediately following the ceremony. Price Chopper Supermarkets, Hannaford Supermarket, BJ’s Wholesale Club and the Roots and Wisdom program made generous donations.

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Washington Irving is located at 422 Mumford St., Schenectady, NY 12307 .