

Reporter's notebook: More than 1,200 SUNY Broome students graduate

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By John Miller

The 67th graduating class of SUNY Broome received their diplomas May 21 on the center stage of the Floyd L. Maines Veterans Memorial Arena. SUNY Broome's John Miller talked with graduates before the start of the ceremony. Here are some of their stories.

Student comes 2,100 Miles to attend SUNY Broome

Enoc Reyes, from El Salvador, graduated this year with two Associates degrees: Liberal Arts and Quality Assurance. Enoc is part of the SEED program (Scholarships for Education and Economic Development), which gives students from the Caribbean and Central America the chance to come to the U.S. to study, learn about our culture and return home to uplift their communities. This is the last year for the SEED program; the U.S. Agency for International Development, which had paid for the program, is no longer funding it.

Enoc graduated with exceptional grades and couldn't be happier. If he hadn't been accepted into SEED, Enoc admitted that the best job he could hope for would be in a call center. Now that he has a degree from SUNY Broome, he is going on to get his Bachelors in Industrial Engineering and wants to get into real estate investment or civil engineering back home in El Salvador.



Enoc Reyes

“The Dental Hygiene Program is like a family”

Mirsada Talovic received her Associates in dental hygiene. Incredibly, Mirsada is a Yugoslav War refugee; she came with her family to the United States in 1994 from Croatia.

Mirsada held a manufacturing job for some years before the plant was shut down. At a crossroads, she chose to jump into the dental field. Talovic aims to find a job as a dental hygienist locally or in Syracuse.



Mirsada Talovic

“I’m Security Officer #1”

Emily Zielewicz earned a degree in Criminal Justice. She learned a lot in her time at SUNY Broome, including fingerprinting, foot printing and how to use a radar gun. Zielewicz also worked for the Office of Public Safety in the Student Village, and her favorite class was Criminal Investigation.

Because of her experience gained at SUNY Broome, Emily was able to land a job with Broome County Government Security. She is a “peace officer” and regularly guards the Floyd L. Maines Veterans Memorial Arena and other county buildings. Long term, she’d love to work for a local police department as a detective, solving homicide, robbery and arson cases.

Emily Zielewicz
“I’m a Science Nerd”

Megan Bilka earned her Associate’s degree as a Clinical Laboratory Technician. She will use this degree to help others by “testing stuff that comes from bodies,” such as blood and urine. She’d like to find a job at a local hospital but believes that her chances and pay may be better in a bigger city such as Syracuse. She said she learned a lot at SUNY Broome – not only through the lectures, but through the monumental amount of hands-on work.

The graduating class of 2015 was a sea of smiling faces. Whether they were transferring, going into the workforce or returning to the workforce, every graduate was pleased with their degree and time at SUNY Broome.

Megan Bilka

Writer John Miller is a SUNY Broome student.

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