



# FUTURES AND OPTIONS

Connecting Urban Youth to Careers

## Welcome to the Alumni Network of Futures and Options!

Volume I Issue 1

Read on for the first issue of our Alumni E-Newsletter!

Through the creation of this newsletter we hope to provide a regular forum for you to reconnect with fellow alums, find out where others are on their career path and find out about career and networking opportunities Futures and Options provides to alumni. We look forward to reconnecting with you and hope you enjoy the newsletter.

**A message about content:**We want this newsletter to be in your words, with topics that interest and help you, so please send us updates on your career path, any job openings or networking events you would like to share, and feel free to give us your feedback on what should be included in the newsletter! Email [Serena](#) with content or feedback.

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I. Upcoming Events

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For any of the following activities, please  
contact [MEllis@futuresandoptions.org](mailto:MEllis@futuresandoptions.org) to RSVP or if you have any questions.

**\*Round Table Discussion with the Fresh Air Fund’s Career Awareness Program:** Come discuss your internship experiences, job interests, and current college experiences with a group of high school students in a Career Awareness Program. (Need: 15 people)

WHEN            Wednesday | January 4<sup>th</sup>, 2012 | 5:00pm-6:30pm  
WHERE           The Fresh Air Fund Offices | 633 Third Ave | Between 40<sup>th</sup> and 41<sup>st</sup> Streets

**\*Leukemia/Lymphoma Society:** The world’s largest voluntary agency dedicated to blood cancer is having a fundraising event and needs people to help create their invitations. (Need: 10 people)

WHEN            Thursday | January 5<sup>th</sup>, 2012 | 10:00am-1:00pm  
WHERE           475 Park Ave South | At 32<sup>nd</sup> Street

**\*Habitat for Humanity:** We'll hang dry wall for one of the houses Habitat is working on. No dry wall or construction experience required. The construction managers are used to working with volunteers with no experience, but plenty of desire to help those in need (Need: 14 people)

WHEN Friday | January 6<sup>th</sup>, 2012 | 8:45am-4:00pm

WHERE Bedford-Stuyvesant, Brooklyn | Exact address will be sent one week prior

**\*Futures and Options College Guidance Workshop:** Our very own Joanna Munoz and Matt Ellis will hold a workshop for high school juniors and seniors on "selecting a major." Current college students are invited to attend and participate in a selection of activities, as well as share their experiences choosing a major. (Need: 5 people)

WHEN Monday | January 9<sup>th</sup>, 2012 | 3:30pm-5:30pm

WHERE Alliance for Downtown NY Offices | 120 Broadway, 33<sup>rd</sup> Floor

For any of these activities, please contact [MEllis@futuresandoptions.org](mailto:MEllis@futuresandoptions.org) to RSVP or if you have any questions.

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## II. Alumni Spotlight

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### **Katuska Imperial**

**ULF Intern at JPMorgan, Summer 2004**

**Binghamton University, Class of 2008 (Psychology)**

**Stony Brook University, Graduate Class of 2012 (Human Resource Management)**

It's been seven years since Katuska Imperial's summer internship through Futures and Options. Since her days as a high school student in the program, she's developed many of the skills and knowledge that made her a successful professional as well as confident graduate student today. In 2008, she earned her BA in Psychology, from Binghamton University and for the

next three years she was a case manager for a local non-profit organization - *Concern for Independent Living*. As a case manager, she provided services and support to a diverse population of adults with severe, chronic mental illness. In 2011, she decided to change her career path and return to school to pursue a graduate degree in Human Resource Management at Stony Brook University.

While at Binghamton, she was active in various student groups and organizations. Notably, she held executive positions - Historian (2005-2006) and President (2006-2007) on the African Student Organization, ASO. Through her leadership with ASO, her executive board successfully developed and launched the inaugural *Intellectual Consortium*. Additionally, they organized several fundraising initiatives and events on campus. In the fall of 2006 they hosted a charity fashion show to raise funds for Nyumbani, an organization supporting abandoned and orphaned children with HIV in Kenya. In 2006, ASO worked in conjunction with Binghamton University Student Association, and Binghamton Hillel to host a campus wide forum featuring keynote speaker Paul Rusesabagina. Mr. Rusesabagina's story of heroism is most famously depicted in the 2004 film *Hotel Rwanda*. In 2008, Katuska was crowned Caribbean Queen in the Binghamton University Caribbean Student's Association Culture Night Pageant. In 2010, Binghamton University Chapter of MALIK Fraternity Inc., recognized her dedication and commitment to service and leadership on her campus by awarding her with the Angela Pauling Memorial Award.

This past September Katuska felt as though there was something missing from her life. She was entering her second year of graduate school and was leaving her former job to begin her new career path in human resources. Between work and grad school, not to mention everyday life surprises, she had more than enough on her plate. Tending to new and challenging academic and professional responsibilities made it easier than naught to neglect her propensity toward community service. However, upon returning to a distant but familiar role, that of intern, she reflected on her experiences at Futures and Options and the decision became clear - it was time to use those networking and interpersonal skills she'd developed and reconnect with the Futures and Options family.

Thank goodness for the internet and social media, reconnecting was literally just a click away. Before she knew it, she was back in the mix of things where she felt she belonged as an alumni member. Katuska recently volunteered at the Futures and Options inaugural Dream Big Fundraising Gala. She's also joined the Alumni and Young Professionals Committee and has committed herself to contributing written work to the Futures and Options Alumni E-Newsletter. "Kids from our common background often aren't expected to graduate high school, much less maintain successful internships with top financial corporations," Katuska stated. "This organization, its staff, mentors, and my peers provided support and guidance in one of the most critical points in my academic and professional career. Without these influences coupled with the support from family, friends, and my teachers, I would lack the vision, motivation, and confidence to continue to grow and develop as an individual."

Katuska went on to state, "making a difference in the life of a student, bringing them to their potential as a future leader is quite simple. The first step is involvement. Reach out to the Futures and Options Alumni and Young Professionals Committee and get INVOLVED! YES we are all busy individuals with full social and professional calendars, but taking time out to give back to a student much like we were, is profound and worthwhile. Second step is making a commitment. Sign-up to participate in various F&O volunteer opportunities, nominate a fellow alumni member for spotlight recognition, mentor a student once a week, co-chair a F&O fundraising event. Every bit of time and effort helps! Third step, be yourself! There is nothing more encouraging to a young ambitious teen but to realize that his or her mentor, role model, is indeed just like him or her; a genuine individual with the drive to create and claim his or her success."

Futures and Options helped Katuska realize the potential that was inside of her all along. She came in as a young lady in high school, hoping to leave her mark on the world. She's already begun to do just that, and we're proud to see where her path leads! We thank Katuska for being an active alumna and both giving back to our program as well as inspiring others to realize their own unique paths to attaining their dreams. We also join her in

hoping other alumni will realize the power that their continued support and involvement will have in the lives of our future leaders and stars!

*Katuska Imperial is a part of the Class of 2004 from John Dewey High School, Brooklyn, NY. She interned at JP Morgan during the summer of 2004. Today, she is pursuing a Master's Degree in Human Resource Management at Stony Brook University and is expected to graduate with honors May 2012. She currently holds the HRIA Intern position at Viacom, MTV Networks. Katuska is a member of the Futures and Options Alumni & Young Professionals Committee and a contributor to the Futures and Options Alumni E-Newsletter.*

Nominate an Alumni Spotlight:  
email [pauilyrodney@gmail.com](mailto:pauilyrodney@gmail.com)

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### III. Feature Story: Gearing Up for 2012

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The real feature story of our inaugural issue of the Alumni Committee's E-Newsletter is Katuska Imperial's spotlight. Everyone at Futures and Options is excited to hear how all of our alumni have fared since their time with us, and we could not be more proud of Katuska and the many others that have chosen to give back to the program by volunteering time. Some of you will have more time than others to give, and that's fine. Just remember that each minute you give touches a current student in a way that no workshop or site visit ever can - and we need you to help make Futures and Options the best it can be in 2012. Speaking of 2012 ...

The staff of Futures and Options is incredibly excited for 2012, and especially what that means for our alumni. You're beginning to see some of that excitement in this very E-Newsletter. We want to communicate directly to you with the type of information that will be helpful and inspiring. We want to give you an outlet to shine props and praise on

yourself and fellow alumni. We also want to give you every opportunity to network and speak directly to corporate executives, nonprofit leaders, and especially your fellow alumni. We aren't waiting until 2012 to begin this focus on alumni opportunities.

Last Monday we held an inspiring event featuring Mark Tatum, Executive Vice President of Marketing Partnerships for the National Basketball Association (NBA). Mark spoke to 60 or so alumni and guests and gave specific advice on choosing a career path, preparing for opportunities, and networking with others. Mark grew up in Brooklyn, the child of a Jamaican father and Chinese mother, and is now one of the most powerful executives in the NBA as well as USA Basketball ... those folks that put together the Dream Teams for the Olympics! We enjoyed having Mark speak, and we look forward to many others in our alumni speaker series.

Through making calls for this event we found out a few things from each of you: (1) many of you loved your experiences with Futures and Options and would like to give back; (2) many more of you wished the event wasn't scheduled during Finals while you're away at school; (3) you get so many emails from Futures and Options that sometimes you wonder which ones are directed to alumni.

We hear you and we're doing our best to respond. We will make an effort to schedule fun events and networking opportunities for those of you that can only participate during your college and university breaks. Please check out the volunteering opportunities listed above for more information on that! Also, we are glad that many of you want to give back - and this E-Newsletter will help us collect your stories, opportunities, and feedback. Please let us know what you'd like to see or how you'd like to help. For Robert, it was volunteering his photography skills. For Zuhair, it was attending an event that didn't have to do with his chosen field of biology. For Katuska, it was submitting her story for us to write about. How will you give back to Futures and Options? We'll do as much as we can to encourage you, but we need you to let us know how we're doing!

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IV. Alumni Network PROPS AND PRAISE  
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*In future E-Newsletters, this section will give a shout out to the everyday accomplishments of our alumni. Just got accepted to school or got a new job? Worked on a big campus project? Let us know, and we'll include it in our Props and Praise section!*

*Make sure your story is heard!*

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V. Job Opportunities  
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### Entry Level HR Position at Mediabrands

Provide support to Global HR group:

- Administrative duties including travel, expenses and scheduling of meetings
- Process new hires, changes and terminations
- Handle offer letters and separation agreements
- Develop PP presentations
- Work on special projects as needed

This person will have the following core qualities and/or capabilities:

- Attention to detail
- Organized
- Flexible and nimble
- Customer service oriented
- Interest in HR
- Advanced Microsoft office skills (Word, excel and PP)
- Ability to prioritize
- Ability to maintain confidentiality

Contact Serena Handley at [shandley@futuresandoptions.org](mailto:shandley@futuresandoptions.org) if you are

interested in the position.

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Connect with the Alumni Network of Futures and Options  
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Join LinkedIn and the Futures and Options Alumni Network  
<http://www.linkedin.com/groups?gid=2360367>

Nominate an Alumni Spotlight  
email [paulyrodney@gmail.com](mailto:paulyrodney@gmail.com)

Submit to Alumni Network Props & Praise  
email [paulyrodney@gmail.com](mailto:paulyrodney@gmail.com)

Contact the Alumni Committee  
email [shandley@futuresandoptions.org](mailto:shandley@futuresandoptions.org)

Update your contact info with Futures and Options  
[http://www.futuresandoptions.org/fao/what\\_we\\_do/for\\_alumni/alumni\\_contact\\_us/](http://www.futuresandoptions.org/fao/what_we_do/for_alumni/alumni_contact_us/)

Futures and Options homepage:  
<http://www.futuresandoptions.org>

"Empowering New York City's under-served youth to explore careers and guiding them to further their education and become productive citizens of the community."