

At Kingsborough, Dr. Cook provides guidance and support in curricular and accreditation matters. She is also responsible for designing, implementing, and monitoring an array of academic initiatives, programs, and priorities, as well as administering college activities and operations to support academic policy and student learning strategies.

Kingsborough Community College [2001 Oriental Blvd. in Manhattan Beach, (718) 368-5000].

Prospect Lefferts Gardens

Keep ‘em dancing

It’s abundantly clear that founder and acclaimed dancer **Karisma Jay** is the creative force behind **AbunDance Academy of the Arts**, an arts organization dedicated to offering children and adults top-notch free and affordable dance, theater, and musical instruction at all levels.

Karisma found that the world of performing arts wasn’t available to people who came from lower-income households. Growing up as the child of a single parent, she felt blessed that her mother worked so hard to secure the funds to give her top-quality training so that she could pursue her passion for dance. After years of performing on stages around the globe, she decided she wanted to help give the next generation of dancers the opportunity to receive superior instruction without cost being a barrier to entry.

“I wanted the school to be a place where the focus is on developing students’ innate gifts without it being a financial strain for their families” said Karisma.

AbunDance Academy of the Arts [430 Rogers Ave. in Prospect Lefferts Gardens, (347) 788-1069; www.abundancearts.org].

Brighton Beach

The Big Apple

Cheers to **Diana Shteynberg**, a pre-K teacher at the **Shorefront YM-YWHA**. Diana was recently surprised by a visit from Senior Deputy Chancellor **Dorita Gibson** and a representative from the Department of Education to congratulate her on winning the **Big Apple Awards: Recognizing Teacher Excellence in NYC**.

Schools Chancellor **Carmen Fariña** announced the winners of the fifth annual awards, honoring 19 recipients of the 7,800 nominees.

Diana was raised in a family of educators and throughout her teaching career has sought to create a welcoming environment and an atmosphere of trust for every child and family, as well as to build a strong parent partnership.

At the end of last year, all her students were able to enter kindergarten without the English as a Second Language program due to excelling in language and literacy.

Shorefront YM-YWHA [3300 Coney Island Ave. in Brighton Beach, (718) 646-1444].

Read Standing O every Thursday on BrooklynDaily.com!

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