

New Americans is sponsored by:

MAPLE GROVE CEMETERY



83-15 Kew Gardens Road • P.O. Box 150086 • Kew Gardens, NY 11415 • 718.544.3600

Making a science of helping others

BY TRACY SOREN
editorial@queenscourier.com

Renzo Samame, a native of Peru, has used his passion for science and helping others to make a difference throughout his community.

When Samame was 17, he came to the United States to visit his grandmother, a naturalized citizen. At the time, Peru was having economic problems and he decided that there were opportunities available to him here in America. His grandmother made a petition for him to get his green card and he was able to stay.

Throughout the next six years, Samame spent his time focusing on his education, expanding his work ethic and giving back to the community. As a student at Queensborough Community College, Samame was president of Queensborough's College Science and Technology Entry Program (CSTEP). Through the program, he helped other minority students as a teaching assistant, arranged workshops for opportunities in science research, and ran an event at a soup kitchen.

Samame is also a strong advocate for the Student Adjustment Act, also known as the DREAM Act, which will assist immigrant children to receive an education.

He said that attending Queensborough was a great opportunity. He was able to study upper class chemistry with Dr. Svoronos, a professor who has taught at Harvard, Yale and Georgetown. He said that he believes he received the same high quality education as the students who attend those private universities.

"The good thing about Queensborough is that you can be walking in the hallways and the teacher will know your name," said Samame.

At the same time he was attending school, Samame, a Woodside resident,

worked full time and tutored science and math. He has done research at St. Johns University synthesizing bone cancer drugs and is planning to continue doing research.

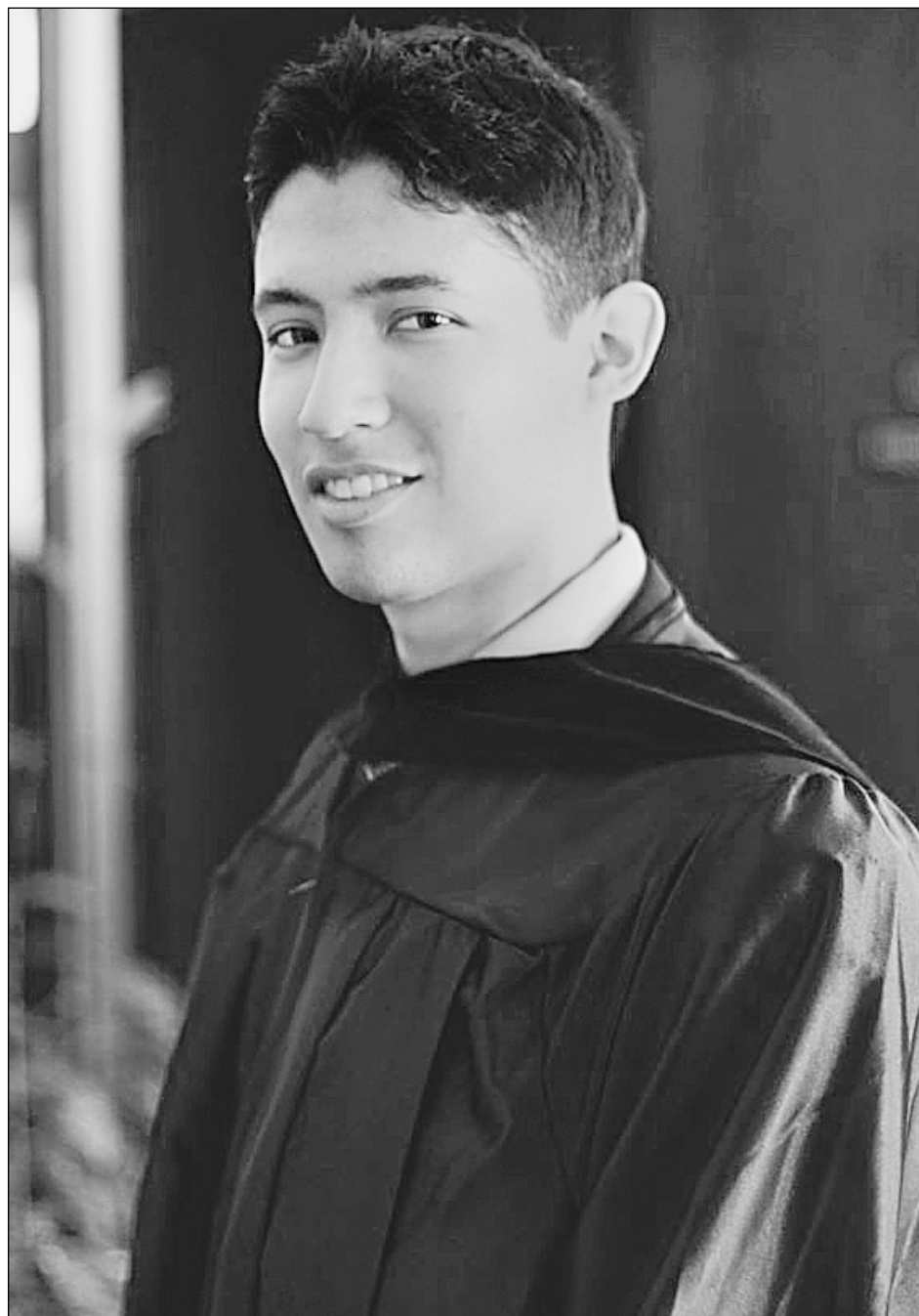
Samame, now 23, recently celebrated his graduation from Queensborough Community College. He was awarded the John F. Kennedy Memorial Award for outstanding college and community leadership. A number of students get nominated for the award but only one receives it. "It was a big surprise because it showed that all the work I was doing actually paid off in the end," said Samame.

As of now, he is volunteering at the emergency room in Flushing Hospital. Because he is aspiring to be either an emergency physician or a surgeon, he feels that this type of volunteer work is the best experience one can get.

Two summers ago, he volunteered at the Margaret Tietz Nursing and Rehabilitation Center in Jamaica. He helped the coordinators, worked in the rehabilitation department and did clerical work. He also spent quality time with the residents and took them out on walks.

Throughout all of this, Samame is working to become a legal citizen. He overstayed his student visa, applied late, and lost his green card. Under the Child Protection Act, he is able to stay because he came to the United States when he was a minor and his mother has set up another petition for him to become a citizen.

Even so, Samame is continuing his education and his work by attending Hunter College in the fall and studying biochemistry. He hopes to attend medical school and travel to countries in need of medical assistance, like Peru. After his medical career, he wants to go into academia and teach.



Renzo Samame

"THE GOOD THING ABOUT QUEENSBOROUGH IS THAT YOU CAN BE WALKING IN THE HALLWAYS AND THE TEACHER WILL KNOW YOUR NAME."

Renzo Samame