

## City University of New York program plumbs for elites among immigrants

CUNY's Macaulay Honors College revives a New York tradition of giving opportunities to 'diamonds in the rough': immigrants and their sons and daughters.

By Geraldine Baum  
May 31, 2009



Carolyn Cole / Los Angeles Times

"A lot of students at Macaulay are goal-oriented," says Sameen Farooq, 21, pre-med, whose parents were doctors in Pakistan but now run a dollar-store in Brooklyn.

Reporting from New York -- After completing a freshman seminar about immigration in New York, Anita Sonawane, a brainy undergraduate who happens to be a New York immigrant, had a transformative aha moment. It was something the professor said.

"Oh, come on, Anita, you know you're not going to be a doctor," Jeff Maskovsky, an urban studies professor at Queens College, told her, hoping to challenge the idea that the only way to succeed in America was to practice medicine.

No, she was not destined to be a doctor, she later realized. "Whenever I started talking, I couldn't help myself, politics just came into the discussion," says Sonawane, 18, a budding community activist and economics major.