Staten Islander Receives Pioneer Alumni Award

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As a kick-off to its 15th anniversary celebration, CUNY'sMacaulay Honors College is proud to announce the first winner of its Pioneer Alumni award: Thomas Brigandi, a 2012 graduate of Macaulay Honors College at the College of Staten Island. Brigandi received the award during Macaulay's Alumni Weekend as it welcomed back the Class of 2005—its first graduating class, and all other alumni. Brigandi received the award from among 13 nominated candidates.

A Staten Island resident, Brigandi works at the credit rating agency Moody's Investors Service as an associate analyst covering power and transportation infrastructure credit ratings. A triple major in Finance, Accounting, and Economics, he met the criteria for the Macaulay Pioneer Award as an individual who has leveraged his Macaulay educational experience to achieve professional accomplishment.

"I couldn't be more proud to see this inaugural honor go to someone as worthy as Thomas Brigandi," said Ann Kirschner, Dean of Macaulay Honors College. "Despite all the demands and long hours of his work at Moody's, Thomas also finds time to mentor and assist Macaulay students who might be interested in a career in business and finance. Not only has he founded a mentoring program for Macaulay students, he also has recruited 55 Macaulay alumni professionals to mentor over 75 students, while also serving as a mentor himself."

Brigandi also is engaged in global volunteer public service as a director of volunteer affairs at the American Foundation for African Children's Education, which has repaired eight schools in West Africa and has built partnerships between policy makers in Africa and North America since 2006. His work for the organization met the other criterion for the Pioneer Award: that the alumnus' post-graduate work reflects Macaulay's vision to inspire and prepare students to solve the challenges facing New York City, our nation, and the global community.

In addition, Brigandi is an active volunteer at the New York Society of Security Analysts (NYSSA), the largest CFA Institute Society in the Americas. He was recognized for his service to NYSSA in 2013 when the Society awarded him with the NYSSA Young Investment Professional Award and in 2015 with the NYSSA Volunteer of the Year Award. Over the past three years, Brigandi has organized 24 conferences that were attended by over 4,000 investment professionals.

"I am a firm believer in volunteer service and I am very thankful that the Macaulay Honors College has given me and my fellow mentoring program lead organizer, Irina Cruz of Soros Fund Management, the opportunity to create and grow our mentoring program over the last three years", said Brigandi. "In my mind, there is no better feeling than getting a phone call from a mentee who is so excited to tell you about their job or internship offer, and I have been fortunate enough to experience that numerous times over the last few years."

The entire Macaulay community took part in the nominating process for the Pioneer Alumni Award. Brigandi's nominations for this award included current students, a Macaulay staff member, and the founding Dean of Macaulay Honors College Laura Schor, who called Brigandi "tenacious and big-hearted."

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