



Eddie A. Perez
Mayor

Sarah Barr
Director of Communications

To Members of the Appropriations Committee:

As Director of Communications for the City of Hartford and a supervisor of interns who take part, are mentored, and achieve personal and professional growth through the Youth Employment Program, I respectfully submit this letter of support for the Youth Employment Program. Please accept this packet of information as testimony for the record it as it contains a message with a sense of urgency for now and for the future.

For more than 20-years, I served communities all across the country--- including the Hartford/New Haven market --- as an award winning television news anchor and reporter. That career was launched by an internship. I was told that the only way to say "thank you" was to "pass it on" and to give someone else the same opportunity. Well, I've been saying "thank you" ever since. I have made it a personal mission throughout my professional career to take-on and mentor young talent who are interested in the field of communications.

That mission didn't stop when I came to the Mayor's Office five years ago. In fact, the internship program has flourished to the point that cities like Baltimore have inquired about it and are looking to use it as a model. However, success is not based on models, it is based on people. It is based on the young, eager, and talented youngsters who come through the Youth Employment Program and capitalize on the unprecedented opportunities it offers.

This includes people like Miranda Stephenson, Whitley Mingo, Shanique Wilson, and Ashanti Gordon --- all of whom have graduated from high school and won scholarships and are currently attending college. The media research, the photography, the news conferences, the production of government cable access television programming--- all of these assignments and experiences paid off and helped pave the way for their future careers. Others have since successfully completed the summer and school-year internships and will soon be joining this list of young people with positive achievements, impressive resumes, and solid work ethics.

This real life work experience will help open doors for more young people in the future. But opportunity is an investment and that costs money. I ask that you please keep building on this success by continuing the current level of funding for this important program. With a significant portion of Connecticut's future workforce coming from urban areas like Hartford, we need to make sure our young people are prepared to seize the opportunity of today for the jobs of tomorrow.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me at (860) 757-9731. Again, I thank you for your time and efforts and respectfully ask that this letter and packet (which includes other letters and photos) be part of your formal review.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Sarah Barr".

Sarah Barr
Director of Communications
City of Hartford



Eddie A. Perez
Mayor

Sarah Barr
Director of Communications

December 12, 2008

Nissa N. Copemann, Vice President, Program & Development
The T. Howard Foundation
601 13th Street, NW Suite 710 North
Washington D.C. 20005

Dear Ms. Copemann,

Please allow me to introduce myself my name is Sarah Barr, Director of Communications for Mayor Eddie A. Perez in Hartford, Connecticut. In the spring of 2007, it was my sincere pleasure to have Miranda Stephenson as our intern here in the Communications Division.

From the moment I met Miranda, I knew she would be the right fit for our team. Sure, she's attending my alma mater of Temple University, but that only added to the fact that she's bright, leads by example, and is a self-starter. For 10 hours each week as a high school senior, Miranda took on computer and research assignments, assisted in setting up news conferences, attended a number of media events, and contributed creative and well thought-out ideas.

Miranda was also a pioneer. Our division never had a high school intern and Miranda accepted, completed, and excelled at her assignments with a maturity beyond her years. Her professionalism and enthusiasm was featured in "The Mayor's Update"--- a newsletter to our residents. Miranda's internship was part of a segment on investing in our youth. Miranda's investment in her future is something that makes Hartford proud.

Since her experience here at City Hall, Miranda has matured and developed new skills to take her to new levels in her studies and in her career. Prior to recommending her to you, I endorsed her for a sales position at a local department store, and she got the job on the spot.

I also know that Miranda's experience of living in Philadelphia has broadened her views. Being exposed to such history and architecture makes one very well rounded. And I know from personal experience that when you live in North Philadelphia (where Temple University is located) you have a better grasp and understanding of economic and ethnic diversity. Miranda is very proud of her heritage and draws upon her personal experiences as she works with others. I recommend Miranda to you with the highest regard.

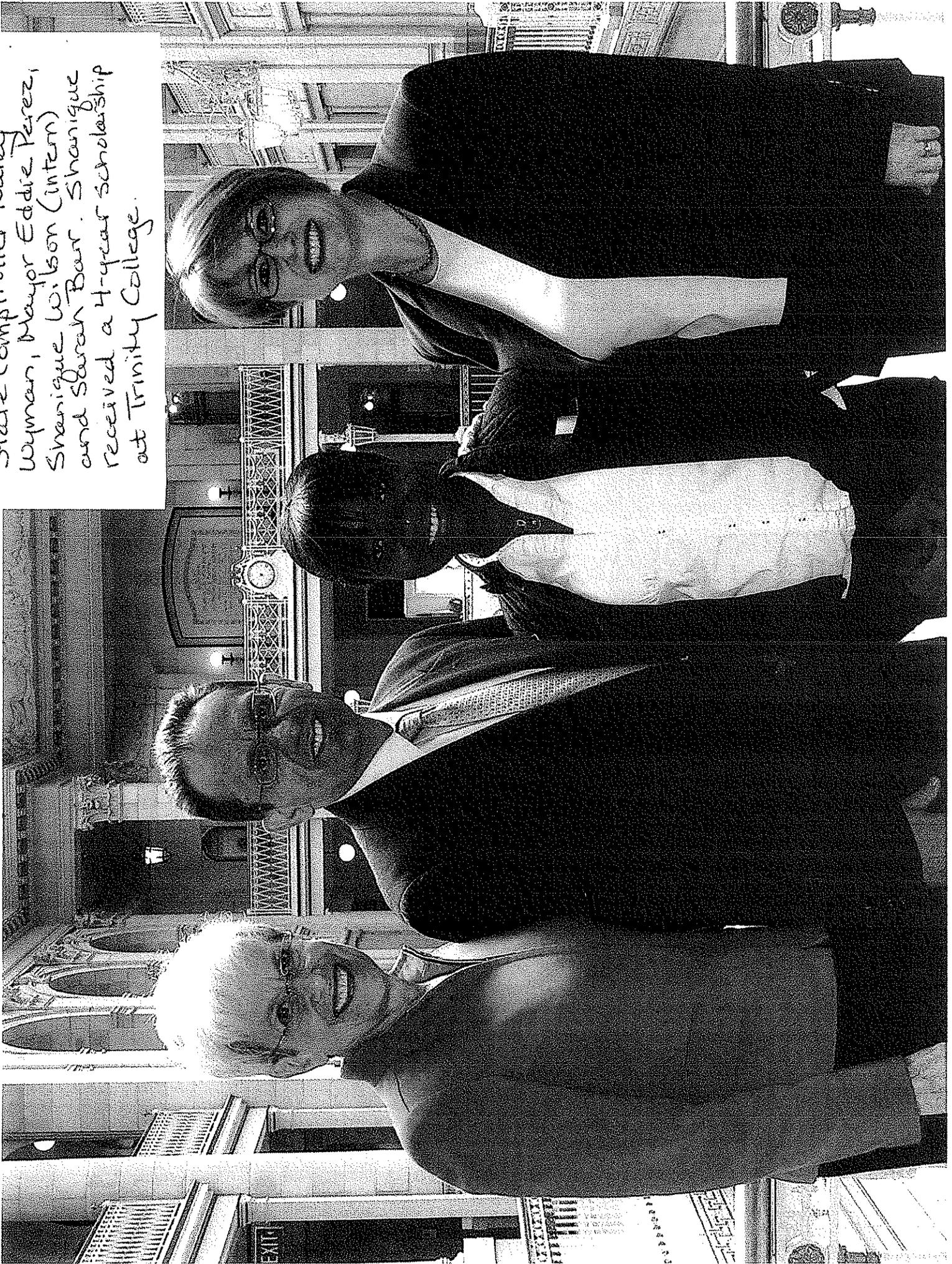
Sincerely,

Sarah Barr
Director of Communications
(860) 757-9731
barrs001@hartford.gov

Miranda Stephenson (sitting)
and Nina To during their
internship program.



State Comptroller Nancy
Wyman, Mayor Eddie Perez,
Shanique Wilson (intern)
and Sarah Barr. Shanique
received a 4-year scholarship
at Trinity College.





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Director of Communications

To Whom It May Concern,

Please allow me to introduce myself, my name is Sarah Barr and I am the Director of Communications for the City of Hartford. Omikya Quinn served as an intern with my department this past summer and performed her duties with great enthusiasm and effort.

At a time when many City governments are downsizing because of these difficult economic times, Omikya stepped up to the plate with her willingness to learn and take on new tasks. This was very beneficial to the staff because research assignments and community outreach campaigns were successfully completed. Omikya did media research on the City of Hartford and played a strategic role in our Office for Youth Services "Youth Summit" which was held in conjunction with the National Association of Local Elected Officials Convention (NALEO) that came to Hartford.

Omikya also helped create and produce new programming for our Government Cable Access Television Channel. Her "Ask the Mayor" segment, in which she interviewed Mayor Eddie Perez about education (he also serves on the Board of Education), enabled Omikya to develop new skills in researching, writing, interviewing, and editing.

Omikya has a bright smile and a sunny disposition that is infectious. She has a unique global perspective and outlook and very strong family ties. She exudes loyalty and dedication and I am confident she will continue to grow and blossom as she takes on new challenges and opportunities in her academic and personal life.

If you have any questions or would like to discuss Omikya's work in further detail, please feel free to contact me at (860) 757-9731 (direct line) here in the Mayor's Office at Hartford City Hall.

Sincerely,

Sarah Barr
Director of Communications



Eddie A. Perez
Mayor

Sarah Barr
Director of Communications

To Whom It May Concern,

Please allow me to introduce myself my name is Sarah Barr, Director of Communications for the City of Hartford. Xavier Medina served as an intern with my department this past winter and performed his duties with great effort and maturity.

Each day, Xavier demonstrated his willingness to learn and take on new assignments. His strong computer skills were beneficial from the get-go in regards to research assignments. He easily found inspirational quotes that were used in some of our Mayor's speeches and he also helped update our website.

Xavier also helped create and produce new programming for our Government Cable Access Television Channel 96 that can be seen on cable locally here in Hartford and streams online on www.hartford.gov. His "Ask the Mayor" segment, in which she interviewed Mayor Eddie A. Perez, was very timely as he posed questions on how to retain and grow jobs in Hartford in this tough economic climate. This project helped Xavier develop research, writing, interviewing, and editing skills--- skills that were further enhanced by co-producing a "Focus On" segment on the Boys and Girls Club. Here, Xavier demonstrated strong teamwork.

Xavier is easy to work with both one-on-one and as part of a team. I've enjoyed watching him grow more confident in himself. I am certain this internship opportunity will help him master new skills in his personal pursuits and in his academic career.

If you have any questions or would like to discuss Xavier's work in further detail, please feel free to contact me at (860) 757-9731 (direct line) here in the Mayor's Office at Hartford City Hall.

Sincerely,

Sarah Barr
Director of Communications