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COMMUNITY COLLEGE

## Community Days Focus on Climate Change and Public Service

October 30, 2013

The fall semester's Community Days focused on climate change as a central theme. On October 22, six concurrent workshops provided students opportunities to participate in interactive sessions and to meet experts and advocates to learn about a broad range of topics, including transportation options, recycling and the science behind climate change. Tara DePorte, Founder and Executive Director of the Human Impacts Institute in New York, gave the keynote talk about climate change.

The Community Day of Service was held on October 23. Guttman students, joined by college staff, "learned by doing" through volunteer work with a variety of community partners in non-profit, cultural and advocacy organizations. The service sites included the [Lower East Side Ecology Center](#), [Rebuild Staten Island](#) and [Rational Urban Mobility](#). [New York Cares](#), the largest local volunteer organization in New York City, conducted helpful sessions to orient students about community service and civic engagement before their day of service. Students documented their learning over the course of the Community Days and afterwards through reflection using photography and social media.



The Fall Community Days experience is part of the required *City Seminar* course and provides practical learning and community-based activities around topics connected to New York City. Group activities facilitate broad discussion and engage students to take action to improve the community. Guttman Community Days are an important dimension of the community-based learning that is the foundation for the college's model of teaching and learning in which the city becomes an extension of the classroom. During the spring 2012 semester, the Community Days focused on the *City Seminar II* theme of immigration.

"Thanks to our community partners in dozens of non-profits across the boroughs, our first-year students get to build on their curricular knowledge and skills as they make a positive impact on the environment," noted Claire King, faculty member at Guttman.