

Kendall Franklin – 2006 Urban Hero

Eighteen-year-old Kendall knew he wanted to be an accountant, but living in a shelter, he lacked the confidence and know-how to present his dreams and tremendous talents to others. Then he enrolled in Youth Advocacy Center's (YAC) *Getting Beyond the System*[®] Self-Advocacy Seminar and became an advocate for his future success.

Through the Seminar, Kendall learned to present his strengths, set short and long-term goals, depersonalize issues and make difficult life transitions. YAC also arranged for Kendall to go on an informational interview with an accountant at HBO who advised him to stay in school and pursue a career he truly enjoys. He put this guidance and his self-advocacy skills to use in finishing high school and going on to Hunter College, where he is currently a junior majoring in accounting.

While actively advocating for his personal goals, he is also committed to giving back to the community. Kendall is a site supervisor at the Coalition for the Homeless and counselor at a summer camp for children, where he received the award for hardest worker. .

Kendall now helps Youth Advocacy Center with community outreach so many more young people can benefit from learning self-advocacy. In addition to presenting to groups of teens and adults, recently Kendall met with City Council members, successfully urging them to support the expansion of *Getting Beyond the System*[®] to help teens city-wide. Kendall believes the GBS Seminar helped prepare him for challenging opportunities such as speaking before the Council. "This seminar would be helpful to anyone, including adults, who want to excel in whatever they are doing in life."