

CLASS ACT OF 2004 INTREPID IMMIGRANT A QNS. COLLEGE GRAD

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Body

It's been a long, harrowing path to graduation for Izeta Pobric, of the Queens **College Class** of **2004**.

Pobric, 48, of Bayside, fled her home in war-torn Sarajevo with her husband and three daughters a decade ago.

Although the former teacher was still reeling from two and a half years of bombing and sniper fire, and had no grasp of the English language, she was determined to further her education.

She signed up at Queens **College** and has spent the past five and a half years working her way through school, taking night and weekend **classes** part time in pursuit of a psychology degree.

"It was difficult for me," said Pobroc. "I didn't know anything of the language."

Up until she left Sarajevo, she ran a makeshift school in the basement of an abandoned building, dodging bullets on her way to and from **classes** each day and earning a UNICEF Teacher of the Year award for her efforts.

Now that she has received her B.A. in psychology - which she chose in hopes of understanding the violence she witnessed - Pobric plans to return to teaching.

Pobric officially finished her degree in February, but plans to attend the June 3 graduation ceremony - which will be a bittersweet experience because her parents cannot afford to fly in from Sarajevo.

"At the same time I'm happy, I'm sad. My parents are not here," she said, choking up with emotion.

"My parents always said, 'Please just educate yourselves and give something back.' I just want to help people - to help kids, even if this world is so hard."

Here is the list of where to applaud the borough's many accomplished graduates from the **Class** of **2004**.

Sunday, May 16

Noon - St. John's University will hold its 134th commencement ceremony on the Great Lawn on the Jamaica campus. Nearly 1,500 undergraduate and graduate students will receive their diplomas.

Friday, May 21

Noon - The students in CUNY School of Law's graduating **class** will participate in the 17th annual commencement at Colden Auditorium at Queens **College** in Flushing.

Sunday, May 23

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10 a.m. - The College of Aeronautics at LaGuardia Airport in Flushing will award diplomas to 130 students. NASA administrator Sean O'Keefe will be the featured speaker.

Thursday, June 3

9 a.m. - Close to 4,000 undergraduate and graduate students will participate in the 80th commencement ceremony at Queens College. Congressman Anthony Weiner (D-Brooklyn, Queens) and Borough President Helen Marshall will join the festivities on the campus quad in Flushing.

Friday, June 4

9 a.m. - An estimated 1,400 graduates - more than half of whom hail from other countries - will fill the Bayside campus athletic field at Queensborough Community College's 42nd commencement exercises.

9 a.m. - York College will award 854 diplomas and will install Robert Hampton as its new president during the 34th commencement exercise on the athletic field on the Jamaica campus.

Sunday, June 6

2 p.m. - St. John's School of Law will hand out an estimated 280 degrees at its commencement in Alumni Hall on the Jamaica campus.

Graphic

JESSICA MCGOWAN ACHIEVER Izeta Pobric, 48, a refugee from Sarajevo, outside Rosenthal Library on Queens College campus, gets her degree in psychology after five and a half years of part-time classes. One of first steps for Bayside resident was learning English.

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