The PVAMU Fourth Floor Art Gallery has previously taken students to New York City to explore and study fine art as only experienced in this unique cultural capital. This year ten students, two chaperones from Prairie View, and two additional students with their chaperone from Texas Southern University participated in this trip was from May 16-20th. We spent 4 days and 4 nights in Manhattan visiting art galleries, museums, viewing architecture, and theatrical productions. This is the fourth year that this trip was made available to students of any major.

Students this year had an intense cultural experience. We traveled to the Metropolitan Museum of Art and the Brooklyn Museum on the first day. We viewed The Whitney Museum of American Art’s Whitney Biennale and saw various exhibitions at the Studio Museum in Harlem. The evenings provided distinct opportunities to travel through Time Square to see the Broadway productions Porgy and Bess and Clybourne Park. Students and chaperones all lodged in a popular youth hostel on the city’s Upper West Side. At the hostel our students socialized with other student travelers from Europe, Africa and Japan. We had a fabulous dinner at Amy Ruth’s a popular soul food restaurant in Harlem. We witnessed the famed Apollo Theater’s Amateur Night show. Students engaged in a dialogue with a museum educator at the Studio Museum in Harlem about the work of Romare Bearden. At the Studio Museum students also dissected images by Loranne O’Grady. Many students who traveled on this trip are not studying art at Prairie View. On this trip all of our students were exposed to artists they had not known of prior to traveling with the Art Gallery. A few students on this trip had never traveled on an air plane before participating in this program.

To balance the educational activities scheduled we also explored Washington Square and Central Park. Students shopped in Harlem, Chinatown, and other neighborhoods across Manhattan. We relaxed on an architectural ferry that sailed around the city. The boat circumnavigated the Statue of Liberty and gave us a clear view of the progress being made with construction of the new Freedom Tower at One World Trade Center.

Students who initially signed up for this extracurricular program agreed to pay for their own transportation and logging, as well as the costs associated with this trip’s scheduled activities. Prairie View student were fortunate to later have been granted funding assistance with the costs of the trip’s cultural activities. The Texas Southern University Department of Fine Arts also underwrote several events in support of the two students who accompanied Prairie View on this trip.

The Fourth Floor Art Gallery as well as the students and chaperones are grateful to the following departments for enriching this trip with their generous support: The PVAMU Office for Academic Affairs, PVAMU School of Architecture, and the Marvin D. and June Samuel Brailsford College of Arts and Sciences.