

MERLYN GRANT RECIPIENT 2019

MALEHA MAHMUD

IS A MASTERS STUDENT IN BIOLOGY AT QUEENS COLLEGE (NYC). **SHE WILL STUDY THE BRONX RIVER WITH STUDENTS FROM NYC PUBLIC SCHOOLS.** HER MERLYN GRANT IS **\$1,800.**

“Climate change is one of the key reasons for declines in biodiversity, especially along rivers . . . **this little project might inspire others to take their own actions against climate change and share their successes.**”

Maleha will use her grant to purchase field guides, sampling nets, water quality tests, and to charter transportation to bring students to and from the Bronx River site. She will also host several local seminars on “climate change in urban contexts.”



[PHOTO ABOVE] “The Bronx River project will work in collaboration with the Lang Science Program of New York’s American Museum of Natural History. The Lang program makes STEM curricula (science, technology, engineering, math) accessible to historically underrepresented students. Over 500 free-flying butterflies can be observed in the amazing exhibition at the Museum’s butterfly conservatory! In this photo, a butterfly lands on my hand during a recent visit.”



[PHOTO LEFT] “I was born in Bangladesh but grew up in New York City. I’m especially interested in what factors impact urban ecosystems . . . Despite being the largest city in the United States, New York is unusually rich ecologically, and the Bronx River is its only freshwater river.”

[PHOTO RIGHT] “I’m cradling for the first time the Queens College Lahti Lab’s beloved pet, ‘Nagini.’ Our lab hosts weekly meetings to discuss topics in ecology, evolution and animal behavior. The gatherings help me grow as a scientist, think about our planet’s future, and adore the world and nature!”



“It might not be possible to resolve climate change all at once,” says Maleha, 23, “yet small steps can be taken to prevent it from becoming catastrophic. Conserving this local Bronx River ecosystem is **one little step that we can take together as a community.**”

GENEROUS CONTRIBUTORS HAVE MADE MALEHA’S MERLYN CLIMATE GRANT POSSIBLE.