

## 12<sup>th</sup> Annual GED Commencement Ceremony – Nearly 450 GEDs Awarded

Cuyahoga Community College (Tri-C<sup>®</sup>) celebrated nearly 450 General Equivalency Diplomas (GEDs) earned during the last academic year at the 12<sup>th</sup> annual GED commencement ceremony. Approximately 150 students participated in the commencement ceremony held at the Tri-C Metropolitan Campus Auditorium.



**Tri-C GED Graduates**

Ian Wilson, a training specialist in the Job Link Services department in the Workforce and Economic Development Division at Tri-C gave the keynote address. Wilson earned his GED in his forties after working numerous dead-end jobs to support his family. He continued his education after obtaining his GED; and in 2005, at the age of 50, he completed a Bachelor of Science in criminal justice, and at age 56 received a Master of Arts in Education.

Wilson now works with nontraditional students to help them pursue a career path. Wilson is licensed by the state of Ohio as a chemical dependency counselor. He is also a global career development facilitator and a licensed driving training school manager. He works part-time counseling others in rehabilitation for chemical dependency. His focus is to engage students in active learning so they develop strong values and ethical standards for enriched educational experiences.

Two student speakers, Ashi M. Robinson, a survivor of domestic violence who entered an alcohol and drug recovery program in 2003; and Agustin Torres, a native of Mexico who moved to the United States in 1995, will speak about their journey. Both completed their GED in October 2011.

Robinson, a member of Narcotics Anonymous, is often asked to speak at sobriety functions. She said, “with a second chance in this one life time, I have been able to turn the tables on what society once said will not change – and that’s the individual who wants to do more than just exist, but one who wants to live.” She plans to continue at Tri-C this fall and pursue her studies in either culinary arts or human services.

Agustin Torres learned the importance of education after working in the restaurant industry for more than 17 years. He realized the crucial need to further his education to be able to provide for a better life for his family and decided to take GED classes at Tri-C to improve his speaking and writing skills. He juggled school and long work hours as a server and bartender to complete his GED. This path led him to enrolling at Tri-C this fall and a job with Tri-C as an assessment technician clerk. He hopes all those without a high school diploma will take the same path and start by completing their GED.