

**CONTACT:**

Divendra Jaffar  
212-908-3380/646-952-3243  
[jaffadi@metroplus.org](mailto:jaffadi@metroplus.org)

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

## **MetroPlusHealth Announces Winning FIT Designs for NYC Dream Weaver Uniform Design Challenge**

*Five FIT Students Win Prizes Totaling \$21,000 to Outfit Health Care Heroes of NYC Health Plan*

(New York, NY – February 1, 2023) – Over the past four months, 14 students at the [Fashion Institute of Technology](#) (FIT) have developed over 45 sketches and mood boards for [MetroPlusHealth](#)'s rebranded employee uniform design challenge, and today the four winning uniforms and one honorable mention were announced. The designs will mark the first-ever official employee uniforms for NYC's high-quality, affordable health plan.

As part of a larger rebrand, this partnership marks MetroPlusHealth as the first health plan to collaborate with FIT. Students were tasked with creating uniforms that reflect MetroPlusHealth's diverse employee force of over 1,500 talented professionals who speak more than 40 languages and represent the communities they serve. Employees voted on the final designs and selected the winners, who will each receive \$5,000, and the honorable mention awardee will receive \$1,000.



Winning Designs

The top designs represent each uniform category, including traveling transporters (drivers, porters, and community center support), street savers (community engagement and outreach), community connectors (community navigator and insurance enrollment), and the voice (call center support). The winning designs will be featured in window exhibits at MetroPlusHealth Headquarters from February 1, 2023, followed by the FIT Art and Design Gallery in the spring. Uniforms will begin production in Q1 and be worn by MetroPlusHealth employees throughout New York City.

“In a city of millions, everyone has different needs but needs health care in some form. It's a unifying thread, a safety net all of us need to live and thrive in this great City," **said Roger Milliner, Chief Growth Officer of MetroPlusHealth.** "Being New York City's health plan of choice to over 700,000 members comes with a lot of responsibility; the representation of different cultures, languages, gender identities, backgrounds, and needs. We take the well-being of this City seriously, including our 1,300+ employees. We serve New York City's most diverse communities and hire from within to better meet the needs of these neighborhoods. As part of this challenge, FIT students were tasked to design uniforms that fit our diverse teams. They've all done an incredible job of capturing MetroPlusHealth's voice, brand, and tone, and today, I am pleased to see their hard work come to life. Congratulations to the students who participated in designing our first-ever uniforms. We're proud to be wearing them."

"We champion creativity at MetroPlusHealth and constantly seek ways to engage with the great City we love and serve," **said Ken Louie, Vice President of Brand Marketing and Communications at MetroPlusHealth.** "As NYC's health plan, we are with New Yorkers every step of the way – this historic collaboration with FIT ensures that our team members will look and feel confident while performing critical jobs in communities across New York City. These students combined the City's unique culture, the MetroPlusHealth mission, and our new rebrand to create uniforms that will empower our teammates to meet one unifying goal – providing quality care that supports every New Yorker's dream."

“The creativity and innovation of our students in developing designs that will meet the needs of a uniquely New York brand has been amazing to watch unfold over the past several months,” **said Michael Kaye, adjunct faculty member in Fashion Design and advisor on the project.** “We look forward to seeing the organization benefit from the students’ vision as they move forward."

<b>NYC Display Tour Timeline</b>	
February 1-April 2, 2023	Winning Uniforms are Displayed in the Window Showcase at 50 Water Street
April 3-23, 2023	Winning Uniforms are Displayed at FIT in the Main Lobby of Marvin Feldman Center (2227 West 27 <sup>th</sup> St.)

MetroPlusHealth wanted to design uniforms that represented its workers, who themselves are part of the lifeblood of New York City. During the pandemic, MetroPlusHealth employees were on the front lines meeting New Yorkers, [partnering with the New York Hotel Trade Council \(NYHTC\)](#) to provide health care coverage for over 5,000 NYC hotel and hospitality workers during the pandemic. This FIT partnership is the latest collaboration to tap unique talents within the City.

In 2022, MetroPlusHealth nurtured the NYC community by hosting community resource fairs, distributing 7,000 bags of produce during the holiday season, partnering with local LGBTQIA+ organizations and highlighting the importance of mental health in AAPI communities, among other initiatives.

Learn more about MetroPlusHealth and its initiatives at [www.metroplus.org](http://www.metroplus.org).

### **About MetroPlusHealth**

Since 1985, MetroPlusHealth has helped the people of New York City get quality health care at little to no cost. MetroPlusHealth is the plan of choice for over 700,000 New Yorkers, and its commercial and government-sponsored plans meet the needs of individuals, families, and workforces. The MetroPlusHealth staff speaks more than 40 languages and is as diverse as the great City it serves. MetroPlusHealth is part of NYC Health + Hospitals, the nation's largest public health system. For more information, visit [metroplus.org](http://metroplus.org). Join the conversation on social media at [@metroplushealth](https://twitter.com/metroplushealth).

### **About FIT**

A part of the State University of New York (SUNY), FIT has been a leader in career education in art, design, business, and technology throughout its history. Providing almost 9,000 students with an uncommon blend of hands-on, practical experience, theory, and a firm grounding in the liberal arts, the college offers a wide range of affordable programs that foster innovation and collaboration. Its distinctive curriculum is geared to today's rapidly growing creative economy, including fields such as computer animation, toy design, production management, film and media, and cosmetics and fragrance marketing. Internationally renowned, FIT draws on its New York City location to provide a vibrant, creative community in which to learn. The college offers nearly 50 majors and grants AAS, BFA, BS, MA, MFA, and MPS degrees, preparing students for professional success and leadership in the new creative economy. Among notable alumni in fashion are Calvin Klein, Michael Kors, Norma Kamali, Reem Acra, Brian Atwood, Stephen Burrows, Dennis Basso, Daniel Roseberry, Francisco Costa, Nanette Lepore, Bibhu Mohapatra, Ralph Rucci, John Bartlett, Peter Do, and Michelle Smith. Other prominent graduates include Leslie Blodgett, creator of bareMinerals; international restaurant designer Tony Chi; and Nina Garcia, editor-in-chief of ELLE. [fitnyc.edu](http://fitnyc.edu)

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