

# Character Breakdown

## IN THE HEIGHTS

**IN THE HEIGHTS:** In the Heights tells the universal story of a vibrant community in New York's Washington Heights neighborhood – a place where the coffee from the corner bodega is light and sweet, the windows are always open and the breeze carries the rhythm of three generations of music. It's a community on the brink of change, full of hopes, dreams and pressures, where the biggest struggles can be deciding which traditions you take with you, and which ones you leave behind.

**Usnavi de la Vega** — Our protagonist owns the corner bodega and longs to visit his beloved Dominican Republic, where he has not been since his deceased parents immigrated where he was a child. He lives with Abuela Claudia, who is not actually his grandmother, but is as close as family to him. He is in love with Vanessa, but struggles to share his feelings. Usnavi serves as an unofficial ambassador for his community. - *Latino*

**Nina Rosario** — Nina, a first-generation college student, has just returned home from her first year at Stanford University. She is the daughter of Kevin and Camila Rosario, the owners of the local car service. The community looks to her as a symbol of success, as someone who has achieved great things outside "the Heights". - *Latina*

**Camila Rosario** — Camila is the co-owner of Rosario's Car Service and has a quiet, but strong hold on her husband Kevin. She fell in love with him at 19 and emigrated together to New York to open their business and raise Nina. - *Latina*

**Kevin Rosario** — The owner of Rosario's Car Service, Camila's husband and father to Nina. After emigrating from Puerto Rico, he has worked hard his entire life to build his business and provide for his family. He is stubborn and fiercely proud of his daughter's achievements. - *Latino*

**Abuela Claudia** — The matriarch of the neighborhood, she emigrated from Cuba when she was very young. She has raised Usnavi since his parents died and still lives with him. She serves as the guiding light for many in the community. - *Latina*

**Sonny** — He is Usnavi's 15 year old cousin who helps at the bodega in the summer. Sonny hangs out with his friend Graffiti Pete, but also has a strong desire to make his community better and to be like his older cousin and mentor, Usnavi. - *Latino*

**Vanessa** — She is a shampoo girl at the local salon who longs to make her way out Washington Heights and away from her alcoholic mother. Vanessa grew up with Usnavi and Benny, and is now the object of Usnavi's hidden affection. - *Latina*

**Benny** — Benny is best friends with Usnavi, and in love with Nina, even though her father disapproves. Benny is a driver for Rosario's, who grew up a bit of a rough kid that Kevin took under his wing. Benny hopes to someday own his own car service. - *African-American*

**Graffiti Pete** — He is the nemesis of Usnavi, who is constantly hanging around the streets, listening to music and painting graffiti. He is friends with Sonny, much to Usnavi's dismay, as he doesn't want Sonny to follow Pete's example. *All ethnicities encouraged to audition*

**Daniela** — She is sassy, savvy, and the owner of a salon. She has fought to create her own business, but cannot compete with the rent hikes as the neighborhood gentrifies. - *Latina*

**Carla** — She works at Daniela's salon and is her best friend. She is a kind, sweet, young woman, who cares deeply for her family and friends, but is a bit naive. - *Latina*

**Piragua Guy** — He makes his living walking the streets of Washington Heights selling flavored shaved ice. He is a representative of the islands so many of the residents once called home. - *Latino*

**Ensemble** — Various Dancers and Singers. - *All ethnicities encouraged to audition*

*Casting for "In the Heights" will adhere to the ethnic designations required by the script and the story. Graffiti Pete and the Ensemble are open to performers ages 17+ of all ethnicities, gender identities, and abilities.*