



HeartShare St. Vincent's Services:
The American Dream Program
2016 Yearbook



The American Dream Program

HeartShare St. Vincent's Services (HSVS) empowers youth, individuals and families to overcome the challenges of family crises, addiction, mental illness and poverty. Working together, we open new doors of opportunity to help our clients achieve healthy and happy lives. With four programmatic divisions - Foster Care and Prevention Programs; Integrated Health Services; Residential and Housing Programs; Youth Development and Community Programs - HSVS staff members serve over 6,000 New Yorkers each year, including over 2,700 of the City's most vulnerable youth. This continuum of services enables HSVS to meet our clients' unique circumstances and needs, equipping them with tools and skills needed to achieve their dreams. By offering a stable home, a safe place to go after school, a means to graduate college and the skills to achieve physical and mental well-being, HSVS equalizes opportunities for those who need it most.

Youth in foster care face staggering odds, and at HSVS, we are committed to ensuring they beat the odds and break through to success. Nationally, between 3-4% of youth in foster care will graduate from college. Through the American Dream Program (ADP), we provide our Scholars with the support they need to persist through college and successfully graduate with stable, fulfilling life plans.

Unique to HSVS, ADP demonstrates our commitment to ensuring that older youth leaving foster care get the support they need to achieve their dreams. Through ADP, we provide our Scholars with college counseling, academic support, financial assistance and emotional support—we are their “academic parents.”

For the 2016-2017 Academic Year, we will have 50 Scholars in ADP, our privately funded college scholarship and coaching program. Our College Scholars are determined to turn their grit into dreams, and through the support of ADP and donors like you, we know that anything is possible for them.

This year's ADP Yearbook showcases the drive and determination of some of our College Scholars through their personal interviews.

2016 HSVS Reverend Monsignor Robert M. Harris Youth of the Year

Diamond H.

FUTURE ADP SCHOLAR | CLASS OF 2021



Diamond is a motivated, reliable young woman. Diamond is determined to become the “best version” of herself, and she has worked hard over the past four years to become a better student and a role model in her community. Diamond is proud of her resiliency—she has overcome great challenges and obstacles to get to this positive place in her life. However, Diamond hopes to gain more self-confidence before she goes to college.

Diamond was born in Brooklyn, and she came into foster care when her biological mother was deported back to Guyana. Diamond lived with her “real” mom until she was four years old, and then she was adopted. Diamond was fortunate to grow up in a loving household, and she was also very thankful that she could grow up with her sisters. Diamond has many favorite childhood memories, but she has one that she thinks truly captures the strong, happy connection she has with her family.

Diamond’s mom took Diamond and her sisters on a vacation to Disney World. They were so excited to be in Florida and see the Magic Kingdom. However, when they tried to go to the theme park, they realized their tickets said Disney LAND—in California! Diamond remembers that they all had a great laugh about it and enjoyed a fun week exploring the rest of Florida and relaxing in their hotel.

Diamond is truly thankful to have a supportive mom, but tragedy hit their happy family in 2015 when Diamond’s mom was hospitalized for a tumor. Diamond’s mom became very ill. She lost the ability to walk, and she could not take care of Diamond and her sisters. As a single mom, she had no one else who could step up and help her with her daughters. Diamond and her sisters were placed back into foster care, and they lived in different homes. Last year, Diamond found a place of solace at HSVS’ New Brighton Group Home. In early September, Diamond moved into her new foster home. She is happy that she has found another caring family—and that she can be reunited with one of her sisters.

This year, Diamond is entering her senior year of high school. Diamond admits that she did not always have good grades. But when her mom became sick, Diamond realized that she may not always be able to depend on her mom for support. Diamond knew that she needed to focus on her grades, go to college and make a bright future for herself. Most importantly, Diamond knew that her change of plans would make her mom proud. Last semester, Diamond made straight As, and she wants to keep working on her grades so that she can secure an academic scholarship.

Diamond’s dream school is Villanova University, which she has visited multiple times as part of the Fresh Air Fund. Diamond plans on majoring in English and English Literature, and she hopes to become an English teacher.

Diamond is excited that this year will open new doors of opportunity in her life. Diamond continues to be inspired by her mom and her sisters. She is thankful for their continued support. Diamond would like to thank her Aunty Harriette for supporting her, encouraging her and helping her with the Youth of the Year application. Diamond also wants to thank her mentor, Joan Baim, who helped Diamond realize her natural abilities and talents. Finally, Diamond wants to thank Ms. Talia who celebrated all of her accomplishments and made Diamond feel special.

We are thrilled to name Diamond our 2016 *Rev. Msgr. Robert M. Harris Youth of the Year*. Congratulations, Diamond!

Advice for Future College Bound Youth

“Use what talent you possess. The woods would be very silent if no bird sang but the best.”—Henry Van Dyke

Dalila A.

UNIVERSITY OF ALBANY / CUNY
CLASS OF 2018



Dalila is a determined, unique, and charismatic young woman. In her free time, Dalila likes to shop and watch horror movies. Dalila is proud of her rich cultural heritage. Raised in Uzbekistan, Dalila's mother is Russian and her father is Arab. Dalila emigrated to the United States when she was 7 years old. Dalila enjoyed exploring NYC and was eager to make it her home.

Dalila entered foster care with HSVS before her freshman year of high school because of her mother's struggle with alcohol use. This was a difficult time in Dalila's life, but despite these challenges, Dalila was determined to not let anything get in her way of going to college. One big support during this time was having a loving foster family. Since coming into foster care, Dalila has gained new family members, including a foster sister whom she considers one of her best friends. Dalila feels that foster care shaped her into the woman she is today.

While in foster care, Dalila has learned how to interact with different people and appreciate different points of view. Dalila calls her foster family and her biological family "family" because she loves them both.

In high school, Dalila made a promise to herself that she would go to college and study Psychology. Dalila's interest in studying Psychology came from her desire to learn how people think and behave. This year, Dalila will begin her sophomore year and she is thrilled to be studying—Psychology! Dalila started out at the University of Albany where she excelled as a student. However, she missed her family and the opportunities available in NYC. This semester, Dalila will be working and interning before she transfers to one of the CUNY schools in the Spring of 2017. Right now, she has her heart set on transferring to Hunter College, which is a top school for psychology and social work.

With hard work, Dalila hopes to one day become a social worker and help other youth in care. Dalila is proud of her ability to manage stress and remain patient when things become overwhelming. After college, Dalila wants to use her own experiences to help people in a positive way by remaining a part of the foster care community. She wants to mentor youth in foster care and bring awareness to the issues. Dalila believes that in order to succeed in college, you need a lot of patience, motivation, the desire to do well and ability to push yourself. Dalila credits her grandmother for inspiring her to pursue her goals and work hard to achieve her dreams.

Dalila's American Dream is to be happy, comfortable, and surrounded by her loved ones. Dalila wants to get married, have kids and wants to live in either Florida or Italy. Dalila is proud of how far she has come despite all of the obstacles she has had to overcome in her life. She is also proud to be a big sister and tries to lead by example.

Dalila appreciates all of the support from ADP. If Dalila needs anything, she knows that someone will be there to help her out. Dalila acknowledges Lauren for always being on top of things and making sure everything is going well. She credits ADP as playing a major role in her academic success. She is thankful to HSVS for positively shaping her foster care experience. Dalila would like to thank her foster parent for accepting her as a daughter, being supportive, and always being there for her. Dalila also wants to thank Kendra Mulzac, who always made sure she had everything she needed for each chapter of her life. Dalila is thankful for her sister who is always there for her, and her boyfriend who motivates her and offers a lot of support.

Advice for Future College Bound Youth

"It is not the same as high school. College is a different experience. Just focus and get to know your professors. It will help you out a lot."

Katherine A.

**KINGSBOROUGH COMMUNITY COLLEGE
CLASS OF 2017**

Katherine entered foster care at the age of seventeen. Katherine thinks of foster care and HSVS as being her “savior,” as they helped her to escape a verbally and physically abusive situation. Katherine has lived in two foster homes since she entered care. The first home was exactly what she needed to graduate high school. Her foster mother placed a strong emphasis on education, and Katherine was very dedicated to her studies. Katherine considers her current foster mom to be her “real” family as they have a deep connection. Despite the issues she has faced and trauma that she has endured, Katherine has remained resilient, strong and successful. Katherine is bilingual in Spanish and English, and she hopes to use her skills in her future career as a lawyer fighting to keep criminals off the streets.

Katherine is very proud of how hard she has worked to overcome the challenges in her personal life. Although she is still very young, Katherine has accomplished more than many of the other members of her family, and she is determined to continue to grow into a successful, independent young adult. Before entering foster care, Katherine struggled in school because her mother only finished middle school and was unable to support Katherine’s education at home. Katherine was unable to call on her peers for support as her parents had a very strict household and she was discouraged from making close friends.



Katherine is the first person in her family to graduate high school, and she is also the first person in her family to go to college. Katherine was proud that she graduated from high school and enrolled in college, and now Katherine is focused on graduating from college so that she can prove to herself and others that she is “more than her past.”

Currently, Katherine is in her final year at Kingsborough Community College and is pursuing a degree in Criminal Justice. At Kingsborough, Katherine is a part of ASAP, which is a program that provides on-campus, individualized supports to eligible students. Katherine’s connections on campus have helped her to find professors and classes that she truly enjoys and accommodate her work and personal life commitments. She is very proud of the hard work she put into her biology class. Although she did not receive her highest grade in that class, Katherine was proud that she stuck to her study schedule, met with the professor and passed the class. Katherine is determined to make this final year of college “her year” so that she raises her GPA and graduates on time.

For Katherine, the American Dream means putting herself in a position where she can fight the injustices that people of color and living in poverty face every day. In the future, Katherine sees herself married, with two children and the ability to always have food on the table—for all of them. Katherine hopes to be a District Attorney and then a judge—she has been inspired by Judge Danoff who has been the judge overseeing her case in Family Court. Additionally, Katherine hopes to write and publish a book about her life to serve as inspiration for others.

Katherine would like to thank: the Office of Youth Development for being “caring and showing that there is a bright future ahead of us,” HSVS for being “the light in the dark world when she thought there was no one to turn to,” Lauren Pettiette “who pushed me and gave me professional and emotional advice,” and Judge Danoff for being “an inspiration and for enlightening me towards a better future.”

Advice for Future College Bound Youth

“It will take a lot of sacrifices to make it through college, but it will be worth it in the end. Once you get an education, its yours for life. No one can take it away from you.”

Alliyah C.

KINGSBOROUGH COMMUNITY COLLEGE
CLASS OF 2018



Alliyah is a strong-willed, optimistic, caring young woman whose faith is strong. Alliyah is proud of her Cuban-American heritage, and she considers herself a “sister to many” because she has connected herself with many females who she positively influences. Alliyah “holds this title dear as it means that she can have a significant impact on the lives of younger girls.”

Alliyah is our resident aquatics guru, and she loves serving as a lifeguard and water safety instructor. Over the years, Alliyah has taught many children how to swim. One of Alliyah’s most recent accomplishments was passing the city lifeguard exam. She worked extremely hard to get to where she is and is happy that her hard work paid off.

Alliyah entered foster care when she was three years old after facing abuse and neglect early in her childhood. Upon entering foster care, Alliyah was forced to be separated from her siblings, which was very difficult. At the age of eight, Alliyah was happy to be returned to her mother’s care and “start over” in Georgia. Two years later, Alliyah and her mother were back in NYC and Alliyah found herself back in foster care. While in

foster care, Alliyah has lived in over thirty different foster homes, in all five boroughs. Many of her siblings have been discharged from foster care through adoption or through kinship placements.

Growing up, school was always very difficult for Alliyah as she was forced to move around a lot, and often missed a lot of school. Alliyah recalls the fifth grade being particularly difficult as she was living with her mother who used to threaten her with physical violence if she did not make good grades. With the constant threat of abuse hovering over her, Alliyah was unable to concentrate on her studies. Alliyah recognizes that although facing such instability in school and at home has been difficult for her, the experience has made her strong and resilient. Today, Alliyah considers her close friends, her colleagues and several of the HSVS staff to be her family.

Alliyah went to college so that she could pursue a career in the field of nursing and eventually adopt her siblings. Alliyah credits all of her experiences, good and bad, for shaping her into the person she is today. She also credits her various interactions with people in and out of foster care for helping her grow, learn, and understand how people work and behave. Finally, she credits God for shaping her into the person she is today.

Alliyah is currently enrolled in Kingsborough Community College as a sophomore. Alliyah is also involved in the Permanency Pact Program and the Youth Advisory Board at HSVS. Before she graduates, Alliyah would like to launch a swim program to promote and teach water safety for youth in care. She is also in the process of creating a YouTube channel that will focus on self-empowerment and self-esteem. Alliyah will make an amazing nurse, and her clients will benefit from her desire to give back to those in need and from her ability to empathize and connect with anyone. She is proud that she has overcome adversity in her life and of the person she has become. After Alliyah obtains her Bachelor’s Degree in Nursing, she plans on continuing to earn her Master’s Degree.

For Alliyah, the American Dream program means that she can truly succeed. Alliyah is grateful for everything the program has done for her and the impact that it has had on her life. She considers her fellow scholars and the Youth Development team to be part of her family. Alliyah credits Lauren Pettiette for the countless times she has provided her with attention, assistance, care and motivation. Alliyah acknowledges all the support from the Youth Development team at HSVS and wants to thank them for always lending an ear and leading by example.

Advice for Future College Bound Youth

“Students shouldn’t always buy into the timeline of college. It is important to learn at your own pace—do not stress about how quickly or how slowly it takes you to obtain your degree.”

Jethro D.

ST. LAWRENCE UNIVERSITY
CLASS OF 2019



Originally from Côte d'Ivoire, Jethro fell in love with soccer at a young age. For Jethro there has always been a special link between soccer and school. Just as he loved soccer, Jethro was very serious about school. He showed the same dedication and determination to excel in both the classroom and on the field. When Jethro first moved to the United States with his mother, soccer was a way for him to connect with new friends while learning the English language. Soccer motivated Jethro to excel in school and put his energy into pursuing positive friends and after-school activities.

Jethro entered into foster care when he was 15 years old, less than a year after arriving to the United States. At that time, Jethro's mother unexpectedly lost her job, and she was unable to take care of him. During this time, Jethro stayed with friends, but what he wanted was a stable place to stay. Once again, Jethro turned to soccer, and his soccer coach connected him with HSVS. Through this connection, Jethro found a home at HSVS' Richmond Hill Group Home.

Soccer has always been a consistent source of confidence and happiness for Jethro, but one of his favorite memories is when he passed the Environment Science Regents Exam. Jethro was having difficulty passing it because English is his second language, and he was extremely proud of the hard work and determination he needed to pass the exam. Jethro faced many difficulties while adjusting to foster care, then to boarding school and finally to college, but Jethro has remained committed to being a success.

Jethro is an easygoing, responsible and determined young man. He knows that he is a role model to other young people who are in foster care, and he wants to show them that even though things can be tough, there is no reason to cause trouble, associate with negative people or give up on your dreams. Jethro is focused on achieving his goals and being a success, and he calls his parents and his love of soccer sources of inspiration. Growing up, he saw how hard his parents had to work—but both of them made education a priority and both of them have their college degrees. On the other hand, soccer has opened countless doors and opportunities that he never imagined he would be able to experience.

Jethro recognizes that becoming a professional soccer player will be very difficult, and he knows that a college education is a critical part of advancing both on and off the field. Jethro wants to be prepared to have a good job revolving around soccer if he is not able to play. Jethro is driven to succeed academically so that he can remain an active leader on the field and set a positive example for his siblings.

Last fall, Jethro began his freshman year at St. Lawrence University on a full scholarship as well as a starting midfielder on the Men's Soccer team. Jethro received conference honors for his athletic accomplishments. Last season, Jethro was named the Liberty League Rookie of the Year and to the All-Liberty League First Team—the only freshman on this team. Jethro enjoyed his freshmen classes, especially his Freshmen Introductions course.

In the future, Jethro would love to live in Chelsea, England and play professional soccer. He would love to spend time with his wife and family and travel the world. After he retires, Jethro would love to run his own business and open a foundation that provides access to sports for youth in need. To Jethro, ADP means that he is supported while he pursues his academic and professional dreams. He is thankful for the support of his former case planner, Charlie Thompson, Lauren Pettiette and his family friends, the Potter family.

Advice for Future College Bound Youth

"You need to have grit. You need to have a purpose. Remember that you are working hard to set yourself up for the future."

Mamadou D.

NYU TANDON SCHOOL OF ENGINEERING
GRADUATE, CLASS OF 2016



Mamadou is a goal-oriented, ambitious and determined young man. Mamadou is a natural leader, but he is also a great team player. Mamadou came to the United States with his family when he was fifteen years old. When his parents returned to Senegal, Mamadou stayed in New York City with his aunt to continue to pursue his education. In school, Mamadou made his mark as a star athlete on the soccer field; however, he also experienced hardship. On a visit to Senegal, his aunt became a victim of a green card scam and was denied entry back into the United States. This left Mamadou alone, with no money, no food, no family and almost no shelter when the landlord attempted to evict him.

After talking to his high school soccer coach about his struggles, Mamadou found his home at HSVS' Jamaica Hills Group Home. His soccer coach remained a close mentor and ally and supported him throughout high school and beyond. Additionally, Mamadou found support from his HSVS family.

Mamadou says that he knows people may find it surprising, but he was not always a dedicated student. When he first entered foster care, Mamadou was extremely focused on soccer rather than his school work. One of his favorite moments was when his high school soccer team played in the state championship—and won! Mamadou was proud of the hard work he and his teammates put into the season. In high school, Mamadou had aspirations of being a professional soccer player, and the championship game gave him a taste of what that life would be like. Mamadou's priorities shifted when he realized that education would open more doors of opportunity for him.

Mamadou graduated from high school and went on to earn his Associate's Degree in Civil Engineering. But Mamadou did not stop there. In 2013, Mamadou was named the *Rev. Msgr. Robert M. Harris Youth of the Year*. Additionally, he was accepted as a student at NYU Polytechnic School of Engineering (now the NYU Tandon School of Engineering), and in May 2016, Mamadou accomplished his dream and graduated with his Bachelor's Degree in Engineering. Mamadou was thrilled to share this achievement with his brothers, his mother and his close friends. This was a proud moment for Mamadou as he is the first person in his family to graduate from college. In the summer of 2016, Mamadou began his first job post graduation as an Engineering Assistant at Turner Construction.

Mamadou has always considered himself fortunate to have a great support network and a multitude of opportunities. As a way of showing his gratitude, Mamadou has served as a role model and mentor to other students. Additionally, this past spring, Mamadou became a founding Member of the HSVS Junior Board. Mamadou also hopes to give back to Senegal by employing the lessons he learned in his sustainable cities class to build better the communities of his home country.

Mamadou believes that the American Dream means being able to make a name for yourself. Mamadou hopes that in the next few years, he will start a family, move to suburbs and have a permanent vacation home. Mamadou is thankful for the staff member in his HSVS group home, the ADP team and Monsignor Harris, who helped him throughout his time in college.

Advice for Future College Bound Youth

"Research different careers and find a job you would enjoy. Pick a major based on these careers—but don't pick a job just because it is the highest paying one. Also, focus on your networks. The people you know can really help you in the future."

Ericka F.

LAGUARDIA COMMUNITY COLLEGE
CLASS OF 2017

Ericka is a loving, brave and creative young woman who is a good friend to all. Her smile and wit keep everyone around her in good spirits. Ericka was born in Brooklyn, and her mother is originally from St. Vincent's and her father is originally from Haiti. Ericka came into foster care in 2011 after her living situation at home became too dangerous. Ericka sees her time in foster care as a blessing in disguise as it has opened up many opportunities for her. Since she first entered foster care, Ericka has lived with her grandmother in a kinship home. Her grandmother has always been an important part of her childhood, and one of Ericka's favorite memories is of reading storybooks with her grandmother and discovering big words like "illustrations." Ericka's love for words and books has stayed with her, and Ericka uses her gift of writing to share her story, connect with others and create beautiful tales for her readers. Ericka dreams of being a journalist, and she is on track to accomplish this goal.



Ericka believes that her experience in foster care has taught her that you can make a good situation out of anything. Before she lived with her grandmother, Ericka was hurt by her mother. This hurt stayed with her, but with her grandmother's love, good friends and support from HSVS, Ericka has been able to persevere and blossom.

Ericka has always been a strong student, but in high school, the challenges at home caused Ericka to misbehave at school. Although Ericka did well in her classes, she truly excelled in her English and writing classes. Right after graduating from high school, Ericka started college at LaGuardia Community College where she is a part of the College Discovery program. Ericka has enjoyed her time at LaGuardia; however, she is determined to transfer to a four-year college where she will be able to graduate with her Bachelor's Degree and be on track for graduate school. Additionally, Ericka hopes that transferring to a college outside of the city would provide her with the opportunity to grow into a more independent, thoughtful young woman.

During the past two summers, Ericka has been able to develop her writing craft. First, Ericka served as a youth journalist and editor for the magazine *Youth Represent*. Ericka's work was featured in a fall edition of the magazine, and she continues to receive glowing reviews and exciting opportunities from her time at the magazine. This past summer, Ericka interned at the Redlich Horwitz Foundation, and she took the lead on an article about the Foundation's Permanency Pact Program, which connects youth in foster care with lifelong Supportive Adults. Ericka has first-hand experience with the Program as she met Shelby, her Supportive Adult, through HSVS' Permanency Pact Program.

Ericka is proud of how far she has come and is proud to be a role model for her younger siblings. Ericka hopes to give back to her community by volunteering at animal shelters and inspiring teens to follow their dreams by being a motivational speaker. In the future, Ericka sees herself living in Florida as a writer who also gives back to children in need.

Ericka credits her success, in part, to ADP as she believes it provides her with the necessary tools to succeed in school. She is thankful for the YoDe team and her HSVS therapist for helping her through college.

Advice for Future College Bound Youth

Be proactive when you need help. The staff members on your campus and agency are there for you, but you have to take the step in reaching out to them.

Corey H.

VAUGHN COLLEGE
CLASS OF 2018

In the Spring of 2011, Corey entered foster care with HSVS. Despite the fact that most of his family never graduated from college and despite all the personal obstacles he has faced, Corey is on the path to achieve his dreams. Corey consistently excels in college and in his work, and he has a natural gift for connecting with other people. This gift comes in handy as Corey focuses his time and energy on jobs that require him to be enthusiastic, charismatic and calm in tough situations.

From a young age, Corey loved airplanes and dreamed of being a pilot. His interest was sparked by living close to JFK Airport when he was younger, which allowed him the opportunity to watch the planes land and take off. Before college, Corey spent time studying airplanes—the mechanics, the different types and the opportunities that he may have to work with them.

Corey did an amazing job of navigating the college process, and he found his place at Vaughn College of Aeronautics and Technology where he majors in Aeronautical Science. As a sophomore, Corey managed to also become a licensed taxi cab driver, and he has enjoyed making extra money and getting his passengers safely to their destinations. Corey loves that his current job—and his future career—mean that he has a personal responsibility for other people. Corey has been fortunate to have many people looking out for him, and he wants to give back to others.

Corey completed his sophomore year at Vaughn, which was filled with opportunities and adjustments. He is excited about the upcoming academic year as he will be better able to focus on his studies and immerse himself in the hands-on training aspects of his program. Corey has made a great impression on his classmates, professors and advisors, and many of them recognize his perseverance and positive attitude. Although Corey has dreams of being a pilot, he also says that he is interested in becoming an air traffic controller. For Corey, ADP means having the ability to succeed in life and to remain stress free as he follows the path to achieve his dreams.



Advice for Future College Bound Youth

Explore all your opportunities and don't be scared to try new things.

Bianca J.

BOROUGH OF MANHATTAN COMMUNITY COLLEGE CLASS OF 2018

Bianca is a loving, energetic, helpful, and open minded young woman. She brings a brightness into every room she enters, and she is the proud mother of a beautiful, intelligent little girl.

Bianca was born in Brooklyn. When Bianca was 2 months old, she moved to Jamaica to live with her grandmother after her mother was arrested for drug charges. When Bianca was 5 years old, her mother was deported for another criminal charge, and Bianca moved back to the United States to live with her older sister. As Bianca grew older, her relationship with her sister fell apart. Her sister became physically and verbally abusive towards Bianca, and she would run away in order to escape. Then, when Bianca was 15 years old, she decided that she could no longer live with her sister and voluntarily placed herself in foster care.

The night she entered foster care she found out that she was pregnant. Initially, Bianca was moved into a group home for young mothers, but Bianca felt unsafe and was moved into a foster home. Over the course of her life, Bianca lived in five different foster homes. Despite the instability in her life, Bianca always stayed focused on her studies. In high school, she was a part of the gifted program, and she excelled in her classes. Bianca always saw school as an opportunity to give herself a better life.



Bianca has two favorite memories, the first being the birth of her daughter. She admits it was hard not having anyone there when her daughter was born, but she loved holding her daughter for the first time. Her second favorite memory was graduating from high school. Bianca not only graduated a year earlier than she expected, but she also walked across the stage with her daughter. Bianca was also very proud to be one of the only three people in the tristate area to receive a DOE Merit Award.

Currently, Bianca is in her sophomore year at Borough of Manhattan Community College where she is a Criminal Justice major. Although she admits it is sometimes difficult to balance being a mother, a college student and working, she stays strong and successful with the help of her family and ADP. Bianca is proud of her resiliency and the fact that despite the trauma she has gone through, she is still a successful student and mother. Bianca believes that college will ensure a better life for her and her family and will allow her to achieve her dreams. Additionally, Bianca knows that her dedication and hard work are setting a great example for her daughter.

Before graduating college, Bianca wants to intern and get hands on experience at the NYC Department of Parole and Probation. She also wants to save \$10,000 before she graduates. After graduation, Bianca would like to move to Georgia and adopt children in foster care. She also dreams about traveling the world. One day, Bianca plans on leading a nonprofit agency that focuses on providing essential resources for those in need, such as free meals, free places to do laundry, and free clothing.

Bianca views ADP as a supportive shoulder that she can rest on when the world is too overwhelming. Bianca wants to thank Shawna Washington for always being in her corner. Additionally, she wants to thank Lauren for always working so hard to make sure that all of Bianca's needs are met. Bianca believes that everyone needs someone like Lauren in their lives. Bianca also wants to thank the Youth Development Team for always going above and beyond and always being there to talk to, for helping her through this journey, for always going the extra mile to help her, and for always showing that they truly care and want to make a difference.

Advice for Future College Bound Youth

"Always ask questions."

Briehanna J.

UNIVERSITY OF ALBANY

CLASS OF 2019



Briehanna entered foster care with HSVS at the age of fifteen because of her mother's struggles with alcohol use that turned into physical abuse. At the time, Briehanna hoped that she would be able to count on her father for support. However, when Briehanna reached out to him for a relationship, he completely shut her out of his life. While in foster care, Briehanna has tried to build relationships with her adult family members, but has found more strength and stability from her siblings and from her teachers and mentors. Briehanna has a gift for connecting with people, and she is a proven student leader. Briehanna's personal strengths and strong spirit have helped her to move past the negative experiences and challenges that she has faced and have motivated her to pursue excellence in all of her endeavors.

Briehanna has always been a talented and motivated student, but she truly blossomed in high school. In high school, Briehanna was determined to take control of her own future and ensure that she went to college. She excelled in her academics, took control of all of her college

applications and stayed on track to graduate as a top student. Briehanna is an excellent writer and critical thinker. Not only did she receive a college scholarship, she was also a Grand Prize Winner for the citywide Award for Youth in Foster Care. Additionally, she has written articles that have been published in newspapers and letters to politicians to inform their decisions that affect youth in foster care.

Last year, Briehanna excelled in her freshman year of college at SUNY Albany. Briehanna started her freshman year with solid support from the school's Educational Opportunity Program (EOP). Through EOP, Briehanna was able to acclimate to college life and the rigors of studying during the summer, and she continued to receive supports from the staff members and mentors throughout the year. Briehanna was a straight A's student in first semester of college, and she maintained high grades in the second semester as well—despite a rigorous course load. Briehanna's professors often highlighted her stellar work in their classes and shared her writing pieces as examples for other students. Next year, Briehanna will serve as a Teaching Assistant and balance her math and science courses with courses that tap into her creative side.

This summer, Briehanna had the amazing opportunity to learn the Chinese language and culture at Middlebury College in an intensive, full-immersion summer program. Briehanna enjoyed the experience, and she hopes that she will be able to travel abroad at some point during her college career.

Briehanna is a talented, creative young woman and the world is truly her oyster. Although Briehanna is not entirely set on one career path, she is certain that she wants it to involve math. Briehanna enjoys the fact that in math, there is often only one answer, but many different ways to find that answer. She also dreams of writing a book and one day opening up a foster home for girls. Whatever she does, Briehanna wants to make sure that she does not have to depend on anyone to help her.

Briehanna is incredibly grateful for the support she has. She has multiple mentors who she can turn to when she faces challenges, but she is especially grateful for a former teacher who serves as her constant source of inspiration and support. Briehanna also believes that ADP has played a major role in her success.

Advice for Future College Bound Youth

Pursue your passions. Always work hard.

Lové J.

CITY COLLEGE OF TECHNOLOGY CLASS OF 2017

Lové is a dedicated, passionate and nurturing young woman who is a model Scholar. Lové epitomizes the resilience that is needed to be a successful, well-rounded young adult. At the age of sixteen, Lové entered foster care, and she had difficulties adjusting to daily life without the constant support of her family. Despite these difficulties, Lové stayed determined to complete high school and go to college. She wanted better for herself and saw education as a means to accomplish all of her goals.

Lové has always made school a priority, and her dedication has served as a model for her peers and colleagues. Throughout the entire time she has been in college, Lové has worked in roles that align with her professional goals and that allow her to make positive impact for her community. Lové brings her personal experience and her natural advocacy skills into all of her internship experiences, which include serving as a Youth Advocate at HSVS, working at the NYC Administration for Children's Services and working for the City Government. Some of Lové's projects during these internships include leading a young mother's group, leading work to combat domestic violence, and more.



Currently, Lové is in her final year at the New York City College of Technology, where she is studying Human Services. She has aspirations to further her education by going to law school. With her law degree, she plans on working in family court as well as advocating for youth in foster care and youth who are at risk of entering foster care. Eventually, Lové would like to open her own organization where she can help individuals who have transitioned out of foster care without a permanent adult connection.

Lové admits that her biggest challenge is balancing being a student, a mother, working, staying connected with her family and maintaining a household. She loves spending time volunteering, writing and spending time with her young daughter. Her personal determination continues to be her best asset and she is dedicated to working hard to accomplish her goals. She believes that it is important for future Scholars to take advantage of all of the people, resources and connections that are available through HSVS, their individual college and through their support networks. To Lové, ADP means the opportunity to succeed. Lové believes that ADP provides necessary support that allows her to go through college without having to worry about the financial burdens others struggle with.

Advice for Future College Bound Youth

"If you are walking down the right path and you are willing to keep walking, eventually you will make progress."—Barack Obama

Runie L.

SUNY SULLIVAN COMMUNITY COLLEGE
CLASS OF 2017



Runie is a kind-hearted, loyal and friendly young woman. She is the proud mother of a beautiful baby girl, and she has big goals for herself and her young family. Over the past few years, Runie has remained committed to making positive changes in her life and serving as a role model for others.

Growing up, Runie lacked confidence in herself, and she did not see herself becoming “anything in life.” When she moved into one of HSVS’ Group Residential Homes, she realized how different things could be and that she could work to make her life brighter and more positive. Runie credits the staff members, case planners and many of the young women connected with HSVS’ New Brighton Group Home to helping her stay on track. Today, Runie and her daughter live with a foster mom who truly believes in her.

When Runie first came into foster care, she did not make education a high priority. Runie was registered for high school, but she stopped attending and began getting into

trouble. Then, she found a GED program that fit her needs and interests. Runie graduated from the GED program, and then set her dreams on attending college. After seeing many of her peers struggle without a college degree, Runie knew that she needed to buckle down and get her degree. With the encouragement of her friends, family and the HSVS staff, Runie applied to college and was accepted.

For the past two years, Runie has attended SUNY Sullivan County Community College. Although Runie’s first semester of college was tough, Runie worked hard in the following semesters to bring up her grades. Last spring, Runie welcomed her first child. Runie showed her personal strength and dedication to school as she simultaneously studied for finals and adjusted to being a mother. Runie credits the support system of her foster mom, sister and her friends with allowing her to make it through that semester. Runie is now only a few credits shy of graduating, and she hopes that she will be able to finish her degree in the City so that she can stay with her daughter and have a shorter commute.

Runie considers herself fortunate to be part of ADP. She believes that being an ADP College Scholar has shown her that she is capable of doing anything she puts her mind to. She appreciates the comprehensive support she receives every step of the way. For Runie, being in ADP levels the playing field and allowing her to have an equal chance at achieving her dreams. Runie wants people to say, “Wow, Runie! She had hard times, but she came into care, improved and she made something of herself!” And over the past few years, there have been many people praising Runie with similar statements. Last year, Runie was named a Runner Up for the *Rev. Msgr. Robert M. Harris Youth of the Year*. Runie is destined for success.

Advice for Future College Bound Youth

Believe in yourself. Anything is possible.

Melanie L.

UNIVERSITY AT BUFFALO
CLASS OF 2018

Melanie is a friendly, organized and responsible young woman. She has a spunky spirit and a smile that lights up the room. Melanie is a first generation American, and her family is originally from China. Melanie is bilingual, and she hopes to learn more languages to further her career in International Affairs.

Melanie was very fortunate to have a loving family throughout most of her childhood. One of her favorite memories was visiting her mother's family in China when she was eight years old. Melanie loved getting to meet all of her mother's relatives, including her mother's twin sister. Melanie's family plays a big role in her life, and she is very connected with her sisters. Her sisters played a huge part in making the transition into foster care easier.

When Melanie was in seventh grade, her world turned upside down. That year, Melanie's mother passed away from cancer. Her whole family was heartbroken, but her father became extremely sad and mentally unstable. Soon after her mother's passing, her father left Melanie and her sisters on their own. Melanie remembers it being very difficult and overwhelming at times. Melanie had to step up and become a mother figure to her younger sister and ensure that their family stayed together. Melanie remembers feeling as though she had to "grow up overnight." Eventually, Melanie and her sisters were placed in the care of their aunt and uncle, and they have had a stable, loving home that allows them to live a more carefree life.



For anyone who meets Melanie, you immediately will figure out that this young woman's cheerful demeanor and positive attitude have enabled her to stay on course and be a stellar student. Even when Melanie faced personal challenges, she wanted to maintain her promises to her mother—to graduate from college, take care of her family and keep a positive attitude. Melanie continues to stay motivated and focused on her goals because she knows that she is a role model to everyone in her family. Right now, she is on track to be the first person in her family to graduate from college. Melanie has also served as a role model for other youth in foster care and an ambassador for HSVS as a two-time Runner Up for the *Rev. Msgr. Robert M. Harris Youth of the Year*.

Melanie currently is a sophomore at SUNY Buffalo, and she has switched her major from Occupational Therapy to International Affairs. Melanie has a great support system on her campus, which includes her counselors and mentors through the Educational Opportunity Program (EOP) and a group of close friends. Melanie loves playing volleyball and handball, and she is also active in a group called Fostering Independence Together whose mission is to help youth in foster care to become more integrated in and welcomed on college campuses.

For Melanie, the American Dream means living your life to the fullest and being able to accomplish all of your goals. Melanie hopes to land her dream job that will allow her to travel the world and cross things off her bucket list. Thanks to her determination and connections on campus, Melanie is getting an early start to her traveling. For the fall, and possibly the spring, semester, Melanie will be a student in Seoul, South Korea at Korea University.

Melanie is grateful that ADP has allowed her to focus on her studies rather than worrying about how to pay for school. Melanie is proud of the courage and determination she has shown in her life, and she believes that her resilience has helped her to soar in school and in her personal life. Melanie would like to thank Diren O'Bryan, her care planner, Donny Duggan, her former case planner, Lauren Pettiette, and her attorney, Ms. Goodman, for always believing in her dreams and helping to make them come true.

Advice for Future College Bound Youth

"Make your counselors your best friends. They are always there to help you if you need it. They are the key to a successful college experience."

Damien L.

YORK COLLEGE
CLASS OF 2017

Damien is a smart, dedicated, hard-working, funny, and outgoing young man. Damien is a pleasure to be around because he is full of positive energy. He likes playing basketball, hanging out with friends and getting to know people. Damien is a free-spirited, resilient young man who never gave up despite facing many difficulties in life.

Damien was born in Brooklyn, and entered foster care at birth. Growing up in foster care, Damien lived in six different homes. It was a challenge for Damien to move around so much, and he never really had a stable home. Damien's childhood is filled with good and bad memories connected with his foster care experience, but through everything, he has met a lot of influential people who have taught him valuable life lessons. Although he admits that it has been difficult to be separated from his family, Damien believes that his experience has been a blessing in disguise. Damien remains connected and with his birth family and loves spending time with his siblings.



As a child, Damien loved going to school because he had good friends and good bonds with his teachers. Damien was a good student despite the struggles in his personal life. Damien's favorite memory is when he graduated from High School. It was the happiest day of his life because it was rewarding to see that his four years of hard work paid off. It was a great moment for Damien because he realized that the end of high school only meant the beginning of his educational experience. Damien is thankful for the genuine people around him that believed in him before he believed in himself.

Damien is goal-oriented and determined to fulfill the goals that he sets for himself. Damien is proud that he never let his situation get the best of him. Over the years, Damien has served as a great example to his peers as someone who makes positive decisions, goes after his dreams and remains true to himself. In 2012, Damien was honored as the *Rev. Msgr. Robert M. Harris Youth of the Year*. Damien's success in college makes him a positive role model for his siblings and shows them that despite their circumstances, they can still succeed. Damien hopes to inspire the people in his community to work hard and go after their dreams. Damien is personally invested in his community because he knows that many people are not as blessed as him to have people looking out for them. He hopes to one day pay it forward and serve as a mentor and supportive adult for a younger student.

Damien is most proud of going to college, and he will be the first in his family to graduate. Damien knows that graduating from college will be an accomplishment that he shares with his entire family. Right now, Damien is on track to receive his Bachelor's Degree in Business at York College this spring. Damien loves learning, and he especially enjoyed his Psychology class because he learned a lot about how people think and behave. Damien has a passion for acting and wants to pursue a career in entertainment. He is also interested in owning a real estate business where he can continue to explore the city that he loves. Damien admits that his biggest challenge has been staying focused on school, but he believes that ADP provides him with essential support needed to excel in school.

Damien is inspired by his future self. He believes that in order to be successful in college, it takes a good support system, a lot of organization, and time management. To Damien, the most challenging thing for students in college is balancing school, work and a personal life. Damien believes that the best thing about college is its ability to prepare you for independence and learn responsibility. Damien is thankful for the support of ADP and for allowing him to pursue his interests and make the most of opportunities.

Advice for Future College Bound Youth

"When everything seems to be going against you, remember that the airplane takes off against the wind, not with it."—Henry Ford

Shontosha L.

**KINGSBOROUGH COMMUNITY COLLEGE
CLASS OF 2018**

Shontosha is an independent, humble and caring young woman. She loves joking around with her friends, and she enjoys spending her free time designing and decorating. Shontosha loves helping people, and she wants to be a social worker so that she can dedicate her professional time to helping those who need her most. Shontosha is proud of her spirit and attitude. She is a strong young woman who does not let others hold her back from accomplishing her dreams.

Shontosha was born in Rochester, New York, and she moved to New York City when she was five years old. Shontosha entered foster care because her mother suffered from mental health issues. She was fortunate to have the support of a loving aunt who has provided her with a safe, stable place to call home. Shontosha is inspired by her aunt who has been the foster parent to eight children in the foster care system and has provided each one of them with love, devotion and protection they deserve. Shontosha has a positive experience with foster care, and she appreciates the opportunities and the programs that HSVS has provided to her.



Growing up, Shontosha loved learning, but she did not feel as though she was fully supported in her education. Often, Shontosha felt different than her peers because she did not have the same clothes and resources as them. Shontosha tried to ignore these difference and focus on her goals: to graduate from high school and enroll in college. Shontosha was fortunate to have high school teacher who pushed her and helped he achieve her goals. Although it was tough, Shontosha remained focused on college as a way to create a brighter future for herself.

Now, as a student at Kingsborough Community College, Shontosha shines as a student. She enjoys that independence that college gives her, and she feels that the structure of college courses is a better fit for her learning style and work ethic. Shontosha attends school full-time, which she balances with a city job. Shontosha is proud that she is able to balance work, school and her personal life. Shontosha plans on transferring to a four-year college to get her Bachelor's Degree, and when she graduates, she wants to work with children and youth.

For Shontosha, the American Dream means being financially stable, having a family and being happy. Shontosha hopes to move out of New York and live in the suburbs with her future family. Although she is committed to being a social worker, Shontosha would also like to be an interior designer.

Shontosha is thankful for ADP because it has made it easier for Shontosha to focus on college. She would like to thank her former case planner Kristine Charmevil for always supporting her. She would also like to thank Jason Brunner for his help with her college applications and Jermaine Smith for making PYA so much more interesting. Finally, Shontosha would like to thank her aunt for her "support, love and guidance" and for believing that she could do anything.

Advice for Future College Bound Youth

"Everything happens for a reason."

Daniel M.

MONROE COLLEGE
CLASS OF 2020



Daniel is very independent, hard working, open minded, and empathetic student. He likes to ride bikes, go to the gym and shop for sneakers that fit in is budget. Daniel was born in Guyana, and his favorite childhood memories are of sitting around a fire, sharing food and stories with family, as his father cooked for large groups of people.

When he was a young child, he moved to the United States with his four sisters to live with an aunt. Daniel happily accepted his new home as he appreciated the opportunities that were available in America. However, despite these opportunities, Daniel's family faced challenges that forced Daniel into foster care. Daniel's lack of education in Guyana and complicated family dynamics made it hard to transition into American life. In school, Daniel acted up in response to the dysfunction in his family life.

When Daniel was placed in foster care, he was able to find some stability and started to take school more seriously. He became much more respectful of his peers and teachers and eventually became an honors

student. As a high school senior, Daniel became a U.S. citizen and is now determined to be the first in his family to obtain a college degree. Daniel prides himself on being hard working and fiscally responsible. Daniel's experience as a child motivated him to go to college and make a better life for himself.

Daniel recently completed his freshman year at Monroe College where he is a honors student pursuing a degree in Information Technologies. Daniel is interested in web designing because it feels natural to him and he really enjoys it. Daniel wants to get certified for A++, a programming language, before he graduates. After getting his Bachelor's Degree, Daniel plans on working for a respected company, and bring his mother to the United States.

Daniel believes that it will take hard work to graduate college, especially when facing personal obstacles that many youth in foster care face. Daniel credits much of his success to being outgoing and working hard to make connections with teachers and peers. Additionally, he stresses the importance of keeping a tight budget and remaining financially responsible. Some of Daniel's favorite things about college have been the exposure to people with different backgrounds, and the many opportunities that college provides. Daniel's teachers, friends and the student center on campus have been tremendously helpful to Daniel and have helped to make his freshman year a success.

To Daniel, the American Dream means to be able to live independently and comfortably support himself. He dreams of owning a car and a home, having a solid group of friends, and being able to live his life. ADP means that Daniel is supported as he pursues his academic and professional dreams, and he does not have to worry about the financial costs associated with college. HSVS has given him better opportunities and has helped him do well in school. Daniel acknowledges that he has always felt cared for while being in foster care and is especially thankful for Lauren Pettiette and Shaneikwa Houston, who ensure that he has what he needs and treat him with kindness.

Daniel also wants to personally thank his foster mother, Nereida Olivo, for her commitment, care, and respect in caring for him. Ms. Olivo provided a safe environment when he was unable to live with family. She kept on caring for Daniel even when he had bad days and was being disrespectful and stubborn. He states that she has treated him as her own and he is honored to be in her home.

Advice for Future College Bound Youth

"Expect to work on your public speaking and time management skills. Don't procrastinate and know the importance of budgeting."

Santos N.

CITY COLLEGE OF TECHNOLOGY
CLASS OF 2018

Santos is a deep thinker who is very approachable, culturally sensitive and willing to go the extra mile for people. These traits have always served him well, and they will be assets as he embarks on a career in Human Services. Santos was drawn to this career because of the positive impact that foster care made on his personal life. Santos hopes that he can serve as a beacon of hope and stability for other people in need. Eventually, Santos would like to start and run a non-profit in his home country of Honduras.

Santos' life has not been easy. He was born in Honduras, and for most of his childhood, Santos grew up in a very small, poor town. When he was 15 years old, Santos left Honduras and started out for the United States. Santos made it over the border, and he was arrested the same day. Santos felt a sense of relief when he was transported to the International Children's Center in Chicago. Santos recalls that he had never seen so much food in life. At the time, he was terribly hungry, but he could not eat a lot of food because he had been fasting for a long time. Eventually, Santos was sent to New York City to live with his aunt, but it did not work out for him. Santos was connected with HSVS by one of his teachers, and he was placed in one of the Group Homes.



Growing up as a teen in a Group Home was an “up and down experience.” Santos says that as teenage boys were all young and naïve, and they often got into fights or caused mischief. At the same time, Santos found a true family among the other young men and the staff members of his Group Home. Santos is fortunate to have a solid, extensive network of people he calls his family. He appreciates the ongoing support of his HSVS family, and he is still connected with his family in Honduras.

At first, Santos only dreamed of coming to American to make enough money to send home to his family. He never imagined that he would go to college. In Honduras, Santos did not take school seriously—until a girl who he liked made fun of him for not being able to read. Santos carried this feeling of embarrassment with him when he traveled to the United States, and he was motivated by the doors of opportunity that a college degree could open. Now, Santos is in his final year at City College of Technology. Santos is a Human Services major, and he has already secured a job as a social worker. Santos recognizes that being bilingual, his personal experiences and his social skills have really helped him to adjust to the fast-paced life of working in Human Services.

For Santos, his American Dream is to accomplish all of his goals and to give back to the community. Santos is proud to be the father of a beautiful little girl, and he hopes to have more children in the future. Santos is excited that his dreams are coming true one by one: he graduated high school, he will soon graduate from college, he has a loving family and he is happy. Santos would like to thank Father Robert M. Harris for never giving up on him and for always believing in him.

Advice for Future College Bound Youth

“Practice writing as much as you can. There are so many rules in writing, and you will have a lot of writing assignments due in college and throughout your professional career. Let people review your work and give you feedback.”

Destiny M.

SCHENECTADY COMMUNITY COLLEGE
CLASS OF 2018



Destiny is strong, open-minded and adaptable young woman. Destiny loves hanging out with friends, going out and going shopping. Destiny is a great listener, and she is the go-to person when her friends need great advice. Destiny prides herself on being a trustworthy and loyal friend.

Destiny is of West Indian decent and loves the culture and music of her heritage. Destiny was born in Brooklyn and has spent most of her life in New York City. Destiny recalls her favorite memory being her High School graduation. Destiny loved seeing how proud her family was of her accomplishments and she was extremely proud of herself for working hard and achieving her goals.

During her time in foster care, Destiny lived in five foster homes. Now, Destiny lives with her grandmother when she is on break from college. Although Destiny is not quite sure how she came into care, she recognizes that foster care has been beneficial for her educationally, financially and medically.

Growing up, it was challenging for Destiny to make the right friends. Sometimes, Destiny mixed with the wrong crowd, which affected her education. But thanks to teachers like Mr. Campbell and her personal determination, Destiny stayed on track and graduated from high school prepared for college.

Destiny is very excited to be the first to go to college in her household. She saw what not having an education can do to a person and how it holds them back. In college, Destiny hopes to develop her public speaking skills. Destiny knows that her strengths will allow her to focus in class and excel, and she feels confident communicating and working with her professors, peers, and other college staff members. Destiny would like to give back to her community by cooking food and volunteering at family shelters. Destiny's biggest inspiration is her grandmother. Through everything, Destiny's grandmother has remained strong, hard working and focused on what is best for her family.

This semester, Destiny will begin her second semester as a freshmen at Schenectady Community College. Destiny wants to pursue a career as nurse or doctor. Destiny likes that there are so many opportunities in the medical field, and she is confident in her math and science skills. Additionally, Destiny knows how to stay calm, listen, and comfort those in need. Destiny knows that she will have to overcome two big challenges to accomplish her dreams: time management and ignoring distractions. Destiny had to learn very quickly how to balance those challenges with the freedom that she has living in upstate New York, but she is thankful that her grandmother has been there to support her.

For Destiny, the American Dream means to be wealthy, to live on your own, and to have the support system to help you reach your goals. To Destiny, the American Dream Program means having support for anything she needs. Destiny states that the financial support has helped out a lot, and she is able to get the things she needs to succeed in college. Destiny is thankful for the fact that she doesn't have to take out loans and that she can get her books, have a place to live and not worry about paying for things. She is especially thankful for staff members Kisha Marlon and Rachael Boucher who have helped her throughout her time in foster care. Destiny would like to give a special thanks to her grandmother, who has basically raised her since she was a baby. Destiny wants to thank her for everything she has done and will continue to do.

Advice for Future College Bound Youth

"There will be a lot of distractions. Make sure to take yourself away from them, and focus on managing your time."

Dareth O.

UNIVERSITY OF ALBANY
CLASS OF 2018

Dareth's grandparents migrated to America from Panama in the late 50's. Dareth was born in Jamaica, NY; however, she spent most of her life in Brooklyn. Dareth credits her life experiences for making her a confident go-getter who is not afraid to try new things. Dareth recognizes that her time in foster care has allowed her to connect with different people and learn about different cultures, which has made her into an open-minded, charismatic young woman. Dareth has a natural gift for connecting with people, and this summer, she was able to use her skills as a camp counselor in one of HSVS' Summer Youth Programs. There, Dareth served as a teacher and a role model for young teens and children.

Dareth entered foster care when she was three years old and has had to overcome many obstacles. During her time in foster care, Dareth lived in over thirteen different foster homes and attended at least ten different schools. These moves significantly impacted her life and led Dareth to question people's commitments to her. Dareth says that it has taken her years to look past the hurt and disappointment from her childhood. Today, she has learned to not to give up on people as easily as she did in the past.



Dareth is a strong young woman, who has not let the struggles of her childhood define her or keep her down. Instead, she draws strength from her past and uses it to motivate her to take control of her destiny and be a model student, advocate and leader. Today, Dareth uses her experience to create a better future for herself and others.

Although there were bumps in the road, Dareth has made great strides in her educational pursuits. She views education as the best way to better herself. Dareth admits that she did not always like school. When she was younger, Dareth would cut class and act out if she felt disrespected. As she got older, Dareth realized the importance of education and made it her priority to attend college and become a leader in her community. As a senior in high school, Dareth focused on securing scholarships and finding a college that would fully support her dreams. Thanks to her hard work, Dareth was the recipient of a coveted national scholarship through Foster Care to Success and the 2014-2015 *Rev. Msgr. Robert M. Harris Youth of the Year*.

As a college freshman, Dareth began college at SUNY-Sullivan County Community College, but aspired to transfer to a four-year school. Dareth achieved her dream and is currently a sophomore at the University of Albany, where she is majoring in business. Dareth hopes one day to open a community center where she can give back to others who are in need and perhaps teach. Dareth has been extremely proactive in ensuring that nothing will stand in the way of her educational dreams. She has received multiple competitive scholarships, and she utilizes the resources she has on campus.

Dareth believes that ADP has played an essential role in her educational success. Dareth admits that at times, college has not been easy; however, with the help of ADP and her team of supporters, Dareth has excelled in school. She would like to thank Jason Brunner for always being there for her. Lauren Pettiette for always being the light that she needs. Brooke Rosenthal for always having her best interest at heart. Dawn Saffayeh for helping to make 2014, which was a hard year, a little easier. Evelyn Pedraza for always sticking by her and caring about her. And finally, Dareth would like to thank Harriet McQueen, her foster mom, for caring for her and encouraging her to grow into a wise, confident young woman.

Advice for Future College Bound Youth

"It always seems impossible, until it's done."—Nelson Mandela

Karla O.

LAGUARDIA COMMUNITY COLLEGE
CLASS OF 2018



Karla is a kind-hearted, funny and cheerful young woman who likes to spend time with her friends. Karla was born in Venezuela, and her mother is Venezuelan and her father is Colombian. Karla grew up speaking Spanish, and she learned English when she moved to the United States. Karla is also hard of hearing, and for most of her life, she has communicated by reading lips. In middle school, she discovered sign language, and now she prefers to speak with English Sign Language. Karla's experiences have made her a very open-minded person, and she tries to please her friends and make sure that everyone around her feels welcomed and supported.

When Karla first arrived to the United States, she lived with her father and her two siblings. But she was not happy at home, and she struggled to overcome an abusive relationship with her father. Sometimes, Karla would come to school crying, and when she spoke to her teachers, they called the Administration for Children's Services. Since going into foster care, Karla has lived in two different homes. She loves her current foster family,

and she considers them her true family. Her foster sister was a peer in her class, and Karla connected right away with this peer's mother. They discussed having Karla live with them, and they have been one happy family ever since that day.

Karla really enjoyed high school, especially math class, and she was very proud to graduate from high school and enroll in college. Although high school prepared Karla for college, it has still been a tough transition for her. Karla is fortunate to be a part of the Deaf Adult Program at LaGuardia Community College, which provides her with individualized support as well as a community of peers who are hard of hearing and deaf. Karla appreciates having a support network that looks at her as a capable, intelligent college student who happens to be hard of hearing rather than labeling her as having a disability.

Karla had a rough start to college, but she has now connected with ADP and is building a stronger relationship with the staff members at HSVS. Karla is learning how to balance being independent with knowing when to ask others for help. Karla is excited that she receives college counseling, financial assistance and emotional support through ADP, and she is also thrilled to be a part of the CUNY/ACS Dorming Program at Queens College. This Program allows Karla to live on campus, commute to LaGuardia and access more services and supports that will help her successfully navigate college. This year, she is committed to being a more engaged student who finishes all of her assignments on time and regularly attends class.

For Karla, the American Dream means achieving her goals and having a happy life. Karla hopes to work in a hotel or be a member of the FBI. Karla knows that her gift for learning different languages, her natural intelligence and her positive attitude will help her in any field that she chooses. Further, Karla recognizes that a college degree will ensure that she is a viable candidate for any job she pursues. Karla hopes to have her own apartment, a good job and a way to truly thank her foster family. Karla would like to say thank you to all of the people at HSVS who have supported her, including Dana Johnson, Krystal Raiford-Sanchez, Jason Brunner and Lauren Pettiette. Also, she wants to thank her mom for always being there for her and encouraging her to follow her dreams.

Advice for Future College Bound Youth

"Go to tutors and make sure you study every day."

Quashana O.

MEDGAR EVERS COLLEGE
CLASS OF 2019

Quashana is a positive, bubbly and adventurous young woman. At first, Quashana may come across as shy because she is quiet around people when she first meets them. However, Quashana says that it just takes her time to warm up to new people, and then she will become one of the most loyal, caring people you will ever meet.

Growing up, Quashana and her siblings watched their mother struggle with addiction. It was hard being children and having to take care of themselves. In 2008, Quashana entered foster care, and her aunt immediately took Quashana and her siblings into her home.

Quashana is grateful that her aunt was able to provide a stable, loving place for them. Her aunt also encouraged Quashana to think positively, go after her dreams and not let her past define her future.

Quashana has always been a gifted student, and even though she missed a lot of school as a young child and teen, Quashana excelled in her classes. Quashana loved reading and learning new things, but she and her siblings were often threatened by bullies who made fun of their clothes. Once she moved into her aunt's home, it was easier to focus on school and on herself. Quashana made her high school graduation a priority, and she was extremely proud when she graduated and enrolled in college at Medgar Evers College.

Quashana is proud of the personal independence that college symbolizes. Quashana has had to depend on other people her whole life, and college means that she is able to take care of herself and also give back by helping others. Quashana is finishing her sophomore year at Medgar Evers College, and she is excited about the job opportunities that will open up to her once she graduates. Quashana feels fortunate that she has family members and friends who encourage her even when school becomes challenging. Before she graduates, Quashana would love to study abroad, and she would also love to visit Africa.

Quashana appreciates the financial support that she has received through ADP. In the future, Quashana hopes to be married and live in Virginia with her future husband and children. Quashana plans on having a career that is focused on supporting children and youth with disabilities. She wants to help them reach developmental milestones to get them on track with their peers.

Quashana is thankful for the support she has received from her aunt and from her sisters. Additionally, Quashana would like to thank Jermaine Smith, Donny Duggan and Jason Brunner for making all of the Youth Development activities so engaging; Lauren Pettiette for always providing her with positive energy and a listening ear; and her long-time case planner Mr. Leonard for always ensuring that she and her sisters stayed together.



Advice for Future College Bound Youth

"Don't put a time limit on your education, learn at your own pace. It's not a race.
Don't compare yourselves with others."

Junesha P.

MANHATTAN SCHOOL OF TECHNOLOGY
CLASS OF 2016

Although Junesha was born in Brooklyn, she feels very connected to the family roots she has in Jamaica and considers Jamaica her home country. Additionally, Junesha moved to Jamaica when she was only six months and lived there until she was eight years old. Junesha has very fond memories of her childhood in Jamaica, and she remembers that she spent a lot of quality time with her family. Even though her life took an unfortunate turn, Junesha is hopeful and confident that she will lead a happy, fulfilling life.

Junesha has been in foster care since 2006 as a result of the physical abuse she suffered at the hands of her mother. Although foster care provided Junesha with a safer place to call home, she admits that she still struggled in other ways. Junesha struggled against the label that many people put in place for youth in foster care. Junesha feels that she had many more challenges and obstacles to overcome as compared to her non-foster care peers. She is thankful that she has the personal strength and determination to beat the negative expectations that were put in place by others. Junesha has seen many people go down the wrong path and does not want to be like them. She is determined to write her own future rather than be defined by some of the challenges she has faced and past decisions that she has made. Junesha knows that it starts with a proper education.



From a young age, Junesha knew she wanted to be in the medical field. Junesha is a kind-hearted, compassionate young woman who likes helping others. She is open-minded and intelligent, and what many people do not realize, is that she considers herself a very shy person. Junesha enjoys shopping, meditating, being adventurous and relaxing with friends.

In the fall of 2015, Junesha enrolled in Manhattan School of Computer Technology's Medical Assistant Program. Since enrolling in this Program, Junesha has excelled as a student. She has great attendance and receives all As and Bs on her report cards. Junesha has enjoyed being a part of the Medical Club that meets every Friday, and she also hopes to learn more about billing and coding. After she completes this Program, Junesha plans on enrolling in a nursing school to further her experience.

In the future, Junesha hopes to have a happy family and a successful career as a nurse. Junesha is thankful that she has had the support of friends, the Youth Development team and others to encourage her to keep working hard for her future. She is glad that she has made solid connections at HSVS. Junesha would like to personally thank: Jermaine Smith, Jason Brunner, Kisha Marlon, Naseive Smith, Donny Duggan and Lauren Pettiette for their constant motivation and encouragement. Although she admits that she does not always show it, she is so thankful for the support and all of the opportunities.

Advice for Future College Bound Youth

"Always strive for the best."

Jasmine R.

CARSTEN INSTITUTE OF COSMETOLOGY CLASS OF 2016

Jasmine is a funny, friendly and passionate young woman. She is very fashionable and creative, which has helped her as she pursues her career as a cosmetologist. Jasmine's creativity also resonates in her love for music. Very few people know that she is also a talented singer and dancer who loves stays up-to-date with today's latest music trends.

Growing up, Jasmine split her time among New York City, Jamaica and Trinidad and Tobago. Her family is originally from the West Indies, and Jasmine draws inspiration from the music and the culture of her family's home countries. But the constant moving around also caused Jasmine to act out. When Jasmine was 17 years old, Jasmine ran away from home and was homeless for a few months. Eventually, Jasmine realized that she could not stay with her friends or return home to her mother, and Jasmine eventually placed herself in foster care with HSVS.

Jasmine is very proud of being an independent, hard working young woman. One of her favorite memories is when she received her first paycheck. When Jasmine was a child, she says that she often found it hard to see her peers with all of the latest fashion trends and newest toys. For Jasmine, receiving her first paycheck signified that she could take care of herself and reward herself for her hard work. She says that she is motivated to continue on a path towards success because she knows that one day, when she ages out of foster care, she will be on her own and personally responsible for her financial, personal, and emotional well-being. Although as a child, Jasmine often wished for fancy gifts and clothes, she says that growing up in foster care and being on a stricter budget will help her to better manage her money when she is "on her own."

Jasmine is proud of her personal determination and resilience. Because of these strengths, Jasmine is on her way to accomplishing her professional dreams. In January, Jasmine started classes at Carsten Institute of Cosmetology, and she excels in her classes—all As and Bs! Jasmine wants to be a hair stylist and eventually open up her own hair salon. Jasmine has enjoyed her haircutting and coloring classes, and she really appreciates her salon business professor, Mr. B., for inspiring her to become a business owner. Jasmine continues to stay motivated by looking forward to the future and also thinking about her mother. Even though they do not always get along, her mother is still a very important person in life.

For Jasmine, the American Dream means having a stable, happy life. In the future, she sees herself in a loving relationship with a home of her own. She would like to have a couple of cars, her own salon and her own line of salon products. Also, ADP allows her to dream any way she sees it. She will be supported along the way; whether it be emotionally, physical, financially. The program means she can be happy with the choices she makes and will be supported no matter what.

Jasmine has many people to thank: Ms. Kadejah who always pushed her to be independent and take charge of her life. Ms. A who was always easygoing and someone Jasmine could always turn to her with any issue big or small. Also, she would like to thank Hadijah, who has been like an older sister to her. Jasmine would like to thank Shawnta Washington for always supporting her and her endeavors. Shawnta has always kind and willing to talk to her about anything and help in any way.



Advice for Future College Bound Youth

"It takes 1000 hours of practice to be a success."

Elan S.

LONG ISLAND UNIVERSITY/ CUNY
CLASS OF 2018



Elan likes to play sports, exercise, lift weights, play videogames and billiards. Elan describes himself as dedicated, focused, reliable, hardworking, and motivated. Elan was born and raised in Brooklyn, and he entered foster care when he was in high school. Elan states that he comes from a family “who had nothing.” Elan entered foster care when he and his mother were evicted from their family home. With his father’s whereabouts unknown and his older brother in jail, Elan turned to his sister in Miami, who became a licensed foster parent. Elan was able to find stability in Miami. Elan says that he is extremely grateful to his sister and her husband for being amazing role models to him. Now, Elan splits his time during school breaks between his sister in Miami and his other sister in Brooklyn.

Before entering foster care, Elan did not make school a priority. With the support of his two sisters, Elan soon realized that education was the key to opening doors and achieving success. As a result, during his senior year of high school, Elan got serious about his education and not only graduated from high school, but immediately enrolled in college for the following semester.

Because of the issues in his personal life, Elan acted out in high school, which resulted in him having to repeat the ninth grade. Shortly after he entered foster care, he moved to Miami and began receiving a lot of educational support. Elan worked hard in order to graduate on time, and his favorite memory is when he graduated high school. Elan states that up until that moment, he had felt that he had not really ever achieved anything. He said that this was the first time in his life that he had proof that despite your obstacles, if you work hard and put your mind to something, you can achieve anything.

Elan suffers from a medical condition, which has led him to live a healthy lifestyle with frequent exercise and self-care. From this experience, Elan is now interested in becoming an occupational or physical therapist. He is proud that he was able to make it to college and that he feels like he is finally in control of his own life. Today, Elan is a junior at LIU Brooklyn where he majors in Sports Nutrition, but he is considering transferring to one of the CUNY colleges to live in a dorm and save money. Sports Nutrition is a perfect fit for Elan. Fitness has always been his passion, and he believes that being healthy plays an important role in being successful in the classroom and happy in life. Elan believes that he would not be here today if not for his inner strength that helped him persevere through all of the hardships in his life.

To Elan, achieving the American Dream means owning a home in a peaceful environment where he can raise a family, be financially stable and have a deeper family connection. In the immediate future, Elan wants to live in his own apartment. After he graduates from college, he would like to move to somewhere in California. Elan sees himself working at a hospital after he graduates but would like to eventually move into either a group or private practice that works with athletes. Also, Elan wants to donate money to organizations that help foster care youth. He wants to help bridge the gap between the youth in foster care and non-foster care youth.

Elan says that one of his biggest inspiration is his brother-in-law. His brother in law came from a similar upbringing, but did not let that deter him from working hard and being successful. He taught Elan that no matter what obstacles stand in your way, there is nothing that you cannot achieve. For Elan, ADP means he will be able to achieve his dreams. He says that he is grateful not only for the financial support he receives in college but also the academic support through advisement and the emotional support through counseling. He said that he is glad that ADP is always there to help with anything.

Advice for Future College Bound Youth

Elan wants to encourage all students who are preparing for college to focus on their time management skills. He also says they should try to develop a good relationship with all their professors because it can really make a difference in the class and in your grades.

Kayla S.

MERCY COLLEGE
CLASS OF 2018



Kayla is a self-described quirky, intelligent and compassionate young woman. Kayla was born in Far Rockaway, Queens, and she has lived in the New York City area her entire life. Kayla's family is originally from Haiti, and they lived in Georgia before they moved to New York City. New York City has been a great place for Kayla to develop her passions, which include exploring new places, writing about her experiences and dreams, taking photographs and trying out different types of cuisines.

Kayla remembers growing up with her mother to be very challenging. Kayla's mother was difficult and abusive, and she did not make the safety of Kayla and her brother a priority. When Kayla was very young, she relied on her grandmother for love, protection and kindness. It broke Kayla's heart when her grandmother passed away from cancer because they lost the one person who was there for them any time they needed. In 2010, when it their mother's abuse became too much for them, Kayla and her

brother entered foster care. Kayla notes that this time in her life was still very challenging, but going into foster care provided her with the stability and comfort that she needed. Kayla lived with her aunt until she turned 21 years old and "aged out" of foster care. Kayla credits going into foster care with taking her out of a bad situation, providing her with the opportunities she needed to excel and making her realize that she did not have to be defined by her past.

Kayla has always loved school and prides herself on being naturally gifted as a student. Even though she had always been a strong student, Kayla recalls the transition into college being more challenging than she imagined. There was never a question in Kayla's mind that she would go to college, and she always assumed that high school would fully prepare her for college. Instead, Kayla calls college a "sink or swim" experience that required more personal motivation, focus and personal responsibility than she had ever needed in the past. Kayla admits that it can still be challenging to find the motivation to get all of her work done on a daily basis, but she keeps her eyes set on a brighter future—for herself, for her brother and for her future family. Kayla knows that education is the key to a successful, stable life.

Kayla is a brilliant, creative young woman, who is grateful that she has made it this far in school. Kayla knows that she will graduate very soon and is eager to do so. Currently, Kayla is a junior at Mercy College, and she is focused on obtaining her Bachelor's Degree in Psychology. Kayla hopes to become a therapist, and would love to settle in North Carolina with her future family.

Kayla is thankful for ADP as the monthly stipends and metro cards have alleviated some of the financial burden that comes with being an independent student in college. Thanks to these supports, Kayla has been able to cut back on her work hours and focus on her studies. Additionally, the grade incentive program has been another source of motivation that has pushed Kayla to get high grades.

Kayla would like to personally thank the Youth Development team and Lauren Pettiette for their help throughout her time college. Additionally, Kayla would like to thank Denise Marshall, Iyesha Witherspoon and her brother, Kaleb for always believing in her and being there for her.

Advice for Future College Bound Youth

"Fear and God do not occupy the same space."—Dick Gregory

Travon S.

FULTON MONTGOMERY COMMUNITY COLLEGE
CLASS OF 2017



Travon considers himself a natural born leader who can motivate others. Travon recognizes that he has a gift for connecting with people, which he is proud to say that he only uses to better himself and his community. Travon is a great self-advocate, and through his words and actions, Travon has been able to accomplish many of his goals. Travon is a self-described strong-willed, open-minded and outspoken young man. His perseverance and grit have helped him to be the successful, independent person that he is today.

Growing up, Travon split his time between living with his father and living with his father's sister. When Travon was nine years old, he was placed into foster care after his father physically abused his siblings. At first, Travon was separated from his sisters and placed in a group home. Then, Travon was placed in a non-kinship foster home, and he eventually was placed with his aunt. Travon and his aunt got along very well, and he felt comfortable and supported in her home. Then, in 2012, Travon and his aunt began to argue, and Travon decided that he needed to move. Travon lived in another foster home, but was recently reunited with his aunt after they

worked on the relationship and reconciled their differences. Even though Travon has had nice foster homes, he still says that he has always felt like a nomad. Travon hopes that by getting an education and focusing on building a bright future, he will finally feel settled and stable.

Travon was heavily shaped by the neighborhoods where he grew up. He recalls seeing many people, even some of his close friends, get caught up in the wrong things. Travon has lost many people in his life to violence, including his best friend. These tragedies have deeply affected Travon and have pushed him to strive for a brighter future for himself. Also, these tragedies motivate him to serve as a role model to younger children and teens. Travon realizes that now he has a reputation for being a positive leader in his community and is committed to succeeded.

Travon was also heartbroken by the death of his mother, and he wants to graduate from college and make her proud. Travon's happiest memories include his mother, although he wishes that he had more of them with her. Every year since she passed, Travon and his family gather to remember her. Travon knows that she is proud of the man that he has become.

Travon was thrilled to have the opportunity to leave his neighborhood and experience new opportunities at Fulton Montgomery Community College. Travon admits that college has been tough, and his personal life, including his mother's passing, has sometimes affected his studies. But Travon has tapped into great resources on campus, and he has found positive distractions that help him balance his studying. At first, Travon was interested in a career working with athletes as possibly a manager, nutritionist or therapist. Now, Travon is also considering a career in Human Services. Travon recognizes that his gift for connecting with people along with his personal experiences would make him excel in this field. Also, it would be a way for him to give back.

For Travon, the American Dream means that he would raise his kids in a safe, happy community. Travon hopes that his American Dream includes marrying his college sweetheart and owning his own home. ADP and HSVS have been like guardian angels to Travon. Travon is especially thankful for the Youth Development team who advocates for him. Travon is also thankful for Shaneikwa Houston and Rachel Boucher for helping him stay on track and get things done. Also, Travon would like to thank Lauren Pettiette for making sure he went to college and he wants her to know that he is lucky to have her on his side—"even if it's given her gray hairs over the last few years."

Advice for Future College Bound Youth

"Don't forget why you are in college. You are there to create your future. You must make smart choices. Don't fall into old habits."

Andrea S.

SKIDMORE COLLEGE
CLASS OF 2019



Since entering foster care, Andrea (“Dea”) has faced a world of uncertainty. Dea is known for her resilience, fierce intellectual curiosity and a strong desire to improve the lives of others. Dea has lived in three different states and has lived in both kinship and non-kinship foster homes. Growing up, Dea used education as an anchor to take control of her life and create her own future. Today, Dea is determined to be successful, and she refuses to be invisible, powerless or allow her past to define her future.

Last year, Dea showed her resilience and grit as the 2015-2016 HSVS Youth of the Year. As our Youth of the Year, Dea shared her personal story and her hopes for the future through a powerful speech. In her speech, Dea described herself as “the epitome of the disengaged youth who had fallen through the cracks of the system”—a state she attributes to “the traumatically disorienting experience I encountered at the NYC ACS’ placement facility, known as ‘the Children’s Center.’”

As a teenager, Dea was in and out of her foster care placements, and she was often “AWOL.” Although Dea has always enjoyed learning, she did not find a high school that fully supported her creativity and learning style until she found her place at City-As-School High School. As Dea noted, “in high school, I was broken. It took me a long time to realize that I could be more beautiful for being broken. That I was, in fact, art in progress. All I had to do was put myself back together. So I did. I rejoined and became more connected with HSVS. I finished high school a year late, but I worked hard. After applying to multiple colleges, I received a full scholarship to Skidmore College, a liberal arts school in Saratoga Springs.”

Dea just completed her freshman year at Skidmore where she is a part of the Higher Educational Opportunity Program (HEOP). Dea has become a confident, active student on campus, and she loves engaging in all of the events, workshops and other opportunities that the school has to offer. She is a part of the DJ Club and hopes to continue to be active in the social justice community. Dea has taken advantage of every opportunity available to her, and she has explored classes such as Neuroscience, International Studies, and more. She hopes to one day run her own nonprofit.

This fall, Dea will be studying abroad in Paris through Skidmore’s exchange program, and she is excited about exploring French culture and hitting the fabulous Parisian shops. Dea also hopes to continue working on the *First Impressions Project* that she spearheaded during her time as an intern at HSVS. The *First Impressions Project* “will create a more welcoming and empowering experience for youth entering foster care at HSVS.”

Dea believes ADP is the embodiment of the idea “work hard, and you will achieve success.” While the notion is great in theory, Dea points out that many people have obstacles in their way that make success seem less than attainable. ADP bridges this gap and makes the impossible attainable for those who lack the same opportunities as their peers.

Advice for Future College Bound Youth

“Take advantage of all of the opportunities available to you on campus, in the community, and through the agency,”

Dylan T.

**LAGUARDIA COMMUNITY COLLEGE
CLASS OF 2017**

Dylan was placed in foster care a month after her thirteenth birthday. Shortly after entering foster care, she was also separated from her siblings. Feeling alone and abandoned, she began to lose all hope as she was moved from one foster home to another. During this time, Dylan felt as though she was on her own, with no support. Dylan is a bright young woman—her intelligence and curiosity are clear from the moment she smiles and speaks. But when she moved from home to home, she struggled in school and faced failing her classes. Instead of accepting this path, became more proactive in her education, and she started using school as a way to empower and improve herself. When she graduated from high school, Dylan was ready for college.

Now, Dylan is in her final year at LaGuardia Community College where she majors in Criminal Justice. Dylan has excelled as a college student, and she does a phenomenal job of balancing her commitments. Since entering college, Dylan has maintained a full-time job as a HeartShare staff member supporting the Energy Assistance Program, which has helped her develop her professional and communication skills. Additionally, Dylan has received multiple accolades for her success as a college student and as a community member. Dylan has maintained a high GPA throughout her time at LaGuardia, which she knows will help her in pursuing her Bachelor's Degree, and eventually, her Juris Doctorate.



Dylan's natural grace and kind spirit make an impact on every person she meets—from professors, to staff members, to her peers at LaGuardia and HSVS. She has excelled in her courses, she has balanced work and school and last year, she was featured in multiple news stories capturing her success as a college student. Even though Dylan is soaring to success, she admits that time management continues to be one of her biggest challenges. She believes that she is able to overcome this frustration thanks to ADP and her relationship with God.

Dylan is proud that she has been able to grow and change into a positive, cheerful and successful young woman. She dreams of using her voice and experience to fight for social justice as a Defense Attorney, where she can help those in need.

Advice for Future College Bound Youth

Be true to yourself. Have faith.

Jade T.

BOROUGH OF MANHATTAN COMMUNITY COLLEGE
CLASS OF 2017



Jade is a determined, resilient young woman and is the model of grace. Jade wants people to know that you can break through the stereotypes and expectations that others set for you. Jade has persevered through the personal challenges in her life to ensure that she would not be considered a “product of her environment.” Jade is a loving, active and caring mother to her beautiful son Connor. Jade’s mother also grew up in foster care, and Jade is determined to break the cycle.

Jade entered foster care when she was 15 years old because the situation in her mother’s home became too hard to handle. At first, Jade lived with her aunt, but her mother became too intrusive on this relationship. Jade’s aunt gave up, and Jade was forced to live with people she did not know.

Jade admits that she has been through some terrible things, but she has always been able to make a good situation out of a bleak one. There were many times while Jade was in foster care that she felt lonely and unloved. But Jade focused on the positive

people and opportunities in her life and kept her eyes on her dreams. Jade’s favorite childhood memory is when she was eight years old, and climbed to the top of the highest mountain in Vermont. Although the journey was long and tough, she was elated to reach the top of the mountain and enjoy the beautiful view.

School has always been a place where Jade has excelled, even when she had to face heartbreak and tragedy in her personal life. Early on, Jade was placed in the gifted and talented program. As a student, Jade often struggled with bullies who were jealous of her good grades, positive connections with their teachers and her athletic prowess. But instead of stooping to their level, Jade was motivated to push forward and accomplish her dreams.

Despite the hardships and difficulties Jade experienced as a child, Jade has already made great strides in creating a better future for herself and for her son, Connor, who is named after one of her favorite movie characters. She is incredibly proud of being a dedicated mom who has been able to balance work, school and a life with Connor.

Currently, Jade is at BMCC and is pursuing a degree in accounting. Jade is a numbers fanatic, and she sees this strength as a skill that will make her stand out when she steps into her formal career. Right now, Jade is working as a Customer Service Representative at ConEdison. In the future, Jade sees herself being a successful woman in many roles—as an accountant, an event planner or a psychiatrist. Jade wants to have a big house, four kids and a happy family.

Jade is thankful for Kiendra Moore, her former case planner, who has seen Jade through so much. She always provided judgement free advice and worked harder than anyone else to make Jade’s life as easy as possible. Jade is grateful to have Lauren Pettiette, who filled a void left by her old case planner. Lauren is easy to talk to and always goes the extra mile. Also, Jade wants to thank all of HSVS for working hard and supporting her all these years. Everyone has played their part to make her life better. She would also like to thank Adolfo Lewis for always keeping her on track.

Jade is proud that she has been able to overcome all of the obstacles that have been in her way, and graduating from college would be a milestone for Jade—she would be the first person in her family to achieve this accomplishment. Jade is a positive role model for all students, and she will continue to serve as a inspiration to her family.

Advice for Future College Bound Youth

“Excelling in college is not just about intelligence. It takes a lot of determination and hard work.”

Tyon T.

MONROE COLLEGE

CLASS OF 2019

Tyon is a hardworking, strong and caring young man. He believes that actions speak louder than words, and Tyon is a person that always follows through on his promises. Tyon realizes that, throughout his life, people have made judgments about him—many of them negative. But Tyon is an independent, inspiring young man. Instead of following the negative choices of his peers, Tyon has remained focused on his goals. He is a model student, athlete and friend, and he always tries to lead by example.

Tyon was born in the Bronx, but he spent a majority of his childhood living in Queens. When he was very young, Tyon split his time living with his grandmother and mother. Tyon is a star student and athlete, and one of his favorite memories is when his football team won the winter league championship. He remembers having to stay calm and keep up his energy, even though the game went into double overtime. Tyon was very proud that his hard work paid off, and he was able to celebrate with his teammates.



Tyon says that his childhood was tough. There were some nights when he did not have enough to eat, and Tyon's mother was abusive to him. The abuse worsened when Tyon's safe haven, his grandmother, passed away. After his grandmother's passing, Tyon was scared to stay at home with his mother, and he would often run away. Eventually, at the age of eleven, Tyon was placed into foster care with his Godmother. Tyon lived with her for four years, but during this time, Tyon began acting out in school and at home. He was forced to leave his Godmother's home, and over the next few years, Tyon lived in five other homes. Tyon recalls that each time he moved, he would purposely act out and sabotage the placement. Tyon had been hurt in the past, and he did not want to get too close to any of the families. Today, Tyon lives with a foster mother who is patient and supportive, and he is grateful for the stability that she provides to him.

Tyon changed schools a lot during his childhood, but he always loved school and thought of it as a refuge from the challenges in his personal life. In high school, football pushed Tyon to stay on track, and he was extremely proud of graduating from high school and enrolling in college. Tyon is now a sophomore at Monroe College. During his freshman year, he wowed his professors and was Dean's List for each semester. Tyon loved his English class because his professor gave a personal touch to his teaching, and he really helped to strengthen Tyon's writing skills. This year, Tyon began practicing with the school's football team, and he still has dreams of making it as a professional football player.

For Tyon, achieving the American Dream means finding success within yourself. Tyon hopes to have a future filled with happiness. He wants to be married with kids, live in a big house and be able to provide more for his children than he had as a child. Tyon sees himself as a business owner who also invest in startups and properties around the world—of course, after he retires from the NFL.

For Tyon, ADP is more than just a program. It's a community and an opportunity. Tyon is grateful for the financial support and guidance he receives through ADP. Tyon would like to thank Naseive Smith, his former case planner, for "the positive impact he had on my life" and Lauren Pettiette for being "one of a kind and a blessing to know."

Advice for Future College Bound Youth

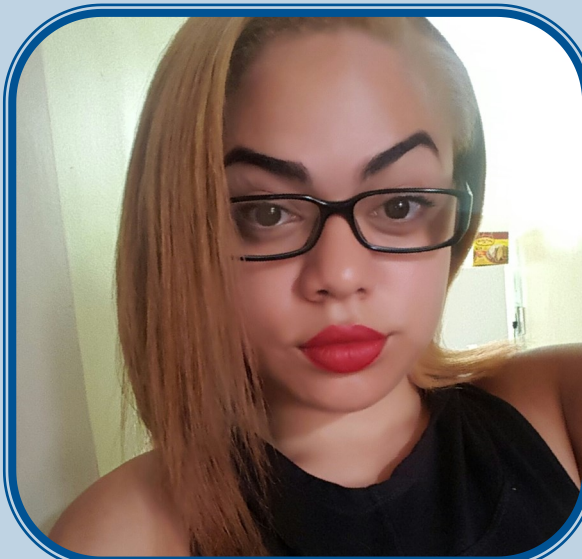
"Be prepared to study all the time. Make studying a frequent habit. Manage your time wisely and stay organized."

Amberly V.

BOROUGH OF MANHATTAN COMMUNITY COLLEGE CLASS OF 2020

Amberly was born in Manhattan, but her family is from Puerto Rico. Amberly describes herself as goofy, smart, up-beat, organized, unique and task-oriented. She likes math and online shopping. Last year, Amberly graduated from Empire Beauty School. She loves making people feel good by styling their hair, and hopes to use her experience and degrees to open her own business.

Amberly came into care with HSVS in 2012. Despite the issues and challenges Amberly faced, she stayed focused on her passion—hair! From a young age, Amberly knew she wanted to work as a hairstylist. Amberly's friends and family members would constantly ask her to style and fix their hair. But it was a summer job in a beauty salon that really pushed Amberly to pursue this passion as a viable career. She loved, and still loves, experimenting with different styles, colors and textures, and her summer job opened her eyes to the possibility of it being a career. Amberly enjoys seeing how different looks can change people's perceptions and personalities.



Amberly believes that being in foster care has shaped her into the person she is today. Although growing up in foster care was challenging, Amberly believes that her experience has not been as difficult as some of her peers, although she did not like switching case planners all the time. She stays out of trouble because of the people who support her, and they have made her a stronger person. Amberly came into care because she was always at odds with her mother. One day, Amberly's mother told her that she was not allowed back in the family home. Amberly confided in a teacher, who contacted Children's Services. While in foster care, Amberly has been living with her grandmother who provides stability and encourages her to work on her relationship with her mother. One of the most devastating aspects of being in foster care was being separated from her siblings. Today, Amberly works hard and is committed to her education. She enjoys spending time with her siblings on the weekends and tries to be a positive influence in their lives.

Growing up, Amberly always liked school, but admits that she wasn't always the perfect student. In high school, she was bullied by other students, and would often react by fighting back. Between her difficulties at home and in school, Amberly recalls high-school as being a very challenging time in her life.

In the fall of 2014, Amberly enrolled in Empire Beauty School. There, she learned various techniques and skills to become a beautician. Amberly excelled at Empire—she was named the top student multiple times, had perfect attendance and caught the attention of her teachers and peers alike. Amberly credits her time at Empire for teaching her timeliness, a great work ethic and respect. Amberly wants to give back to the community by having “beauty days,” where women and children would get their hair done for free so they can have a chance to feel confident and beautiful.

Amberly graduated from Empire in the spring of 2015 and is now a freshmen in Borough of Manhattan Community College. She plans on obtaining a Bachelor's Degree in Business Management so that she can own a successful hair salon. Amberly is also studying to take her state certification test to become a certified beautician. She aspires to one day move to California to open her future salon.

For Amberly, ADP has allowed her to try new things and to follow her dreams. With the continued support of ADP, Amberly knows that nothing will stop her until she accomplishes all of her dreams. Amberly is thankful for the Youth Development team always supporting her and for connecting her with Barbara, her Supportive Adult.

Advice for Future College Bound Youth

“Find motivation. Find something to inspire you to learn and make it through each day. You need something to inspire you.”

Natrone W.

BOROUGH OF MANHATTAN COMMUNITY COLLEGE
CLASS OF 2019



Natrone (“Nate”) is an outgoing, fun and passionate young man. He loves sports, especially baseball, and Nate is proud to have grown up in a city where there are so many great sports teams. Nate was born in Canarsie, Brooklyn, and his parents are also both originally from New York City.

Nate came into foster care in the summer of 2011. His transition into foster care was not easy, and it helped having baseball to turn to when he felt alone, overwhelmed and frustrated. Slowly, Nate realized that the new people in his life were truly there to support him and ensure that he had a safe, stable and happy life. When Nate entered foster care, he lost touch with his father. But in recent years, Nate has reconnected with his father, which has made him feel much more fulfilled.

Nate’s favorite memory was starting on his high school’s varsity baseball team. Nate says that growing up in foster care did not give him a lot of opportunities to play baseball on organized team. He was very proud that he

made an impression on the coach, meshed well with his teammates and earned himself a spot on the starting squad. Nate feels that baseball helped him become an even better student in school because it made him use his time more wisely and motivated him to keep up his grades. Nate knew that good grades would keep his spot on the team.

Last fall, Nate began his freshman year at Borough of Manhattan Community College (BMCC). Although it was a big adjustment, Nate is determined to persist through college and graduate. Now, Nate realizes that many of the strengths he discovered on the baseball field can be used to ensure that he is a success in the classroom. For example, Nate knows that it is important to connect with teammates and get advice from your coaches. Nate plans on becoming more connected with his classmates through study groups and engaging with his professors and tutors on a more regular basis. Right now, Nate’s major is Liberal Arts, but he hopes to change his major to Sports Management so that he can pursue a career connected with the sport he loves.

Nate is motivated to graduate because he realizes that his life could have taken a very different path. Nate is proud that he was not deterred by negative influences. Before he graduates, Nate would like to have a 3.0 GPA and to be a member of the baseball team. In the future, Nate sees himself married with four children living in a nice house in Florida. If Nate could have one big dream, he would love to represent the United States as a member of the Olympic Baseball Team. He would also love to run an organization that would allow kids to engage in sports.

Nate is proud to be a Scholar in ADP and is proud that he has made it so far. He admits that high school was tough, and he had doubts that he would be able to make it to college. Nate has the determination, positive attitude and heart to achieve his American Dream. Nate would like to thank his case planners, the ADP team and his foster mom for always being there to support him.

Advice for Future College Bound Youth

“Don’t give up. Keep working hard.”

Shantel W.

LINCOLN UNIVERSITY
CLASS OF 2018



Shantel is an outspoken, caring and intelligent young woman. Shantel is a great listener, and she loves helping others. At school, Shantel is a Resident Assistant (RA), and in this position, she serves as a role model to young students. Shantel is a perfect person for this role as she is a talented, dedicated student. She gracefully balances school work and her personal life, and she has maintained high grades throughout her college career.

Shantel was born in Brooklyn, and her family is originally from Jamaica. She loves traveling with her family, and she really enjoyed going on a vacation to Puerto Rico. The houses were beautiful, and she really enjoyed getting to explore a new place and learning about a new culture.

Shantel came into foster care at the age of six as a result of her mother being unable to care for her. Shantel's experience in foster care and her experiences as a young child have made her into a compassionate, confident advocate for herself and for others who need a voice. Shantel firmly believes that it was her own drive and

resilience that made her into the successful young woman she is today.

Shantel admits that it has not been easy being placed in foster care after her mother's mental health issues rendered her incapable of taking care of her. From an early age, Shantel was committed to her academics and to being an all-around successful person throughout every stage of life. Shantel's determination for academic and personal success came from her desire for a stable and successful life. Shantel is determined to be the first person in her family to earn a college degree. Shantel says that her family background and working at Kmart motivated her to pursue a college degree. She worked hard in high school to make good grades, and Shantel's dedication to her studies landed her a merit-based scholarship to Lincoln University.

Currently, Shantel is a junior where she is on her way to obtaining a Bachelor's Degree in Finance, although she is considering getting a double major or picking up minors as well. Shantel is an active member of her college campus. Besides being an RA, Shantel is a part of the National Honor Society, the student government as well as other organizations. Shantel excels in school and tries to surround herself with people who have the same drive for success. Shantel aims high as she hopes to have a 4.0 before she graduates—she already has one of the highest GPAs in ADP. In her last two years at Lincoln, Shantel hopes to join more clubs on campus, and she is also interested in pledging a sorority.

Shantel dreams of going to graduate school and earning her PhD. Shantel would like to graduate with no loans, and she wants to live in New York City with her future husband and children. Shantel would like to thank HSVS for the emotional support she has received since she was six years old. Additionally, she would like to thank Shaneikwa Houston, her case planner, and Lauren Pettiette for their support. Also, Shantel would like to thank Monique Hunt and Kiara for believing in her. Finally, Shantel would like to thank her mother.

Advice for Future College Bound Youth

"Prepare for college early. And don't be afraid to explore your options and go out-of-state for college."

The American Dream Program Freshmen Scholars



Lyndell likes to sing, dance, read and write books. For Lyndell, writing is a therapeutic outlet. When she is feeling strong emotions she releases them into her writing. Lyndell is a natural leader. Lyndell's passion to create positive change at her school led her to participate in the elections.

Lyndell is interested in majoring in Criminal Justice or Forensics. Lyndell is most excited to go to college for the new experiences, to meet new people and to get out of her comfort zone. Lyndell hopes that a degree will help her achieve her goal of being an FBI agent.

Lyndell B.

LAGUARDIA COMMUNITY COLLEGE | CLASS OF 2018
CRIMINAL JUSTICE



Dale likes shopping, taking pictures, playing basketball, socializing and reading. Dale is most excited to meet new people in college, and he would like to be more social.

To Dale, the American Dream is being able to do what you want to do without worrying about financial security and basic needs. In the future, Dale wants to find a career that truly makes him happy. Dale would like to travel, and his American Dream is to buy a big house, with a nice car, a wife and child. He also desires a career that will allow him ample time away from work to enjoy life.

Dale's advice to other young adults in foster care is, "Don't give up. There were a lot of times that I wanted to give up and it wasn't worth it. Keep pushing yourself. Things can only go wrong for so long. Persevere."

Dale B.

LAGUARDIA COMMUNITY COLLEGE | CLASS OF 2018
UNDECIDED



Vita loves hanging out with friends and going to the amusement park. She is most excited for the college experience over all. Vita looks forward to getting to know people and advancing in her major. In college Vita hopes to put herself out there more, become more involved, and be more sociable.

In the future, Vita plans to have a Masters in teaching and be a Spanish teacher. To Vita, the American Dream means to live life to its fullest and pursue whatever your gut tells you to pursue without financial worries. Passion should drive your dreams not finances. Vita's American dream is to start a family when she is settled into her career.

Vita C.

ADELPHI UNIVERSITY | CLASS OF 2020
PSYCHOLOGY

The American Dream Program Freshmen Scholars



Carlos loves to hang out with his friends, play sports and stay active. Carlos particularly likes soccer, volleyball and baseball. Carlos is a self-proclaimed geek. He loves to play video games, and watch anime movies.

Carlos is excited to go back to school. He is most excited to begin learning at a higher level and embark on his future. After college, Carlos would like to work in the military or as a law enforcement officer and have a family. He wants to combat the negative stigma that is currently surrounding law enforcement. He hopes that higher education will help him follow his dreams and make his family proud.

Carlos' American Dream is having a job, house, family, and a comfortable life. Carlos hopes to be successful doing something he loves while also having the ability to provide for his family.

Carlos C.

LAGUARDIA COLLEGE | CLASS OF 2020
CRIMINAL JUSTICE



Katherine (Katy) likes to draw, read, write, and travel. She is motivated by her past to achieve greatness. Her mother's untimely passing has fueled her passion to become a doctor.

Katy plans to major in Biology and pursue a career in medicine. Katy is most excited to learn how to be independent while she is away from home. Katy hopes to network more, to maintain a 4.0, and pursue extracurricular activities. After Katy graduates from the Bachelor's Degree program she is focused on going to medical school. Katy dreams of laying down strong foundations to protect her future children and their children from any hardships. Katy believes that the extra support system ADP is providing will help her achieve her dreams.

Katherine D.

SUNY FREDONIA | CLASS OF 2020
BIOLOGY



Armando is a charismatic young man who likes school, movies and loves all types of music. Armando is excited to conquer college and let it lift him up, not tear him down. At college, Armando would like to explore the field of business and become more patient.

Armando hopes that business will be a career that will make him happy for the rest of his life. Armando looks forward to building his own brand.

Armando dreams of being an entrepreneur and would like to be on television acting in shows, movies, and commercials. Armando's American Dream is having a home, career, and maybe a significant other in the future. He hopes to gain fame, to be someone everyone talks about, and to be a mentor to others. Armando dreams of being a well-known actor who is also well educated in the business world.

Armando M.

LAGUARDIA COLLEGE | CLASS OF 2020
BUSINESS AND PERFORMING ARTS

The American Dream Program Freshmen Scholars

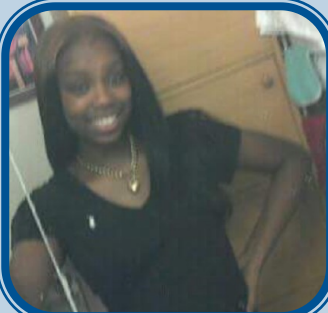


Shanai is a hardworking, intelligent young woman. She loves cooking, and she has spent most of her time in high school learning what it takes to be a master chef. At SUNY Adirondack, Shanai will be a part of their Culinary Arts program. She is excited about her classes and the hands-on experience that she will gain.

For Shanai, the American Dream means not letting anything get in her way and doing whatever it takes to achieve her dreams. Shanai hopes to graduate from college and open her own restaurant in New York City.

Shanai M.

SUNY ADIRONDACK | CLASS OF 2020
CULINARY ARTS



Laisha likes reading, watching cartoons with her kids and spending time with them. She is excited to push herself to achieve a degree and proving to herself that she can do it. Laisha is looking forward to making more friends and being social. Laisha's sole purpose of going to school is to ensure that her kids will be comfortable in the future. She prides herself in being a great role model for her kids.

After college, Laisha would like to own a startup business and wants to be a happy in her life. For Laisha, the American Dream means being able to explore the world without limitations, living comfortably, and enjoying life with her friends and family. Laisha's American Dream is to have a nice home, happy kids that are going to good colleges and go on a cruise.

Laisha N.

HOSTOS COMMUNITY COLLEGE | CLASS OF 2019
UNDECIDED



Esmerelda likes to read, play violin and make art. Esmerelda has volunteered at various pet stores and horse stables. She also loves to travel. During high school, she was given the opportunity to go backpacking for a month in the Rocky Mountains.

Esmerelda wants to remain well-rounded by getting involved in music and the arts. After college, Esmerelda would like to travel. The most important thing to her is being surrounded by those she cares for that care for her in return.

Esmerelda believes the American Dream is being able to accomplish ones goals and dreams by working hard to achieve them. For Esmerelda, ADP means extra support alongside the support of her loved ones to make her dreams come true. Esmerelda hopes to continue expanding what she knows about the world, while also keeping her life simple and content.

Esmeralda R.

FRANKLIN AND MARSHALL COLLEGE | CLASS OF 2020
UNDECIDED

The American Dream Program Freshmen Scholars



Gabrielle “Gabbie” is very excited to start at Queens College. She admits that she had attempted to go to school once before but the school wasn’t a good fit for her and she did not complete her first semester. She is excited to have a second chance to go back to school with more support so that she is able to achieve her dreams.

While in college, Gabbie wants to learn how to be the best teacher she can be. She wants to get a lot of hands on experience so that when she graduates school she can jump right into being an elementary school teacher. She would either like to teach in New York or try teaching internationally, in Brazil. For Gabbie, the American Dream is having the freedom to pursue her dreams, especially because she is female and identifies as gay.

Gabrielle R.

QUEENS COLLEGE | CLASS OF 2020
EDUCATION



Gamalier is most excited to go to college because it will give him more opportunities to do what he wants in the future. He is excited to try many different classes and have many hands on experiences.

After college, Gamalier is not sure what career he will choose. He is very interested in music and would like to possibly become a performer. Gamalier is also interested in possibly being a computer technician.

To Gamalier, the American Dream is being able to achieve what you want and having the freedom to pursue the path you want.

Gamalier R.

CUNY | CLASS OF 2019
UNDECIDED



Tierra Sinclair is attending Lincoln University. In college, she wants to see overall positive growth mentally, spiritually and physically. Tierra would love to pursue a Master’s degree after she graduates from the Bachelor’s Degree program.

Tierra believes that for many minorities the American Dream is just that, a dream. She believes that the popular conceived notion of the dream was most readily available for white Americans in the 60’s. She believes that the “dream” is made unachievable due to a lack of help and resources. Tierra’s American dream is to make enough money to be comfortable and still do what she loves.

Tierra believes that the support ADP is providing along with her education will make her dream more of a reality.

Tierra S.

LINCOLN UNIVERSITY | CLASS OF 2020
PSYCHOLOGY

The American Dream Program Freshmen Scholars



Grace plans on majoring in Airport Management. Grace loves reading, playing basketball and cooking. Grace participated in the Possibility Project, where she got together with a group of foster care youth who put together a play about different family struggles. Grace also participated in our Slay the Runway Fashion Show.

Grace is excited to be on the basketball court again and being on the team at Vaughn College. She is also excited to grow and improve her math skills at the college level. Grace has a passion for helping not only herself with her degree but others as well. She hopes to do programs for the homeless, foster care youth, and other people who are in need. She wants to travel the world and believes that attaining an airport management degree will help her do that. To Grace, ADP means that in the future she will be able to have a great career that she enjoys doing, that she will be financially stable and able to enjoy life to its fullest extent.

Grace T.

VAUGHN COLLEGE | CLASS OF 2020
AIRPORT MANAGEMENT



Timothy is most excited to network and meet new people in college. He would also like to experience playing on a college team. Timothy wants to get his Associate's Degree in Business. After college, Timothy would like to become a real estate agent.

To Timothy, The American Dream is to believe in yourself. With hard work, failure is not an option. Hard work leads to success.

Timothy T.

LAGUARDIA COMMUNITY COLLEGE | CLASS OF 2018
BUSINESS



This summer, Samira got a head start on adjusting to college life as a student in her school's Educational Opportunity Program. Samira hopes to graduate from college with her Bachelor's in Psychology and GPA of 3.0 or above. She is thrilled about the endless possibilities that her college degree will provide for her, and after graduation, Samira hopes to get in Master's degree. Samira hopes that her educational and personal experience will allow her to work as a psychologist who serves children and teens who are experiencing "rough patches" in their lives.

For Samira, the American Dream means happiness. Samira hopes that her perseverance and success serve as an example to her sibling that they can do anything they put their mind to—no matter what they are going through in life.

Samira T.

SUNY OSWEGO | CLASS OF 2020
PSYCHOLOGY

The American Dream Program is...

**Celebrating
milestones.**

GRIT!

**Emotional support and
dedicated mentors.**

**Learning about
different careers.**

**Assistance throughout
the college application
process.**

**Connections with on campus
supports and programs.**

**Affirmation of my
resilience.**

**Encouraging emails and
shout outs.**

Studying!



**Building leadership skills
and creating positive change
through the Youth Advisory
Board.**

**Making
Dreams
Happen.**

FAMILY!

**A network
of peers.**

**Help with
resumes and
jobs.**

College Boot Camp!

Serving as a role model.

**The tools I need to
succeed—
textbooks, laptops,
care packages and
metro cards.**

**Supports to
transition
into the
real world.**

Can You Guess

A. I am caring and kind.
I am a lifeguard.
I want to be a nurse and host my own YouTube channel.

B. My favorite author is Sister Souljah. I love social sciences. I want to be the CEO of my own company.

C. I want to be an airplane pilot.
I drive cabs. I love learning about cars, trains and airplanes.

G. I recently attended an event at the United Nations.
I am a loving mother.
My major is Human Services.

H. I want to be a Criminal Defense Attorney. I have a strong faith in God. I love learning.

I. I am funny and beautiful.
I am a hair stylist.
My favorite song is "Gasoline."

M. I am a loving mother. I was one of three Tri-State students to win the DOE Merit Award. I want to sit on the Parole Board.

N. I love makeup. I am inspired by Bethany Hamilton. I want to be a journalist.

O. I love playing volleyball I am studying in South Korea. I want to be an ambassador, translator or work in foreign policy.

S. My favorite story is "Flowers for Algernon." I love fashion. I want to be a nurse.

T. I want to major in Psychology. I love amusement parks. One of my best friends is my foster sister.

U. I am a fashionista. My dream is to be a Judge. I love traveling.

Y. I am originally from Honduras. I already secured a job as a social worker. I love working out and taking photographs.

Z. I enjoy reading the *New Yorker*. I am studying in Paris this Fall. I hope to run my own non-profit.

AA. I love working with kids. I was a Runner Up for Youth of the Year. I am a people-person.

EE. I am a star football player. I want to be a business owner. I have made the Dean's List every semester.

FF. I like fashion. I just completed Math Start at LaGuardia. I want to own my home in the future.

GG. I am a Resident Assistant at my college. My motivation song is "Apparently" by J. Cole. I love acting and shopping.

KK. I love eating. I am a great free-style rapper. I want to work with computers.

LL. I am a part of my school's Educational Opportunity Program. I want to be a psychologist.

MM. I like playing basketball. I love working with kids. I love wearing t-shirts with funny saying.

QQ. I love acting and singing. I want to be a student leader on campus. I hope to get a Master's Degree in Psychology.

RR. I love animals. I received almost a full-ride scholarship for college. I hope to travel the world.

SS. I am a certified EMT. I want to go to medical school. I love hanging out with my family.

TT. I want to be an FBI Agent. I was an active student leader in high school. I want to major in criminal justice.

UU. I am a loving mother. I want to own a startup business. I would love to go on a cruise for a vacation.

VV. I love cats. My favorite book is *The Alchemist* by Paulo Coelho. I want to be an English teacher.

The ADP Scholar?

D. I am a math whiz. I learned Chinese this summer. I will be a Teaching Assistant this fall.

E. I am inspired by the music of Gyptian and Carl Thomas. I want to own my own hair salon. I love to sign.

F. I am studying Information Technologies. I became a U.S. Citizen last year. I have a great shoe collection.

J. I was in a Jiu Jitsu club. I play billiards. I want to be a physical therapist who works with athletes.

K. I am originally from Uzbekistan. I love horror movies. My favorite subject is Psychology.

L. My favorite author is Stephanie Meyers. I love music from the West Indies. I want to be a doctor or LPN.

P. I aspire to be an actor. I love playing basketball. I will graduate in the Spring of 2017.

Q. I rode horses when I was younger. I love Toni Braxton. I want to be an accountant.

R. I am inspired by the song "Modou Modou." I graduated from NYU. My HS soccer team won the state championship.

V. I consider Beyoncé an inspiration. I love art, food and photography. I want to be a therapist in North Carolina.

W. I love hiking and exploring nature. I want to play professional soccer. I was born in Cote d'Ivoire.

X. My major is Criminal Justice. I know how to communicate in Spanish, English and English Sign Language.

BB. My dream is to play baseball in the Olympics. I am inspired by Derek Jeter. I love playing video games.

CC. I am a movie fanatic. I am a freshman at LaGuardia. I want to be an actor and businessman.

DD. I love spending time with my sisters. I want to work with children who have disabilities. I am inspired by Beyoncé.

HH. I can dunk like LeBron James. I am role model in my neighborhood.

II. I want to work in law enforcement. I enjoy anime and video games.

JJ. I love interior design and enjoy decorating my apartment. I want to be a social worker after I graduate.

NN. I love cooking. I am excited to go out of the city for school. I want to open my own restaurant.

OO. I will be playing basketball at my college. I recently performed a monologue about my life.

PP. I went to a performing arts high school. I want to be a teacher. I love music.

Alliyah, B. Dareth, C. Corey, D. Brieahanna, E. Jasmine, F. Daniel, G. Love, H. Dylan, I. Amberly, J. Elan, K. Dalia, L. Destiny, M. Bianca, N. Ericka, O. Melanie, P. Damien, Q. Jade, R. Mammadou, S. Juneisha, T. Vita, U. Katherine A., V. Kayla, W. Jethro, X. Karla, Y. Santos, Z. Andrea "Dea", AA. Runie, BB. Natrone, CC. Armando, DD. Quashana, EE. Tyon, FF. Dale, GG. Shantel, HH. Travon, II. Carlos, JJ. Shonotosha, KK. Gamalier, LL. Samira, MM. Timothy, NN. Shana, OO. Grace, PP. Gabrielle, QQ. Tierra, RR. Esmeralda, SS. Katherine D., TT. Lyndell, UU. Laisha, VV. Diamond H.

Call to Action: Everyone Can Achieve Their American Dream

Youth in foster care face staggering odds. The fact that our students step onto a college campus and enroll in classes make them the elite few among their peers in foster care. In a 2010 study by researchers at Chapin Hall at the University of Chicago, 20% of youth in foster care who were surveyed had no high school diploma or GED. Further, only 4% had received a degree from a 2-year college and just 3% had received a degree from a 4-year college.

Your support will allow us to continue and expand ADP and develop our Pipeline to ADP. Through the Pipeline to ADP, we will develop a more solid pathway for our younger students to graduate from high school and enroll in college. Further, for our ADP Scholars, we plan on increasing the level of financial and programmatic support we provide to our College Scholars so that they have a more fulfilling college experience. Together, these initiatives will help us to **accomplish our goal of supporting 100 College Scholars by the year 2020.**

In order to accomplish our goals, we need you to invest in our current and future ADP College Scholars.

Currently, through ADP, our College Scholars receive:

- A monthly stipend for each month in the calendar year,
- A monthly metro card for youth in the city or the equivalent allowance for youth out of the city,
- Tuition assistance and textbooks,
- College Care Packages throughout the year, and
- Financial rewards through our new grade incentive program for College Scholars who receive As and Bs on their final semester transcripts.

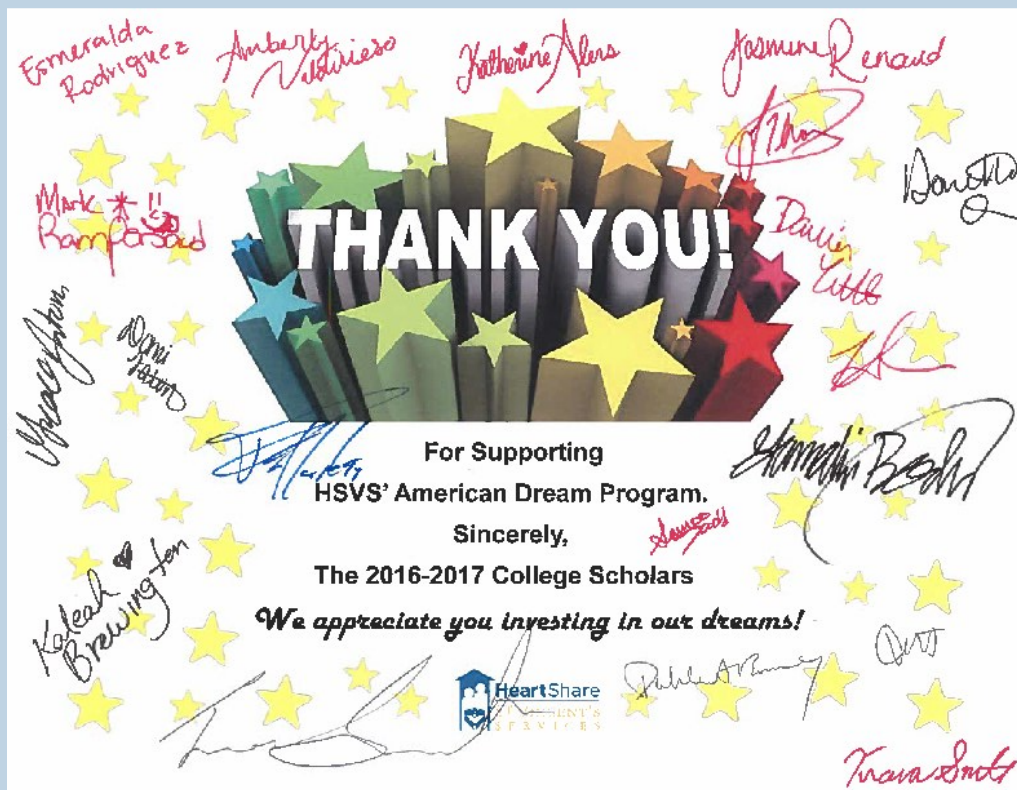
If you wish to invest in our ADP College Scholars by donating money, serving as a mentor or tutor, or providing our College Scholars with internships and other job opportunities, please contact Lauren Lee Pettiette, Senior Director of Education, at 718-422-2339 or Lauren.Pettiette@heartshare.org.

The American Dream Program

Acknowledgements

We would like to thank all of the ADP College Scholars who shared their stories, dreams and memories in order to help the HSVS team create the 2015-2016 ADP Yearbook.

We would also like to thank the donors who have invested in the dreams of our ADP College Scholars. Without your support, our young people would not have the same opportunity to focus on their academics and achieve long-term success.





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HeartShare St. Vincent's Services is an affiliated company of HeartShare Human Services of New York