BRIGHTER HORIZON FOUNDATION'S 4TH ANNUAL

COLLEGE REVEAL EVENT

JUNE 3, 2023 | 6:00 - 10:00 P.M.



The Commonwealth Chateau Chestnut Hill College

WELCOME TO THE COLLEGE REVEAL

June 3, 2023

College Graduates – Class of 2023







Jamie



Zybreana



Danielle



Sabarin

High School Scholars - Class of 2027







John



Benjamin



Aiden



Emily



Jada



Charity



Jaelyn

2023 Community Partners



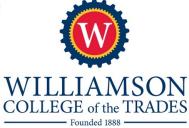








George Washington Carver High School of Engineering and Science



Save the date: Brighter Horizon's 5th Annual College Reveal Saturday, June 1, 2024 @ 6:00-10:00 PM

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college Graduates & Scholars



Kalice Howard University Drexel University Class of 2021



Virgen Class of 2021



Brianna *IUP* Class of 2022



Kelsie **Grand Canyon** Class of 2022



Zybreana Clark Atlanta Class of 2023



Jamie **U** of Miami Class of 2023



Giselle Penn State Class of 2023



Sabarin Howard University Class of 2023



Danielle Chestnut Hill Colleae Class of 2023



Barry Temple Class of 2024



Michaeya Penn State Class of 2024



Safiyyah Cornell Class of 2024



Myles Penn State Class of 2024



Darien Kutztown Class of 2024



Carlos Williamson Class of 2024



Nasir Williamson Class of 2024



Amira Gwynedd Mercy Nursing Class of 2025



Jaymaba PENN Class of 2025



Tatiana Middlebury Class of 2025



Malik Georgetown Class of 2025



Aisha Jefferson Nursing Class of 2025



Ruqayyah Howard Class of 2025



Aiden Temple Class of 2025



Kyla Drexel Class of 2025

College Scholars



Beatriz Princeton Class of 2025



Vonyeh Penn State Class of 2025



Anna Princeton Class of 2026



Skye LaSalle Class of 2026



Cashmere East Stroudsburg Class of 2026



Asmaa Drexel Class of 2026



Keith Williamson College Class of 2026



Jacob University of Mississippi Class of 2026



Kaiyn Boston University Class of 2026



Christine University of Pittsburgh Class of 2026



Michelle University of Pennsylvania Class of 2026

tigh School Scholars



Norristown High School Class of 2028



Yohelia George Carver Class of 2028



Jonax Cristo Rev Washington Class of 2028



Ja'Maiya Norristown High School Class of 2028



Sean Cristo Rey Class of 2028



Astan George Washington Carver



Malea George Washington Carver Class of 2028 Class of 2028



Sal Cristo Rey Class of 2028



Katherine Cristo Rev Class of 2029



Kaylin **Belmont** Charter Class of 2029



XXX George Washington Carver Class of 2029



XXX George Washington Carver Class of 2029



Jordan Girard College



Tyzhay Girard College Class of 2029 Class of 2029



James Gulfport High School College Essay

Have you ever felt something so mesmerizing that it gave you goosebumps? That is me every time I touch a stage. It is like a light bulb turns on, on the brightest setting in my head whenever I touch a script. Everyone who knows me knows that I love theatre. Since I was a kid, every component of theatre has excited me. The timing of the lights. Someone performing a monologue that leaves you in tears. The stage manager being the one who is in control of just overall helping the show come alive. The curtain call after finishing a great show. Being able to walk out and hear everyone clapping, yelling, cheering, and sometimes crying. Every aspect of theatre leaves me astonished. I did theatre all throughout middle school. I continued to move up the theatre ladder and get more comfortable. Plans were established. Go to college and pursue theatre! Getting notes in rehearsals is okay. A little constructive criticism. People talking about you and your craft? Not okay in the slightest.

I decided not to join the theatre my freshman year. When I made it to high school though I felt out of place and lost my love for one of my favorite forms of art. I did not do any shows nor drama club. I felt horrible about it because I dodged one of the things that I believed was my calling due to insecurities and pleasing people. Finally, sophomore year, I joined the drama club. Then when the person playing Puck in "A Midsummer Night's Dream" got quarantined opening night, I was the first person they asked to fill in for him due to my performance in drama club. I filled in for a lead role in my school's play opening night.

Then I took a chance and auditioned for my community's theatre production of Footloose the Musical. I talked awfully about myself because I wasn't as experienced as everyone else who was auditioning but I could not allow myself to back down. I got Willard Hewitt. I got what I have been dreaming of since I was young. This was a big role. No quarantine. No understudy. Just pure hard work. I did it for myself and by myself. I have never felt so accomplished. The feeling of genuine happiness was something I haven't felt in such a long time until that moment.

Being a minority within other minority groups, I go through a lot of things within my everyday life. As a young, black, non-binary, gay teen living in the Deep South, I have experienced my fair share of discrimination and ridicule. Wanting to fit in so bad but being alienated anyways. Theatre gave me a home where none of that mattered anymore. I could just be James, and James could be whoever they wanted to be. Mississippi isn't the most welcoming state when it comes to anything considered out of the ordinary. I check every box in the "out of the ordinary" category. Theatre was my guardian angel. It gave me a voice so powerful to the point where the politics of Mississippi didn't matter to me at all. Portraying someone bigger than yourself. It is an act of freedom and self expression. It helps me in ways that I would never be able to articulate. I feel needed. I feel important. I feel like the best version of myself whenever I hit that stage.

I saw myself as a failure for not doing theatre freshman year. Reflecting on those times now, I wouldn't deem it as failure at all. It was a steppingstone. The crack that I thought would tear me down, made me learn to start taking myself and my talents more seriously, put myself out there, stop doubting myself as much and learn that there are definitely bumps in the road, but the driving of the car should never stop.



Jaelyn Girard College High School College Essay

It's so easy to want to fix everything about yourself, to destroy the outermost protective layer, to hold your inner self in your hands molding it like clay. Making a body reflects all the beauty, like looking in the mirror and seeing your heart, your brain, and your conscience, being able to feel your true colors. Yeah, I know, this is me. Hi, I'm Jaelyn and here is one of the most life changing components to who I am. I've wanted to be someone else, live a different life, and change myself since I was little. I've been destroying my self image because I don't look like who I really am. I am a beautiful 17 year old black girl who is intelligent, hard working, and a firm believer in self love.

When I was 12 I wished that I could be more popular, I wished that I could fit in better. The truth was I believed the way I looked with my pretty brown eyes, the way I spoke with my almost perfect straight teeth, and the way I understood with my everlasting growing brain were the things that repelled people from me, but no, I was very wrong.

When I turned 14 I wanted to destroy myself to reconstruct the person I wanted to be. I was losing friends, I was focused on school too much, and I was constantly distracting myself from dealing with my self hate. Someone once said to me "more people would like you if you lost weight." That was the start of my deepest level of self hate.

When I turned 15 there was the Pandemic. This was the longest time I had to spend with myself by myself. Throughout the years that the pandemic lasted I was forced to heal the self inflicted wounds that grew deeper and deeper as my self hate grew like poison ivy, wrapping its toxic self around my mind. I was given the chance to destroy the image I created, I was able to hold my heart in my hands and build around it. I piece by piece built the person I knew I was.

Now, here I am 17 years old, standing in my truth. I no longer allow other hands to shape my outermost protective shell. I choose me, I use my hands to continue to shape my shell. I am my own superpower, and I protect my peace by seeing myself through my own eyes. The amount of growth that I've painfully endured has paid off, I love me.

It's crazy to think that I'm going to college next year. I can confidently say that I view myself as worthy, as wonderful, and as ready for the next step. I'm going to apply to college without being filled with self doubt, self hate, or the feeling of being less than based on anybody else's view of me. This next phase of my life will be hard, I will encounter people that see me just for my outermost protective layer, but they don't know all the shaping and molding I've done to make my inner soul match what everyone sees. Through this next phase I will remain positive, self empowered, and confident in who I am. I've learned that others' perspective of my body can't hold me back, it can't hold a tight grip on who I choose to become.

One of the most important long term goals is to own a daycare. I hope to encourage every child I work with to see themselves and all the magic they have foster at a young age. I hope that helps them navigate life as they progress and meet people that may see them negatively or just different. I hope to teach the children that cross my path that they are their own superpowers and that they get to mold the body and mind, which holds their hearts and souls.



Aiden George Washington Carver College Essay

Following a sophomore year of remote learning, I returned to school as a junior, expecting to pick up where I left off with my friends. Instead, I quickly learned that many of them had acquired new friend groups, which did not include me. Where my best friend and I had done everything together in the past, I was now someone he just knew. As I left school one day and watched him head off with his new group, I made a decision about this troubling situation. I decided not to care.

Convinced that friends weren't necessary, I began to keep to myself whenever possible. While everyone else was joining clubs and activities, I was a club of one. I didn't mind that much and the fact is, there were even some good things about it. I wasn't distracted from school, I spent more time developing my skills as a photographer, and I didn't have to deal with others' judgments and thoughts. However, one day as I was scrolling through my most recent photographs of a forest path, an uncomfortable thought entered my mind: I can't think of anyone to call who would share my excitement about my pictures. My belief that I didn't need other people had left me feeling alone and isolated.

The next day in school was completely different for me. I knew I would be happier if I connected with others, but I didn't know exactly how to do that, or who those "others" might be. Walking into my advisory that day, my eyes met the gaze of a girl I will call, "Hope," who I'd always thought was nice but didn't really know. On that day, however, I sensed that she was open to being my friend and, with my new outlook, I could see that she felt a change in me. We started to talk and, over the next few months, a romance between us began to grow.

Once I connected with Hope, it became easier and more enjoyable to bond with other people. She had multiple friends, and I was always welcome to join the conversation and contribute. Another change was how I viewed my teachers. In the past, I had always seen them merely as people doing their job. Once I started building relationships with a few of them, however, it made learning easier and more satisfying.

Unexpectedly, challenging my own belief and changing my attitude also helped my relationship with my parents. The pressure I felt to excel academically had become overwhelming but I never knew how to talk to them about it. My relationship with Hope and others had taught me a lot about expressing my feelings and, once I shared my discomfort with my parents, they were incredibly understanding. They decided to get me help and go easier on me about schoolwork, making me realize that they truly did want only the best for me. In addition, their acceptance and assistance encouraged me to discuss with them whatever was troubling me, without fear of criticism or anger.

Overall, challenging my own belief about not needing others had a profound effect on me. For one, I learned that I never have to feel stuck; I have the ability and determination to change and pull myself out of negative situations. I also discovered that although independence is a good thing, isolation is not. Finally, I saw that connecting with others is a powerful and positive experience. Looking ahead to college, I am confident I will connect with even more people and continue to expand my understanding of the world, and myself.

Thinking back to the beginning of 11th grade, I've realized how far I've come and how meaningful the changes within me have been. Although I still enjoy photography, the pictures I now take are not only of trees and sunsets. Like my life, they are full of people.



Charity George Washington Carver College Essay

"God spoke to me last night. He wanted me to remind you all that despite what 'the world' wants you to believe, women have been and will remain subservient to men. That is the truth. Do not be deceived!"

These were the words of my grandfather, coming through a loudspeaker in my house each morning before my homeschooling began. As the patriarch of a deranged religious cult, he indoctrinated his members in his maniacal teachings and isolated them from the world. My family was a member of this cult and, up until 8th grade, so was I.

All that began to change when my parents split up during the summer before high school. I found myself living with my mom and younger sister, excommunicated from the cult as a result of the divorce. I was enrolled in public school for the first time, which was a startling experience. When it comes to English, science, and math I became aware of how little I knew. I then immediately realized how much I yearned to know.

To make things more difficult, I did not have the social skills to develop friendships and was still deeply affected by the teachings of the cult which had ingrained in me a fear of opinions that did not align with the religion. Unable to function successfully in class, I spent most of my days in the counselor's office, shaking with insecurity.

The only highlight of my school days was Physical Science. With each class, I discovered that I had a natural ability to absorb this information, and my love of science grew with each chapter in the textbook. At the same time, my hunger to know more about this field increased. I was starving for knowledge and gorged myself on every single piece of information I was taught.

My hard work was noticed by my Physical Science teacher, Ms. Hartey. One day she asked me to stay after class and all I could think about was what I had done wrong. Fortunately, the answer was... the opposite! Ms. Hartey told me that my natural curiosity would be an asset in the future and introduced me to several extracurricular science programs, including a highly competitive summer research experience hosted by the University of Pennsylvania. Amazingly, I ended up being selected for the program, called Penn Laboratory Experiences in Natural Sciences, in the 10th grade. Ms. Hartey's confidence in me was inspiring and encouraged me to make the most of the abilities I was just discovering I had.

Growing up, I was taught that my role in life was to cook for my husband and be a mother to my children. Yet, as I continued to learn not only science but mathematics as well, I slowly recognized that I could do so much more with my life. One particular experience made this concept crystal clear. When Ms. Hartey introduced molecular geometry to the class, I was the only student who grasped the concept. Later, one of the smartest and most arrogant boys in the class asked me to help him. It was at that moment that I truly started believing in myself as a scholar, female, and human being with unlimited potential.

These positive experiences pulled me even further away from the toxicity of my background. My grades continued to improve. I made friends and was able to discover a healthy balance between my academic and social life. Most importantly, I learned the importance of being open to change, that change leads to growth, and that committing myself to constant and positive growth would be the keys to my success.

For many years, my grandfather's booming voice echoed loudly in my head, wherever I went. It was shaming, angry, completely unreasonable, and, in the end, made no sense. But today, that voice has been replaced with a different one – truthful, comforting, and loving. That voice is my own.



John George Washington Carver College Essay

It was like the Titanic hitting the iceberg. I wanted to drop out of high school and move to another continent so no one could see me as I wallowed in my misery. After two years of straight A's on my report cards, I had just received my first "B."

To many, this response to my first "B" might have seemed extreme. But that would only be because of something they couldn't understand. Throughout my life, winning has been of utmost importance. Whether as part of a team, or by myself, I have an unstoppable urge to come out on top. Winning to me was never an option; it was the foundation of my identity.

Although my identity as a winner has influenced my grades, it is actually more connected to learning. In every group I am in, I like to be the person who has valuable information to share with others. To be that person, I am constantly exploring various intellectual concepts such as the state of the world, new technologies, and space exploration. As a kid, and even now, I always discussed these topics with my family during dinner and loved sharing the new things I learned that day. My identity as a winner is strengthened by this because learning all I can helps me win the battle against ignorance.

An area where my will to win has been especially strong is competitive video games. It all started the day my cousin and I made it to the semi-finals of a competitive tournament which, surprisingly, changed how I viewed life. Before that day, I was constantly doubted by friends and family, who did not see the value of what I was doing. Because of my identity as a winner, however, I was able to disregard their negativity and keep competing. When I finally broke into the semi-finals, it allowed me to trust that no matter what goals I set, my love for winning will allow me to accomplish them. My love of winning does not mean that in every situation I have to be the best. In fact, I enjoy being around people that are better than me at whatever we are doing, because that's the way I learn and grow. For example, last year in AP Calculus, I was definitely not the top student. But winning in this scenario wasn't about being the best; it was about learning the most.

Furthermore, my identity as a winner is not limited to personal accomplishments. I am also dedicated to helping society itself win its battles against ignorance and deprivation. Through my membership in the National Honor Society, this drive has taken the form of serving my local community. As a student of World War II, I am also committed to serving the entire world community by learning how to avoid new wars in the future. In my view, making the world a safer place will be another aspect of winning.

My compulsion for winning, coupled with my desire to avoid war and create a safer world has also led to my interest in cybersecurity. Having already mastered two coding languages, I am now looking forward to expanding my knowledge and ability in computer science and helping businesses and governments win the cyber warfare battles that are sure to come. Looking ahead, one of my major goals is to work for the Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency and become a major factor in ensuring national security. Achieving this goal will be one of many victories I hope to celebrate during my career.

That horrible "B" on my report card put me in a dark place but I refused to let it haunt me. My will to win gave me the determination I needed to rise up and bring back my straight A's for the last two semesters. Because when you're a true winner, the iceberg doesn't have a chance.



Jada George Washington Carver College Essay

In the two weeks since we had moved from Clarendon, Jamaica to West Philadelphia, PA, I saw snow for the first time and shoveled it, while living in a row home in a low-income neighborhood. My parents and I slept on a taped-up air mattress given to us by a friend, with a space heater that could catch fire in the blink of an eye. Our gas was cut off and we barely had enough money for food. I had gone from walking to school and eating June plums every morning to not going to school at all. The question I kept asking myself was, "How is this better?"

Early one morning, my parents decided to find out if it was even possible for me to enroll in school. Not possessing sufficient clothing for the weather, we layered almost everything we owned and trudged through the snow towards the School District of Philadelphia. We were escorted to an office, where a nice lady reassured us that I could attend school, which had us all hugging each other. As we were about to leave, the woman stopped us and, with a broad smile on her face, pulled out a pink coat with a fluffy hood and thick lining and encouraged me to try it on. The coat fit perfectly, and she told me it was mine and to be sure not to lose it since it was going to get even colder in the months ahead. This woman's act of sensitivity, generosity, and compassion was not only surprising but has continued to affect and motivate me throughout my life.

The most immediate result of this experience was that I stopped being focused on myself. My parents risked everything so I could have a better future and, up until that day, all I could think about was how terrible I had it. Strengthened by kindness, however, I was now able to appreciate the opportunity I had been given.

In high school, the simple act of caring I experienced as a young girl has moved me to do the same for others, through programs such as SpeakUp! and the School District Leadership Team. Whether it's simply listening to what's on my fellow students' minds or donating supplies to children that are in the same situation I was in, I am constantly reminded of my own gratitude for receiving a coat that I had not asked for or expected.

Outside of school, I also try to be a positive force for others. For example, one day, as I was visiting the mall, I entered a store full of Caribbean-themed clothing. I started a conversation with the owner, a sweet woman from Guyana named Rose, and we talked freely about religion, culture, and family. She told me business was slow and her brother had recently been shot. I recognized her as a person in need and decided right then that every time I went to the mall, I would buy something from her store, even if it is small. I encouraged my family to do the same, and it is now routine. Being able to help Rose in this way reminds me of how someone helped me and seeing her appreciation is all the reward I need. Getting others involved showed me that people want to help each other, only sometimes they need someone else to show them how.

Serving others in the field of healthcare has become my career goal. Whether it's as a research physicist or anesthesiologist, I want to give back to my country as much as possible. But no matter where I end up in life, I will never forget that not long ago I was a freezing young girl who didn't have a coat. The lessons I learned that day continue to inspire me to care about others, just as a stranger once cared about me.



Emily Central High School College Essay

The real world we live our life in is vast. Oftentimes, one can feel lost. But as I traveled through this journey of my life, there have been stations where I was able to take a stop to find guidance. At these different stations, I received a lot of help from different mentor figures. One very important station I stopped at in my life is fifth grade with my English teacher, Mr. Konya. At this station, I was able to gain a tool I believe is very important and basically is one of my essential tools in my life. Through Mr. Konya, I learned the power to transport myself into stories I read. This allows me to come to an understanding of the characters from a wide range of settings and genres. Through their story, I was able to gain knowledge and learn lessons about life, beliefs, and most importantly, learn that these characters are multilayers like real life people. They can represent many things and convey different messages depending on one's perspectives. This ability has allowed me to fall in love with reading.

Before I met Mr. Konya, I'd never liked reading books all that much. The characters in the book I was reading all felt one-dimensional and it never felt that they were alive. At that point, I never felt they could exist outside of those flat pages. Furthermore, reading was very hard for me, it felt like I had to drag myself through thick mud to even finish a book. This feeling made reading feel like it was a chore. The fact that English was not my first language and no one read to me outside of school probably continued to fuel this feeling.

But after meeting Mr. Konya, my experience with reading changed. I felt like the characters are alive and breathing, that they can come right out of those pools of words on the page. It is like an imaginary movie inside of my head. I don't see these characters trapped inside set scenarios in the book anymore, I can imagine them going on new adventures outside of the book. It has made reading exponentially easier and much more enjoyable, especially when I can insert myself into the adventure stories.

This ability of immersion is an important skill, it allows me to be more of an empathetic person. It made me patient with listening to other people's stories, because being able to immerse in their story gave value to it. This skill has also come in handy in corroborate information I learn with the stories of people I heard in life, to create this complex web of what I come to perceive as the world we are living in.

One such case of world building was in theater production. When it comes to costume making, you have to understand the character and the world they are in. I find that this immersion skill has made it easier for me to immerse myself in the story of the script. It also allows me to sit down for a whole day to immerse myself in other people's production of the play and other media of the same characters the play is based on. By learning the original source and other people's interpretation of the play, I can start forming my own interpretation which influences the character design I come up with. In the most recent production at my school, the *Addams Family Musical*, I watch the original comedy show, parts of the movie and shows, and other school's productions of the musical, just to get an understanding of how we should dress the characters and what we need to account for in the production. Although it was a lot of work, it was quite fun actually, especially when we came together to share our designs and ideas to arrive at the best character design.



Benjamin Cristo Rey High School College Essay

My grandparents are very religious, and thus for most of my life I was raised in the church. The first stories I heard were all Old Testament, and all through that time I had one source of inspiration, one example to live by, one role model. David. As the story goes, this small shepherd boy would go on to slay a mighty warrior named Goliath and become one of the greatest kings to ever live. I see myself in this. Just some kid from West Philly who has overcome great obstacles and will continue to do so. Every school I've been in has been a battle. Every challenge has been a Goliath. Every inch gained in my life has been a challenge. Even before I was born.

My father met my mother at a recreation program for children with disabilities when they were both eight years old. Time passed and he never forgot her. When he was 18 years older, he showed up at my grandparent's house asking for her and one year later, he asked my grandparents if he could marry her. They were married by the time both were just 20 years old. They were told not to have children and spent their first eight years of marriage avoiding children. However, at that time, they decided they wanted to start a family and I was born. They were told not to have children because they did not have the money for it, and my dad said, "rich people think money raises children but this is not true, parents raise children." They were told "you are disabled and you may have a child with disabilities" and my father said, "who better than us to raise a child with disabilities." When I was born, my grandmother tells me that "nurses tripped over each other on their way to call DHS" because these parents were disabled and dared to have a child.

Through these challenges I have had a simple motto. Prove them wrong. Prove the ones who thought my parents could not have a child wrong. Prove the ones who think some mixed-race kid from the back end of West Philly can't go far wrong. Prove those who think my dreams are impossible wrong. Prove the ones who think that they are better than me wrong.

So now here I am, in spite of the world saying that I could not be. Here I am, eighteen years old, first-generation college student, eldest of four children in my family. Here I am, leading from the front, being the example and the inspiration. Here I am now, helping my youngest sister through her struggles because one day I want to see her become successful as well. Here I am, and I'm not going to let the world tell me no.

My passion, for as long as I can remember, has been theater. To support this career, I intend to go into Criminal Justice so I can help fix the currently broken and unjust system. I also intend to help those who have been imprisoned for reasons both deserving and not. Specifically, I want to bring my passion for theater to juvenile detention centers and adult prisons. See, recently I have been participating in and helping run a LARP summer camp in upstate New York known as the Wayfinder Experience. This has helped me get through pains in my life, such as being separated from my parents for a year by DHS. It has given me, and many others my age, a chance to escape the stresses, challenges, and fears of life. It gives us a chance to just be ourselves. It allows us to have a community. No, a family. We learn from each other, we laugh with each other, we cry with each other. I want to bring that to these places because people have been denied that.

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