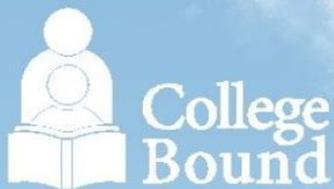


Welcome to the 29th Annual End of The Year Celebration

COLLEGE BOUND
CELEBRATES 29 YEARS
OF MAKING COLLEGE COMPLETION A REALITY

Imagine

Student Anthology





At College Bound, we were fortunate to recognize the impending pandemic early on and suspended our face-to-face and group programs. We moved our programming to a virtual format and have continued to support our students to not only graduate and prepare for college but to navigate this new normal. Collectively, we have assisted in securing or providing students the technology needed to complete their school work as well as providing emotional support during these challenging times.

We recognize that there are ways for us to use this time to improve our services and collaborate more effectively as a team and with other advocates. We have been reminded of the importance of family, not just our blood relatives, but also those special people that have entered into our lives and make them fuller and better.

It is during these times that we are reminded of the importance of community and those that support us through thick and thin. When I started this journey with College Bound as a site coordinator, many years ago, I met such a man in the person of Leo Lawless. I didn't realize at the time that he would have such a profound impact on my life. Leo and I were polar opposites in many ways but similar in others. What really connected us, was our shared passion for College Bound. Leo often pushed me to be better and nurtured my vision for the organization to better serve youth, like me, who needed access. He gave me invaluable advice, often unsolicited, but treasured nonetheless. He recognized that his life had been molded by his education and hard work and actively sought ways to leverage his privilege to help our students. From being an avid supporter at the University Club for our Career Night program or sponsoring a hole at their golf tournament to inviting me to the Lombardi Gala at Georgetown, Leo always wanted to provide opportunities for me to expand my network to talk about College Bound. His long and effective service on the College Bound Board of Directors left an indelible mark on the organization and me.

Leo reminded me on more than one occasion about the importance of time as he cautioned, "there's a finite amount of it!" This and so many other jewels that he gave freely have enriched my journey. He was always willing to coach me and share his wisdom. I've met very few people who operate from a place of selflessness like Leo. His life will always serve as a reminder of what it means to give unconditionally to others because you know it's the right thing to do.

I could never repay Leo for all that he has taught me, but I can honor him by continuing to advocate for those that society often overlooks.

My Best,

***“Go confidently in the direction of your dreams.
Live the life you’ve imagined.”
– Henry David Thoreau***

What matters most to you and why?

Jaime George

What matters most to me is family and education. Family because they are my biggest support system and they help me with what I need to do. Education matters to me because you can't go anywhere in life with no education, and you need to put forth effort and do the work and do it to your best ability.

Nina Ballard

In my 17 to 18 years of living I only find two things to be extremely important which are my family and creativity. My family has either encouraged me to face my fear or pushed me towards my own goals. If it wasn't for them I wouldn't have the values I have now. Creativity is how we express ourselves to each other; it brings out your first impression to anyone you meet. No person is the same, they either have it artistically or based on their personality. It makes everyone different which I have always taken into account when meeting a new person.

Eve Ellis

Film and storytelling matter to me a lot because storytelling was one of the first things I enjoyed that allowed me to express my emotions. Another reason why I love film and storytelling so much is because it gives those an opportunity to tell their stories and raise awareness for what they believe in. This can help those who cannot tell their stories.

Tylena Patton-Bullock

There are many things that matter to me because I am invested in several things in all different aspects of my life. One of the most important things that matter to me in my life is my bond with my mother. It has been my mother and I from the beginning of time, and ensuring that my relationship with her is intact matters the most to me.

If I were to ever lose the strong bond that we have, I know that I would no longer function properly. Coming from an only child's perspective, the bond that you build with your parents sticks with you long after you and your parents are dead. I would not be as far along in life as I currently am without this strong foundation and may never have been able to get as far as I will potentially be.

Cenaria Fells-Watson

My education and family matter to me. My family supports me through everything I do and they help me with any challenges I encounter. My education is important to me because I am able to expand my learning and knowledge. Education will help me become more successful in life.

Nina Enwesi

To me, I think that it is important that everyone should have access to an education. Having an education is good because it gives more opportunities to a person. When you have an education, you have more knowledge than a person who doesn't have as much education, so your chances of gaining opportunities, such as a job, are higher since you are educated and can probably be more trusted with things. Also, more education often allows employees to make a higher salary.



Lordes Weston

Getting my education matters the most to me because without my education I would not be able to go far. An education helps you get into college and get a job. It also helps you with a lot of everyday skills and tasks that you might have. Getting an education can honestly predict and improve your future.

Zakhiya Graham

I want to get into college and get a masters degree. I'm unsure what my major would be but I'm interested in engineering or becoming a doctor.

Lalah Choice

Something that matters to me is music. I enjoy all different genres of music from classical to hip hop and rap. Playing the cello has allowed me to listen to music and understand it in ways I would not have if I didn't play an instrument. When listening to music I am able to break it down and hear the different parts and then put them back together. I am able to hear things a non-musician might not. Playing the cello allows me to relieve my stress and express myself.



Adorre Fells-Watson

Family matters most to me because in life you will always need someone to care for you and to motivate/push you to be successful and stay on the right track. Family can serve as this support. It is important to have anyone who cares about you, including those outside your family like friends, teachers, and counselors.

Moselle Simmons

Something that matters to me is food because food makes me happy. Food never really disappoints and when I'm feeling down I eat a snack or I eat a full meal. Food is good for me - heart and soul, that's why it is important to me.

Success is important because if I succeed I know that I won't have to worry about struggling in life. Failure isn't an option because I feel as though if I fail in school I won't get a nice job or a nice house.

Nikyah James

Life and family are things that matter to me. Not living off of my fears and living to accomplish my goal and be something, someone. To leave a mark on the world and not become another statistic but rather something else. Lots of people do things out of fear which can cause stress and depression.

Who is your favorite artist? What messages do they convey?



John Ashby VI

One of my favorite musical artists is Kendrick Lamar. He can send a message that can hit you if you're going through hard times. If you have problems with violence, love, family, friends, or with yourself he can express it in a way you could think it relates to you. I have too many tracks to name a favorite, but one of his songs is called the Art of Peer Pressure which tells of a story of how spending time with friends can get you killed.

James Alexander

My favorite artist is Michael Jackson. The King of Pop, in my opinion, had music that was so unique - not only his music but his entire style was unique.

His music talked about things like racism, deforestation and other topics that if left untreated would be serious problems today. Michael was an icon. Another thing that I admire about Michael was that he spent millions on children in need, children's hospitals. This showed that he believed his purpose was not to help himself but to help others.

Aiden Fuller

My favorite musical artist is Frank Sinatra. He was one of the best artists of his time, from his dazzling personality to his extraordinary voice, Frank was a sight to behold with his performances.

Maryori Maloney

My favorite artist is El Lapiz Conciente because I don't just like him but I admire him and what he does for the community. He encourages other people to do better and he also helps out the community. El Lapiz gives advice and mentoring via social media (such as Instagram and Facebook) to teenagers and people that are looking forward to being successful in life. El Lapiz also makes songs about respecting women and respecting others in addition to life, political instability, and corruption in the Dominican Republic. With his music he touches many souls because all his songs have a meaning and a theme that is empowering and thoughtful.

Ayrrika James

Frida Kahlo is my favorite artist. She draws self-love and her art depicts the time during the Mexican revolution. She is a powerful figure for women empowerment. I like how she can make an art piece that makes you feel like you're in the picture.

Ayanna Lovelace

My favorite music artist is Jhene Aiko. Jhene's music is diverse and can create a different vibe everytime you listen to it. When I listen to Jhene's music I feel calm and mellow, I love the fact that I can properly hear words and comprehend her message. My favorite Jhene Aiko song is "Spotless Mind," and I listen to it when I'm in a space of meditation.

Amaya Berry

My current favorite musical artist is Rod Wave. In his music he talks about the different things he's been through in his life and how he has and is overcoming his struggles. His music differs from a lot of other rappers because everything he puts out is really from his heart and things he's actually been through, unlike most rappers who talk about what's popular. In his music he goes into depth with his stories to the point where anyone listening can hear and feel everything he's saying whether they've been through it or not.

As a student, what do you feel are your strengths? What distinguishes you from other students?

Oluwabukunmi Balogun

What distinguishes me is when it comes down to completing my work to its best quality, I am always capable of doing so. I am not only a hard worker but a creative thinker. I am actually interested in learning and not just in getting the job done.

Noelle McDougle

My greatest strength is my ability to learn very different languages for a long time, at the same time. I am comfortable with being in



uncomfortable situations. I'm not afraid of not knowing all the answers. Also I've used what I've learned in my language classes about culture and history when interacting with people different from me, not limited to the cultures of the languages that I take, which has also been a benefit from going to an IB school since I was four.

Recently, I have become interested in the medical field, mainly nursing, because of this, I have started watching videos by certain doctors about what it is like to go through medical school and become a doctor. One of the main points that they make is about being comfortable with being uncomfortable and knowing when to admit what they don't know. I have noticed that these concepts can be applied to different fields, such as performing arts, another career interest of mine.

Though this may not seem to parallel my interest in performing arts, there are a lot similarities between the two fields that many do not see. I am a candidate for the IB diploma and I take chinese and spanish.

Heavyn Dorsey

As a student I feel my strengths are that I am determined and self motivated. This distinguishes me from other students because I am determined to get everything that needs to be done no matter what is in the way of my success. While doing this, I motivate myself, saying there is no limit and there's always room for improvement.

Describe your work ethic.

Lucca Bey

My work ethic is strong, I balance my school assignments and often, if not always, study and review for my classes even before a test date has been announced. Everything that I do, I do it with the expectation that I will be proud to put my name on it and show it off.



MyAja Rush

My work ethic is one of grit and merit. I am a person of determination and image, a creature of habit. I believe in resilience. My work ethic shows that failure is an opportunity for growth and redemption. It also exemplifies hard work and diligence. I exemplify determination to get my work done but enjoy my work as I do it.

Jada Phillips

I like to create an agenda of things I need to do from most important to least important, then prioritize when I'm specifically going to do them. I'll keep in my planner that list of my priorities and activities. I like to do the most complicated item first or those that might take up the most time. I'm a good advocate for myself, if I need help, I ask; if something is wrong, I reach out.

Khaliq Muhammad

When I am invested in something, whether I struggle or not, I don't give up. When I am struggling with something, I have mentors that I can talk to at College Bound, my mosque, and older siblings. As an example, when I am struggling in Algebra 2, I go to STEM in Your Hood (a math and science enrichment after school program through College Bound).

What are accomplishments you are proud of?

Christopher Hickman

I personally have accomplished a lot dealing with my grades. I actually got one of the highest grades on my history test last Friday, and with the AP curve I got an A. I think I'm doing well in English as well. In rowing, I'm gradually getting better as we continue to work out and row. I hope I can accomplish even more during the next month.

Jalen Whaley

I made a presentation to the Terri Morrison Institute about a theory I had earlier this year.

Dorian Clary

I had to complete an on-demand, timed essay and did well on it.

Ayana Mitchell

After a mock debate I participated in during debate class, I was recognized for being one of the best debaters in class. I am proud of this accomplishment because I was very overwhelmed and confused in class when I was analyzing all of the files, but during

the debate I was able to confidently perform the best of my ability and being recognized made all of my hard work feel worth it.

Ashley Chapman

My Junior year was the year I made the Honor Roll all four quarters. Since middle school I have not been focused on school because in 2016, my freshman year, my grandmother passed and I lost focus towards everything around me. I remember the smile on my mother's face when I told her I made Honor Roll first quarter into the school year. She was ecstatic.



Mydier Hughes

My most rewarding academic experience would be when I made Honor roll for two semesters during my sophomore year. During my freshman year I received the MVP award in cheerleading which was another rewarding experience.

LaDawnah Best

I reaffirmed my abilities as a great student by making it into the selective IB class at my school. This highly selective program is only available to those who teachers believe are capable and have the work ethic to endure this extremely rigorous program. I am extremely happy and pleased that I am able to show others my capabilities as a scholar through this program.

Kaniyah Bailey

Two of my most rewarding experiences during highschool are College Bound and track. College Bound is rewarding because it's setting up college and the rest of my life for me and I have the honor to meet people that will be with me step by step through the rest of

highschool and college. Track is an extracurricular activity to put on my resume showing my accomplishments that I have achieved in school, for example, winning races and building relationships with new people. When I ran in the cross country championships this year I got 8th place out of 29, even though I sprained my ankle. The best advice I ever received was “don’t give up, keep going” - words from my coach.



Shamiya Jackson

My most rewarding experience during high school would be receiving a 4.0 during the first quarter of my junior year. Receiving a 4.0 was the most rewarding because, at first I really thought I could not achieve this high standard, but then I changed my energy and my whole work ethic and, thankfully, I achieved it.

Rachel Harlan

My most rewarding experience during high school was achieving Honor Roll for the first time since starting in the IB Diploma Program. It was rewarding because the IB Diploma Program is very hard to keep up with, and achieving Honor Roll was a big deal because it shows how my work ethic is applied toward my school work.

I work diligently throughout any project or assignment that is given to me, and I make sure that the work I produce is correct and is fully thought out to the best of my ability. I am focused on one assignment at a time so I can complete it accurately and precisely, and so I can make sure that I do the work the correct way the first time. I have

a work ethic that is needed for college level coursework, and have been in challenging classes in order to increase my worth ethic.



Laurence Poole

I think that winning National History Day (NHD) at my school is my most rewarding experience. I picked my NHD project because I didn't expect to win. I was expecting to receive a decent grade and that was it. I thought my project wasn't perfect and its flaws could easily be seen, but just because I didn't view it as good or perfect doesn't mean that others didn't see the good in the video. Winning NHD helped boost my confidence and helped me to have less doubt in myself. I will be able to believe in my work and put my best effort to it. I've shown myself that I'm capable of anything I set my mind to do.

Aniya Doleman

The most important activity for me is my internship at the office of Councilmember Anita Bonds. I worked on strategic planning, program development for new youth oriented programming, market research, and grassroots organizing. I was able to increase my familiarity with D.C. city functions in order to direct constituents to the relevant office staff.

Derrick Lewis

Playing sports for my school is really important to me, not because I can say "I'm a part of a team" but because these sports have imprinted messages in them. For example this year my basketball team made three new additions and it was on me to make them feel like a part of the Paul basketball team and comfortable making mistakes. I did so by inviting them to out of school activities and treating them like they have been here for years like the rest of the team. This event has helped me be a better person by helping and introducing others, which will be needed in the near future. Of course I play the game because I love it but I also play the game to better myself and others around me.

Kennedy Swann

My most rewarding experience during high school joining the National Academy Foundation because most students in my grade did not get accepted. Also, it was very competitive to get into because it focuses on finance. This program is very special to get into because you get internships in your senior year.

Out of all the activities inside and outside of school, joining the NAF program has been the most important to me because I got to see different views on the inside of companies, the people they hire, and how their merchandise is sold.

We cannot seek achievement for ourselves and forget about progress and prosperity for our community... Our ambitions must be broad enough to include the aspirations and needs of others, for their sakes and for our own.

- Cesar Chavez

What does College Bound mean to you?

Amadi Lee-Kane

When I first walked into College Bound, I thought I was just a fortunate kid from an unknown elementary school who happens to be in a program to better myself academically. I had no idea how the program would go or who I would know or where this would take me. Now, after all this time I think I finally understand what this is. This is my Mecca for knowledge, unity and networking with people who want to do something with their lives. This is FAMILY. This is our road to greatness. I was able to make friends and connections with people who would help me seize advantages in life. One of them being Mr. Ward, who saw potential in a clueless, yet curious, 13 yr old boy. He taught me about things I never heard of such as the bombing at the centennial Olympic park in Georgia in 1996. He reminded me to not count out on any opportunity to improve myself as a scholar. He cared for me like I was one of his own. Another example of this would be the paired mentors I've had during my time here. I did not have a mentor for the first couple of months in College Bound. In December of 2016, a young man in a suit walked into our site and signed in. He was directed to accompany me at my table. He said "Wassup man, my name is Brandon. How are you?" Ever since then I've always been able to maintain that bond I built with him even now. In my last year I was able to meet a young man by the name of Aaron Henry. We connected through basketball aspirations and what we plan on doing in our current academic positions. Me being a senior in high school and him going to achieve his goals in law. He also taught me the importance (along with Mr. Ward) of doing what's BEST for myself and not putting all my eggs in one basket. Being able to look at my options in full detail has stopped me from making mistakes. One of them being me in this program which will help me beyond my time here. Thank you all for being there for me, thank you all for believing in me, and thank you all for everything you have done for me.

Cobi Cash

As this is my second year in College Bound, this program has done so much for me already. The reason why I love College Bound is it is a way for me to grow and be my own person. College Bound has helped me with my speaking and writing skills. They also open doors and gain relationships. One thing College Bound has helped me with is exploring different colleges that I would possibly like to go to in the future. This has helped me because it helped me narrow down my top choices, look for scholarships, and also look for internships. In College Bound I have a mentor that helps me and guides me down the right path, having a mentor has been a help especially as I'm in my last 2 years of high school. There are many more reasons I love being in College Bound, but these are just a few.

Cierra James

I have attended the College Bound program for two years now and gotten a number of opportunities from this program. College Bound offers an SAT Prep class where for 16 weeks I took a group class that helped me build different skills I would use during the SAT to increase my score. This class in particular opened my eyes to how hard and how much preparation is needed in order to take this standardized test. Before I took the test, College Bound allowed some students to take the PSAT and during the prep class we used that PSAT test to base where the student was at. I got a 910 on my PSAT the first time and at the end of the program I got a 1120. College Bound has offered me a mentor, some scholarships, and a chance to participate in my community for community service hours. For example, one of College Bound's recent community service opportunities was at the Unique Rehab Center. On this day, a group of College Bound students including me walked throughout the hospital asking different patients if they wanted to join us in a game of bingo while we were accompanied by a nurse. Thank you for your continued support of College Bound and as you can see the results are amazing.

Zakiya Roberson

My experience as a College Bound student is amazing. I've received so much help from College Bound and my mentor. They are like my family. When something is going on, my mentor is always there no matter what. I appreciate her so much for getting me through my 11th grade year. College Bound makes sure that students are ready and prepared for college. We have great events we attend like college tours, and monthly outings with our mentor. I'm so happy that I'm a part of



this program because without it I wouldn't be the young woman I am today. I am so thankful.

Justin Semiah

Before joining College Bound, I was a slacker and lacked the qualities that College Bound has impressed upon me today. I wasn't focused on school at all and I associated with people that didn't want the best for me. After seeing my poor grades and parents constantly nagging me, I wanted to make a change. At that point, I began utilizing the resources that College Bound provided.

I had a very real fear of public speaking. Just the thought of speaking in front of a crowd brought great anxiety and nervousness. However, through College Bound sessions I slowly was forced to face my fears by speaking in front of the entirety of my site every week. Without being assigned great mentors to assist me every step of the way the progress I have made could not have been possible. Even though when I initially joined the program I thought it was a waste of time, I quickly learned to see the benefits in what they were preaching to us.



Simple sayings that Mr. Ward would preach to us like “If you are not 30 minutes early, you are late” stuck with me and challenged me to develop good habits of promptness. This mentality that College Bound instilled in me has allowed me to receive recognition from my boss for always being early and ready to work. The significance of time management was another attribute College Bound wanted students to have. College Bound made us work on personal statements, brag sheets, and many

other items that would be useful during the college application process way before my peers outside of the program did. Notably relieving my amount of stress during that time.

While going through the college application process, College Bound gave students a college organizer which helped me to organize all my scholarships, acceptances, and many other things. Because it was online and more accessible it was very convenient and I didn't have to worry about losing these important documents. Through this

process I also learned that the reason why my school work was always so hectic was because of the lack of organization. This encouraged me to create my own method of organizing my assignments and school work, as a result, my grades were back on track and teachers took note of my performance and improvement.

One of the best and most impactful experiences I had with College Bound was Senior Day. On that day, I was able to meet all of the other seniors and get to hear about what they wanted to do in their futures. Also, while finally being a senior, I was able to participate in the senior events that my peers in the years before me did. This made me feel like I finally made it. At that point, I knew that the same way that I looked up to my peers in the past year, is the same way that the kids in the younger grades would look up to me. This new growth at College Bound put me in a position that forced me to work harder and continue setting an example.

Also, on that day Mr. Ward took all of the male students to a Nordstrom to teach us the basics of professional men's attire. I enjoyed this especially because I was able to learn about the different brands and Mr. Ward challenged my previous opinion on professional attire. Originally, I thought that there wasn't much room for personal style but Mr. Ward was quick to show us all the customizability and individuality that comes with dressing professionally.

In addition to learning about professional attire, College Bound does a great job of providing a mentor. Although I have had a different mentor every year, I was still able to build strong relationships with each of them. From each of these mentors I was able to learn something. The most notably is my most recent mentor, Armel Casket. Armel was the best. Although we have been partners for a short time, he has been able to teach me important lessons that I will be able to use for the rest of my life. Through this we were able to build a genuine relationship that I really appreciate. One of the things Armel has taught me was the importance of networking. Many times Armel showed me the benefits of networking first hand. For example, on a museum trip with Armel, we ran into one of his colleagues. This led to us getting an exclusive curator tour of the museum and learning the stylistic choices made by the curator when forming the exhibitions. On top of all of the lessons my mentor taught me he also is from Lyon, France. This allowed Armel and I to have many learning experiences about each other's cultures, while he taught me about his culture I also taught him about mine.

Through other conversations I learned that Armel works for the World Bank. This was interesting to me because it reminded me of being a part of Model UN. Connecting these two experiences allowed me to speak with someone who was doing the work out in the world. I know if this was ever something I wanted to pursue, Armel would provide support, further exemplifying the importance of networking that he taught me.

Overall, because of the resources that College Bound has provided me with, I plan on going on to college to study Graphic design and discover all that college can offer me, while knowing I can rely on College Bound and my Mentor to support me in any way they can, as I embark on this next chapter of my life.

I can't begin to thank College Bound enough for helping me through my journey. As a resilient black scholar that will continue to make progress, achieve and break the negative assumptions and labels placed on me. I plan to return to College Bound as a mentor. I know many others, like myself, would greatly benefit from the programming and opportunities College Bound has to offer.

Why do you want to go to college? Be honest.



Terell Chavis

I want to go to college so I can become a dental hygienist. I need my medical degree and also to develop socially, intellectually, and professionally. I want to be a dentist, I plan on getting my universal certification by the end of my junior or beginning of my senior year and I plan on going to college so I can get a degree from the medical field.

Breanna Lewis

The reason that I want to go to college is because I want to further my education and also get another perspective on life from being away from home. It will give me a chance to experience how the real world is when your parents are not around. I want to have a successful life and career and I know that going to college can open up those opportunities for me.

Assata Bates

I want to attend college because it will give me advantages in life such as having a higher salary and getting more job opportunities with a degree. Plus, I would like to say that I have attended college and graduated pursuing my career. It will also help me explore different places that I am unfamiliar with.

Jada Brown

I want to go to college because in today's society you need a college degree at a minimum. To achieve my goal of being a child psychologist I will need at least a master's degree. Also my desire to attend and complete college comes from the responsibility I feel to be a leader for my younger siblings. The power of college will give me exposure to the real world. The academic, professional, and social skills I learn in college will help me be a model for my loved ones.

“The future depends on what you do today.”

— Mahatma Gandhi

What are your goals for this year?

Arnett Horne

Before 2019 ends I want to accomplish surviving 2019 and living to see another year. 2019 has been a crazy year, especially in DC. It's like everytime I watch the news, someone dies. Each time I see, I wonder if I'm going to be next? Is anyone who I love going to be next? And as time goes by, I'm just processing the thought that nobody is safe. It can happen to anyone. It can happen at any time, and that's what I hate. Innocent people just pass on while people are being indifferent and not watching.

Kennedy Harrison

My academic goal is to get straight A's all year. I plan on achieving this goal by studying and doing homework, also by doing what I'm told or what I am supposed to do. My other goal is to test into the high school of my choice with a good score and high grades. Lastly I want to score high on my PSAT. I will achieve these goals by studying every night and not wasting my time on dumb things. Also, by getting to class on time so I can learn what I need to get the scores that I want.

Raven Jones

Most of my 2019 goals have all been covered, I was able to accomplish them. I had the opportunity to network with some amazing people and it 2019 showed me where positive communication can take you. The year of 2019 goals were passed in an all time high. I was very successful and with the upcoming new year of 2020 I have the same

expectations. My last goal is to visit a few more colleges because making my final decision.

Zariah Bailey

My goals for this year are to strive to accomplish, to continue to increase my GPA as much as possible because I look forward to going to a good college. I would also like to improve on my volleyball skills.

Gregory Cousart

My goals for this year are to not fail any classes, make high distinction Honor Roll, and get straight As all year.

Teri Jones

My school goals are to create better study habits and obtain better grades in my math, history and reading class. I would like to get all A's and high B's. I want to accomplish this by staying focused, improving and turning in my homework. I hope to prove to my mom that I can get better grades. I will achieve my goals by being responsible. I also would like to join two extracurricular clubs at school.

David Barrow

I would like to have A's and at most one or two B's for final grades. Also to achieve that I would have to do my homework and study for all of my classes. I want to attend STEM In Your Hood for the extra help. Then, if I still need additional help I can ask my mentor as well. I do not want to get any bad grades on any of my quizzes and exams. I will achieve this by going to STEM In Your Hood and studying.



Charles Alexander

This year I took the PSAT and feel that I did pretty well.

Anthony Harrison

My academic goal for this year is to maintain all A's and B's with nothing under a B minus. I'm also trying to boost my GPA up to a 3.0 or higher. I currently have a 2.8 and have been increasing steadily, so I'm almost there. When achieving this goal I will have to be more committed than I have been since my freshman year. I plan on going to the library every day after I finish my classes, this way when I get home I can study for my SAT. I am also trying to raise my SAT score as much as possible. My main tool for reaching my academic goals is going to be my quality time in the library.

Lyndsey Creighton

A career that I would possibly be interested in is therapy or becoming a psychologist. A college major I'm interested in is clinical psychology.

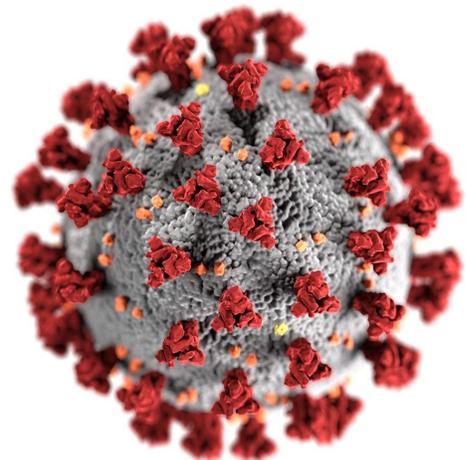
Mikkiah Bassil

The goal I accomplished last month was getting better grades, the goal I have for this month is to be less antisocial.

During this time of social distancing, what hobbies or other activities have you been participating in?

Terri Franklin

During this time of social distancing, I have been trying to workout more because I want to be more in shape. However, I haven't been consistent with it because of other distractions. I have been doing a lot of assignments during the social distancing which is really good because I usually procrastinate. I don't really have any other hobbies but during this break I learned that I like to write. So, I started writing in a journal about my goals and emotions because I feel like it's really important to make sure your mental state is good and journaling is a good way to get those emotions out. Also, I've been really interested in drawing and painting so hopefully I can start doing that during this break.



Schalom N'da

During social distancing, I've been catching up on a lot of sleep. I've been talking to many friends and checking up on how they are doing during these times. On Monday, I rode my bike to the National Mall. It has been at least two years since I've ridden a bike. It was great exercise and I enjoyed it so much. Since I have a lot of free time, I've played lots of games as well and watched the news going on around the world.

What do you know about Covid-19 (asked in March 2020)?

Cobi Cash

I know little to nothing about the coronavirus except what the media or the government is telling the public. The coronavirus, also known as COVID-19, is similar to the flu with symptoms of pneumonia. Also, the coronavirus has a 3% mortality rate, originated from China, and is now a pandemic. This is scary because it is such a new virus, with no treatments, causing it to spread so rapidly. I think the federal government should monitor it closely, and when it becomes impossible to accept more people into the country they should close all the non-essential facilities. Then, when it becomes an even worse problem all facilities and the government should shut down until there is a cure or we find out how to control it.

Bailey Allen

The coronavirus is a type of virus that has spread from China. It has spread through the community quickly. I feel as though the government should actually help and provide support, just in case it comes here. It comes from bacteria and contaminated air, etc. We need to be careful because it will spread fast especially if it comes here because people take the metro and bus to get around. All of those seats and handrails have been touched, so we need to be careful.

Since the US has reported the most cases of COVID-19, what lasting effects do you believe this will have on our country? Or do you think our lives will go back to what we know as "normal"? Please explain.

London Anderson

I feel that COVID-19 will have an effect on the world moving forward. COVID-19 will have some of the world taking more precautions compared to before the world knew

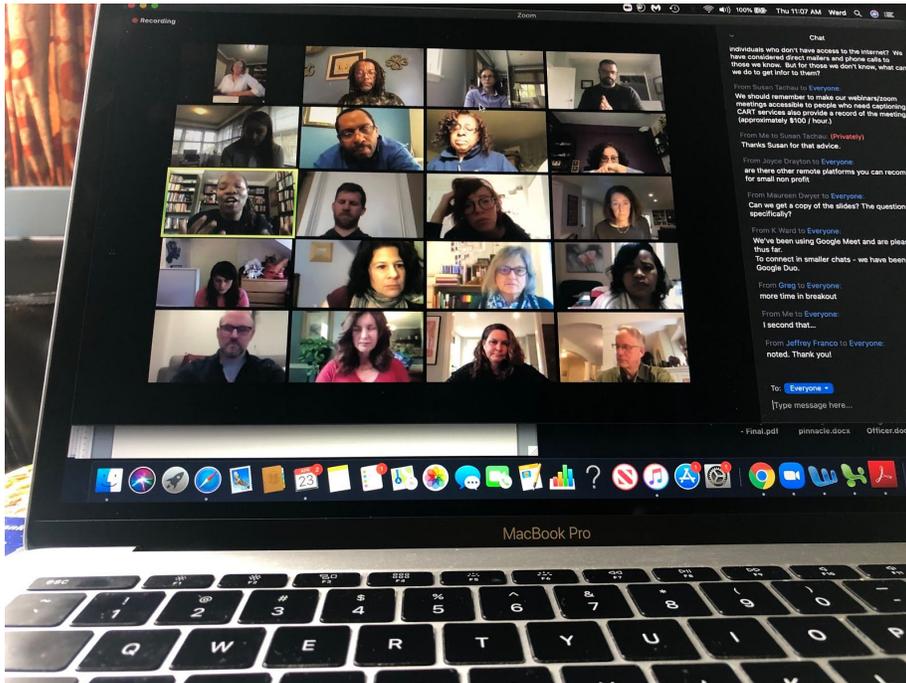
about COVID-19. The virus will have everyone in the world becoming more cautious than before.

I do not think that our lives will not go back to what we know as “normal.” People may still be in shock even when it’s announced that the virus is no longer as prevalent as it is now. The coronavirus is something that will always have an effect on the world.

Jordyn Middleton

In this time and season of our lives, COVID-19 has had a major impact on us daily. Due to COVID-19 being widely spread in the US, I believe it will have many major effects on our healthcare system and our community.

One of the first long-lasting effects that will impact our health care system is the number of supplies we will have to invest in to take care of citizens in the US. This will



impact us economically because more money will be spent on helping people who have COVID-19 and people who involve intensive care. Additionally, I believe the spread of COVID-19, may harm the US economically because so many people are currently out of jobs and do not have a stable income. People are fearful of encountering disease due to how many people that have it which is causing them to not go out to spend money which helps to keep the economy circulating. Additionally, I believe COVID-19 may negatively impact the mental health of people within the community. Many people’s daily routines have been changed because of the spread of COVID-19. They are not able to see their families, participate in many activities they love or even go outside. This can have a negative toll on how people think and even cause them to harm themselves or other people. Therefore, I am constantly praying for those who may be in that position and reaching out to my loved ones to let them know that they are not in this alone and they are cared for.

Eventually, I do believe our lives will go back to what they were as normal, however that will take time. We need time to find a vaccine, and make sure that people are not still spreading the disease. This may take months or years but I strongly believe in due time

that we will be able to have our normal lives back. I strongly believe that God is bigger than this virus and due time things will go back to normal. In the meantime, I will continue to use this social distancing time to grow, spread love amongst my loved ones, and gain more knowledge.

Yao Calhoun

Because of my optimism, I believe life will be able to go back to as close to normal as possible soon enough. When parents start going back to work and students start going back to school, I do believe people are going to come back with germaphobe mindsets in their everyday life.

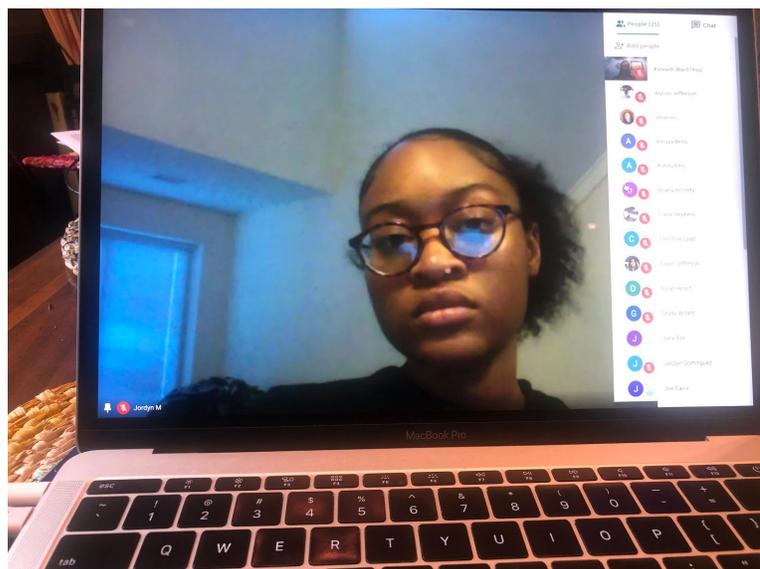
Anahjah Boone

I think that the coronavirus will definitely impact businesses. Currently, businesses are suffering because of the inability to physically enter stores and make purchases. In the future, I believe that there will be a significant boom to the economy because businesses will have restored and increased their profit. The demand of businesses such as hair salons, nail salons, and theaters have gone up tremendously during this period of time, and individuals will immediately try to participate in those activities because during this period they feel that they have missed out. The economy may bounce back quickly because people may have saved money during this time frame and will begin to splurge. Yet, if the coronavirus goes on too long, people may lose their jobs and have less money to spend, or change their usual spending habits, resulting in there not being an immediate recovery of the economy.

Attitudes towards investments will have changed as well. People will possibly begin to invest in business that will be more resilient during times like this rather than riskier companies. I do not think that society will return back to normal because this quarantine has changed people's attitudes and approach to certain things...and to life. For example, many people began to invest in their faith, have found time to exercise more, have improved their cooking habits and health.

Derek Emons

I believe that this pandemic will make us rethink our healthcare system and realize its faults. We will also be more cautious in the future and take better preventive



measures to stop this from happening again. Right now America is a dog with its tail between its legs, and we have to realize how negative this disease was to us and how we can stop another pandemic. After this, our lives will probably go back to normal but we will be cowed, which means that there will be a new normal. This new normal probably has us washing our hands more often and having better hygiene.

Alyson Jefferson

I think the coronavirus has given people the chance to reflect on their actions and the way they go through life. It has improved hygiene practices and given the environment a break from toxic human practices. In the long run, I think the virus will cause people to become more cautious about cleanliness, but it will blowover. Also it will cause the public to take a look at who they put as the president because we need someone who can respond competently in a crisis. I believe that society will definitely go back to normal as it has after another crisis, because human nature tells most people to revert back to what they know or what is the easiest.



Zakiyya Emerson

I believe that COVID-19 will affect the US school systems as they have had to make large adjustments to try and continue the school year as normally as possible. I believe that the concept of snow days or unexpected school closures will now be non-existent as most of the country now has moved to digital learning. I do not think that life will go back to “normal” as this pandemic has affected how many people go about their daily lives. Hopefully, this will have instilled a more hygienic lifestyle for many people and make them more aware of how they come into

contact with others. COVID-19 may have negative effects as many people have been using this as an excuse to racially discriminate against those of Asian descent.

“To know how much there is to know is the beginning of learning to live.” -Dorothy West

How has the Covid-19 pandemic impacted you?

Darve'll Darlington

This virus so far hasn't affected my life but it has impacted the people around me, like my grandparents and my great grandparents. This virus has caused me to come live with my mom for a while to stay out of their way, so they can get the time that they need to themselves. I'm worried about whether I want to walk across the stage in June or if I'll even be able to go back to school. The good part about it is that I've been able to spend more time with my brothers because they've missed me and want to be with their big brother. I make a huge impact on their lives. I'm like a mentor to them. I just want to get back to my everyday life and be able to go back to school.



Wyatt Graydon

Covid-19 has affected how we live our lives and how we understand the world. For example, we don't want to go outside at all and all delivery services are slow because nobody wants to work outside. We can't go to the store because we might contract the virus and also because people are taking everything, so the shelves are empty just about every day. It's hard when you're being told that the death rate is going up and that the people who got sick are going up.

Kyndell Geddis

COVID-19 has affected my life by causing me to end my senior year early. Due to this virus my school is shut down and I have to do distance learning at home. Meaning all my work will be sent to via email. The policy of my school has also changed due to the virus, now all my work is extra credit and is not mandatory. Which means school is much more relaxed. This virus has also caused me to not be able to work. I'm a child so

I'm not really in desperate need of money however many Americans during this time have been laid off and are not able to receive an income to pay their bills. This has caused the unemployment rate to rise exponentially. People are forced to stay in their homes to distance themselves from others. This has also caused many people to stock up on food and empty out the grocery stores. COIVD19 has really changed the way we live our lives causing many Americans to be scared. Solutions that I think should be implemented are that we should continue to self distance and pray to God that this will all pass soon.

Jane Eze

Due to the coronavirus a lot of things have been affected or stopped for many people. I think the coronavirus will change how we do things as a people. Corona has shown that a lot of things can be done online and has even shown top universities that SAT scores are not as important as once thought. I think it will force everyone to be more careful and cleaner about the decisions we make for our health and, hopefully, we will come out of this better and not worse.

Zojeilah King

March 30th is my birthday, I planned on visiting Barry University as well as Johnson and Wales, my top colleges but I can no longer visit. I don't want to attend a college that I haven't visited before. Due to the virus, I haven't left the house because I have two elderly grandparents. I'm going to spend my 18th birthday with my family which is definitely a plus. I'm afraid that someone that I love will be impacted by this virus.



What are three things you are excited for?

Liza Gassaway

I am excited to be home with my family and blessed that we are all healthy. I am blessed because I got into my highschool of choice: Girls' Global Academy.

Martin Luther King Jr. D.C. Student Essay Contest

Shana Grant

I am not a born Washingtonian. I was born in Warner-Robins, Georgia and moved here when I was just over one year old. It was not until 2015 when I moved off of Bolling Air Force Base to a neighborhood in Ward 8 did I become cognizant of the problems plaguing DC. The three problems I am most passionate about are the food desert, the low quality of education, and the lack of emergency health services, in

Wards 7 and 8. Every Sunday, I accompany my mom across the river to shop for healthy foods for the coming week in Ward 6. Every day I travel across the river again to attend a school with a graduation rate above 70%. Every year, when I do my annual checkup, I am reminded of the privilege I have to use the services of the United States Air Force, while my neighbors do not. And in the case of an emergency, we all have to cross the river because there is only one hospital serving more than 160,000 people who live in Wards 7 and 8, but not a single hospital that provides obstetric care, which contributes to the disproportionate rates of maternal mortality in my community. These issues resonate with me because of my desire to be a doctor, specifically an obstetrician. Access to healthy food options, quality education, and sufficient medical care critical to the mental and physical health of a community. But how does circling a few circles help solve the problems in our communities?

Food deserts appear in eleven percent of Washington DC's total area and of the deserts, 82% are in Wards 7 and 8 of Washington DC, areas that house more than half a million people. Local government agencies rely on data generated from the census for planning the budget and policy decision-making for the next ten years. Census data is also utilized by businesses, enlightening them on areas where their services may be in need. For example, a healthy food grocery store learns from census data that there is a shortage of their products in a certain area so they expand their business to said area. This intern provides healthy food alternatives and possible jobs to members of that community.

In Wards 7 and 8, there are only three co-ed, public senior high schools, none of them have a graduation rate exceeding 67%. When citizens complete the census the “data is used to allocate federal dollars for student loans, Title 1 grants, school breakfast, and lunch programs, career and vocational training, Head Start and special education grants in DC” (Why It Matters, dccensus2020.dc.gov). The government can use the census data that may present disparities in education between communities to defend funding programs to raise the proficiency rates in struggling communities.

With more than 160,000 residents of Wards 7 and 8 it is surprising that there is a lack of adequate medical clinics per mile while other areas of the city have fewer people but more providers. The census data aids the government in addressing healthcare needs. Building a public hospital, in an area experiencing a healthcare desert, the government would be more inclined to allocate money to fund it if census data supported it.

The census is a vital component of informing the local and federal government of struggling communities, like my own, so change can be made. The data collected by the census helps the citizens give proof to reinforce the problems they and their communities are facing every day. Problems such as not having enough places to buy healthy, nourishing foods, having excellent schools, and not ample healthcare providers, in their communities. With this data, communities can begin to advocate their improvement to their leaders with information that can not be disputed. The 2020

census is important to me because I am a witness of how a lack of money can damage a community. With the help of the census, disenfranchised people in underprivileged communities would be equipped to move the needle on real change in their communities. The 2020 census is important to DC because providing equity in food, education, healthcare providers mean more jobs and healthy, happy citizens.

Reniya Coleman

America has an extensive history of discrimination against African Americans. It's no secret that we are the most mistreated, most unprotected, yet the most resilient group of people that have ever existed. Fighting our way to escape from the gloomy past of slavery with no basic human rights, only to be told that we were not equal to other humans because of our skin color. But we didn't let that stop us from attaining greatness.



During the Civil Rights Movement, we faced the challenge of battling against our government. The system that was designed to protect and serve all Americans left out a major detail; it was designed to legally suppress people of color. The systemic oppression of Black people was no mistake under any circumstance. Even after being freed by the abolition of slavery in 1865, we were not free to enjoy life, embrace liberty, or pursue happiness. Protesting and battling against our own government was quite possibly one of the most difficult challenges. And achieving full political equality is still not done—but that doesn't mean that it won't get done.

The Civil Rights Movement in the United States was a decades-long struggle by African Americans to end legalized racial

discrimination, disenfranchisement, and segregation. It was a period where African Americans battled against America for their basic human rights. During the period of Reconstruction in the late 1800s, after passing the 13th amendment that abolished slavery, African Americans also gained the right to equal protection under the 14th Amendment, and, most importantly, the right to vote under the 15th Amendment.

Despite these advancements, African American rights were violated from local to

national levels. In most states, schemes and tricks were devised in the local judicial system to prevent African Americans from exercising their rights. Since many African Americans had access to mostly public education, the quality of their schools was less than that of their white counterparts. These decisions were made on local levels but were practiced almost nationwide. While a large number of African Americans were educated, many of them were not because to provide for their family they often had to choose to work over education. Due to these circumstances, Blacks were not able to pass the unethical and overly complicated aptitude tests to be counted in the census to vote in their state. Physical violence against them and their families was also often used to intimidate African Americans into not exercising their rights.

Even though we faced these difficult plights, we stood tall and resilient. The Civil Rights Leaders took a national stand against these injustices and actively fought tooth and nail for everything African Americans deserved. Through methods of violence or civil disobedience, they were able to get national recognition of our cause to empower people of color everywhere. Most notably among them was Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.

Dr. King was one of the most influential Civil Rights Movement Leaders in the world. He was famously known for his civil disobedience tactics, rooted in his belief of God, that ignited protests and riots across the entire continental US. He often travelled to different states to advocate for equality between all races in their educational, political, and social rights. In his infamous "I Have A Dream" speech, Dr. King believed that the US government owed African Americans everywhere "a check from the Bank of Justice", because the US failed to give them the justice they so rightfully deserved. He inspired several generations of people of all races to make positive change and to advocate for those that can't do it for themselves. In his "Give Us the Ballot" speech that he delivered in D.C., Dr. King explained that the only way that the government would be free of the constant protest and scrutiny from African American people would be to let them vote. "Give us the ballot" he said. After enduring countless acts of violence and failed attempts at achieving his political goals, he was able to convince President Johnson to pass the Voting Rights Act of 1965. This act invalidated the use of any test or device to deny the vote and authorized federal examiners to register voters in states that had disenfranchised blacks. He succeeded at empowering a nation with his efforts, efforts that are still significant for us today.

Despite all the courage, strength, and resilience it took to achieve such a monumental step, the current generation doesn't seem to appreciate this right as it should. It's almost as if we don't care about this basic citizen's right because we've never had to work for it. We've always had the right to vote, so we don't value its significance. In my city and my community, I've heard countless residents say that they don't register to vote because their vote doesn't matter. What we fail to realize is the fact that not

everyone votes or cares enough to educate themselves about the candidates. As a result, the city does not always move forward in a way that serves all of its residents. Additionally, ALL DC residents are legally disenfranchised because we have no voting representation in Congress! There are still tactics in place that violate our voting protection under the Voting Act of 1965, such as by constantly making the criteria for voting more difficult each time. Being a felon, living in a specific district, and not having a federal ID are all ways to disenfranchise Blacks. We need everyone to use their vote wisely, not only to honor those that have come before us, but to improve the quality of our lives now.

The next generation of voters is currently making strides to exercise its voice. Voting bills such as the Vote 16 Bill was petitioned to the DC legislation to legally lower the voting age to 16 years old. Despite our efforts being rejected, we won't stop there. Voting is a right our ancestors fought and died for and we don't plan on wasting their efforts. Voting is essential to maintaining our democracy and each vote matters.

What do you wish you could see, hear, read or experience for the first time all over again?

Jackson Lewis

One thing I wish I could do all over again for the first time is ziplining. When I was in fifth grade we went on a class trip to an adventure park and I was one of the first people to get to the front of the zipline line. I was extremely nervous so when it was my turn to jump off I just let myself fall and I got stuck halfway and stepped in cow poop when they had to get me down. If I could do it again for the first time I would probably take the advice of the other people there with me and take a running jump off the edge. That way I would probably like ziplining even more than I do now.

Kobie Frazier

One thing that I wish I could relive all over again would have to be high school, 4 years went by tremendously fast but it was a great experience. I have learned so much not only academically but mentally and emotionally. Junior year was definitely a test but I got through it and I'll take that with me forever. High school has also helped me recognize who was/is rooting for me and helping me along the way and those people are who I'm 100% grateful for. This year was cut short for me and it has been very bittersweet thinking about how this is it for the class of 2020, but I'm happy that I have had the support from lots of people, including College Bound.

Nya Grant

This question is very complex because there are so many things that i've experienced in my life thus far. One thing I would re-experience for the first time would be finding my love for books. Since I've discovered my love for books my life hasn't been the same since. I only wish I'd done it earlier but I think it also helped me have some idea of what I want to do in the future or what I would like to major in. When I found my love for reading I also found out that creating stories and writing them intrigued me.

Kendall Childs

I wish I could experience my 8th grade year all over again. The trips and new experiences I had last year were just so fun & I would do it a thousand times again. My 8th grade Spanish class went to Costa Rica which was a lot of fun. We also went to Kings Dominion as a whole 8th grade. My knowledge grew more and more that whole year I made new friends and lost some, but experiencing that year made me grow even more socially & academically.

Lundyn Ross

I wish that I could experience my last year of middle school all over again because I feel like I made a lot of mistakes that year. For example, I stopped playing tennis during that year. Before this year, I was really into tennis and going to ATA which is a national tennis championship. However, during that year I began to slack off and made excuses about why I couldn't play anymore. The reason why I regret doing this is because if I continued to play, I could have gotten scholarships for playing but at the time I did not realize this. I would also like to experience this year again so that I could enjoy it to the fullest because I didn't realize how many responsibilities I was going to have after that school year.



What are you learning about yourself as a result of the coronavirus-related shifts in your life? What are you learning about other

people as a result of our present situation?

Maya Carter

During the quarantine, I have learned that I thrive in an environment where I always have something to do- I enjoy having a schedule. I learned that I prefer going into a classroom rather than doing online classes from my bedroom. I also learned that I am interested in learning about astrology and sociology.

Jamia Hardy

I have learned that I have been a positive person through the Covid 19 outbreak. I still do my work and stay in contact with my teachers. I learned that doctors and nurses (and others who work in the hospital) have a hard job and are putting their life on the line for people. I also have learned there are many generous people who have helped others in a time of need.

Sydney King

During this quarantine period, I've learned that as much of a social butterfly I can be, I really enjoy just being in the house relaxing and not trying to do twenty different things at once. I don't believe in horoscopes and the zodiac signs but one thing I can agree on is that if given the option to be lazy and work on self care, taurus will take the opportunity. During these past few weeks, when I wasn't working on scholarships, small personal projects, or figuring out my college situation. I spent a lot of my time either sleeping, watching Netflix, working out, self-care, cleaning, or on social media. I also realized that I don't really interact with my friends over social media until later in the day and I stay up very late because that's when I get most of my creative ideas. Another thing I've realized about myself is I have a lot of good ideas but I doubt myself too much and never go through with them but I'm working on stopping this bad habit. I plan on doing this by completing two projects I really want to do which is make my first youtube video and learn how to sew.

Some things I've noticed during this time is that some people are not taking this pandemic seriously. I have friends that are willing to risk their lives and their family member's lives because they don't think the virus will kill them and they won't let a virus stop them from enjoying their lives. Some people are taking this time to work on themselves whether it's physically or mentally. A lot of people are using this quarantine to the best of their ability while others are just complaining about being trapped in the house for a month.

During this time of social distancing, what hobbies or other activities have you been participating in?



Jazmia Quigley

During this time of social distancing I have been trying to keep myself occupied. I have been completing my school work and trying new things. I started cooking more full meals and I have been trying new things with my hair, like twists and braided ponytails.

I have been reading a new book which is very interesting, I like it because I can relate to it and it is based on a true story which makes it ten times more interesting to read. There are many more things that I could be doing during this pandemic, so I plan on trying to find new hobbies and more things to try to occupy my time.

Jada George

Since quarantine has started I've been getting back into crafting. I've tried ordering a sewing machine but unfortunately that wasn't very successful. For now, I've just been drawing and trying to take my mind off of everything around me. I've been keeping up with friends checking up on them to make sure they're alright.

Nichelle James

During this time of social distancing I have been working on my online classes for school. I have been completing all of my assignments so that I can boost my grades up in each of my classes. So far I have boosted my grades in Probability and Statistics, AP Physics, and JROTC. I will be getting the rest of my grades up before the third term is over. I have also been working on scholarships. I am working on completing scholarships everyday until I can't submit another scholarship.

Jala Fogle

While isolated by social distancing, I have been exploring all my options in the house. Such as having game night, and movie night with my family. I think that now is the perfect time to get closer with my family and get to know each other more. I watch YouTube and Netflix individually as I usually do most of the time. Also, I have tuned into my other extra-curricular programs virtually. If I am not able to go out physically, I



should still participate virtually in order to gain knowledge on various subjects. I have been looking for opportunities that I can possibly participate in when the epidemic dies down.

I am exercising and trying to be better with my health, while I already have good health, I want to exercise and take precautions to prevent getting sick. I've been reaching out to my teachers, friends, and associates to view how they are doing during quarantine most of them seem to be just as bored as I am. I decided to paint and research topics that seem quite interesting as well as weird. Hopefully I can continue to stay occupied while being ordered to stay at home for long periods of time.

Camoni Mullins

During this time I am learning that I am a very resilient person. Instead of staying sad about the current circumstances, I have chosen to add excitement to small things like dinner. My mom, sister, and I have started doing TikTok inspired character themed dinners. Most recently, we dressed as rock stars and performed routines for one another. I am learning more about my mom when it comes to her personality. We already have a very close relationship but I have observed that she has more "cabin fever" than me these days. Watching the amazing things she is continuing to do in her job is exciting to see.

Shaina Adams

Throughout this pandemic, I am not as much learning about myself as I am rediscovering. For example, I've rediscovered my love for ice cream and manga and started enjoying both just about everyday. Since I am at home and stuck with my family all day everyday, I've also rediscovered how annoying my brother is. Even when he left for college, I knew that he was annoying, but knowing and experiencing are very different. This pandemic has also gone to show how I can thrive in environments in which I am on my own. Seeing as how I hate conversing with my classmates via zoom, I've now realized that going back to school will also be a struggle for me.

When it comes to other people, I've learned just how social they are. I have no desire to go outside or talk to more than a few select individuals, so seeing people go crazy under these conditions is quite eye opening. Additionally, I've realized how some other people's lives are affected by this. Aside from getting to stay home, my life hasn't changed much. Seeing how other people are struggling with the quarantine (both financially and emotionally) has reminded me that everyone is different and lives under different circumstances.

What courses have you enjoyed the most in high school? Why?

Ayanna Norrell

I have really enjoyed English because I love writing, creating stories and poems, and expressing the way I feel about things. I have also really enjoyed Advanced Placement U.S. History because the teacher breaks things down which really keeps me interested. Also, I love art because it allowed me to explore my creative side and to express myself. Furthermore, I enjoy Digital Media because this too allows me to enter into my creative side and it showed me what I am capable of. Lastly, I love Spanish because it allows me to understand different cultures more and to communicate with other people better.

Jermaine Evans

I like my sign language and hospitality classes because these are the things I want to do in my future. I like my sign language class because I'm good at it and I help other students when they don't understand. I can already see myself being an interpreter. I also like my hospitality and tourism class. It has taught me a lot about being professional and has helped me with networking with new people.

Latrell Davin

So far, throughout my three years of high school, I have enjoyed my finance class the most. I started taking my finance class as a sophomore and it is the inaugural finance class at my school. I have built a very strong relationship with my finance teachers and I consider them some of the best teachers that I have ever been taught by. I joined the National Academy of Finance because I wanted to educate myself about finance and the impact that it has on the economy. Furthermore, I am given the opportunity to meet with business professionals in the finance industry and entrepreneurs as well. I think that everyone should take a finance class in high school because it is very important to learn how to manage your money. In addition, I am currently enjoying my AP English class. I really like how we are learning about real-life situations and current events

throughout the world. I have been more engaged in English class this year because of the various activities we do in class and the balance between independent and collaborative work.

What does being thankful mean to you?

Mydier Hughes

Being thankful means showing gratitude. Being thankful shows that you are pleased and grateful for what you have or what is given to you. I am grateful for having my family and friends who love and appreciate me, having a home to go to, clothes and shoes to wear and lastly food and education.

Giavonni Marshall

I believe that being thankful means appreciating those around you and I am thankful for my grandmother because she does so much for me and my family and has to put up with stuff but she doesn't stop doing what she does. She is always happy even when things are not so joyful. I appreciate my grandmother for that and so much more.



William Carter

Thankful to me means being appreciative for something or someone who has influenced my life in some sort of way. For example, I'm thankful for my mom and dad because they do everything in their power to make sure that I'm successful. I'm truly thankful for the opportunities that have been bestowed

upon me. Being able to play chess at a high level and being able to teach it to others while getting paid at a young age feels like a great thing that I'm thankful for. Also, being

alive, healthy, and safe is something for because not everyone has the opportunity to live life happily.

Of all your activities inside and outside of school, which has been the most important to you? Why?

Zaniyah Bailey

During the summer of 2019, I went on a trip abroad to South Africa for community service. In the middle of the trip, the rest of my group and I had the honor of participating in a soup kitchen. During this event, a few other abroad students and I were assigned to have the African community come together as a whole and enjoy the home-cooked meal we prepared as well we gave away clothes and shoes. After this event, I felt appreciated.

Cana Stephens

I started a club called G.L.E.E. (Girls Love Empowering Each Other) to give girls in my school a place to feel comfortable talking about how things outside of school can impact your classroom performance.

Kamyia Denson

African Culture Club was my most meaningful commitment because it allowed me to start listening to several different news outlets such as NPR, allows me to discuss topics such as cultural appropriation, and gives me a space to talk to other African American students and teachers at my mostly white high school. I was honored to be selected to host the annual assembly with my friend and I also performed several times. The crowd showed me a lot of love and it was a wonderful experience I would like to recreate next year. African Culture Club or ACC fills a gap. In regular American history class history is not addressed from the perspective of an African American. In other courses, most of the material is not relevant to the experience of an African American girl. I took a class in tenth grade called African American History and Culture, but it was only a semester and I did not learn as much as I would have been able to if it was taught as an actual history course instead of an elective. Having a safe space of people that look like me and have similar experiences is important to me, because at my majority white school it is easy to get lost personality-wise. A lot of topics that we discuss would be seen as unimportant or confusing to my white classmates such as cultural appropriation and police brutality because they are unable to relate and have never had to deal with certain things an African American would. The African American experience is often not talked about enough in schools, especially when black people are the minority. ACC

has been the most meaningful overall commitment, because it has built my self confidence and pride in being a young lady of African American descent.

Describe the best advice you've ever received and why it is important to you.

Desiree Dyke

The best advice I received is that if you want something done, you should do it yourself. It's important to me because I believe that you should put in the work to get the outcome you want and it inspires me to be independent.

Brandon Hall

The best advice I have received was "always finish a task" and "never give up on anything". It's Important because I have heard it ever since I was young and I used that advice in real situations. For example, I used "never give up on anything" when I was at work and me and friends were competing against different levels with our chants and at first the higher levels were beating us and my team wanted to quit, but I stepped in and said "let's do one more we might still win" so once we did our chant we actually ended up winning which was very exciting for us.

Kamari Byrd

"With that attitude you won't get anywhere. You will get somewhere because of your abilities but that attitude won't get you far." This advice has helped me to be aware of my facial expressions and tone to make sure I am communicating effectively.

"You may encounter many defeats, but you must not be defeated. Please remember that your difficulties do not define you. They simply strengthen your ability to overcome."

- Maya Angelou

Describe a time when you did something that you didn't accomplish on the first try.

Indira Colbert

A time when I didn't succeed at something the first time I tried, was when I had basketball practice in 6th grade. I didn't know how to dribble the ball in between my legs. I was getting frustrated because everyone else was doing it like it was easy. I kept practicing, but it just wasn't working out for me until my coach taught me the correct way. Then, finally I was doing it better than I was before. But, as of today I can do it anymore.

Deandre Walters

In 9th grade I tried out for the football team to be a wide receiver, I didn't make the team so I decided to train and get better. Eventually, during 11th grade, I was asked to be on the team as a kicker but I turned it down because I wanted to focus on school.

Aryn Monroe

Something I did not fully accomplish on the first try would have to be cornrowing hair. That is a skill that definitely has to take time and effort into learning, and is something you get better at after every attempt. The first time I tried, I had cornrows of different sizes and they would not stay in place because I did not make them tight enough. Now, I know the exact steps and measures you have to take to make a good cornrow however, I still try to practice more and more to get better.

Laila Hood

There was a time when I joined a camp that put us in groups with different instruments, even though a dj set is not an instrument, I was put there. The camp only goes on for a week and at the end of the week on a Saturday, we have a performance at the 9:30 club in front of anyone who comes. After a week of getting prepared, I was ready. We waited our turn as other groups went on stage and then the time came. I had a partner who dj-ed with me because we were using vinyl. She played her music until it was my turn and my music did not turn on. So we were just standing there confused because everything was plugged in and turned. Someone came up to see the problem and they saw one plug was not plugged in. So the next year came by and we performed at the same place and I checked and knew everything was fine and it went smoothly.

Shaumya Kelly

One thing that I didn't accomplish on the first try and ended up eventually being successful was growing a plant. At first, when I planted the seeds, it did not grow in the span of time it should have. After a while it started to grow, but then it was time to go on winter break. I thought I should water my plant enough to where it would last, unfortunately I ended up overwatering it and it died. I was very upset because it felt like a waste of all of my hard work and dedication. I replanted the seeds and my plant started to flourish. It was healthy, the leaves were growing, the stems began to grow taller, and I was so proud of my plant. Then the Coronavirus came around and I couldn't take care of my plant anymore due to it being left at school and I was unable to get my plant.

Personal Statement

Terri Franklin

This school year I joined an all girls' robotic team with four other members. I was really excited about it because I love robots and I was given the opportunity to be with teens who share the same interest as me. In addition, the chapter already had four all boys' teams that had experience with competitions and building robots. So, the girls' team only had one member who had experience in robotics before because she was on a boys' team last year. We expected her to help us because she knew what she was doing but she was very closed off and paid more attention to the boys than us.



I was upset that no one was paying us any attention and I felt unwanted by the chapter. I got over it because I realized that dwelling on the situation was not going to make it better. All the girls left the team because they had other things to do except for one of my teammates and we had to do all the work by ourselves.

We had to build, program, and have a notebook that documented the process with the robot for our very first competition. We were overwhelmed because we didn't really know what we were doing and still had to go to the competition whether we had a completed robot or not.

We worked really hard to prove ourselves to our chapter. We ended up winning 2nd place in our first competition and first place in our chapter. We didn't have enough time to build and program our robot because we started the chapter late, but we built a robot that could put up two to three blocks. Also, during the competition I was the driver and our robot could not stack the blocks so I had to figure out a way to stack the blocks. I would pick up two blocks and release one in the goal zone and have the robot try to push the other block up on top of the one in the goal. This method ended up working which led to us getting in second place. After the competition, the chapter started paying us more attention and the boys started helping us improve our robot.

I find it surprising that the girls had to win a competition in order to have some respect. At first, I thought it would be really fun to be a part of a program where I share similar interests with people my age. However, I didn't really feel welcomed in the space which really changed the way I felt about engineering but I didn't let their negativity change the passion I have for engineering. I learned that you have to fight for your place in society because nothing is handed to you. This experience has prepared me to face obstacles that may come my way in the future.

Christopher Plummer

I am in a program that does after school mentoring called College Bound and they provided me with a trip to Ghana - a life changing event that I am thankful for.

The night before I was happy but also nervous because I have never been on a plane for that long and I knew the seats were going to be tight. The day of my departure, I did not go to school because the flight was scheduled for 5:30pm, so I sat at home and tried to mentally prepare for what I was going to see, and say to the people I would meet,



and how they would react to me. Arriving at the airport, I was as nervous as I have ever been but I knew this would be a wonderful experience. On the airplane I anticipated arriving in a new environment and visiting where my ancestors originated from.

When I arrived in Africa and left the airport, I was sad to realize that as I expected the African people and kids are not

wealthy, I noticed that the kids did not look like me. I noticed how their hair was cut low and that they did not have the latest pair of shoes on, but they were so happy and filled with joy, it made me think about the way I live. We visited a school, and that is when it really hit me and I realized that I had an excellent life. I had always wanted more and expected everything but these kids have little to nothing and are happier than me. While we were in the school I talked to one of the kids and I asked him a variety of questions. I wanted to know why her hair is short or why they don't have the latest type of shoes, and the response she gave to me was she is happy with the little that she has and she knows that her family is struggling so she makes sacrifices. Once she said that, I fully understood the fact that I needed to be grateful for what I have and always be thankful. While I was there I took pictures with many kids and I saw the joy on their faces, as they are not usually able to take many pictures.

Throughout the trip I had many experiences like this which led me to change my ways. When I returned home it was close to Christmas time and, instead of asking for several things, I asked for one thing and taught my brothers that be happy with what you have. I encouraged my dad to take a similar trip, so that he could have a life changing experience just like I had and 2 months later he went.

The main focus that I took from this was not to take school for granted. Once I got back, I started to want more from myself and started to improve my work ethic and also worked to improve my mindset. This has led me to want more for me and my program mentor, to make sure we have a good relationship because other kids do not even have this chance. That trip to Ghana changed so much about me and the way I live, I wish that everyone in the world was able to do the same.

India Gerald

My handwriting is always a topic of discussion when someone sees the way the words and letters fall on the paper. Some say it's "unattractive" or "interesting". Others say it's "unique". I say "it's legible". It's a mixture between poor cursive and chicken scratch. My handwriting is based on the period of my life when I was very shy. But with the help of my friend I gained the courage to come out of my shell.

I have been shy since forever ago. You would rarely catch me talking in public or to a stranger. I've never, even to this day, been able to point out why I was so shy. Was it fear? Or me being uncomfortable? Initially, my shyness affected many aspects of my life, even the smaller things, like hiding away in my room when company came over, and my handwriting. In Pre- K, I couldn't gain the courage to ask Ms. Mozan for help



with writing my letters. So I've been stuck with this handwriting since I was young.

Throughout my childhood with my handwriting still being the same, I blossomed little by little, year by year. I actually began to raise my hand in class to answer or ask questions, then I started to actually speak to my peers and the other children in the neighborhood, making lifelong friendships. So by the time I was promoted from elementary school to middle school I became what I call a semi-social butterfly. One day in the 7th grade I could feel my

shyness creeping back into my life because I feared asking my friend what was wrong in our friendship. But another close friend (I still thank to this day) said to me, "What do you have to lose?", and ever since then I have never been the same. I went over to my friend, and we talked it out, both realizing that the situation was only a hill that we were making it a steep mountain. To this day we're still friends, and we occasionally laugh at our childish problem from middle school. For myself I have completely blossomed into a new me, a better me. I gained more confidence, and that dark period of shyness has never appeared back in my life, or held me back from many endeavors.

From time to time I still get discouraged. When deciding if I should sign up to be a leadership ambassador for a program, I wasn't sure if I was up for the challenge. The challenge of representing a whole program, or being a great role model as a person and student for the ones younger than me, made me feel uncertain. But my inner confidence kicked in and I signed my name on the paper to run for the position. I'm happy my confidence won the battle against my temporary discouragement, as I won and now I have the pleasure of assisting students in my community and even in Ghana to pursue their education and their passion.

I have and never will let my past and current discouragements stop me from growing as a person. I never allow them to make me lose sight of who I am and want to be. Anytime I feel discouraged, I replay that scene of where my friend states to me "What do you have to lose?", and it pushes me to continue to step out of my comfort zone to better myself and grow as a person. I'm more confident, outspoken, outgoing, open-minded, and have the handwriting of a six year old. But I'm proud of my handwriting; I'm proud of me overcoming the obstacle of being terribly shy. Shyness was a major part of my childhood that I'll never forget, and getting past that stage was a huge stepping stone towards my personal growth and the bettering of my life.

Ezell Hill

On the corner of 8th and H Street NE Washington, DC a couple of blocks from where I grew up there used to be a stripmall called the H Street Connection. At the H Street Connection there was a 7-Eleven, Subway, Ace Cash Express and a cleaners. But the stores I would always visit were Gamestop and Rite Aid. Every time I went down to the Rite Aid I would grab cheddar fries and a mango Tropical Fantasy. Then if I needed to waste time I would go into the Gamestop for a while to play on the PS4 console and also to see if there were any new games coming out. With the development of the streetcar retail rent started to go up in price because of the brand new streetcar line and nearby renovations. The H Street Connection no longer was a necessary part of the neighborhood so it was torn down. When this happened it made me upset because I enjoyed those locations in my neighborhood.

One increasing problem we have in the United States is gentrification. This is a situation where the price of a neighborhood goes up to a point that the people who were able to afford housing in that neighborhood now can't and are forced to move out and find a new place to live that isn't as good. After seeing this happen in my neighborhood I had to ask myself; how does this occur? This happens when a high end store or a commercial renovation happens to a property in the neighborhood. Since that new house is in that neighborhood the price of the neighborhood goes up because of that renovation. This slowly starts a snowball effect in the area where other property owners will raise the rent of the surrounding houses or just sell it and force the person living in the house to move out.

I have seen this start to happen in NE DC where I currently live. When my parents were in their teens they saw this happen to SW DC and now they say it's completely unrecognizable. This was a predominantly low income neighborhood with a lot of minorities, but with the renovation of the waterfront that is in that area, the price of rent and living in that area has gone up significantly. This coupled with the new and renovated houses in the area has forced a lot of people that usually would be able to

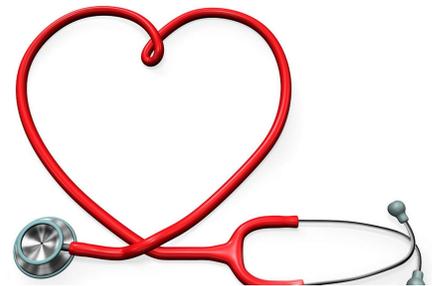
afford these houses out of the neighborhood because these people have a low income job.

Once I understood how it occurred I wanted to know how we could fix this problem. We can fix this problem by giving the people who actually live in the neighborhood a voice on what happens in the planned development. For instance, the people who live in the neighborhood can make a registered community organization (RCO). This allows for the people in the neighborhood to have an impact on the new developments as they are being planned. If residents see that the development will affect them in a negative way then they can use the organization they created to alter the development in a beneficial way to the community. Another way the RCO can combat gentrification is through land trusts. This is where the residents buy the land that is below the building and everyone splits the taxes for that land so that the rent on the land stays low. This also allows for people who are falling on momentary hard times to share the burden and help protect the investment in property.

This issue is important to me because I don't think anybody should be slowly pushed out of their neighborhood for any reason, I also know many people already know about this problem but not many people are helping those who need to be helped and trying to stop the problem.

Nya Person

I'm not a patient person, but I think that is what has led me to want to be a nurse. From a young age, when I turned in schoolwork, I wanted to know what the teacher thought about my writing skills, comprehension and other areas where I could improve and areas where I excelled. I like to know that my work has impact and I like to know that as soon as possible so I can adjust if needed. That's what I saw in a hospital this summer when I shadowed my aunt, who is a nurse. She moved around from patient to patient and played a part in different areas and, by the end of the day, got feedback and support from her team. It amazes me that there are so many things that could happen on the job because nurses are often the first responders to many situations in the hospital. I realized that nursing is what I want to do. I have lost close family members because of illnesses, and if I can do something to help comfort other people in the difficult process then I'd like to do what I can. Being a nurse would also be continuing a legacy, continuing the dream; my aunt, grandma, and godmother are all nurses and a vital part of my daily life. They inspire me to want to study the field of nursing and work in the fast pace, exhilarating and sometimes calming environment. By hearing their stories, seeing what they accomplish



every day and understanding my goal to make an impact in the world with my work, nursing seems like the best way for me to achieve this goal.

What do you do for fun?

Kristen Murphy

For fun I like to listen and dance to R&B, Pop, and Hip-Hop music. Music helps me express my feelings through my movement. I like to search up art projects on the internet and learn how to make, build or create things that are useful to me and my family. I like to do hard math problems. I also like to draw too. But I really love baking desserts like on baking shows on cable tv.

Valerie Pair

For fun I like to read, sing and write music. I also like to watch medical related shows and movies. This summer I read a variety of books, my top three favorites were "Pride" by Ibi Zoboi, "On the come up" by Angie Thomas and "Binta" by Nnedi Okorafor. The second activity I like to do is sing! I sing all the time, I've been singing in my church choir since I was five years old. I sing for school, that's what I am majoring in. I'm a vocalist. Writing music usually is a momentary activity, something comes to my head and I will stop and write it down then later on I'll add more and more to what I have written. Or sometimes I will listen to a beat and freestyle it in my head. I absolutely love watching medical shows and movies. My favorites are Chicago Med and Grey's Anatomy. I think seeing those shows is probably one of the many reasons why I want to major in nursing or general surgery.

Juvonte' Morant

I enjoy playing video games, being outside, playing football, or any outside activities. I'm also very creative and like to watch YouTube videos with different science activities I can do at home.

CiAhna Chloe

For fun I enjoy swimming. I have been swimming on the swim team since I was 6. One thing that I enjoy about swimming is the bond with my coaches and the fact that it makes me always want to do better. Another thing that I do for fun is listening to music, I usually listen to music while I am doing work. It helps me focus on work or anything I



need to focus on. Music helps me tune out all distractions and focus on what is important.

Kaiya Best

I like to sleep, watch Netflix, play games, go outside and walk outside, hang out with friends or family, and I LOVE to eat Chick-Fil-A. I am very competitive so I like to play games with my family and hang out with them. I am a cheerleader, and I am very athletic, I also play basketball.

Jazzlyn Dominguez

I like to play with my pets, watch TV shows, and spend time with my family. If I have time after homework, I will spend time outside with my pets. I like going out places with family or my siblings. I like to travel and explore new places. I also really like to try new things.

“The future belongs to those who believe in the beauty of their dreams.”

- Eleanor Roosevelt.

What are your personal goals?

Nailah Saleem

My goal is to be a child psychologist. I would like to get assistance with homework. I would also like to get information on things I could do now to start on the path to child psychology. I envision my mentor helping with homework and assisting me with college and career goals. I also hope to have fun with my mentor.

Jaron Hickman

I want to have a career in marine biology or engineering.

Sanaiya Johnson

My career goal is dentistry, I'm interested in being a dentist because of my past dentist. I liked how they interacted with their patients and co-workers and how comfortable they made me feel. It inspired me to want to become a dentist.

Kamaia Bexley

I hope to learn self confidence: how to become more confident in myself and my capabilities, to come out of my shell: become more social, not be afraid to speak or ask questions, and patience: patience is very important, especially when you're stuck on a problem or project. I hope to learn different methods and ways to deal with frustration.

Damonie Robertson

I would like to change the community and give back if I make it in life.

Kendall Tyson

I hope to learn self awareness and advice that will help build and shape my character and self esteem. My career goal is to become a pediatrician. I hope to gain a full understanding of how important it is to not only attend, but to complete college, in order to have a brighter future.

Ta'Leah Allen

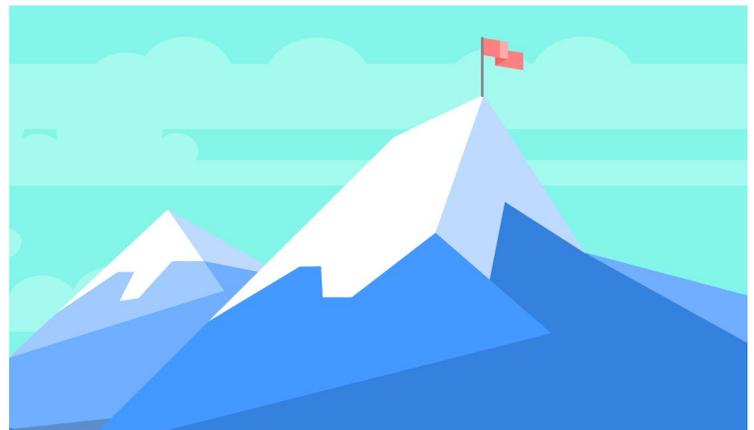
My career and life goals are to become a veterinarian or an artist, and to own my own house one day. I hope to get better at accomplishing my goals and academics in general with the help of College Bound.

Azuri Terri

My career goal is to become a Fashion Designer/ Entrepreneur.

Amonie Carrington

I go to a high school for technical design and production. This school teaches me about the technical design and production department. A few things this school has taught me about is lighting design, costume design, stage management, sound design, but there is so much more. We express our feelings through our art. In my department we work on our professional and performing arts projects and we gain hands-on experience with state-of-the-art-tools and equipment. At my school we get real live practice and it gives us a competitive atmosphere. I have had a lot of accomplishments in my 2 and a half years at Duke. I have worked on many shows such



as the Laramie project, Ahmal, recitals, Founders day, among other shows. I am interested in going to college for technical design and production because I want to further my education, and and be the best that I can be in my career choice

Ava Hollingsworth

I'd like to pursue a career in engineering.

Brandon Dickerson

I want to pursue a career in business management as a baseball agent.

What motivated you to join, or motivates you to stay in, College Bound?

Tony Mozelle

I would like to join College Bound's Academic Mentoring Program because in today's environment I feel that I was born with a disadvantage by being a young black man. I understand the importance of being a well rounded individual with a great education. I also understand that even if I equip myself with these tools of life I will still have to work harder than some of my competitors to achieve my highest potential. I would like to participate in the College Bound Academic Mentoring Program because I want to reach my maximum potential and I understand that I am going to need guidance in order to achieve my life goals.

Raymello Brandon

I would like to participate in the program because I feel like it would benefit me for the future and help me get into a college of my choice. I want to go to college so I can be an engineer or IT specialist.

Gerald Thompkins

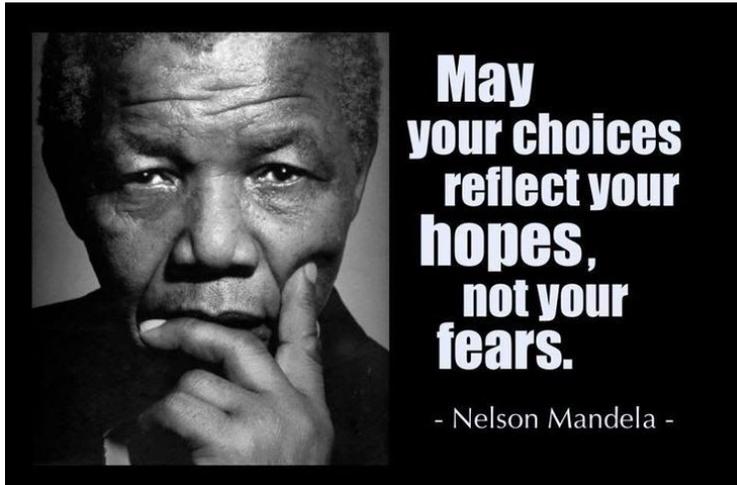
I joined College Bound to help further my education goals and to gain the insight I can learn from my one on one mentor.

Laniejah Lyons

I am interested in College Bound because College Bound will help me get into the college of my choice so I can be what I want to be when I grow up.

Kevin Mencias

I hope to understand how I can get to college quickly. I want to get to know someone who has already attended college, and I would like some support working through high school. I hope to graduate high school early, and plan to participate in the dual-enrollment program in high school.



Amani Hylton

I decided to participate in College Bound's Academic Mentoring Program to get mentorship and learn how to be a more independent, focused, and intentional student. I would also like to take advantage of the opportunities offered through the program, such as PSAT prep, writing lab, and college

scholarship assistance. I'm especially looking forward to going on college tours. I hope to gain an understanding of what it takes to be successful in my academics in order to prepare for college.

Gibrel Coleman

I hope to gain knowledge on how to become a better student and I want to be exposed to different things that I have never seen before. I would like to go on a college tour to see what college life is like. I hope to learn how to become the best me I can be, and to learn how to advocate for myself and speak up when I need help.

Briana McCritty

If I am being honest, I never really knew about this program until my mother mentioned it to me. I felt kind of skeptical to join, but as long as I'm able to feel comfortable around others, it'll work for me. I hope to gain a better visual for my future and what it holds for me. I'm hoping that I'll get to expand my social skills and thinking as well.

Zakayla Graham

I want to participate in College Bound for guidance and assistance throughout my education. I envision my mentor being open and understanding and able to communicate easily.

Miracle Spencer

I want to participate in College Bound because it seems like it can help me get into a better high school and college. I hope to learn from my mentor not to give up and to keep going. Also to help me reach my goals and aspirations.

Aniyah DePeazer

I would like to get stronger in my math and ELA classes. In my last school I wasn't challenged academically and now that I have gotten into McKinley Tech I am being challenged. I would like to be pushed to use my full potential. I hope to gain the knowledge I need and a relationship with someone who can assist me in reaching my goals.

Zakhiya Graham

I want to participate in the College Bound Academic Mentoring Program for support and encouragement to achieve my personal and professional goals as well as managing my own learning in order to maximize my potential, develop my skills, improve my performance and become the person that I want to be.

Christian Davis

I like College Bound and want to attend because of the education. The things College Bound could help me with is unbelievable. I feel that my education should be a breeze with College Bound, for example they can provide me with knowledge on career choices that could shape the rest of my life.

Sahali Ham

I hope to participate in College Bound because I want to make a bright and successful future for myself. While in College Bound I hope to gain academic skills and the best strategies, so I have better chances of success as a future Yale student.

Jaiden Fogle

I want to participate because my parents cannot afford to pay for my education. I want to be able to succeed in life. I want to be able to make my parents proud. I envision my mentor being able to help me become successful and to be that extra level of my support team. I hope to learn the importance of integrity and grit and also to learn how to give back to my community one day.

Jaylee Davis

I want to attend College Bound to help me determine which path I wish to follow in college. Two senior girls at Banneker, Erica and Ishaya, recommended this program to me. They said it was very helpful with helping them to determine what college to attend. I hope to gain a better understanding of the professions I wish to pursue. The one-to-one mentoring program can help with connections for scholarships and college admissions.

Tania Herndon

I want to participate in College Bound to get my math & science grades up. I hope my mentor teaches me what's right and what's wrong & how to solve math problems in a simple way to comprehend.

Weslee James

I am interested in the College Bound program because I would like to develop my knowledge and skills as a student, a learner, and an athlete. I also believe that the one-on-one time will be very helpful for my academic performance and help me to better understand certain subjects. I am ecstatic to learn and understand more about college, as well as developing my public speaking and social skills. Applying for scholarships is also important because I would enjoy paying less for college.

Sydney Mack

I want to participate in this program because I want to get first hand knowledge on leadership skills and go on college tours.

Nashaun Williams

I joined College Bound because I wanted help staying focused on success and graduating college.

Robert Washington

I want to be in College Bound so that I can not only be ahead in the game of high school but be able to have a scholarship and get into the best college. I hope to gain a better education and get better as a person and student athlete.



Clarke Weathersby

A friend of mine mentioned College Bound to me because her sister did it and loved it. After doing research on it I realized that College Bound would be the perfect fit for me. My mentor will help me stay on the right track and make the right decisions, which a young girl like me needs. The SAT prep and college trips will prepare me for what's yet to come. The opportunity to get scholarships along with the high possibilities of getting one by going to Banneker would help me tremendously. All in all the College Bound program would benefit me a lot.

Kadi Barber-Anderson

I am interested in the College Bound program because I would like to visit different colleges to see which ones I would like to go to. I like the one on one mentorship program because I need help with my reading comprehension and vocabulary. I want to attend college because I want to get a good job and succeed in life.

Kayla Briscoe

I hope to learn skills that would stay with me and help me function as a college student and when I go into my dream career that revolves around organization. I envision my mentor supporting my ideas and goals through both moral and investment with time towards what I aspire to do.

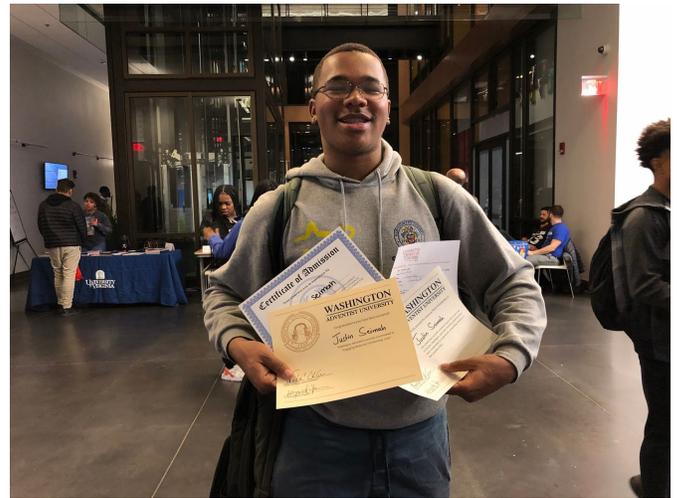
Tzai Robinson

I decided to participate in College Bound because I was told I could get the help needed with the work I was struggling in. I also wanted to participate so that I could work on my self-management skills. I also needed help finding opportunities for me to use my second language, Mandarin Chinese.

Janiah Long

I hope to learn perseverance and how to put myself in the best position to become successful in school in life. I would like to learn about HBCUs and Ivy League institutions as well.

I have a strong interest in college. As a 10th grade student, I want to make sure I begin to prepare myself for post-secondary options. I hope to gain a mentor who drives me as equally as my parents around attending college. Also, I am hoping I can gain some support around my academic studies to ensure I am college eligible in the next two years. My high school has very high expectations and I want to make sure I am doing whatever it takes to meet them.



I hope my mentor can teach me about college choice and the different options that are available to me. I also hope my mentor can be a part of my “village” that prepares me for my next phase of life, which will be college.

Darius Minor

Graduating high school with a high GPA requires some help and I believe this program will provide all the help I need. I want to attend college so that I can get a nice job and keep my family on our feet. I also want to go to college so that I can pursue a career that will best suit what I enjoy.

Xavier Wright

I want to get into the best college for me and have help when I am in college. I hope to get better at writing and learn how to get ready for college.

Chyna Wooten

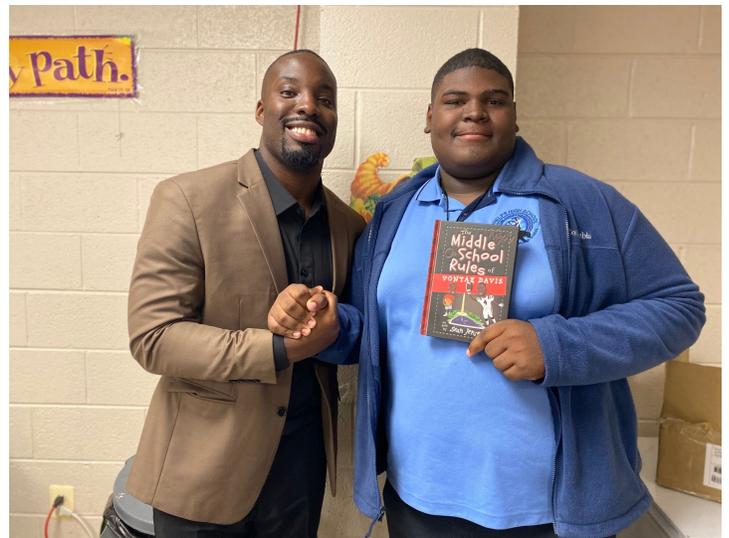
Participating in the program is a wonderful opportunity for exploring American student life, learning more about the educational opportunities while in high school, making new excellent friends and studying about the environment around us. Moreover, participating in this program promises to be an unforgettable experience in my student life.

Hanif Samuels

I want to be in this program because I feel as though I'm going to need help because I might fall behind due to distractions. This program will put me in the right direction and make me into a better leader.

Changamire Anderson

I would like to participate in College Bound because I know of the impact it can have on students of color. I am a black male that would like some academic support and guidance as I prepare for college. I have also witnessed the great support it provided for my sister and I know I am not as academically strong as she was in high school. I hope to gain some better study habits and guidance on how to be a stronger student. I do not have a lot of free time due to my competitive gymnastics and would like to gain stronger reading skills for the SAT.



John N'da

I want to participate because my brother says he gained experience in college searching. I hope to get some scholarships and get into a good college.

Ayana Buggs

I initially joined the College Bound Program because my aunt told me that the program will help me pay for my tuition and keep me out of debt after college. MY original reason has not changed. When I entered the program I expected a support team, that would help me through high school and college successfully. My expectations have been met.

The resource of my mentor is something I'm very grateful for because when I needed help on homework she was there to help me.

Christian Allen

I hope to expand my outlook on life; to learn something about myself. I want to further realize the importance of studying and maybe get an idea of what profession I'd like to pursue.

Aaron Weeks

I would like to participate in College Bound to gain study tips and create study habits that can prepare me for high school and college. I would also like to have a mentor for encouragement. Sometimes I may doubt myself and my confidence in specific areas of study are not as high as they can be.

What do you hope to learn from your mentor?



Jordan Williams

I envision my mentor in the role of someone who will meet me where I am, collaborate with me to identify my strengths and area of growth opportunity. In this, I envision my mentor fostering my growth and development socially and academically my areas of opportunity for growth and continuing to enhance, develop and capitalize on my strengths. I envision receiving compassionate and honest guidance towards my aspiration to go to college, complete college successfully and realize my dreams

Charles Eze

I hope to learn balance from my mentor. I want to learn how to balance my academics better. I think it will be beneficial for me to have someone to guide. I think that I can gain a better grip on my education and learn how to better juggle my education and my personal life.

Nina-Skye Johnson

I'm hoping that my mentor can help me learn how to set my priorities and organize my task, so I can better handle my workload and activities in high school. I see my mentor as someone I can discuss career choices with. Also, I envision my mentor as someone I can get advice from and share my ideas with.

Makayla Bailey-Curtis

I hope to learn to be more of a leader from my mentor, to be all that I can be and to push through even when I don't want to.

Ivone Cherif

I hope to learn about strategies that can help me successfully get through college from my mentor. I also hope to learn about ways I can better manage my time and keep myself from procrastinating.

Antoinette Jean-Baptiste

The following things that I hope to learn from my mentor are:

To be more confident, to stand up for myself, to embrace my own gifts that God gave me, to be riskier with my dreams as an artist, and to work on time management.



Ade Olanegan

I want my mentor to help guide me down the right path for college.

Marcus Hall

I hope my mentor can help me decide and learn about what I want to do in life. I know I want to go to college but I don't know what my major would be.

Naimah Moss

I hope to learn lots of things from my mentor, of course educational stuff, but also life lessons or just simply telling me about a new show I should watch. I don't want my mentor just to be another teacher that just teaches me math or English. I want my mentor to actually connect with me on a more emotional level or at least see eye to eye with me. To provide me with lessons and skills I really think back on and remember.

Langston Creighton

What I hope to learn from my mentor are life skills and how to better prepare myself for college.

What is some advice you have for the class of 2020?

DiMya Budd

2020 was expected to be a year of good. Ending 2019 the world was happy for a new year, new beginnings, and seniors were happy for their graduation and prom. The year soon became a series of unfortunate events, every month brought new problems, so it is hard to see the good in all the bad. Some advice I have for the class of 2020 is to look past the negativity to see the positivity in life. Do not dwell on lost experiences and opportunities, but pride yourself on how far you've come and know that you will still graduate now with a unique story. Be grateful that you are alive and well and appreciate that through all the odds and obstacles, you still got that diploma.

Reggie Grant

My advice to the class of 2020 is to always stay focused and make the best of college. Make relationships with your teachers because good relationships with teachers can help you in the long run. Making good relationships with others will benefit you as well. For example, your new friend can teach you things you never knew about and they can give you knowledge about other clubs and things like that. So keep calm and have fun in college - but not too much because you only get one shot at an experience like this.

Kaidyn Aull

Some encouraging words I would give the class of 2020 is don't let what we are going through now affect you in any way, shape, or form. I know you all were looking forward to having the full senior experience but don't let this stop you, "a minor setback for a

major come back” that's all this is, just let this be your fuel to keep going in life, this is not going to be the first nor last time something like this will happen. Also, I would like to say you all have worked so hard for what is coming in the future don't stop now. College is the next step, what you all have been waiting for, you're almost done, good luck just make sure you do everything you're supposed to do, and make sure you set the standards high for the following class.

Matthew Adams

I only have one thing to say, which is don't forget the people who saw you grow and the people you grow with. If they are good people they will be there when you need help and you have to be there for them.

Kennedy Childs

I myself am a junior, becoming a rising senior in the fall, and one piece of advice I would give the class of 2020 is to stay positive through all of this confusion and tragedy. I know I would be devastated too if I waited four years to attend prom and walk across a stage to graduate with my friends. Hopefully, the coronavirus will end soon and they can

make up for lost celebrations and time while reconnecting with family and friends.



Benjamin Enwesi

I actually have an older sister who is graduating this year and my only advice for her is to stay on task, work hard, follow your dreams, and don't let anyone tell you what your limits are. My sister is very wise and smart, she's kept straight A's her whole life and I know if she continues to work hard she'll be successful in everything she puts her mind to. And this doesn't only go for

her, this goes to anyone who is in the class of 2020 & going off to college. The sky is really the limit, they should let this whole corona crisis get to them, instead, they should continue to work hard and make a meaningful impact on this planet.

Javier Simpson

I want to tell the seniors to not let anybody change them, and to stay true to themselves while they socialize with people. Don't let others make you feel uncomfortable in your own body, it's your body so you make the rules. GOOD LUCK !!!!! You guys are gonna

do great things.

Seniors: What is some advice you would like to give the younger students?

Andrianna Lovelace

As my journey with College Bound comes to an end, some advice I would give to students is to take advantage of all the resources College Bound offers. I joined College Bound in the 10th grade not knowing where I wanted to go to college or what path I wanted to take. College Bound really helped me navigate my plans with the college tours, career nights, and Taste of College. I know sometimes it can be boring or you do not want to do it but it pays off in the end. For 11th graders, who are about to be seniors, my advice would be to stay organized. Senior year can be a lot and you will have a lot to do, so get a planner and stay organized. Don't apply to so many schools as it will be hard to keep up with and hard to make a decision. Apply to 10 or fewer schools and apply to lots of scholarships. Make sure you choose your school based on you and not your friends' decisions. Lastly, enjoy senior year. As you know Class of 2020 is missing out on some major milestones like prom and graduation. I am not saying this will happen to you, but make sure you make every moment count.

Diamonique Parks

As a whole, the best advice I would give them is to always be certain in what you love to do because many people would tell you how to live your life and what route that you should go in. Advice is always good to consider, but make sure that your input is always the top priority.



Something I learned from Will Smith is to try to stay away from having a plan B because it can distract plan A and from that statement I learned that you have to believe in yourself strongly. Also, I would tell them to have fun, but not too much because you are only a senior in high school one time in life before you enter the adult world. Senior year can be very stressful, but make some time to have fun and create many memories. Lastly, I would tell them to be one step ahead of everyone because being overly prepared in 12th grade causes less stress.

Rachel Powell-Young

I would advise the younger students to get involved in school and community activities as much as possible. It is important to show that you can manage multiple activities or responsibilities on top of staying on top of your schoolwork. I would also advise the students to begin finding things they're passionate about. By doing this you're able to begin doing and learning about it in high school and start to get a sense of what colleges have this passion so you can begin to find which colleges you're interested in.



I would also tell students to reach out to people and go to tutoring if they see that they're struggling in a class. Tutoring is very beneficial even if you think you know enough it's always good to go if it's available. Finish your community service hours early in high school so you're not worried about rushing to do it during senior year. Get assistance with enhancing your writing skills and abilities because that'll be beneficial for writing essays and writing for scholarships.

Lauren Stewart

The advice I have for 8th-11th graders is to apply for scholarships now! College Bound puts out a lot of great scholarships for 8th-12th graders and it is never too early to apply! Applying now the pool is smaller but once you get to 12th grade everyone starts to apply to scholarships and the pool gets larger. Other advice I have is to be active in your community and school and also be consistent. Colleges like to see a well-rounded student, but they also don't want to see you in something for a year and drop it for something else. Be consistent in which activities you choose to do/participate in. You may have great grades and great SAT/ACT scores but if colleges see that you weren't in any clubs or participated in community service activities, you have a lesser chance of getting into that university. My last piece of advice, which is really key, is to work on your time management skills. Work does not decrease as you go from one grade to the other, so if you work on managing your time, your life can be a lot less stressful.



Micah Carter

My advice is to not tolerate any disrespect from anyone. A lot of times I've found myself in situations where older people may be intimidated by me and act accordingly. This taught me to become my biggest advocate. There are going to be plenty of people in your path who don't want to see you succeed because they are threatened by your greatness. Take that with a grain of salt and continue to persevere because at the end of the day you can be whatever you want to be. I've experienced many injustices as a young black woman in this country, not just from people outside my community but within my community as well whether it be the black community, female community, or my peers. YOU DO YOU and that's my advice to you. Trust your heart and take everyone's advice with a grain of salt because not everyone has your best interest at heart. On a lesser note HAVE FUN, it can be really easy to get caught up with work, school, family, extracurriculars, etc. Too many times during my time on this earth, I've burnt myself out, it's never worth it. COVID-19 has shown us that you can't take life for granted and you must live it to the fullest because nothing is guaranteed. My motto is live, learn, grow, follow that and I think you're ready to take on the world and also make sure you have a wonderful village surrounding you as much as you can.

RayLynn Hill

The advice that I would give to the 8th-9th graders is that transitioning into high school is a very challenging and awkward transition because you all are transforming into young adults. Expectations will be higher, work is a little bit more advanced than middle school, and maturity is key. You have to become more aware of the people in your school because incoming freshmen are labeled as gullible and can be easily targeted for bullying, harassment, and manipulation. Just stay focused, it's always easier to start strong and build up your GPA to at least a 3.6-3.7 so that throughout the rest of high school you are able to challenge yourself to do better and set high standards for yourself.

Mekhai Morrison

The advice I would give to 8th-11th graders:

- Don't be afraid to try something new because it might spark an interest in something you've never thought you'd be interested in.
- Take advantage of every College Bound opportunity because they'll pay off in the end and you'll gain motivation and insight at every event.
- Apply to scholarships!!!
- Be your authentic self, always, don't try to change yourself to please anyone.

- Never think your hard work is not being noticed because all of your work is being taken into account to different people in different ways.

I gave this advice because these are things which helped me in my last 4 years of College Bound to grow and develop. Due to College Bound I have been able to try new things in my high school and outside of my high school and that has contributed to my success academically. It has led me to be more well-rounded as well. Every College Bound event has taught me something new about the college process and the steps I need to take to prepare for it. I continuously apply to scholarships to help out my expenses for college and aid in my overall collegiate experience. I've been authentic with my approach which allowed me to receive the Posse Scholarship when I did my interviews. I remained transparent and true to myself. Finally, all the hard work I've put in during high school I highlight in essays and in several interviews because your hard work should not go unseen. You've done it, so share it don't be afraid that others are better than you. Your story is just as valuable as others.



Iftakhar Alam

As an upperclassman, I have found that managing time as a student is very important. The transition from middle school to high school can be stressful, but that level of stress can be minimized through

organization and maintaining a proper schedule. Personally, I haven't followed a strict schedule and am guilty of procrastination. But, I do know that high school can be very intense at times and usually, this is due to the workload one's school gives. To the current high schoolers, I would say constructing a strong resume for college is very important. This suggests participating in after school activities and finding your interests. I would recommend sticking with a club or activity of your interest, rather than joining many clubs you are mildly interested in. Personally, I found interest in my Robotics club as a freshman and stuck with the club all throughout high school. I have met some of my closest friends through that club and am glad that I was able to find my passion for engineering so early on in high school.



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