

Friends Meeting of Washington  
Mary Jane Simpson Scholarship Fund  
Annual Report, 2012

This is the 31<sup>st</sup> year of the Mary Jane Simpson Scholarships during which we have given a total of 96 scholarships to deserving children in the District of Columbia. For many years we gave \$1000 scholarships. However, in recent years we learned the benefit of maintaining contact with at risk students over the whole course of their college education. Since 2007, we have been giving multi- year scholarships. Recently, with the collaboration with the Bethesda Friends Meeting, we have been able to give multi-year scholarships which total of \$3500 per student. This breaks down in the following way: giving \$1500 year one, \$1000 year two, \$500 year three and \$500 year four. This year we are giving 4 multi-year scholarships. In addition we received an unexpected contribution from 5 individuals which enables us to give two additional \$1500 one year scholarships. This means that this year we will dispense \$17000 in scholarship aid. The funding for these scholarships comes from the generosity of Friends Meeting of Washington, Bethesda Friends Meeting, the Sunrise Foundation and various individuals from within the meeting and the Washington community.

This year's recipients for four year support are:

**Happy Awide**

Happy had strong academic standing at Benjamin Banneker High School where she received an International Baccalaureate degree. She has been accepted at George Washington University. Her English teacher reports that despite learning English as a second language, Happy is "a gifted thinker and writer." She also scored first place in Banneker's science fair. Her goal is to become a doctor.

Happy was raised in Togo and immigrated when she was in the eighth grade. Her father, who earned a masters degree in Russia and was a hydraulic engineer in Togo, works here at a Pizza Hut. Happy is aware of the sacrifices which her family has made to secure a better future for her.

Happy wants to become a doctor or work in public health. She is particularly interested in women's health issues. She worked for two years on the Youth Advisory Board of Children's Hospital where she was involved in promoting safe-sex for teens in the District of Columbia. She also worked at the Latin American Youth Center in an outreach program to reduce STDS. She has pursued her interest in medicine by doing a clinical internship at the Community of Hope Health Clinic. In addition, Happy has tutored younger students. Showing that she covers all ages, Happy has also taught computer skills to adults. Happy is active in sports and has been on

the Banneker softball and volleyball teams. She received the Clyde G Nora Memorial Award for her leadership skills.

### **Cori Hart**

Cori attended Theodore Roosevelt Senior High School. She has been accepted at Ohio State University. She has strong academic recommendations. Her English teacher states, "In all of these classes she has been absolutely brilliant, demonstrating intellectual curiosity, complexity, comprehension and great depth of thought...she is regarded as a leader and caring peer on whom her classmates can rely...an indispensable member of the school community." Her chemistry teacher reports, "Cori's work ethic pushes her always to achieve at the highest levels." She not only achieved at the top of the class, but she also helped explain the concepts to her classmates. Cori's goal is to become a child psychologist.

Cori's family life has been difficult. She grew up in Gaithersburg but following her parents' divorce, she and her mother moved to the district. Cori's mother is disabled and they have lived on disability and child support payments. She has been helped through this difficult time by a counselor who has inspired her to get a psychology degree so that she can help other children.

Cori has been involved in the community, working for the Mayor's Emerging Leader's High School Intern Program for two years. In addition she has had an office job at the DC department of Corrections to help her family financially. At school she is a cheerleader, a tutor, manages the boy's basketball team and plays softball.

### **Rainer Luza-Herrera**

Rainer has attended Theodore Roosevelt High School. He plans to attend the University of the District of Columbia to get an associate degree and then he would like to attend the University of Massachusetts. He has already taken some courses at UDC as well as a course at Bard College Clemente Course. Rainer's goal is to become a civil engineer.

Rainer grew up in Peru. His mother left the family to immigrate to the United States. Rainer's father was not a presence in his family, but his grandfather was his mentor and teacher. From him Rainer learned to do construction and carpentry. In Peru, Rainer attended a technical school where he was a culinary student. In order to make money for transportation, he worked weekends at a restaurant. Rainer came to the United States in November of 2009.

At school in the United States, Rainer's first challenge was to learn English. However, he also revealed strong intellectual curiosity and independent thinking. In one class on Modern World History, the students were asked to create a flier to enhance awareness about the link between electronics and violence near mines in Central Africa. Rainer developed this project into a video which integrated pictures, music, maps and interviews to highlight this issue. He then shared this with Roughriders for Global Peace and other community groups. He has been active in the Latin America Youth Center where he has helped community members learn computer skills. He has also been active in Many Language One Voice, an organization which advocates for the rights of people who have English as a second language. Rainer has worked as a tutor with Spanish speaking students, and he has also taught an after-school Spanish class to Roosevelt High School teachers to help them communicate better with their students and students' families. Outside of school, Rainer has worked as a hotel maintenance worker to help support the family.

### **Raven Quattlebaum**

Raven is graduating from Washington Metropolitan High School after attending a number of schools. She plans to attend Bennett College for Women starting there this summer in an academic enrichment program. Bennett's learning center will provide her with academic support. Her goal is to become a social worker. "With my degree, I want to give back to another little girl who thinks no one cares, or help another child get through what I went through and seen."

Raven has been in foster care since the second grade. Her mother was physically abused by her father and became a crack addict and was later imprisoned. Raven has three other siblings, all of whom were taken out of the home. Raven reports experiencing the inequities of foster care, where the foster care parents provided for their children but helped their foster children in a minimal manner. To deal with this, Raven turned to food as an addiction, but she never lost her ambition to go to college. Raven is a woman with a strong religious conviction.

Raven's recommendations all applaud her motivation and her desire to help others. She is president of the student government. She has a strong work history, working as a cashier at Hershey's Ice Cream and teaching in a dance program at Joy of Motion.

This year's recipients for one year of support are:

### **Christopher Feaster**

Christopher attended Hospitality High School. He plans to attend Michigan State University in their hospitality management program. His goal is to be a hotel entrepreneur.

Christopher's family life has been unstable. Last summer his mother was evicted from their home. After living with friends and family, they are now in a DC shelter. Christopher's mother has encouraged him to write poetry which she also writes.

At school, Christopher excelled academically. He has been involved in extracurricular activities such as the Drama club and Yoga club. He was part of the Lodging Management Program team that competed in Florida and won 3<sup>rd</sup> place in Hotel Operations. He also was the president of the student body. Christopher has work experience in a DC student achievement program and for the Embassy Suites Hotel.

### **Bebine Noe**

Bebine attended Theodore Roosevelt High school where she was the class valedictorian. She plans to attend the University of Oklahoma as a premed student. Her chemistry teacher describes Bebine as "a role model to her peers in the classroom."

Bebine is a native of Cameroon. She came to the United States in the tenth grade, without fluent English and has progressed to the point of being at the top of her class. At school Bebine is on the volleyball team. Her coach describes her "always the player giving it her most...where another girl might reach for a ground ball, Bebine dove for it." Bebine was vice president of the student government, captain of the girl's softball team, co-captain of the girls' volleyball team and volunteered for an organization serving the homeless.