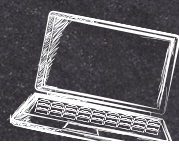




**TOM JEFFERS  
 ENDOWMENT FUND  
 FOR CONTINUING  
 EDUCATION**



**Youth Advocate**  
 PROGRAMS, INC.

# A LETTER FROM THE ENDOWMENT PRESIDENT

In 2004, Youth Advocate Programs, Inc. (YAP) established the Tom Jeffers Endowment Fund for Continuing Education to assist our youth and families in reaching their educational goals. Our first awardees received their scholarships for higher education in 2007. To date, we have awarded 325 scholarships. This fund has only been made possible through the hard work and efforts of YAP's staff. Employee donations through weekly payroll deductions and fundraisers has brought the fund to over \$2,000,000.

We decided to make the application process very simple. By submitting a brief essay on their goals, awardees received their scholarship, made payable directly to their educational institution of choice or by YAP purchasing the necessary equipment, such as laptops. The decision was also made to make the scholarship available annually so that youth and families can reapply and be awarded year after year. At YAP we realize that educational dreams cannot be limited to one year, therefore there must be continued support.

We are very proud of our recipients; some have faced many barriers and have been marginalized. Many are first generation college attendees. We put together this booklet so that we could share some of their achievements and hope you find it inspirational.

In closing, I would like to thank Jeff Fleischer, YAP's CEO, as well as YAP's National Board of Directors: Joseph (Jay) Snyder, Frances Lanigan, Kamia Brown, Donncha Hughes, Emily Ferguson, Sebastian Johnson, Tremaine Reese, Vivian Sanks-King, Randolph Stone, Ricardo Villalobos, William Wachob, Mamie Jackson Williams and our Board Chair, Lynette Brown-Sow. I would also like to acknowledge and thank the Tom Jeffers Endowment Board Members (see sidebar) for their dedication to this project. Special recognition for the contributions of YAP's staff, for without them, none of this would be possible.

Sincerely,  
Gary Ivory,  
Senior Executive Officer of YAP &  
President of Tom Jeffers Endowment Fund

## ENDOWMENT OFFICERS AND BOARD MEMBERS

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*special thanks to  
Patty Rosati, Kim Brown &  
Cheryl Furman for  
creating this publication*



**60%**

of YAP employees donate weekly to the Endowment



**325**

scholarships  
awarded  
since 2007



**50+**

individuals have received  
more than one award

75

# of scholarships per year

50

25

0

2008

2010

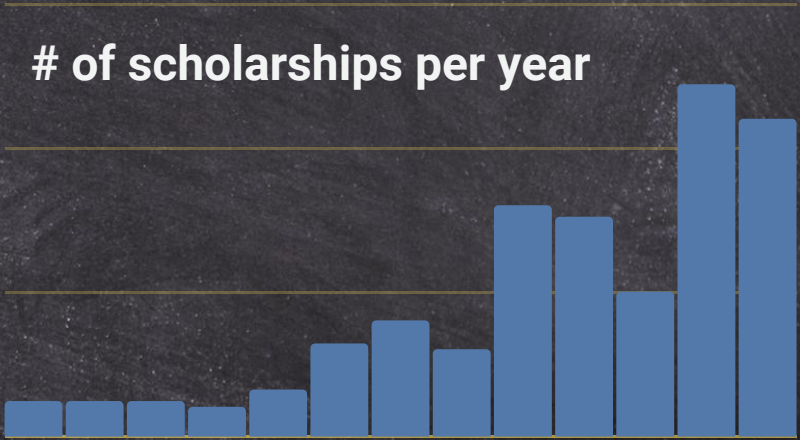
2012

2014

2016

2018

2020



YAP Program  
Harris County, TX

Scholarship awarded  
2015

Graduated from  
Texas Tech University

Major  
Computer Engineering

Current job  
Sr. Network Engineer



# MICHAEL

## WHAT DID THE SCHOLARSHIP MEAN TO YOU?

It meant that there was someone or some organization that still believed that I could make it through difficult times and through the situation that I was in. It meant that I still had an opportunity to pursue a different path in life.

## WHAT IMPACT DID IT HAVE ON YOUR EDUCATIONAL/TRAINING GOALS?

It had a great impact on me not having to work so many hours to earn an income while attending school.

## WHERE ARE YOU CURRENTLY IN YOUR CAREER? DO YOU FEEL THAT THE SCHOLARSHIP CONTRIBUTED TO YOUR SUCCESS?

Currently, I've been a Senior Network Engineer for a few years. While attending school I was doing some contractual work. So, by the time I graduated I applied for a few jobs, which looked at the requirements and put me through a lot of tests to see what I was capable of doing and it just so happened that the title for one of those positions was a Sr. Network Engineer. Because of my years of experience and working with so many different technologies, I was afforded the position.

## WHAT'S A FUN AND INTERESTING FACT ABOUT YOURSELF?

I am always multitasking. I tend to work on a lot of different things. Although my degree is in Computer Engineering, I pretty much work on anything that I can get my hands on. I literally learn anything there is to learn out there. I take it and absorb it. E.g. Stocks, bonds, 401k.



YAP Program  
Roanoke, VA

Scholarship awarded  
2020 (2x awardee)

Attending  
VA Western  
Community College

Major  
Social Work

# MICHELLE

## WHAT DID THE SCHOLARSHIP MEAN TO YOU?

It helped to ensure that I would have access to everything I would need to continue to be successful in school. If I need to pay for my computer to be repaired, need to pay for a service in order to complete a project for school, and even paying for additional books to help me better understand the topics that I am learning about.

## WHAT IMPACT DID IT HAVE ON YOUR EDUCATIONAL/TRAINING GOALS?

When I won the laptop last year, it allowed me to have a reliable laptop to complete all my classes online without the added stress of whether my old laptop would suddenly die and I would lose work that I had been doing. This year it provides additional funds to continue my education without worrying whether I will have to decide if I pay for something for school, or provide something for my children in order to pay for school. Overall, both of the scholarships have given me a greater peace of mind.

## WHERE ARE YOU CURRENTLY IN YOUR CAREER? DO YOU FEEL THAT THE SCHOLARSHIP CONTRIBUTED TO YOUR SUCCESS?

Currently, I am still a full-time student and not physically working outside of the home. However, the scholarships that I have received have allowed me to continue to feel like I do not HAVE to work and can focus the energy I have (remaining after caring for my children) and put towards bettering myself through my education which will make me a better more informed therapist when I am finished with school.

YAP Program  
Orange County, NY

Scholarship awarded  
2013, 2020 (2x awardee)

Graduated from  
Marist College

Major  
Criminal Justice/  
Social Work

Current job  
YAP Preventative Case  
Manager



## SAVANNAH

### WHAT DID THE SCHOLARSHIP MEAN TO YOU?

The scholarship meant a great deal to me. It helped me afford books and a laptop my first year of college. I used this laptop the entire four years of my undergrad and it was a life saver. I do not know how else I would have been able to complete school work without it.

### WHAT IMPACT DID IT HAVE ON YOUR EDUCATIONAL/TRAINING GOALS?

The scholarship had a huge impact on my life. I was able to do work from home on my laptop instead of spending hours in the school library while attending school full-time and waitressing/tutoring part time. The scholarship helped me buy books so I did not have to go into additional school loan debt.

### WHERE ARE YOU CURRENTLY IN YOUR CAREER? DO YOU FEEL THAT THE SCHOLARSHIP CONTRIBUTED TO YOUR SUCCESS?

I graduated from Marist College in 2017 and will begin my Master's in Social Work come Fall 2020 at Aelphi University to pursue my passion of helping children and families. After graduating from Marist, I landed a position with YAP as a Preventive Case Manager and have worked there since March 2018. In my role, our goal is to keep families together and prevent children from going into the foster care system.

### WHAT'S A FUN AND INTERESTING FACT ABOUT YOURSELF?

I feel like this scholarship has really come full circle for me as I, myself, was a recipient of the scholarship and then I was in turn able to nominate a youth I have worked with for the scholarship who was also awarded it.



YAP Program  
Harris County, TX

Scholarship awarded  
2014

Attending  
Texas Southern  
University

Major  
Social Work

Current job  
Peer Recovery Coach

# DESTINY

## WHAT DID THE SCHOLARSHIP MEAN TO YOU?

It allowed me to move onto campus and reside within the dorms during my freshman year. When I got the scholarship, I didn't realize that I was behind in some of the things that I had to do in order to actually live on campus. As a first generation college student, I was really just unaware; I had a lot to learn.

## WHAT IMPACT DID IT HAVE ON YOUR EDUCATIONAL/TRAINING GOALS?

The scholarship was a domino effect in my life. Because of my relationship with YAP and my former mentor, I had the opportunity to be trained as a Peer Recovery Coach. My job as a Peer Recovery Coach has led to me joining the Family Advocacy Board (FAB) through disability rights.

## WHERE ARE YOU CURRENTLY IN YOUR CAREER? DO YOU FEEL THAT THE SCHOLARSHIP CONTRIBUTED TO YOUR SUCCESS?

Currently, I am a junior finishing up my degree in Social Work. My plan is to attend Law School to attain my JD. I am the youngest Vice-Chair serving on the FAB, and am running for the Chair position. I have been a Peer Recovery Coach with the Houston Health Department for the past 5 years. I am a Psychological First Aid Trainer and I have hopes of receiving my Youth Mental Health First Aid Trainers Certificate. The scholarship and YAP's support has paved the way for me to accomplish what I wasn't sure that I would be able to do as a youth with mental illnesses. It opened my eyes to the possibilities and the fact that there are no limitations. The only limitations are the ones that I set for myself.

YAP Program  
Baltimore, MD

Scholarship awarded  
2018

Attended  
Baltimore Community  
College

Major  
General Studies

Current job  
Cable Technician



## JASPER

### WHAT DID THE SCHOLARSHIP MEAN TO YOU?

I had assistance in attaining additional opportunities. My scholarship was utilized to purchase a laptop. It afforded me with the ability to complete my school work. The majority of my school assignments had to be completed on-line and/or typed on a computer.

### WHAT IMPACT DID IT HAVE ON YOUR EDUCATIONAL/TRAINING GOALS?

In addition to helping me in school, it has helped and continues to help me with completing some of my responsibilities associated with my job as a Cable Tech.

### WHERE ARE YOU CURRENTLY IN YOUR CAREER? DO YOU FEEL THAT THE SCHOLARSHIP CONTRIBUTED TO YOUR SUCCESS?

I attended 3 semesters at Baltimore Community College. At the time, I had begun to work for a cable company and the demands of the job did not afford me with additional time to my studies. However, I am thinking about continuing my education in the future and it is good to know that I would be eligible to receive the scholarship again when that time comes. Currently, I am a Cable Tech with Cox Communications.

### WHAT'S A FUN AND INTERESTING FACT ABOUT YOURSELF?

I love animals. I am hoping to purchase a home next year and I would like to eventually own my own business.

You choose who you surround yourself with. Eventually, you either become like them or they become like you







YAP Program  
Las Vegas, NV

Scholarship awarded  
2020 (2x awardee)

Attending  
Southern New  
Hampshire College

Major  
Criminal Justice

# CIERRA

## WHAT DID THE SCHOLARSHIP MEAN TO YOU?

The scholarship helped me purchase a laptop and books for my classes. YAP workforce program helped me get my first job, and then secure a better paying job to provide for my kids and myself. Once I aged out of the program I made sure I stayed in touch with my advocates and updated them on how everything was going.

## WHAT IMPACT DID IT HAVE ON YOUR EDUCATIONAL/TRAINING GOALS?

Since the last time I received this scholarship, I've grown as a person and a mother. I'm now a family of 5. I have my own two children along with two foster children. Since I am not a foster parent I do not receive any help from the state. I work, attend school and manage to support myself along with four children under the age of 7.

## WHERE ARE YOU CURRENTLY IN YOUR CAREER? DO YOU FEEL THAT THE SCHOLARSHIP CONTRIBUTED TO YOUR SUCCESS?

Since my time attending Southern New Hampshire University, I've earned 48 credits and have a 3.39 GPA. I expect to graduate February 2022. After my degree I'm looking to continue to work with YAP, whether working directly with them or as a probation officer alongside them.

YAP Program  
Carbon/Monroe PA

Scholarship awarded  
2020

Attending  
Marywood University

Major  
Music Education



# SCHOLARSHIP WINNER

*\*name withheld by request*

## WHAT DID THE SCHOLARSHIP MEAN TO YOU?

It was an opportunity not to worry so much about where I am going. Not having to worry so much about how I am going to pay for college grants me more time to focus on getting my work done, practicing, and establishing connections.

## WHAT IMPACT DID IT HAVE ON YOUR EDUCATIONAL/TRAINING GOALS?

It allowed me to gain more knowledge and skills without having to worry about getting an on-campus job to try and make up for what the scholarship has done. With that additional time, it allows me to manage time better, focus more on achieving better grades, and have an eased mind.

## WHERE ARE YOU CURRENTLY IN YOUR CAREER? DO YOU FEEL THAT THE SCHOLARSHIP CONTRIBUTED TO YOUR SUCCESS?

The scholarship has 100% contributed to my current success. I am entering my first semester as a second-year student. I feel secure in my major and my department since I have switched over to this new field of study.

## WHAT'S A FUN AND INTERESTING FACT ABOUT YOURSELF?

In the last 4 months, I have learned to play a total of seven instruments!

*Be phenomenal or be forgotten*





YAP Program  
Baltimore, MD

Scholarship awarded  
2019

Attended  
Montgomery Community  
College

Major  
General Education

Current Job  
Residential Painter/  
YAPWorx Participant

## ERICK

### WHAT DID THE SCHOLARSHIP MEAN TO YOU?

It was a blessing! This scholarship meant that I could get everything that I needed for school; because nothing is free.

### WHAT IMPACT DID IT HAVE ON YOUR EDUCATIONAL/TRAINING GOALS?

It helped me to be able to attend school with a little more ease. I received a laptop, so it helped me be able to complete my work. Also, my Advocate educated me about the HVAC programs and the ability to make a lot of money. So, it made me focus and determined even more.

### WHERE ARE YOU CURRENTLY IN YOUR CAREER? DO YOU FEEL THAT THE SCHOLARSHIP CONTRIBUTED TO YOUR SUCCESS?

I took a break after the first semester, but I am technically still enrolled at Montgomery Community College absent a major. Although HVAC is interesting, I am not 100% certain as to what I would like to focus on regarding a career. Currently, I assist my brother with doing some Home Improvement in houses in Virginia. This was my first time experiencing luxury homes and it was impressive; I would love to live in one of those homes in the future. The scholarship afforded me with a laptop, which I've utilized to conduct job searches.

### WHAT'S A FUN AND INTERESTING FACT ABOUT YOURSELF?

I'm a good person. I pick up on people's energy and if it's positive, I will vibe with them. I am really a happy person.

YAP Program  
St. Lawrence County, NY

Scholarship awarded  
2009

Attended  
Herkimer Community  
College

Major  
Information Technology

Current Job  
Computer Security



# BRANDON

## WHAT DID THE SCHOLARSHIP MEAN TO YOU?

The scholarship was a starting point/helping hand that was needed to begin the journey to success.

## WHAT IMPACT DID IT HAVE ON YOUR EDUCATIONAL/TRAINING GOALS?

It opened up the doors to ultimately reach career goals.

## WHERE ARE YOU CURRENTLY IN YOUR CAREER? DO YOU FEEL THAT THE SCHOLARSHIP CONTRIBUTED TO YOUR SUCCESS?

Graduated and currently working at a computer security company, designing and improving software to protect computers from possible hackings and manipulations. The scholarship served as a domino which moved and allowed everything else to fall into place.

## WHAT'S A FUN AND INTERESTING FACT ABOUT YOURSELF?

A former Navy Seal who is married with two children.



YAP Program  
Las Vegas, NV

Scholarship awarded  
2020 (2x awardee)

Attending  
Culinary Academy of Las  
Vegas & Vegas PBS

Major  
Culinary Arts & Business

## BRIDGER

### WHAT DID THE SCHOLARSHIP MEAN TO YOU?

The scholarship gave me the opportunity to help me complete a course in my career interest. Ms. Vanessa encouraged me when I did not think I could do it.

### WHAT IMPACT DID IT HAVE ON YOUR EDUCATIONAL/TRAINING GOALS?

It will help me to start my own business career in the future.

### WHERE ARE YOU CURRENTLY IN YOUR CAREER? DO YOU FEEL THAT THE SCHOLARSHIP CONTRIBUTED TO YOUR SUCCESS?

I feel the scholarship has contributed to my current success by giving me the tools to learn the skills I need for a job. I did not obtain a degree, but I received two certificates in Kitchen Steward and Baker's Helper.

### WHAT'S A FUN AND INTERESTING FACT ABOUT YOURSELF?

One fun fact about me is I love to play video games and play basketball.



I am so fortunate to have the opportunity to be a part of YAP.

YAP Program  
Chicago, IL

Scholarship awarded  
2014

Attended  
Northern Illinois  
University

Major  
Business



## EUGENE

### WHAT DID THE SCHOLARSHIP MEAN TO YOU?

YAP is one of the best things that happened to me. If YAP wasn't there, I would have definitely been in trouble.

### WHAT IMPACT DID IT HAVE ON YOUR EDUCATIONAL/TRAINING GOALS?

When I arrived to NIU I made goals to work hard, graduate, and take the skills I learn to improve my impoverished community. This is the first time in my life I have not had to worry about bullets flying at random within my community, witnessing gang activity, drug usage, prostitution, and violence. Living on campus within a calm, competitive, and educational environment has transformed me.

### WHERE ARE YOU CURRENTLY IN YOUR CAREER? DO YOU FEEL THAT THE SCHOLARSHIP CONTRIBUTED TO YOUR SUCCESS?

My goal is to graduate from NIU with a 3.8 GPA and then return to Chicago to start a business and give back, perhaps motivational speaking with other Southside youth. They can relate to me more because I was just in their situation.

## IN THEIR OWN WORDS...

With YAP, I actually had a **future to look forward to.**

**Seamus** - Bradford, PA

The only way I think I'll ever be able to repay YAP for everything they have done for me is to continue to use the skills I have learned there to **be the best version of myself** I possibly can be.

**Brooklyn** - Roanoke, VA

I want to [get my doctorate] and **help people**, whether they are police officers or criminals. I believe everyone needs a support system.

**Holly** - Haddon Heights, NJ

YAP helped me learn that I had things to live for and that my entire identity wasn't my mental illness. As someone with a mental illness, sometimes it feels like people see that first before they see me. **YAP treated me as a person** which really makes the difference.

**Evan** - Dunmore, PA

By awarding me the scholarship, I am able to concentrate on **what is important to me: education.**

**Kyrah** - Las Vegas, NV

# MULTI-YEAR RECIPIENTS

## FLORIDA

Tayah D.

## NEVADA

Bridger A.  
Carolyn S.  
Cierra G.  
Madison W.  
Nancy Z.  
Tierra W.

## NEW JERSEY

A.R.  
B.B.  
Holly P.  
Jenna R.  
Joseph R.  
Lakesha C.  
Karen B.  
Sierra B.

## NEW YORK

Mae Ellen B.  
Savannah K.  
S.K.

## PENNSYLVANIA

Alex A.  
Aida C.  
Colin B.  
Courtney C.

## PENNSYLVANIA (cont.)

Damire E.  
Dominic T.  
Erin B.  
Ernest F.  
Evan B.  
Evan O.  
Greta B.  
Kevin G.  
Kristie G.  
Lamique S.  
Latifa A.  
Michael S.  
Morgan F.  
Nicholas B.  
Nina B.  
Paula L.  
Samantha L.  
Shimira G.  
Theresa S.  
William J.

## TEXAS

Esmerelda L.R.  
Michael F.  
T.R.  
Tisheka W.

## VIRGINIA

Brooklyn S.  
Michelle L.





**YAP provides scholarships to current and former program participants (or their caregivers) who are pursuing post-secondary education or training.**

**Whether the goal is college, truck driving school, business school or other practical endeavors, we can provide support through our scholarship program!**

**to learn more or to donate:  
[yapinc.org/endowment](http://yapinc.org/endowment)**

### WHAT CAN THE SCHOLARSHIP BE USED FOR?

Our scholarships are flexible and can be used for concrete needs that support your education. In addition to tuition, we have paid for books, bought cutlery for a recipient going to culinary school, paid for tools and a tool box for a young person learning a trade, and purchased a computer for a student. Scholarship amounts are typically \$1,000.

### WHO IS ELIGIBLE?

If you have ever been in a YAP program, you are eligible for the scholarship. Caregivers of current or former YAP participants qualify too!

### HOW MANY TIMES CAN I APPLY?

You can re-apply and receive scholarships each year of your vocational or educational program at any point in your lifetime.

### WHERE DOES THE MONEY COME FROM?

Our employees are the primary contributors to the Endowment Fund. A whopping 60% of our staff donate weekly through payroll deduction! Combined with other employee-led fundraising efforts, the Endowment Fund now exceeds \$2M and continues to grow.

### HOW DO I APPLY?

It's simple! Go to [yapinc.org/endowment](http://yapinc.org/endowment) to complete the one-page application and review requirements. Keep in mind that you must first be accepted into a school or training program before you can apply.