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Student Spotlight

February 2017

Ky'Mier Bowie

Fruitful Ground Christian Education Development Center

Montgomery, AL



We first introduced Ky'Mier Bowie to our donors and friends in a 2015 AAA Scholarship Foundation spotlight story. At the time, Ky'Mier was a 10th grader at Fruitful Ground Christian Education Development Center, a school that had helped him regain his confidence and get back on track with his education. Today, he is a senior at the same school and working towards a promising future, thanks to the opportunities provided to him by the AAA Scholarship Foundation donors and his parent-selected school.

Ky'Mier is the only child of Kristie Davis, a single parent and teacher who works hard to provide for her family. Although Ky'Mier had attended his local public school since Kindergarten, it was not until he reached 7th grade that his mother began to notice drastic changes in both his behavior and academic performance. He no longer liked school and, as his attitude declined, so did his grades. When he began to get into physical altercations with other students, Kristie confronted him about it and learned that he was being bullied, almost on a daily basis.

"I will never forget the look on his face," Kristie recalls. "It was like his enthusiasm had died. He had no drive and didn't like school. I knew then that I would do whatever it took to save my son from this disastrous path he was going down."

Every day at work, Kristie was unable to concentrate as she worried about her son's safety and emotional wellbeing at school, as well as the impact it was having on his education. As a teacher herself, she was aware of education statistics in Alabama, where 71 percent of 4th graders and 74 percent of 8th graders perform below the proficient level in reading, and less than 16 percent of 8th graders are proficient in math. Furthermore, 32

percent of African American high school students in the state do not graduate on time¹. She was determined to prevent her son from becoming another statistic.

Kristie worked with the teachers and administrators at his school to come up with a solution, but she soon came to the conclusion that Ky'Mier would do better in a different environment. Her nephew was attending Fruitful Ground and she had heard wonderful things about his progress there, so she decided to visit the school and see if it would be a fit – and if she could afford it on her income as a public school pre-Kindergarten teacher. After visiting the school and discussing Ky'Mier's challenges with Annetta Tate, the principal at Fruitful Ground, she was certain the school would be the solution Ky'Mier needed. She also soon learned that her family would qualify for a scholarship from the AAA Scholarship Foundation, making it possible to afford the tuition.

A lot has changed in the few years Ky'Mier has attended Fruitful Ground. The supportive teachers and staff at the school have helped Ky'Mier regain his love of learning and, as a result, he is excelling. At 18 years old, he has developed into an articulate young man with exceptional writing skills and a grateful heart. He no longer dreads going to school out of fear of being bullied by other students. And his low self-esteem has been replaced with a positive outlook on his future.

However, his road to success has not been without bumps. Shortly after he began attending Fruitful Ground, he fell very ill and learned that he had type 1 diabetes. Thankfully, the supportive network he and his mother have found both at Fruitful Ground and the medical community has helped him adjust to a new lifestyle that will keep him healthy and thriving.



With high school graduation quickly approaching, Ky'Mier has set his sights on his future endeavors. To coincide with his passion for animals, he is considering pursuing a career in zoology or a related field. He is actively looking into several colleges in Alabama and Florida and hopes to pursue higher education following graduation. Eager to gain some real-life work experience, he is also working with the local career center to help him land a summer job prior to entering college. As a backup plan, he has also considered following in the footsteps of his maternal grandfather and uncle and enrolling in the U.S. military. Whichever path he takes, we are sure that he will conquer his goals and make his mother proud.

“I am so thankful to the AAA Scholarship Foundation and its donors for giving my son the opportunity to overcome his struggles in school and gain the knowledge and experience he will need to be a successful and productive member of our future generation,” says Kristie. “I no longer worry about my son’s future and instead look forward to all the great things he will do with his life. You have made that reality possible for my family and so many others. Thank you!”

About AAA Scholarship Foundation

The AAA Scholarship Foundation awards scholarships solely to qualifying low-income, disabled and/or displaced students. The typical AAA Scholarship student is an ethnic minority living with a struggling single parent/caregiver in a high crime community. More than 85 percent of AAA scholarships are distributed to children at or below 185 percent of poverty. Many children are either below grade level, failing at their previous school or both when they receive a scholarship. Parents, who find their children in these circumstances and care about their future, look for viable options. They seek an atmosphere that challenges their child and will

¹ Source: *Kids Count Data Center*. The Annie E. Casey Foundation. <http://datacenter.kidscount.org/>.

reverse inadequate learning, social patterns and the potential lifelong negative impact. They wish to change their child's learning environment, acquaintances and the unfortunate predictable outcomes associated with school failure.

AAA Scholarships are funded in Alabama, Arizona, Florida, Georgia, Nevada and Pennsylvania by corporations that redirect a portion of their state tax liability to the AAA Scholarship Foundation in exchange for a tax credit (dollar-for-dollar in Alabama, Arizona, Florida, Georgia and Nevada, and up to 90 percent in Pennsylvania). The AAA Scholarship Foundation is one of the only approved Scholarship 501(c)(3) Nonprofit Organizations exclusively serving qualifying low-income, disabled and/or displaced students through these Scholarship Tax Credit programs. AAA Scholarship Foundation provides your company with the convenience and efficiency of a single-solution for participating in multiple state tax credit scholarship programs. For more information or to learn how your corporation can participate in the program, visit www.AAAScholarships.org, or contact Kerri Vaughan at kerri@aaascholarships.org or 888 707-2465 ext. 730.