



Alabama • Arizona • Georgia • Pennsylvania

## Student Spotlight

### November 2013

#### The Levi-Sayles Family

Kennesaw, GA



Like most parents, Sabrina Levi has an unwavering dedication to her children. However, Sabrina's own struggles have only intensified her commitment to paving a better path for her family and ensuring her children succeed – both in school and in life.

A single parent herself, Sabrina grew up under the sole care of her mother, who worked long hours to provide the basics: keeping a roof over her head, food on the table, shoes on her feet and clothes on her back. Her mother did the best she could, but after the long hours put into supporting the family, Sabrina's education was not a focal point. After all, Sabrina did okay in school, passing on to the next grade level and eventually graduating high school. It was not until Sabrina re-enrolled in college that the harsh reality hit her – her basic academic skills – including English and math – were not up to par. In fact, she was testing at only the 8<sup>th</sup> grade level in reading and she had to take four classes to bring her up to the 12<sup>th</sup> grade level, and had to start over with the basic level class in math.

In search of a better life for her family, Sabrina and her three children – Kayla Sayles (17), Khalib Sayles (12) and Saudia Sayles (10) – moved to Georgia in 2011. At first, it appeared that her children were doing well in their new home and school and she made a point to attend all the parent-teacher conferences to ensure she stayed engaged in their education. However, later in the year she was shocked to learn that her oldest daughter Kayla's English and writing skills were not up to par, and she was in danger of being held back as a result.

Fearful that her daughter would face the same struggles she had, Sabrina acted quickly to find an intervention, eventually leading her to her family's church and the school associated with it, Covenant Christian Ministries Academy in Marietta, Ga. The school had a first year financial assistance program that enabled Sabrina to enroll all three children in the school. Kayla, Khalib and Saudia grew by leaps and bounds over the next year, overcoming hurdles in their education and catching up to grade level. However, without additional financial assistance available and barely able to cover even the family's living expenses on her limited income, Sabrina knew that she could not afford the tuition the next school year. She was heartbroken at the thought of having

to take her children out of the school that had helped them in so many ways – and feared that it would disrupt the gains they had already made. Fortunately, before it became a harsh reality, she was approved for AAA Scholarships that enabled all three of her children to continue at Covenant Christian this school year.

As a result, the Levi children have continued to excel at their parent-selected school. Kayla, who once faced being held back, is now in the 12<sup>th</sup> grade and has been able to overcome her struggles in English and catch up to her grade level thanks to one-on-one attention from her teachers and the hard work and extra effort she has put forth. Now bringing home A's and on her way to honor roll status, Kayla is involved in several extracurricular activities at the school, including cheerleading, drama and choir. She is also preparing for graduation and entering college, where she is considering majoring in criminology.

Khalib, now in the 7<sup>th</sup> grade, and Saudia, in the 5<sup>th</sup> grade, have also prospered academically at the school. Khalib is bringing home A's and B's and has already earned a spot on the honor roll. The teachers at the school have also helped Saudia focus on her academics and she is becoming a rising star.

With the secure feeling of her children doing well in school, Sabrina has dove into her own education plan as she continues in college to pursue a degree in social work in hopes of making a better life for her family.

“My children are my inspiration each and every day,” Sabrina says. “To see them excelling makes me feel like I am doing something right as a parent. None of this would have been possible without the AAA Scholarship program. My family now has hope for a bright future, and the means to reach our goals and dreams.”

### **About AAA Scholarship Foundation**

The typical AAA Scholarship student is an ethnic minority living with a struggling single parent/caregiver in a high crime community. The average household income of families accepted to receive scholarships is \$23,559 for a family of four. 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 to reverse inadequate learning and/or 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, Georgia 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 and Georgia and up to 90 percent in Pennsylvania). The AAA Scholarship Foundation is the only 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization and approved Scholarship Organization exclusively serving eligible, low-income children 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](http://www.AAAScholarships.org), or contact Kerri Vaughan at [kerri@aaascholarships.org](mailto:kerri@aaascholarships.org) or 786 367-0823.