



Milestones

Helping aspiring scholars find their way

FALL 2007 / VOLUME 2 / ISSUE 3

Letter from the Executive Director

Dear Friends,

The beginning of the 2007-08 academic year has been a season of growth and transition for CDI. Our first class of Scholars are now college Freshmen; we had a heartwarming *bon voyage* party for them and their families in August. Thanks to generous CDI board members, each Scholar received a gift bag that included certificates to Linens-N-Things and Best Buy, along with a shopping list for dorm room essentials. When it was time to ship off, our Scholars were well stocked! From Goucher College, here in Maryland, to Stanford University all the way in California, we have had wonderful news from the Scholars via their weekly check-ins about their adjustment to college life. All 10 Scholars are doing well, with several reporting that they have earned As on key assignments. A few excerpts from their weekly check-ins are on page 3.

The Class of 2008, inspired by last year's Scholars, is working hard on senior year classes and college applications. Since July, they have attended weekly study skills sessions with our fantastic tutors, Nitin and Dan. The Scholars also had some fun this summer. We hiked in Great Falls, VA, attended an amazing performance of *Phantom of the Opera*, and enjoyed our annual end-of-summer retreat in St. Michaels, MD (Photos page 3).



Dean Jack Blackburn with '07 and '08 Scholars

On October 18, **Dean Jack Blackburn** of UVa met 2007 and 2008 CDI Scholars when he spoke (details, page 2) at CDI's fall event, again generously hosted by **Elizabeth and Michael Galvin. Ms. DaMaris Hill**, Director of the Educational Opportunities Program at Goucher College, also joined us with CDI's two EOP Scholars, Cindy and Francisco. It was a wonderful evening!

We are already reviewing nominees for CDI's Class of 2009. In one calendar year our Scholar numbers more than quadruple! Our partner high schools double! We welcome Albert Einstein and John F. Kennedy High Schools to the CDI network. On top of work close to home, CDI is reaching across the county by participating in a series of professional development workshops for counselors. We are eager to share our successful model. On the homefront we are adding a wonderful new counselor, **Ana Hilton** and a part-time administrative assistant, **Amy Kim**. Our team is growing to keep up with the program's expansion. Thanks for your continued support.

Warmly,

Theresa O. Atta

Our Mission

- To identify and support gifted, low-income, primarily first-generation-to-college students and help them to plan for, apply to, attend, and graduate from a selective, four-year college.
- To build leaders and scholars by mentoring students' personal and academic development.
- To leverage CDI's expertise in educational and college counseling by offering pro bono consulting and training assistance to other similar organizations.

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Destination CDI

Many thanks to the wonderful admissions representatives who visited CDI and/or met with the Scholars:

- Aug. 4: **DePauw University**
Stefanie Niles
Keith Stanford
- Sept. 20: **Smith College**
Deedee Baldvins
- Oct. 3: **Tufts University**
Dan Grayson
- Oct. 4: **Stanford University**
Karen Ransom
- Oct. 5: **Bates College**
Kristen Belka
- Oct. 9: **Colgate University**
Lia Glavin
- Oct. 11: **Connecticut College**
Scott Alexander
- Oct. 24: **College of the Holy Cross**
Suzanne Timmons
- Oct. 30: **Wellesley College**
Youlim Yai
- Nov. 5: **Boston College**
Paul Bonitto
- Nov. 16: **Reed College/ Colorado College**
Vanessa Garrido/ Jessica Raab

We offer a special acknowledgement to the admissions officers who met with us during the NACAC Conference in Austin, TX:

- Sept. 28: **Oberlin College**
Thomas Abeyta
- Trinity College (CT)**
Anthony Berry
- University of Delaware**
Susan Knight
- Sept. 29: **Cornell University**
Kyle Downey
- Goucher College**
Lisa Hill
- Stanford University**
DeAngela Burns-Wallace

Dean Jack Blackburn, UVA

Excerpt: “*Building a Better College Community*”

It’s clear what CDI is doing is extremely important. I’m glad to hear about the program’s expansion. The data show that the percentage of low-income students attending four-year colleges is actually smaller now than it was a generation ago. We’ve seen a drop in the percentage of students receiving need-based aid, and in the number of PELL recipients (low-income students). That’s true across the country, and we’ve got to reverse it.

With Access UVa, we are trying to reach low-income students. The College Board has also organized a Low-Income Task Force, which I’ve been on for about two years. We’ve just made our report, and we hope to engage government leaders, educational leaders, business leaders, churches, foundations, secondary schools, and colleges and universities to be more supportive of low-income students. We hope the College Board will offer some fee waivers for the CSS Profile, for AP and other test scores, the documents college applicants need to submit. We’re watching very closely to see how each college and university advances in the percentage of low-income students who matriculate, and we’re monitoring progress.

CDI is bringing highly honed counseling skills and long-term support to help the most needy students, and I congratulate the program on its success.

CDI Community News

At the invitation of **Dr. Nancy Carlson**, Montgomery County Public School (MCPS) High School Counselor Specialist, Theresa Atta and Nina Marks are participating in workshops for MCPS high school counselors. The first session, “Senior Savvy”—What Every Counselor Should Know About 12th Grade Students”, held in September, focused on advocacy for first-generation, at-risk, college-bound students. Further sessions will be held in December and May. CDI Board member **Larry Griffith**, Vice President of the United Negro College Fund, will be part of the December program.

At the 2007 National Association of College Admission Counseling conference, held in September in Austin, TX, Nina Marks again moderated pre-conference workshops designed to facilitate better communication between high school counselors and senior college Deans. This year’s “Ask the Deans and Directors” sessions featured candid discussion on selective admissions with panelists **Ted Spencer**, University of Michigan, **William Shain**, Bowdoin College, and **Paul Marthers**, Reed College.

Thanks, Volunteers!

CDI gratefully acknowledges three volunteers who have offered invaluable support. **Zachary Wenner**, Dartmouth 2010, worked with the Class of 2007 on the transition from high school to college. **Annie Galvin**, Yale 2007, led essay writing workshops for the Class of 2008. Finally, **Jennifer Hamilton**, Boston College 2010, helped to organize CDI’s 2007 graduation event and continues to mentor Scholars in the Class of 2008.



Scholars' Voices

CDI's Inaugural Class, the 2007 Scholars, signed an agreement in June committing, among other things, to weekly e-mail check-ins with Ms. Theresa. The submissions reinforce CDI's continuing support. Below are excerpts from the start of the school year.

Kevin, Juniata College: This last week has been invigorating. The whole college experience has really made me understand how much I like being independent. I've started out really well. In Spanish I have a B+, though this class is much more complex than the ones I took in high school. I'm *punishing* Calculus! I have an A+, with a 98% on our first exam.

Cindy, Goucher College: I love my schedule! I had my first big exam on Monday which went amazingly well! I feel pretty confident. They have Sunday study sessions, and I went! While I was there I didn't really feel it helped, but while I was taking the test (and speeding through it because I thought it was sooo easy) I realized that it really did help!

Francisco, Goucher College: I have been attending meetings about the expectations ahead. My science classes are demanding, but I told them I was willing to work hard. All the students here are nice and talk to you for no special reason. In college, as you may already know, tests are a major part of your grade. Mrs. Marks was right ... in college you spend less time in class, but you need to spend more time studying.

Frances, Hollins University: Everything is going really well. One of my friends told me how I can start a cross country club. ... I posted fliers and had an informational meeting last week. I didn't know that a lot of people were interested in running. So far we have 30 people. It's a lot of work starting a club. I am both the coach and the founder.

Gloria, Stanford University: Orientation week was so much fun. There was always something to do. I am currently taking Accelerated Calculus, Spanish, Humanities, and Kickboxing. Stanford is great!

Jamie, Dickinson College: I've been accepted to the Bonner Scholars Program! As a Bonner Leader, I am required to perform 450 hours of community service in the Carlisle, PA area. This may seem overwhelming, but it will be a great way to earn service hours by doing what I really enjoy. I am also assigned a Bonner Mentor to help if I have any questions.

Karla, Oberlin College: I really enjoyed our CDI summer reading, *A Hope in the Unseen* by Ron Suskind. I must admit that this is the first time I ever finished a book in less than a week. It WAS very inspiring. I learned about 20 new vocabulary words.

Merab, Hofstra University: ... My group said we would meet in the hotel lobby at 8:00pm, but people started arriving at about 8:30, then there was a steady trickle of arrivals 'til 9:00pm. This is utterly ridiculous because, as Ms. Theresa says, to be early is to be on time, to be on time is to be late, and to be late is unacceptable!

Rafelin, Virginia Commonwealth University: This week has gone a lot more smoothly than the first week. I am now understanding the material, and I am going through it easily (for the most part). I have also been attending study groups and office hours regularly. Both things have been a tremendous help for me. I am still a little homesick but now I talk to more people.

Wendy, Cornell University: This past week went well ... I received an A in my Computer Science prelim, and I looked up the solutions for my Calculus class, and I believe I should be receiving an A in that exam as well. Now the only class that is left is Physics which is this Tuesday. Wish me luck!



Hiking Trip to Great Falls, VA



Cultural Event: Phantom of the Opera



Summer Retreat in St. Michaels, MD



College Visit: DePauw University



Milestones

Support CDI!

CDI is growing by leaps and bounds. Besides quadrupling our number of Scholars and doubling our number of participant high schools, among other things, we are revamping our web site.

Construction is currently going on behind the scenes, but we have added a DONATE page. Now you can donate online!

Please visit our web site today and support our amazing Scholars.

www.collegiatedirections.org

THANK YOU



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The Road Ahead

December 1	SAT and Subject Test Date
December 3-7	Recruitment Meetings for Class of 2009
December 8	ACT Test Date
December 10	CDI Workshop with MCPS Counselors
December 15	College Application Deadline for Class of 2008
December 20	CDI Application Deadline for Class of 2009
December 21	Class Meeting for College Scholars
January 1	Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) Available
January 7-25	CDI Interviews for Class of 2009
January 26	SAT and Subject Test Date
February 1-28	CDI Home Visits with Class of 2009
February TBD	College Goal Sunday
March 1	SAT and Subject Test Date
March 8	Orientation for Class of 2009 <i>tentative</i>