



June 2006 Student Spotlight: Davante McCallam and Khiyandra McCallam



Spirit of Christ Academy, Miami

Elizabeth and Anthony McCallam are the proud parents of three children, two of which are first-year Step Up For Students scholarship recipients. Khiyandra, 10, and Davante, 14, both received their first Step Up For Students Scholarship from the Florida PRIDE scholarship funding organization for the 2005-2006 school year. Both children have benefited from the Step Up For Students Scholarship Program in their own unique ways.

The McCallams moved from New Jersey to Miami, Fla., a few years ago, when Khiyandra was in third grade and Davante was in sixth grade. Soon after Khiyandra and Davante began attending their assigned public school, Elizabeth and Anthony McCallam began to notice significant changes in their children. Khiyandra, who has always made A's and B's, was still maintaining a B average but she no longer was enthusiastic about going to school and she lost interest in her classes. She complained to her parents that she could not concentrate because of distractions caused by the other children in her class. A highly motivated student, Khiyandra told her parents she wanted to go to another school that would enable her to continue to excel in school.

On the other hand, the new school environment affected Davante differently than his younger sister. Davante's grades began to dramatically decline and he began making D's and F's in his classes. Without the proper learning environment for his individual needs, Davante lost motivation to do well in school, and it

affected his overall behavior and attitude in school and at home.

Concerned for their children's academic futures, Elizabeth and Anthony continued to search for other educational options. Because their oldest daughter was an Opportunity Scholarship recipient, they had some knowledge about Florida's school choice programs and knew which resources to contact for a solution for their other two children. After contacting the local board of education office, Elizabeth learned about the Step Up For Students Scholarship Program and applied. Khiyandra and Davante received their Step Up For Students Scholarships from Florida PRIDE for the 2005-2006 school year and began attending Spirit of Christ Academy in Miami.

Since attending Spirit of Christ Academy, the futures for both Khiyandra and Davante look brighter. Always an excellent student, fifth-grader Khiyandra is highly motivated to achieve at her new school and is making all A's. She has even established goals for her future with plans to play for the WNBA and become a pediatrician. Now in the eighth grade at his new school, Davante is eager to go to school and enjoys attending his favorite class – science. A skilled basketball player, Davante hopes to play the sport professionally in the future. Additionally, he loves animals and science so much that he plans to pursue a career as a veterinarian. Elizabeth and Anthony McCallam are extremely proud of their children and pleased with the results of the Step Up For Students Scholarship Program.

-MORE-

About Spirit of Christ Academy

Located in North Miami Beach, Spirit of Christ Academy was established in 1997 by the late Pastor Regina T. Lamb, who had a vision to "Raise up righteous seed." Although Pastor Lamb passed away in July of 2004, the school continues to fulfill this vision. The school is connected to the Spirit of Christ Church through ministry.

Spirit of Christ Academy has approximately 108 students, 50 of which are Step Up For Students scholarship recipients. The school's tuition cost is \$350 per month.

About the Step Up For Students Scholarship Recipients

The typical Step Up For Students scholarship family has an average income of \$22,074 for a family of four, and more than half of the scholarship families are single-parent homes. The typical scholarship student is an ethnic minority living with a struggling single parent/caregiver in a high crime community. They 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. Parents apply for Step Up For Students Scholarships so their children can attend the school best suited for their special needs, beliefs, and abilities, and to address negative trends in their child's learning skills and/or environment.

Step Up For Students Scholarships are funded by corporations that redirect up to 75 percent of their corporate state income tax liability to a qualified Scholarship Funding Organization in exchange for a dollar-for-dollar tax credit. For more information or to learn how your corporation can participate in the program, visit www.StepUpForStudents.com, or call 1-877-677-KIDS for more information.

