

**Step Up For Students
June 2007 Student Spotlight:**



**Deborah Creel
First Assembly Christian School
Ocala, FL**

Thirteen-year old Deborah Creel will be entering the eighth grade this fall at First Assembly Christian School in Ocala, a school she has attended for the past three years on a Step Up For Students Scholarship. The scholarship program has given Deborah the chance to excel to new levels at her parent-selected school.

During Kindergarten and first grade, Deborah attended First Assembly Christian School. However, when her mother, Susan, fell ill and could no longer afford the private school tuition, Deborah transferred to a local public school in second grade. Soon after, Susan began to notice a decline in her daughter's academic performance. Deborah, who was always at the top of her class, was now dwindling down to lower achievement levels. To make matters worse, she faced bullying and violence from her peers at the school.

Concerned that her daughter would continue to decline academically, Susan searched for options. While browsing the Internet one day, she came across the Step Up For Students Scholarship Program and realized that she was eligible to receive a scholarship for Deborah to attend a school of choice. When Deborah was in fifth grade she was approved for the scholarship and began attending First Assembly Christian School – a school that her mother felt could meet Deborah's learning needs.

The encouraging teachers and academic programs at First Assembly Christian helped Deborah to get back on track. The academic programs challenged her to excel to her full potential and the supportive network of teachers and staff helped boost her self-esteem. By the time Deborah finished sixth grade, she was scoring above and beyond her grade level. Her past Stanford Achievement Test scores prove she is continuing to excel. She scored post high school in all subjects and a 10.7 grade level in vocabulary!

Although she has not even begun high school, Deborah is already thinking about her future. A math whiz and a dancer, she aspires to become both an engineer and a professional dancer someday.

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Deborah Creel/2

Susan Creel is exceedingly proud of her daughter's achievements and looks forward to watching her grow. She believes that Deborah's future would not be as bright or even possible without the opportunities the scholarship program has given her. Deborah will be entering the eighth grade this fall and there is no doubt she will continue to shine.

About First Assembly Christian School

A ministry of First Assembly of God of Ocala, First Assembly Christian School serves children in Kindergarten through eighth grade. During the 2006-07 school year, the school served 230 students, 42 of which were Step Up For Students scholarship recipients. The standardized achievement test annually administered by the school is the Stanford Achievement Test (SAT). The cost of tuition is \$3,400 plus the cost of books.

About the Step Up For Students Scholarship Recipients

The typical Step Up For Students scholarship family has an average income of \$23,000 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 1-800-782-9140 for more information.

