

**Step Up For Students  
July 2008 Student Spotlight:**



**Avery DeShazier  
Heritage Preparatory School  
Orlando, FL**

Avery DeShazier is an ambitious student who will be entering the 5<sup>th</sup> grade this fall at Heritage Preparatory School in Orlando. A third-year Step Up For Students Scholarship recipient, Avery has overcome significant academic hurdles to become the excellent student he is today.

Avery is the only child of Rose Hill, a single mother devoted to the wellbeing and education of her child. From the time Avery entered Kindergarten at the local public school in Altamonte Springs, Rose has been involved in her son's education in and out of school, making sure that she reinforces what is taught in school at home. During the summers, she even makes sure that Avery stays on top of his schooling by reading and doing other educational activities. That is why Rose was concerned when Avery began to struggle with the basics, especially reading and math, during first grade.

When Avery's grades declined to C's and D's, Rose took time off work to visit her son's class to see if she could identify the problem. Believing that Avery needed more focused attention, she had the teacher move his seat to the front of the classroom, which helped and he was able to pass first grade. Unfortunately his struggles continued the next year in second grade and his grades dwindled down to D's and even F's. His teacher indicated that Avery seemed to have a short attention span and was distracted easily during class, suggesting that Avery may have a learning disability. Although Rose did not believe her son had a learning disability – especially since he did not display this type of behavior at home – she had him tested anyway. The test proved Rose was right – Avery had normal learning capabilities.

When Rose and Avery relocated to the Tampa Bay area before his third grade year, Rose knew she had to find another solution to help Avery overcome his struggles. She applied for and received a Step Up For Students Scholarship, which she used to send Avery to New Jerusalem Christian Academy in Seffner. By the second semester of third grade, Avery's grades had risen from D's and F's to A's and B's.

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Although New Jerusalem was able to help Avery get back on track, Rose felt that another school, Tampa Bay Christian School in Brandon, had an academic program more tailored to his needs. Since the scholarship is awarded to parents, not schools, it is transferable to other private schools, and so Rose was able to enroll Avery in Tampa Bay Christian when he was in fourth grade. During his time at Tampa Bay Christian, Avery continued to excel and became an honor roll student.

This summer, Rose and Avery relocated to Orlando indefinitely to be closer to family, where Avery will be attending Heritage Preparatory School on the scholarship program. Rose believes that the school's unique college-preparatory programs will help Avery continue on his path to success all the way up through high school and prepare him for a successful future. In fact, at the young age of 10, Avery has already identified his goals for the future; he plans to become not only a professional football player, but also pursue a career as crime scene investigator in the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI).

Although she makes personal sacrifices to send Avery to a school of choice – including paying the remaining tuition costs and other fees not covered by the scholarship, as well as transportation costs – Rose knows it is worth the improvements she has seen in her son's academic performance. She is thankful to the donors and supporters of the scholarship program for giving her son the opportunity to receive the educational tools necessary to lead a successful life.

### **About Heritage Preparatory School**

Established in 1969, Heritage Preparatory School serves Orlando-area students in grades preschool through 12<sup>th</sup> grade. Heritage Prep students take college entrance examinations and prepare with testing such as the Stanford 10, PLAN, PSAT, ASVAB and EXPLORE. During the 2007-08 school year, Heritage Prep served 250 students, 125 of which were Step Up For Students scholarship recipients. The annual cost of tuition at Heritage Prep for the 2008/09 school year is \$5,050 for grades Kindergarten through 12<sup>th</sup>, 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 \$24,489 for a family of four, and more than 60 percent of the scholarship recipients come from single-parent homes. The typical scholarship student is an ethnic minority living with a struggling single parent/caregiver in a high crime community. Many 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](http://www.StepUpForStudents.com), or call 1-800 782-9140 for more information.

