



Step Up For Students September 2006 Student Spotlight:



The Harris Family Temple Christian School, Titusville

Catherine Harris is a single mother of ten children, eight of which she has adopted from Ukraine. Four of these children are on the Step Up For Students Scholarship Program. In January 2006, three of her daughters were accepted on the scholarship program and have experienced a tremendous amount of improvement since attending their new private school. Each had their own unique struggles and have overcome them through the use of a Step Up For Students Scholarship from Children First Florida.

One of Catherine's daughters, Yulia Marie Harris, came to the United States when she was 6 years old. She started off in kindergarten at the local public school. That year, Yulia was retained and had to repeat kindergarten. She was now 7 years old and still in kindergarten. Each year, Yulia continued to struggle through school and fell behind her peers. In third grade at almost 11 years old, Yulia was once again retained for failing the FCAT. As a result of her struggles in school, Yulia became discouraged and didn't want to go to school. To make matters worse, the children teased her that she was so much bigger and older than any of the other children in her class.

Catherine's other daughter, Erisca Ann "Shayla" Harris, came to the United States when she was 4 years old. Once in school, Erisca struggled to keep up with her peers and suffered from a severe speech problem, which caused the public school to put her in special classes.

Catherine's younger daughter, Ekaterina Lin Harris, had a different problem in school than her sisters. Ekaterina came to the United States when she was 18 months old. She was very frail and tiny for her age, and according to her records in Ukraine, she suffered from Fetal Alcohol Syndrome. Ekaterina was tested by Orange County School board and qualified to start pre-school at the age of 3 years old due to severe learning disabilities and delays. By the time Ekaterina started kindergarten at Columbia Elementary, she was working on a first grade level. By the end of kindergarten, Ekaterina was working on close to a second grade level. When Ekaterina returned to her public school for first grade, Catherine asked them to please test her and put her in advanced classes so she could excel, but the school would not.

Catherine was devastated that the school could not offer Erisca and Yulia the extra help that they needed, and Ekaterina would not be put in an environment that challenged her advanced level. At this time, Catherine was sending her oldest son to Temple Christian School in Titusville, using her own money. The representatives from Temple Christian told Catherine about the Step Up For Students Scholarships available from Children First Florida. Catherine immediately applied and all three daughters were accepted on the program and began attending Temple Christian School in January 2006.



All three girls have experienced positive changes during the short time they have attended Temple Christian School. Yulia, who is now in 5th grade, has experienced a drastic improvement in her grades, and her drive to want to learn has increased tremendously. Once sad and discouraged, Yulia, now is eager to go to school to learn and make friends. Erisca's grades have also improved. Now in the 6th grade, she enjoys her new school so much that she looks forward to going to school each day and is even involved in many after school activities. Always an advanced student, Ekaterina, now in the 2nd grade, also enjoys attending Temple Christian School, where she participates in classes that challenge and further develop her high educational level. Additionally, Catherine's son Jamie Harris (13), who was just recently accepted on the Step Up For Students Scholarship Program, is now beginning his first year at Temple Christian School.

Catherine Harris believes that the scholarship program has changed her children's lives and is making it possible for them to have a bright, successful future. She is grateful for all the corporate donors who have given her children more than just a scholarship – she feels they have given her children life and the drive to want to learn.

About Temple Christian School

Located in Titusville, Florida, Temple Christian School was started in 1994 by Pastor Wendell Correll and Greg Correll under the name Temple Baptist Church Christian School. The first school year included only 16 students in grades 1st through 12th. Following a rapid growth, the school moved to an A Beka curriculum in 1999. From 16 students in 1994 to more than 225 in 2006, the school grew to become a leader in Christian Education in the Central Florida area. In addition to the full high school program, the school offers specialized programs for educationally challenged students. Temple Christian uses the Stanford Achievement Test (SAT).

The base annual tuition at Temple Christian is \$3,375 for K-5; \$3,695 for grades 1st through 6th; and \$3,795 for grades 7th through 12th. Additionally, book costs are \$320 for K-5 and \$395 for grades 1st through 12th. The school has 45 Step Up For Students scholarship students.

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 1-800 782-9140 for more information.