

**Step Up For Students  
Monthly Student Spotlight  
December 2008:**



**Kiaya Cash  
Cornerstone Christian School  
Jacksonville, FL**

Kiaya Cash is a 12th grader at Cornerstone Christian School in Jacksonville, a school she began attending on the Step Up For Students Scholarship Program last year. A talented singer, Kiaya has been given the opportunity to shine in both academics and fine arts at her parent-selected school.

Kiaya is the oldest daughter, of Kendra Cash, a divorced mother of two who works hard to ensure her children's needs are met. Kiaya and her sister, Kennedy Chisolm, attended public school their whole lives. However, when Kiaya was in 11<sup>th</sup> grade, her grades began to drop to C's and D's. Her mother felt that she needed an environment that would challenge her to excel both academically and artistically. She also wanted to make sure her daughters were well prepared for college and the future, especially since Kiaya was so close to finishing high school.

After learning about Cornerstone Christian School from a friend, Kendra knew that it would be the best academic environment for her daughters. Unfortunately, as a single parent on a fixed income, Kendra could not afford the tuition. Thankfully, with help from Step Up For Students, she was able to send both Kiaya and Kennedy to Cornerstone Christian.

The school turned out to be a perfect fit. The academic programs at Cornerstone challenged and engaged Kiaya, and as result, she has excelled. She currently maintains a 3.0 grade point average. She has also been given the opportunity to fine-tune her vocal skills with the help from Cornerstone's music programs.

Kiaya's admiration of music started when she was only three years old when she would sing at church with her mother. Today, Kiaya regularly performs at her school and church programs, as well as workshops and other events in her community. She was even given the opportunity to showcase her talent during the Step Up For Students Donor Appreciation Rally in November 2008.

Her passion for music has also shaped her goals for the future. She plans on attending Florida Community College at Jacksonville (FCCJ) for two years and then transferring to Clark Atlanta University to major in music theory. She hopes to become a music teacher in the public school system and also start her own organization to help other children develop their own talents in music.

### **About Cornerstone Christian School**

Located in Jacksonville, Fla., Cornerstone Christian School offers academic programs for students in Pre-K through 12<sup>th</sup> grade. The school currently serves more than 300 students, 100 of which are receiving Step Up For Students Scholarships. The average cost of tuition at Cornerstone is \$3,600. The school annually administers the TerraNova and Stanford Achievement Test (SAT) to assess student achievement.

### **About the Step Up For Students Scholarship Recipients**

The typical Step Up For Students scholarship family of four has an average income of \$24,489, and more than 60 percent of scholarship recipients come from single-parent homes. The typical scholarship student is an ethnic minority living with a single parent/caregiver. 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. They 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 Kerri Vaughan at (866) 344-9553.

