



# Milestones

Helping aspiring scholars find their way

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## Letter from the Executive Director

Dear Friends,

Spring is upon us and Collegiate Directions, Inc. (CDI) is abuzz with energy and activity. The CDI Scholars in the Class of 2008 are choosing among exciting admissions and scholarship offers (page 3). Scholars have been awarded several prestigious scholarships including the Echols (UVa), Monroe (William and Mary), and various other distinctions. We also have **CDI's first Gates Millennium Scholar, Sasini Bentota** of Wheaton High School! As a Gates scholarship recipient, Sasini will attend the undergraduate and graduate schools of her choice at no cost to her family. It is a tremendous honor.

We dedicate this issue of *Milestones* to CDI parents and families. Since we started the program in 2005, we now have Scholars and parents in three different stages of the college process. The parents of the CDI Scholars' Class of 2007 are watching their children conclude their Freshman year on college campuses around the country, proud of their strong academic and extra-curricular performances. The parents of the Class of 2008 are meeting with CDI

counselors in the coming weeks to discuss final college decisions, as they and their children prepare for high school graduation. Finally, we are welcoming our newest cohort, the Class of 2009, which includes students from five high schools across Montgomery County, MD: **Wheaton, Walter Johnson, Einstein, Kennedy and Paint Branch**. We have completed a round of home visits with these new families and hosted the parents on March 29 at a Welcome Brunch & Orientation.



Meet members of the CDI Scholars Class of 2009!

In January, we held our first annual CDI Family Social (page 2), to gather and celebrate CDI Scholars' parents and grandparents. In this edition of Scholars' Voices (page 3), 2008 Scholar Lealem Asrat (whose younger sister Mahlet is in the CDI Scholars' Class of 2009) shares his appreciation for the loving guidance and support of his parents.

We appreciate the overwhelming response to our newsletters, which now reach almost 500 supporters in our educational, philanthropic, and community networks. We hope you'll look forward to the extended summer edition of *Milestones* in which we will share profiles of this year's college-bound students and name the schools at which they will matriculate.

Warmly,

Theresa O. Atta

## Our Mission

- To identify and support gifted, low-income, primarily first-generation-to-college students and help them to plan for, apply to, attend, and graduate from a selective, four-year college.
- To build leaders and scholars by mentoring students' personal and academic development.
- To leverage CDI's expertise in educational and college counseling by offering pro bono consulting and training assistance to other similar organizations.

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# Milestones

## Congratulations!

For the second year in a row, the Potomac and Chesapeake Association for College Admission Counseling (PCACAC) has awarded CDI staff and partners the Marion Flagg Scholarship.

Congratulations to recipients Dr. Nancy Carlson (High School Counselor Specialist, Montgomery County Public Schools) and Ms. Ana Hilton (Counselor, Collegiate Directions, Inc.)! The award recognizes high school, college and/or community leaders who serve underrepresented populations and have made a significant contribution in the areas of college advising and advocacy.

The scholarship underwrites a one-year membership in PCACAC, along with all-expenses-paid attendance at the PCACAC Annual Spring Conference. This year's conference will be held April 27-30 in Williamsburg, VA.

## Meet CDI Counselor Ana Hilton

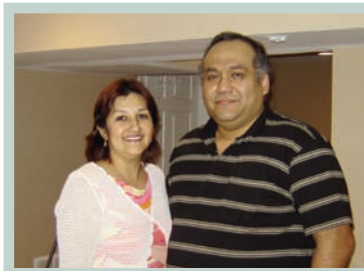


CDI is delighted to welcome Ana Hilton to our counseling team. Ana is a 2001 graduate of the College of Wooster. Prior to joining CDI, Ana worked in the Dean of Students' Office at the College of Wooster where she worked on a peer mentoring program focused on multi-ethnic retention. Ana coordinated a new student transition program, *Summer Connect*, that allowed all incoming first-year students to connect with current Wooster students before arriving on campus for New Student Orientation.

Ana was born in the Dominican Republic and moved to Massachusetts at age five. She speaks fluent Spanish and enjoys reading, running and any outdoor activities. You may contact Ana at [ahilton@collegiatedirections.org](mailto:ahilton@collegiatedirections.org).

## 1st Annual CDI Family Social

On Monday, January 21, CDI held our first annual Family Social. We could think of no better way to commemorate the Martin Luther King Jr. Holiday than to gather together in the spirit of faith, family and legacy. This heartwarming event provided an opportunity for CDI families to come together to celebrate the accomplishments of the college students and the aspirations of the high school Seniors. Enjoy some photos from our "family album"!



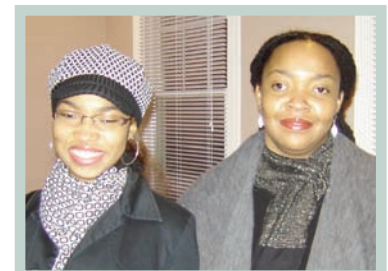
*Our hosts: Mr. & Mrs. Rivas*



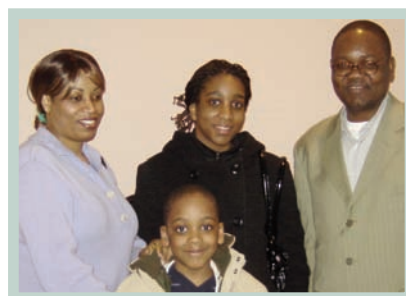
*Isel and her dad, Mr. Otero*



*Marilyn, Irene, Helena & Cathy*



*Anita and her mom, Ms. Robin*



*Cathy and the Kuangu family*



*Flavio Medina and his family*



*Helena and Anita*



*Karla with her grandmother and sister*



## 2008 College Acceptance List

American University	Fordham University	Temple University
Barnard College	Franklin & Marshall College	Towson University
Bates College	Frostburg State University	Trinity University
Boston College	Goucher College	Tufts University
Boston University	Hampton University	University of Chicago
Brandeis University	Hollins University	University of Delaware
Brown University	James Madison University	University of Mary Washington
Bryn Mawr College	Juniata College	University of Maryland - Baltimore County
Case Western University	Lafayette College	University of Maryland - College Park
Catholic University	Lynchburg College	University of North Carolina - Chapel Hill
College of the Holy Cross	Morgan State University	University of Notre Dame
College of William & Mary	McDaniel College	University of Pittsburgh
Columbia University	New York University	University of Richmond
Connecticut College	Randolph-Macon College	University of Vermont
DePauw University	Salisbury State University	University of Virginia
Dickinson College	Spelman College	Virginia Commonwealth University
Drexel University	St. Joseph's University	Virginia Tech University
Emory University	St. Peter's College	Washington College



The Koskeys, Parents of Gloria '07 & Brian '09



Lealem and his dad, Mr. Hailemariam

## Scholars' Voices

*CDI Scholars owe a debt of gratitude to the parents and guardians who have guided them throughout their lives. Often, CDI parents have made personal sacrifices to provide a better life for their children. Below, **Lealem Asrat** of Wheaton High School shares his reflections about his mother, who has taught him life lessons with strength and love.*

My mother and I share some interesting characteristics. I have my mother's eyes and hands . . . My mother and I also share the value of helping others and pushing ourselves so that life becomes easier, whether it is through academics or through prayer. When my father was unemployed, my mother did her best to support the family. In addition to her work outside the house, once home, she would set aside all other priorities to make dinner, check our homework, and listen to how our day went. My mother never once complained about being tired or doing too much. I have become a hard worker, just like my mother, inside and outside the home. I am a young man who helps with housework, does the dishes after every meal, waxes the floor, makes the beds, and dusts.

Perhaps the greatest influence my mother has had on me is my appreciation for my education. I study every night and do my best in classes, sports, and clubs. Unlike other students at my school, I come home early every day; I make sure I eat a light snack and get on top of my homework and projects. After I finish my assignments, I usually eat dinner and read ahead for my AP classes. This effort has paid off because I just received six As and one B on my first quarter report card. I am so grateful for the work ethic I inherited from my mother.



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# Milestones

## NACAC Legislative Conference

On March 9-12, 2008, **CDI Executive Director Theresa Atta** joined over 100 guidance counselors and college admissions representatives at the NACAC Legislative Conference in Washington, DC. During this annual event, educators from across the United States converge on Capitol Hill to meet with Senators, House Representatives and their key aides to promote NACAC's educational and legislative priorities: 1) Access to Quality Counseling, 2) Need-based Financial Aid, and 3) Rigorous Curriculum. Theresa Atta and **retired Walt Whitman High School Counselor Peg Cothorn** met with **Representative Christopher Van Hollen (D-MD)** to discuss the demographic shifts in Montgomery County and the counseling needs of low-income and first-generation-to-college students.

CDI was able to participate in this conference due to a generous grant from the PCACAC Government Relations Committee. Thank you!

## The Road Ahead

March 29	Parent Brunch & Orientation for Class of 2009
April 5	Community Service Project
April 14-22	Class of 2008 College Choice Family Meetings
April 16-17	Montgomery County National College Fair
April 27-29	PCACAC Spring Conference
May 1	Students' Response Date to Colleges
May 3/June 7	SAT and Subject Test Dates
May 4-6	Mount Holyoke College Counselor Program
May 17	Class of 2009 Meeting
June 12	MCPS Last Day of School
June 14	ACT Test Date
June 16	Bowling Party, Classes of 2007-2009
June 21	Annual Joint Board & Advisory Board Meeting
June 22-27	Harvard Summer Institute on College Admissions



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