



Milestones

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Letter from the Executive Director

Dear Friends,

We are thrilled to share an exciting development! CDI has been selected for inclusion in the 2009/10 *Catalogue for Philanthropy*. This year's *Catalogue*, scheduled to launch in mid-November, profiles selected nonprofits in the fields of education, human services, nature, culture and international service. Chosen as one of only three educational enrichment organizations in a "very competitive field" of 240 candidates, CDI has earned recognition as "one of the finest smaller nonprofits that Greater Washington has to offer!" We are honored by this tremendous vote of confidence, which will open doors to a larger community of funders and help to raise CDI's profile as a highly effective organization addressing the needs of low-income, first-generation-to-college students.

Also, congratulations to CDI's Class of 2009! Our Scholars received more than \$1.4 million in scholarships and grants, which included need- and merit-based aid, as well as financial awards for distinction in community service and leadership. The summer flew by as we prepared the Class of 2009 (see insert with Scholar profiles) for their transition to college. The fourth annual

Graduation & Bon Voyage Party was a huge success, complete with original poetry, speeches and a moving musical performance from members of the Class. Leading up to the party, many Scholars spent the summer working or traveling with their families, and others experienced an early introduction to campus life as participants in summer enrichment or "bridge" programs at their respective universities. Inside, under Scholars' Voices, is a thoughtful piece by Nahum Goba reflecting on his experience



CDI Scholars from the Classes of 2007-2010

in the Rainey Academic Program at UVa. On the home front, we hosted a Transition to College workshop, launched the second year of the Peer Mentor Program, and delved into Malcolm Gladwell's *Outliers* from our Summer Reading Series.

While the older Scholars excel in college, our 22 high school Scholars are hard at work with weekly test preparation classes, essay drafts, applications, preliminary college lists, and campus visits, in addition to taking rigorous academic courses and managing application forms. Inspired by previous CDI classes, the 2010 Scholars are on track to set new records with increased test scores, college acceptances and financial aid offers. It's hard to believe that in just a few months, CDI will begin recruiting the Class of 2011! For updates between newsletters we invite you to visit our new and improved Web site: www.collegiatedirections.org.

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 cost-effective consulting and training assistance to public school systems and education-related organizations.



GREATER WASHINGTON

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Milestones

THANK YOU HONEST TEA!

CDI would like to thank Honest Tea for sponsoring our fourth Annual Graduation & Bon Voyage Party on Saturday, August 1. The Bethesda-based company donated eight cases of ade and tea, and provided a company cooler for the refreshing drinks. In appreciation, CDI Scholars signed a poster for Honest Tea (see below). We owe a special “thank you” to Miss Katherine Hamilton, a summer intern for Honest Tea and a Sophomore in the Honors Program at the University of Maryland-College Park, whose thoughtful generosity made the donation possible. Many thanks to Katherine and her manager, Mr. Steve Lubow!



Katherine Hamilton with CDI's "Thank You" poster for Honest Tea

CDI at NACAC 2009

The 2009 National Association for College Admission Counseling (NACAC) Conference is being held in Baltimore, MD on September 24-26. **Theresa Atta**, CDI's Executive Director will sit on two panels on Saturday, September 26:

- Session E500 - Advocating Traditionally Underserved Students to be Consumers in the College Process
- Session G710 - Staying in Your Lane: Helping Those Who Have the Greatest Need Gain Access

We will see you at the Conference!

CDI 2009 Graduation & Bon Voyage Party

On Saturday, August 1st, CDI held its annual Graduation & Bon Voyage Party. The event provided an opportunity for CDI families to celebrate the accomplishments and goals of the high school graduates. Enjoy some photos from our “family album”!



Diego, Kenneshia & Mahlet



Michael & Samantha



Annie with mother, Ms. Sim



Brian with two younger sisters



*CDI Volunteers:
Mrs. Hamilton and daughter, Jennifer*



Lealam & Mahlet's parents, Mr. Hailermariam & Ms. Zewde



Annie, Diana, Hayoung & Steven playing "Pachelbel's Canon"



2009 College Acceptance List

American University	Hollins University	Stevenson University
Babson College	Johnson C. Smith University	Towson University
Bates College	Juniata College	Trinity University (DC)
Boston College	Lafayette College	University of Delaware
Bryn Mawr College	Loyola College	University of Maryland - BC
Carnegie Mellon University	Marshall University	University of Maryland - CP
Catholic University	MIT	University of Maryland - ES
Christopher Newport University	McDaniel College	University of Mary Washington
Columbia University	Morehouse College	University of Michigan
Cornell University	Mt. Holyoke College	University of Pittsburgh
DePauw University	New York University	University of Richmond
Dickinson College	Pace University	University of Rochester
Franklin & Marshall College	Randolph-Macon College	University of Virginia
Gettysburg College	Rutgers University	Virginia Commonwealth University
Goucher College	Spelman College	Washington College
Guilford College	St. John's University	Yale University
Harvey Mudd College	St. Mary's College	

Scholars' Voices

CDI Scholar, **Nahum Goba**, is now a first-year student at the University of Virginia. Below he shares his thoughts about how CDI and the Rainey Academic Program have helped him prepare.

I am so glad CDI encouraged me to attend the Rainey Academic Program at the University of Virginia (UVA) this summer. The program lasted one month; however, just a few days after I arrived the benefits of the program became clear to me. One morning I saw a father talking to

his son, who was in a different program, at a café (a lot of parents were present for orientation). I think the father was an alumnus because he was telling his son what classes he should take and what he needed to know about the school. Most of the students had parents who went to college and could provide them with proper information. I knew being a first-generation-to-college student was going to be hard because my mother, who raised me by herself, could not give me the same guidance that the father was giving his son. I was not sure of what I was doing because there was no road already paved for me.



Nahum & his mother at the Wheaton HS graduation

I think CDI and the Rainey Academic Program are helping me catch up with the students whose parents understand how things work. It would have been difficult for me to apply to college without support from CDI. They gave me options that were never there before; I never knew UVA existed until CDI recommended it for my Preliminary College List. They also provided workshops, SAT prep courses and moral support throughout my junior and senior years of high school. I am thankful that CDI is going to counsel and guide me until I obtain my UVA degree. On the other hand, the Rainey Program gave me a head-start on college by enrolling me in summer courses and workshops. It would have been extremely difficult for me to come in the fall without prior knowledge of how the college functioned. However, now I was able to start the fall semester without stress, fear, or intimidation. Programs such as CDI and Rainey not only give first-generation-to-college students a better understanding of how to get into college, but also the chance to be successful once we are there.

Transition to College

In August, CDI offered our 2009 high school graduates a college transition workshop. **Mr. Joe Tavares**, Project Director at the Center for Student Opportunity in Bethesda, Maryland, led a student panel of CDI's Peer Mentors (rising college Sophomores). Mentors shared experiences as eager Mentees asked questions. **Ana Coello**, Gates Millennium Scholarship winner, shared the following:

CDI provided a unique opportunity to talk to college sophomores and other experienced individuals. We were encouraged to ask all kinds of questions. We heard real stories about how to handle challenges in a new environment; this information is not found on Web sites or in glossy brochures. We covered diverse topics, ranging from academic course loads and time-management to roommates and home food. We also spoke about the responsibilities of being an adult and having more independence. It was a very helpful session.

CDI thanks Mr. Tavares for his participation; he is truly dedicated to helping first-generation college-bound students.

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Milestones

Ms. Jenifer's Peace Corps Experience

In July, CDI's Office Coordinator, **Ms. Jamyel Jenifer** (Jam) presented a session on the Peace Corps and highlighted her own experience in Mali, West Africa. Jam's Peace Corps service began in 2006, as a nascent Spelman graduate. She followed her dream to explore the world and rise to new challenges. During her two-year stint, she worked at a local clinic. She also spearheaded several projects including teaching soap-making, launching a sewing class, and educating the villagers about how to use the leaves of the indigenous Moringa tree to fortify their daily diets with essential micronutrients.

Joining the Peace Corps was transformational for Jam. She inspired the Scholars to consider it as a post-college option. It builds confidence and independence; it teaches problem-solving and time-management skills; it shows the value of persistence and humility – all vital life lessons adding to personal growth. In closing she said, "Always give 100% in everything you do – there are no excuses!"

The Road Ahead

September 21	CDI launches its new Web site
September 21	Columbia University visits CDI
September 24-26	NACAC Annual Conference, Baltimore, MD
September 28	Babson College & Stanford University visit CDI
September 30	College of the Holy Cross visits CDI
October 2	Tufts University visits CDI
October 5	Harvey Mudd, Oberlin and Vassar Colleges visit CDI
October 8	Mount Holyoke & Smith Colleges visit CDI
October 11-12	Overnight trip to DePauw University
November 3	Boston College visits CDI
November 5	Swarthmore College visits CDI
November 16	<i>Catalogue for Philanthropy</i> Launch
November 26-27	MCPS Thanksgiving Holiday Break



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