Message From the Executive Director

In a year when the Ron Brown Scholar Program is focusing on demonstrating its “impact”, we have been looking at the widely different but increasingly powerful ways our Scholars are influencing positive change in America and globally. Then, comes the unexpected and timely—a letter we received from Keon Pearson (RBS 2011); a note that makes us realize that “impact” is actually more of a process than an outcome. I’m sharing with you a part of Keon’s letter because it so clearly illustrates why all of you who believe in our Scholars and so generously support the Program are having a positive “impact” on so many lives.

Dear Mr. Mallory and Ms. Evans-Grevious,

I hope this note finds you both well.

I just wanted to take a moment to express my sincere appreciation for the profound way that the Ron Brown Scholar Program has impacted my life. Being at Harvard can be intensely tough at times, especially for people from my background and family situation. However, because of the support of RBSP, I felt secure, supported, and at ease during my college career. Knowing that I would never have to worry about affording books, or making flights home, or getting to medical school interviews across the country made an invaluable contribution to my mental health and well-being. All that I had to do was study hard and be a normal student, and I could rest assured that things would fall into place.

And things have certainly fallen into place! I have had unimaginable journeys across the globe, learned to communicate (admittedly, quite poorly) in two additional languages, experienced running a small non-profit, literally run thousands of miles, fallen in love, developed strong friendships with people from three different continents, deepened my passion for medicine and minority health, and, most recently, gained acceptance into the top medical schools in the country.

So I wanted to thank you both for the excellent work that you do every day. When I heard that all twenty-eight finalists received the scholarship this year, I nearly wept with joy. Twenty-eight lives were forever changed, and it was truly a beautiful moment.

I cannot believe that it has already been four years since my Selection Weekend! I still vividly remember exactly where I was when I got that fateful phone call. Being a Ron Brown Scholar has meant the world to me. Soon enough I plan to be able to contribute my time and treasure to this cause!

Sincerely,
Keon

We have many reasons to celebrate this year. We reached our fundraising goal; we heard from and were inspired by our speakers during the Sixth Annual American Journey Awards, Sam Alemayehu (RBS 2004), the first (but we know far from the last) Ron Brown Scholar to contribute funds to cover a full scholarship for a new Ron Brown Scholar. Sam repeated the word “love” during his speech—and we all understood the profundity of what he was conveying. Donielle Buie, our first Scholar Trustee, gave a stirring speech in which she asked the audience to consider a range of soul-searching questions, concluding with, “Are you ready to go the distance with me, because I am with you?”

We also heard from Ms. Cokie Roberts who paid special tribute to her brother Thomas Hale Boggs, Jr. who passed away in the fall of 2014. Tom was an inspiring friend and supporter of the Program who was instrumental in the naming of the Ron Brown Scholar Program and became dedicated to the success of each Ron Brown Scholar.

Throughout the evening and in every corner of the vast hall, our Scholars connected with friends of the Program, our friends made new friends, and everyone had a good time celebrating a special family of young leaders.

As Keon mentioned, we were able to award a scholarship to each of the twenty-eight finalists—that was the sweetest part of a very sweet weekend. Thank you for being an important part of our family.

Please enjoy the Scholar accomplishments profiled in this newsletter. We hope you will stay in touch with us, connect with a Scholar and keep us in your giving plans.

All the best to you,

Michael A. Mallory
President & Executive Director
Reflections From a 2015 Ron Brown Scholarship Recipient

By: Leah Yared, RBS 2015

I remember sitting there thinking, “Will I hear that right?” I looked around to see my fellow Scholars jumping out of their seats, hugging each other, and crying tears of joy. I’m not much of a crier, but the atmosphere was so moving that many of us got emotional. We had just heard Mr. Mallory say the words: “You ALL won!” With three words, our lives changed forever.

Rewind to the beginning of Selection Weekend. When we were accepted into the 6th Annual Ronald H. Brown American Journey Awards ceremony on Friday night, we were brought into a massive room filled with well-dressed adults. The evening was to honor the legacy of the late Thomas Hale Boggs, Jr. and highlight the accomplishments of our very own Ron Brown Scholar Alumnae Ameeyah and Mr. Thomas Hale Boggs, Jr. as well as their goals and aspirations.

Leah Yared will attend Harvard College in the fall.

There was a genuine feeling to run alongside fellow high-performing black male entrepreneurs and technologists. The Project represents an innovative approach to fulfilling positive societal impact. It also confirms a belief undergirding the uniqueness and success of the Ron Brown Scholar Program. Hidden Genius confirms the realization of a critical aspect of the Program’s initial dream: ‘The vision of Mr. Mal- lory and the Pilaro family was to see our individual missions and aspirations, all the while supporting each other to build towards the greater good. I am extremely proud to be working with high-gauge experts such as Jason and Ty, both of whom I have admired since the very first day I met them. What’s critical is that they share a commitment to building confidence in their students; thus empowering them to persevere through systemic barriers and achieve their dreams. The demand for this work exceeds the current capacity to meet it. The Hidden Genius Project wants to be in the vanguard of meaningful impact in America. ’

Brandon Nicholson (RBS 2001) has been named the Founding Executive Director of the Hidden Genius Project. The mission of the organization conceived of and launched by two Ron Brown Scholar colleagues—Jason Young and Ty Moore—is to be the leading incubator of high-performing black male entrepreneurs and technologists. The Project represents an innovative approach to fulfilling positive societal impact. It also confirms a belief undergirding the uniqueness and success of the Ron Brown Scholar Program. Hidden Genius confirms the realization of a critical aspect of the Program’s initial dream: ‘The vision of Mr. Mallory and the Pilaro family was to see our individual missions and aspirations, all the while supporting each other to build towards the greater good. I am extremely proud to be working with high-gauge experts such as Jason and Ty, both of whom I have admired since the very first day I met them. What’s critical is that they share a commitment to building confidence in their students; thus empowering them to persevere through systemic barriers and achieve their dreams. The demand for this work exceeds the current capacity to meet it. The Hidden Genius Project wants to be in the vanguard of meaningful impact in America. ’

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H e’s a philosopher and a poet, a chess master and a violinist, a published researcher and a Harvard grad—no wonder Malcolm Grayson is at the top of the academic food chain. But when Malcolm found out he was a recipient of the prestigious Michael C. Rockefeller Traveling Fellowship, he decided grad school could wait.

Awarded by members of the Rockefeller family to a select handful of Harvard seniors, the fellowship provides a year’s worth of financial support for unrestricted travel to a foreign country. That’s right: unrestricted. Recipients of this coveted prize get an entire year to enrich their lives outside of academia by doing well, just about whatever they want. With the freedom to go anywhere and do anything, Malcolm plans to hike the length of Japan while memorizing poetry and mastering lucid dreaming. Malcolm will perfect a special memorization technique known as the “Memory Palace” to commit hundreds of poems to memory—a small feat he explains: “A lucid dream is just like a normal dream except for two things: 1) You happen to know that you’re dreaming and 2) You now have full control over what happens in the dream. It’s quite fun manifesting your imagination right before your eyes.”

Malcolm plans to master lucid dreaming and use his skill to design video games, another lifelong passion of his. With a double major and a minor from Harvard (all with honors, by the way), Malcolm works as a private tutor for high-profile clients around the world. Parents book him months in advance to come to their country and teach their kids anything from the SAT to English, poetry to philosophy. Malcolm’s aspirations and his accomplishments to date showcase the range of abilities our Ron Brown Scholars possess.

They are all intellectual standouts, but their dreams move them along unique and diverse paths. Malcolm plans to hike the length of Japan while memorizing poetry and mastering lucid dreaming. Their journey of awakening to master one thing is an important part of the mission of the Ron Brown Scholars Program and it became quite clear that the Ron Brown Scholar Program held a special place in his heart. Tom was truly a private person, almost to the point of being shy, but not when it came to taking the time to help select and mentor the many Scholars who passed through his open door.

Dissussions with Tom’s family cemented the idea that Tom would have been very proud to have an endowed scholarship in his name. We quickly reached out to his family and to a large extended family of friends, sharing favorite stories about Tom and our mutual grief from Tom’s passing. We agreed to try to raise enough money prior to the Sixth Annual American Journey Awards Dinner so we could establish an endowed fund in his name, to fund at least one full scholarship annually. We believe this is an outstanding opportunity to honor Tom and his family and friends that within a very short period of time, the kernel of an idea grew into reality and the first Tom Boggs Scholar has been selected.

The seeds of the Ron Brown family had already been sown, and our family looks out for its own. I went home the following morning thinking back to the phenomenal young men and women I had just met—the quintessence of black excellence. I was humbled and honored to be considered a part of this family. At school, I was always “that kid”—something of an outlier in terms of academics and race. The American Journey Awards dinner taught me that black excellence is not unusual; there are hundreds of role models in this program alone. The wisdom past Scholars bestowed upon us was much different from the usual “Follow your dreams” or “Find your passion”! These were real people (people we could actually relate to!) who found their passion and thrived. I’m sure the RBS Class of 2015 will rise to the occasion of excellence, and I thank everyone who paved the way for us to achieve this honor.

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Congratulations to the 2015 Ron Brown Scholars!

Jason Adulley
Bronx, NY
Regis High School
College: Williams College
Interest: African-American Studies

Akinbode “Levin” I. Akinseye
Frisco, TX
Frisco High School
College: Brown University
Interest: Neuroscience

Andrew O. Bempah
Evanston, IL
Evanston Township High School
College: Stanford University
Interest: Operations Research

Lena F. Blackmon
Val, AZ
University High School
College: Stanford University
Interest: Material Science

Montell D. Brown
Cincinnati, OH
Oak Hills High School
College: University of Pennsylvania
Interest: Biological Basis of Behavior

Caroline E. Hamal
Astoria, NY
Bard High School Early College Queens
College: Columbia University
Interest: Biochemistry/Physics

Malorie C. P. Horton
Upper Darby, PA
Commonwealth Connections Academy
College: Tulane University
Interest: Psychology

Desmond J. Howard
Lexington, KY
Bryan Station High School
College: University of Pennsylvania
Interest: Physics

Taylor L. Howell
Fayetteville, GA
Sandy Creek High School
College: Georgia Institute of Technology
Interest: Chemical Engineering

Briana M. Kille
Alexandria, VA
Thomas Allen Edmon High School
College: Massachusetts Institute of Technology
Interest: Engineering

Devin B. Kilpatrick
Rome, NY
Rome Free Academy
College: Princeton University
Interest: Earth Science

T’Angaria J. Knight
Memphis, TN
Whitehaven High School
College: University of Tennessee
Interest: Marketing/Psychology

Courtney K. Lewis
Kennesaw, GA
The Walker School
College: Emory University
Interest: Neuroscience

Ayanna D. Martin
Collinsville, TN
St. Mary’s Episcopal
College: Vanderbilt University
Interest: Economics

Anthony D. Mayfield
Fort Worth, TX
Boswell High School
College: Stanford University
Interest: Electrical Engineering

Christopher D. McKinnis
Paschen, NC
Paschen High School
College: University of North Carolina - Charlotte
Interest: Meteorology

Tristan J. McLaurin
Conway, MA
Pioneer Valley Performing Arts Charter Public School
College: Massachusetts Institute of Technology
Interest: Mechanical Engineering

DivineAsia E. Miller
Brooklyn, NY
Brooklyn Technical High School
College: Amherst College
Interest: Psychology

Jaylen J. Pittman
Montgomery, AL
LAMP Magnet High School
College: Yale University
Interest: Global Affairs

Raymond E. Pryse, IV
Aurora, CO
East High School
College: Duke University
Interest: Public Policy

Matthew W. Shearin
El Cajon, CA
El Cajon Valley High School
College: Dartmouth College
Interest: Computer Science

Mojique D. Tyler
Brooklyn, NY
Bard High School Early College
College: Yale University
Interest: Physics

Auriel S. Wright
Macon, GA
Northeast High School
College: Harvard College
Interest: Global Healthcare

Leah S. Yared
Rockville, MD
Rockville High School
College: Harvard College
Interest: Government

Chidera C. Onwu
Stockbridge, GA
Dawson College
College: Yale University
Interest: International Relations

Chidera C. Onwu
Stockbridge, GA
Dawson College
College: Yale University
Interest: International Relations

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College: Yale University
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Stockbridge, GA
Dawson College
College: Yale University
Interest: International Relations

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Stockbridge, GA
Dawson College
College: Yale University
Interest: International Relations

Immanuel Foster (2002) is a litigation associate at Skadden, Arps, Slate, Meagher & Flom LLP in Boston.

Brandon Nicholson (2003) is the executive director of The Hidden Genius Project, whose vision is to be the leading incubator of high-performing black male entrepreneurs and technologists. These leaders are committed to mentoring underscored youth and creating a cohesive community of tech innovators who actuate positive, transformational change within their communities. Through its model, The Hidden Genius Project aims to offer workforce and economic development as a means to effect a positive societal impact.

Tristan Ivory (2000) is currently putting the fundamentals on his dissertation and should be done this upcoming June.

Tracy "Ty" Moore II (2002) is busy managing the research contract that MindBlown Labs was awarded by the U.S. Treasury Department. In addition, he’s reaching out to people in the community that would like to use their best-in-class financial capability game and lessons plans. Shorty, he’ll be joining Jason Young (2004) in the White House at the President’s Advisory Council on Integrity and2015 National Initiative University conference in Miami. 

Eddie Martin, Jr. (2000) is continuing his work as a special assistant at the U.S. Department of Education’s Center for Faith-Based and Neighborhood Partnerships, an initiative that is part of the White House Office of Faith-Based and Neighborhood Partnerships. He is also serving as chaplain (captain) of the 400th Military Police Battalion at Fort Meade and the youth pastor at Nineteenth Street Baptist Church in Washington, DC.


Faith Jackson (2012) was recently elected president of Read Between the Minds, an e-mentoring, non-profit organization she co-founded in 2008. She is really excited about making it her main focus outside of school, and the organization is currently part of the Venture Incubation Program at Harvard Business School. She is still deciding her plans for the summer, but hopes that the summer involves both productivity and relaxation.

Matt Wood (2013) is striving to finish his sophomore year strongly, will be in NYC as a summer analyst for Credit Suisse, and looks forward to finalizing his plans to continue his studies in Brazil in the fall.

Crystal Boyle (2006) is alive and well in Berlin, researching best literacy practices for teaching refugees in the school system as part of the Alexander Von Humboldt Fellowship. She’s creating with her production company and the team is working on pitching Downtown Girls and developing it into a TV show. This summer she will be meeting Angela Merkel for dinner with her program, and living in Barcelona and parts of Greece.

Sharlene Brown (2004) is working as a management consultant for Accenture. She remains very involved in the education space and joined the founding governance board of a new school opening in East LA.

Chand Washington (2011) will be working at Goldman Sachs in New York as an analyst for the Private Wealth Management division after graduating from Harvard College.

Michael Mekonnen (2009) just returned from a very refreshing and wonderful trip to Ethiopia (9 years after arriving in the US!), and just moved past the one-year anniversary as a software engineer at Google. “I have learned and grown in many ways in this first year, and look forward to the same amount, if not more, of growth in the coming year.”

Jordan Abston-Harmon (2013) transferred to Harvard College in the fall. He leads a program with the Institute of Politics that discuss the intersection of race and politics, competes on the Harvard Mock Trial team, and volunteers with a group that tutors incarcerated youth once a week. He will intern at the New York office of McKinsey & Company this summer.

Julius Mitchell (2009) has just returned from backpacking in southern China, Singapore, and the Philippines to celebrate his New Year. As his teaching fellowship with the China-Asia Exchange Continues this next June, he is preparing applications to a wide range of finance, legal, research and consulting positions.

Jade Craig (2002) was married on September 22, 2014. He and his wife Jamie currently live in Washington, DC. With the help of Ron Brown Scholar Program mentors, he received a presidential appointment in the Obama Ad- ministration. He serves as the Special Policy Advisor to the Assistant Secretary for Fair Housing and Equal Opportunity at the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD).

Malcolm Grayson (2011) is about to graduate from Harvard College with a degree in philosophy. After graduation he plans spend a year living in the wilderness of Japan, memo- rizing poetry and mastering lucid dreaming.

Brennan Gould (2011) is director of pro- grams at the Charlottesville Area Community Foundation and oversees the Foundation’s grantmaking and strategic community development initia- tives. She and her husband Andie are awaiting with great excitement the arrival of their little girl in June.

Folake Donsu (2007) is the marketing man- ager at Boltier, an online marketplace where emerging consumer and manufacturing businesses can access growth capital from a network of accredited investors. Check the new front page design was designed for the underclassman “who has made notable achievements in promoting elements of black culture such as art, dance, or other artistic expression.” She has also received an award for the Onyx Senior Society’s Freshman Honor Roll. She will be interning in Manhattan with Vacum and will be working on a project in the Content Distribution and Marketing division, and is very excited to learn about the mass media industry in this very hands-on manner.

Vitoria Offiel-Dua (2014) will be having a low key summer and taking summer courses for her pre-med prerequisites and shadowing at the Huntsville hospital. She is also interested in her pre-med courses so that she can study abroad in the UK during the spring semester of her junior year.

Dorian Dargan (2007) leads Product at You-Now, a fast-growing live video social network & venture-backed tech startup in NYC. He and his wife are expecting a baby girl in May.

Camille Everhart (2009) is currently finish- ing up her Master’s in Mechanical Engineering at Stanford, and will be taking her qualification exam for Ph.D. candidacy in the spring.

Bryant Watson (2006) is headed to Yale Law School this fall.

Frederik Groce (2010) is currently working as a Lead Engineer at Stanford Student Enterprises. He has just re-signed for another year and is excited to continue his work with the orga- nization. One of the big projects he’s been inves- ting a lot of his time on is creating a brand new incubator for Stanford start-ups called Cardinal Ventures.

Jasmine Browne (2007) is currently supporting the testing and commissioning of a new ventilation machine for Pfizer in Barcelona and parts of Greece.

Sharlene Brown (2004) is currently the global digital product director of Havas World- wide, where she was recently selected as one of 46 Havas employees (out of the 16,000 per- son employee base) for Havas CEO Yannick Bolloré’s inaugural class of next generation leaders, which guides high-performance managers for executive leadership positions within the company. She was also recently tapped to write a column on technology trends for The Drum.

Gomian Konneh (2014) was awarded the “Intercultural Award” from the University of Pennsylvania’s Onyx Senior Honor Society, which is awarded to the recent freshman who has made notable achievements in promoting elements of black culture such as art, dance, or other artistic expression.” She has also received an award for the Onyx Senior Society’s Freshman Honor Roll. She will be interning in Manhattan with Viam and will be working on a project in the Content Distribution and Marketing division, and is very excited to learn about the mass media industry in this very hands-on manner.

Botta Ali (2003) just returned from a trip to Nigeria for family weddings and connecting with the leaders of Nigeria. She joined the research and advocacy team at Choices in Childbirth in New York City, and launched her in-home women’s massage therapy and preventive medicine practice: www.Creative- Rebirth.com.

William Chichester, III (2001) has celebrated his first-year wedding anniversary to his beauti- ful wife, Ivy. He spent his anniversary in St. John’s Virgin Islands. He continues to reside in the Yale-Capital One’s diversity campus recruiting efforts.

Chaz Beasley (2004) is finishing up his term as the president of the Young Democrats of America in South Carolina.

Jennifer Green (2003) currently serves as Vice President and Counsel at Credit Suisse.

Andrea Headley (2010) is finishing up her second year as a doctoral student studying the politics of crime control. Her current research has centered on prison privatization and police-community relations.

Mondaire Jones (2005) is currently finishing his junior year at Harvard College. He’s currently planning his senior thesis on race consciousness and social mobility of African- American communities in the South, which will begin in May of 2015. Besides senior thesis research, Miles will continue his work as treasurer and CEO of the Phillips Brooks House Association (PBHA) this summer. A student-run nonprofit, PBHA is Harvard’s largest service organization, running over 80 after-school, mentoring, adult services, advoca- cy and summer learning programs annually.

Miles Mabrouth (2012) is currently working at Bank of America in NYC as a senior financial analyst supporting FICC Emerging Markets Finance. In February 2015, he was promoted to assistant vice president. In addition to work, he has been preparing for the GMAT with hopes of attending business school in the near future.

Malcolm Grayson (2011) is currently the global digital product director of Havas World- wide, where she was recently selected as one of 46 Havas employees (out of the 16,000 per- son employee base) for Havas CEO Yannick Bolloré’s inaugural class of next generation leaders, which guides high-performance managers for executive leadership positions within the company. She was also recently tapped to write a column on technology trends for The Drum.

Kajoli Ningiwa (2009) is finishing his third year of a PhD program at Northwestern University in the School of Education and Social Policy. He is beginning his dissertation research on the moral socialization involved in engaging with hip-hop music.

Clarence Brown (2013) is currently working as a assistant manager at Google in NYC as a senior financial analyst supporting FICC Emerging Markets Finance. In February 2015, he was promoted to assistant vice president. In addition to work, he has been preparing for the GMAT with hopes of attending business school in the near future.

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Ron Brown Scholars Celebrate the Success of Playwright Katori Hall, RBS 1999

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Scholar Updates (cont’d); Save the Date

Ron Brown Scholars
What Are They Up to NOW?
Spring 2015

(Continued From Page 9)

an innovation and leadership academy for Black students called Enza Academy (www. enzaacademy.org) which operates in the Bay Area and New York City. It was inspired by Ron Brown.

Danai Kadzere (2010) is working with her editor/publishing team to put the final touches on The Princess Games coming July 27, 2015 to bookstores and libraries across the USA and Canada.

Jeanine Pollard (2005) is looking forward to her summer internship with the Smithsonian Center for Learning and Digital Access.

Charday Ife (2010) is at USC finishing up her fifth year double-majoring in African-American Studies and Economics.

Fatima Loeliger (2007) is living and working in NYC as Creative Director for TheMuse.com, an online job search platform focused on the millennial job-seeker. She is loving learning more and more about the tech space and can’t wait for summer.

Natalie Davis (2005) is in the final stages of her dissertation proposal. Her study will investigate Black students’ political and intellectual agency across contexts (i.e. within one African-centered and one place-based school).

Amber Bailey (2009) was named as a 2015 Advocacy Scholar for Preservation Action. She is a public historian committed to using the past to educate and engage her community and adopted hometown of Chicago. Her interest in historic preservation is rooted in her desire to be a steward and advocate for marginalized communities and historic places within them. To this end, she is especially interested in how historic preservation can be used as a tool to revitalize economically depressed areas.

Maia Roberson (2011) has decided to attend the University of Utah to pursue a PhD.

Carolanne Sanders (2009) has decided on the University of Washington to get her Master of Public Health in Community Oriented Public Health Practice with a concentration in health policy. She moves to Seattle in the fall.

Save the Date

IMPACT:
Ron Brown Scholars
Catalyzing Change in Our Communities and the World

Mark Your Calendars for the Annual Ron Brown Scholar Summer Reunion and Leadership Summit

Offices of Deloitte
Arlington, VA
August 7-9, 2015

More details to come!

Our Partners

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