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EDUCATION FOUNDATION

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THE IDEAL EDUCATION FOUNDATION  
CELEBRATES THE 30TH

INFINITE HOPE  
SCHOLARSHIP GALA

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 15, 2025

167 N GREEN ST, CHICAGO, IL 60607

THE CELEBRATION BEGINS AT NOON



167  
EVENTS



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The IDEal Education Foundation extends its sincere appreciation to our esteemed sponsors for their generous contributions to both the foundation and our gala. Your support plays a vital role in advancing our mission and making a meaningful impact.

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- JOHN W.LEE III



## EDUCATION FOUNDATION

Greetings to Our Honored Guests,

On behalf of the Board of Trustees of the IDEaL Education Foundation, it is my pleasure to welcome you to the 2025 Infinite Hope Scholarship Gala held in memory of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. With heartfelt appreciation and gratitude, thank you for your support of the Foundation and our community partners. We are extremely excited to be able to share the great work that we've accomplished during the last year as we continue to work with local youth and advocate for safer communities free of gun violence. This year's Gala is especially memorable as it marks 32 years of committed service and impact by the Foundation in the Chicagoland Community and our 30th Annual Scholarship Fundraiser.

Generous donors like you have enabled the Foundation to award in excess of \$295,000 in scholarships and benefits to hundreds of high school and college students since our inception; to sponsor over a hundred students who have attended various Leadership Development Institutes across the Midwest; to support Cub Scout Pack 350 and BSA Troop 350 in the Dolton/Riverdale/Burnham communities for over nineteen years; to mentor outstanding young men from Leo Catholic High School for the last eight years and most recently, students attending Kenwood Academy High School. Our students have graduated from college and entered the workforce as educators, engineers, scientist, physicians, computer specialists and businessmen. Your generosity has opened doors for young people that otherwise may have remained closed for a lifetime.

As we celebrate thirty+ years of service, we realize there's still much more work to be done. That's why we launched a Gun Violence Prevention Initiative in partnership with the Illinois Criminal Justice Information Authority (ICJIA) and the Black Community Provider Network (BCPN). Over 3 weekends, we mentored dozens of young men at UCAN Chicago to reduce the incidence of gun violence in the south and westsides, thus positioning them for a brighter future with endless possibilities.

We hope you enjoy the program this afternoon and we humbly request your financial gifts later in the program as we share additional opportunities (50/50 Raffle, auctioning of original paintings, paddle raise) to partner with us as we continue to make a difference in Chicago and its surrounding areas.

Yours in service,

*Marcus A. Payne*  
Chairman, Board of Trustees  
IDEaL Education Foundation





## **Greetings and Salutations,**

It is with great honor and immense gratitude that I stand before you as the incoming President of Iota Delta Lambda Chapter and welcome you to the 30th Annual Infinite Hope Scholarship Gala. Today, we gather not only to celebrate this milestone but also to reaffirm our unwavering commitment to empowering the next generation of young Black men through education.

For three decades, the IDeaL Educational Foundation has served as a beacon of hope, providing scholarships and resources to talented, driven students who aspire to achieve greatness. Our mission is deeply rooted in the principles of leadership, service, and brotherhood—values that continue to inspire us to make a lasting impact in our communities.

As we look around this room, we see the strength of a collective vision—the unwavering support of our members, partners, and donors who believe in the power of education as a transformative tool. Your generosity, whether through contributions, sponsorships, or silent acts of support, has fueled this initiative, ensuring that countless young scholars have the opportunity to pursue higher education and realize their dreams.

To our scholarship recipients, you are the reason we are here. Your resilience, ambition, and dedication remind us why we must continue this important work. You represent the future, and it is our privilege to invest in your success. As Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. so profoundly stated, "Intelligence plus character—that is the goal of true education." Today, we celebrate you and the boundless possibilities that lie ahead.

I must also take a moment to acknowledge our immediate past President, Dr. Keith McGee, for his outstanding leadership and dedication to this chapter and foundation. His contributions have been instrumental in bringing us to this moment, and I am honored to build upon the foundation he has laid.

Brothers and distinguished guests, as we celebrate this momentous occasion, let us renew our commitment to this cause. The road ahead is filled with challenges, but together, we can continue to elevate our legacy through leadership, service, and brotherhood.

Thank you for your presence, your support, and your belief in the power of education. Let's enjoy this afternoon and, most importantly, let's continue to make a difference.

**Fraternally,  
Bro. Donald L. Ramsey Jr.  
President, Iota Delta Lambda Chapter  
Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity, Inc.**

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Trustee and Director of Educational Activities, Cortez Watkins, would like to extend his heartfelt congratulations to the awardees on receiving their scholarships. Your dedication to academic excellence and commitment to your future have earned you this well-deserved recognition. We celebrate your hard work and perseverance and look forward to seeing all that you will accomplish.

This achievement is not only a testament to your diligence but also a reflection of the support and encouragement from your families, mentors, and educators who have guided you along the way. Education is a powerful tool that opens doors to endless opportunities, and we are confident that you will use this scholarship to further your knowledge, expand your horizons, and positively impact your communities. Your success serves as an inspiration to others, demonstrating that with determination and focus, anything is possible.

As you embark on this next chapter, remember that learning is a lifelong journey, and the skills and knowledge you acquire will shape the path ahead. Embrace every challenge as a chance to grow, and continue striving for excellence in all that you do. We look forward to witnessing your continued success and the contributions you will make to society. Congratulations once again, and best wishes for a bright and promising future!

**Yours in service,**

**Cortez Watkins**

**Trustee and Director of Educational Activities  
IDEaL Education Foundation**



To the Brothers of Iota Delta Lambda,

I want to thank you for your service to the Chicagoland community. The impact that you have made on the lives of families is immeasurable.

To chapter leadership and the IDEAL Educational Foundation's leadership, I commend you on your investment in our youth, who need our guidance more now than ever.

Finally, to the planning committee for the Infinite Hope Scholarship Gala, your commitment to excellence is a testament to who we are as Alpha men and as supporters of education.

Much success on your gala!

Fraternally rooted,

*Franklin Stacy, Jr.*

Brother Franklin Stacy, Jr.  
29th Midwestern Regional Vice President  
Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity, Incorporated.





# THE DISTRICT OF ILLINOIS

*Congratulates*

**THE BROTHERS OF IOTA DELTA LAMBDA  
ON A SUCCESSFUL INFINITE HOPE SCHOLARSHIP GALA**



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SERVICE TO YOUTH AND YOUNG PEOPLE!**



**IOTA DELTA LAMBDA  
CHAPTER #505**

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ON BEING COMMITTED TO DEDICATED SERVICE  
AND EMPOWERING YOUTH FOR OVER 30 YEARS!



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**S.S. T.N.T.**

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JONES II★WATKINS III★JONES JR.★MCGEE I★FLINT JR.★WILLIAMS★TREADWELL

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For over 30 years of unwavering dedication  
to uplifting and empowering youth!



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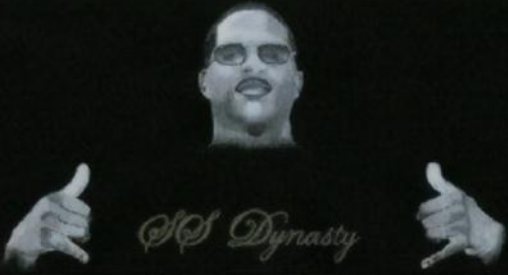
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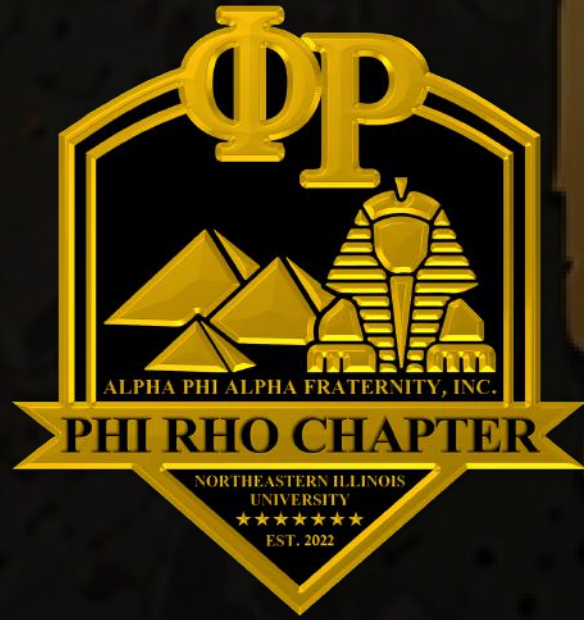


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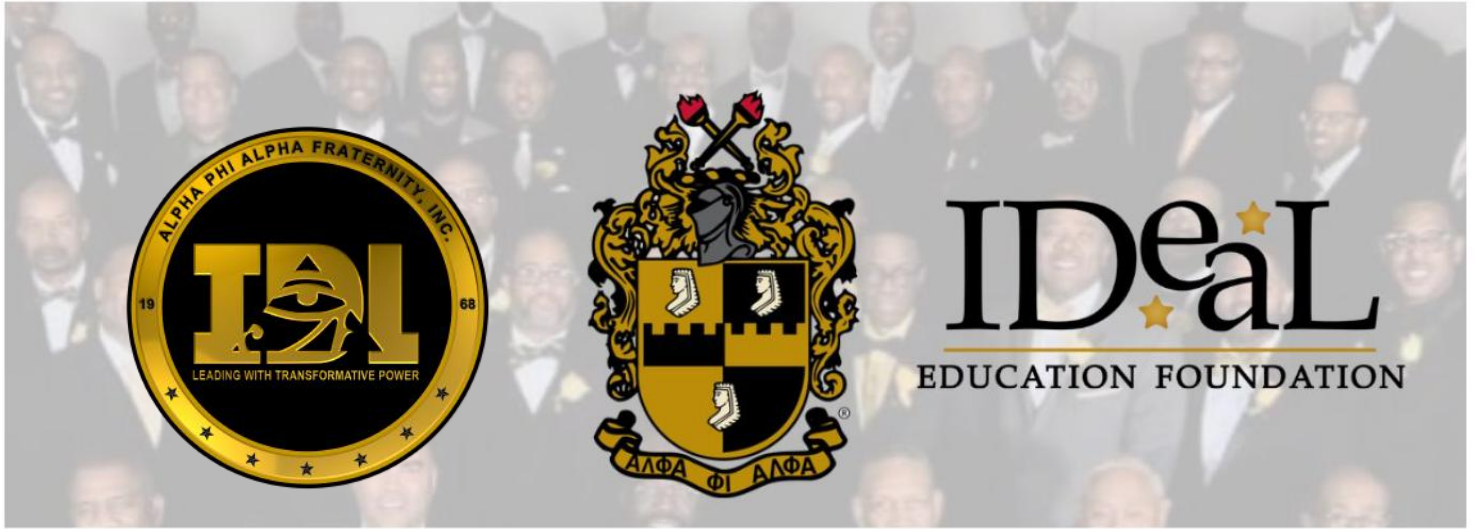
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# Xi Lambda Chapter

**Congratulates the  
*Ideal Education Foundation***



on their

**30th Annual Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.  
Infinite Hope Scholarship Gala**

Proving yet again that Alphas develops leaders,  
promotes brotherhood and academic excellence while  
providing service and advocacy for our communities.



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**DAR'TAVOUS DORSEY**

Brother Jaylen Burns Gun Violence Awareness Award Recipient

**for striving to make Chicago a safer place**



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Family Medicine



**Kristen Hainey, MMS, PA-C**  
Family Medicine

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**Josephine Minnicino, MD**  
Family Medicine



**Imaobong Udonkang, APRN, FNP-C**  
Family Medicine

## MATTESON

20939 S. Cicero Ave.



**Dorothy Jones, MD**  
Internal Medicine



**Leonard Robinson, MD**  
Internal Medicine



**Lance Wallace, MD**  
Internal Medicine



**Ann Waldron, RN, MSN, AGPCNP-BC**  
Family Medicine

## OLYMPIA FIELDS

3700 W. 203rd St.



**Marie Baird, DO**  
Family Medicine



**Richard Ceragioli, MD**  
Pediatrics



**Joseph Guan, MD, MPH**  
Internal Medicine



**Prince Hodgobey, MD**  
Family Medicine



**Caroline Kim, DO**  
Family Medicine



**Ira Kumar, MD**  
Pediatrics



**Justin Li, DO**  
Internal Medicine



**Neela Patel, MD**  
Pediatrics



**Michael Settecase, DO**  
Family Medicine



**Mohammad Wadud, DO**  
Family Medicine



**Larina Branch, FNP-BC**  
Family Medicine



**Lisa Fantroy, PA-C**  
Family Medicine

## TINLEY PARK

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**Kathleen Bewley-Thomas, DO, FAAFP**  
Family Medicine



**Marjorie Craig, FNP-BC**  
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## Organization History

Conceptualized in 2016 as a part of co-founder Dr. Darryl Hylton's doctoral research, Dr. Hylton wanted to examine the impact of mentoring on the persistence of African-American males at predominately white institutions (PWIs). What started off as two-sections of a First Year Seminar class has now expanded into the organization we see today.

## Mission

To increase the persistence and graduation rates of collegiate Black men.

## Goals & Objectives

1. To **support** students matriculating towards degree completion.
2. To **increase** awareness of issues affecting Black men in society.
3. To **connect** students with resources to aid their personal and professional growth.
4. To **develop** students to be leaders amongst their peers.
5. To **serve** through various community service projects and initiatives to help elevate our communities.



## Our Framework

**Direct Service:** Providing cohort style personal, professional, leadership development, and professional mentorship through the **ONYX25 Recognition & Leadership program.**

**Indirect Service:** Supporting collegiate Black men across the nation through the establishment and sustainability of **collegiate chapters.**

**SINCE 2020, THE COLLEGIATE BLACK MALE NETWORK SERVES AS A CHAMPION FOR BLACK MEN PURSUING A COLLEGE DEGREE.**

We pride ourselves on creating an environment where Black men feel safe, heard, and valued.

**50+**

students, to date, a part of the organization

**15**

colleges/universities represented nationwide

**100%**

of program alumni have post-graduate placement (i.e. graduate/professional school, career employment)



**EVERY BLACK MALE DESERVES A COLLEGE DEGREE!**





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# INFINITE HOPE SCHOLARSHIP GALA

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 15, 2025

SCHOLARSHIP AWARDEE

DONTE AND  
KUIANA CLEAVES  
SCHOLARSHIP

MASON MICOU

WHITNEY YOUNG  
MAGNET HS

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SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 15, 2025

SCHOLARSHIP AWARDEE

EDDIE JONES  
MEMORIAL  
SCHOLARSHIP

FARUQ GAJI

NORTHEASTERN  
ILLINOIS  
UNIVERSITY

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SCHOLARSHIP AWARDEE

INGREDION INC.  
STEM SCHOLARSHIP

CARLIN HENRY

LEO CATHOLIC  
HIGH SCHOOL

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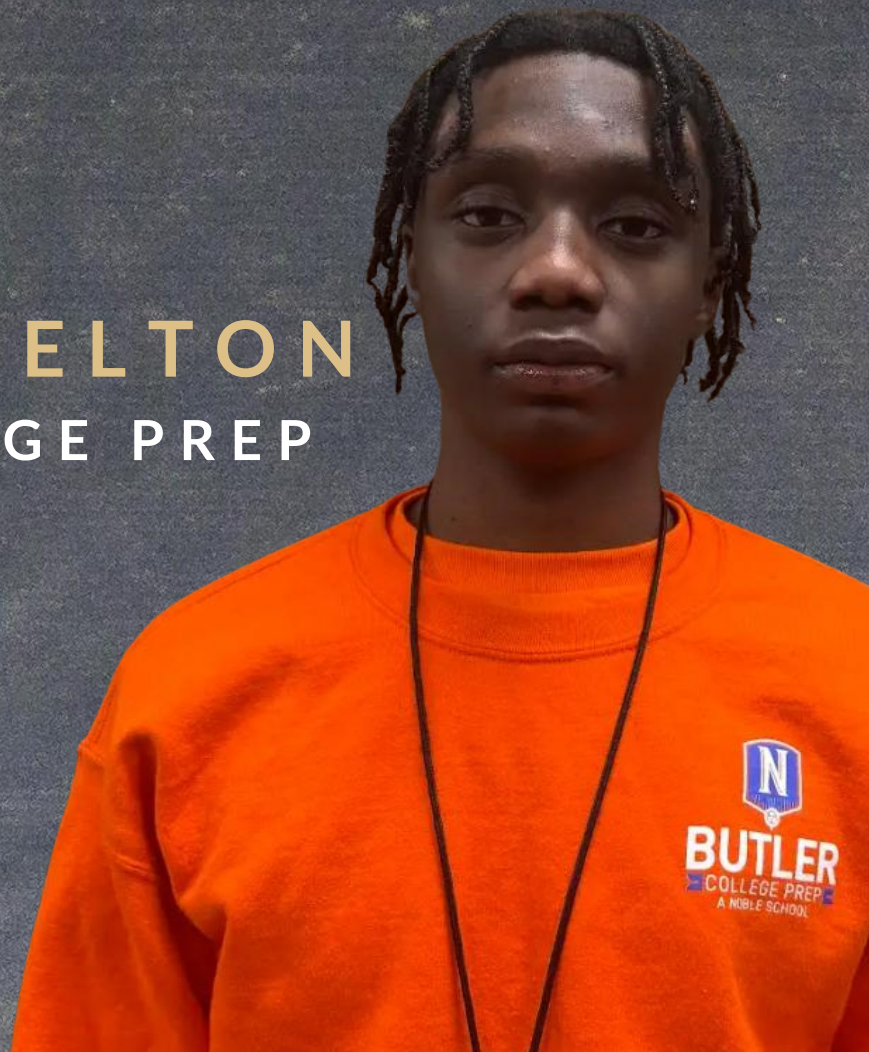
SCHOLARSHIP AWARDEE

IDEAL EDUCATION  
FOUNDATION  
MLK SCHOLARSHIP

CONNER SHELTON  
BUTLER COLLEGE PREP

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SCHOLARSHIP AWARDEE

IDEAL EDUCATION  
FOUNDATION  
MLK SCHOLARSHIP

DAYO BABATUNDE

NORTHWESTERN  
UNIVERSITY

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SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 15, 2025

SCHOLARSHIP AWARDEE

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FOUNDATION  
MLK SCHOLARSHIP

JOSHUA SMITH

LEO CATHOLIC  
HIGH SCHOOL

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FOUNDATION  
MLK SCHOLARSHIP

KARIM HASSAN  
KENWOOD ACADEMY  
HIGH SCHOOL

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FOUNDATION  
MLK SCHOLARSHIP

LORDAN BLACK

LEO CATHOLIC  
HIGH SCHOOL

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SCHOLARSHIP AWARDEE

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FOUNDATION  
MLK SCHOLARSHIP

OMARI KAMAL JR.

LINDBLOM MATH &  
SCIENCE ACADEMY

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SCHOLARSHIP AWARDEE

PAYNE-GRAHAM  
& HARDING  
MLK SCHOLARSHIP

EVAN BATSON  
WHITNEY YOUNG  
MAGNET HS

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SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 15, 2025

**HONORS COMMUNITY AWARDEE**

**THE JAYLEN BURNS GUARDIANS  
AGAINST GUN VIOLENCE AWARD**

**CARMICHAEL LEWIS**



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**Carmichael Lewis is a Chicago police officer, life coach, author, screenplay writer, and community leader dedicated to empowering young people and strengthening the relationship between youth and law enforcement. A proud Chicago native, he overcame early challenges— including arrests and academic setbacks—to become a force for transformation. With over 15 years in law enforcement, he is committed to public safety and holds a Master's in Public Safety Administration and a Bachelor's in Criminal Justice. His dedication has earned him several Life-Saving Awards and The Superintendent Award of Valor.**

**As the Founder and Executive Director of Youth & Blue United Inc., Carmichael works to bridge the gap between law enforcement and urban youths through mentorship, leadership development, and innovative programs. His organization prioritizes keeping students in school by offering alternatives to suspension and detention through The Pivot Program: Redirecting Students for Excellence & Transformation, a diversion initiative that provides guidance rather than punishment. Additionally, Ignite Your Purpose is a transformative program designed to inspire and empower youths through mentorship, leadership development, and personal growth opportunities. Through these initiatives, Youth & Blue United fosters trust, collaboration, and lasting change among young people and law enforcement.**

**Beyond his career, Carmichael is deeply involved in schools, churches and detention centers, using his experiences to inspire and uplift the next generation. His mission is to ensure that every young person has the support, mentorship, and resources needed to succeed."**

**Linktr.ee: <https://linktr.ee/carmichaellewis>**

**Website: <https://youthandblueunited.org/>**

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**HONORS COMMUNITY AWARDEE**

**THE JAYLEN BURNS GUARDIANS  
AGAINST GUN VIOLENCE AWARD**

**DAR'TAVOUS DORSEY**



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**Dar'tavous Dorsey is a lifelong Chicagoan and the Director of Strategic Partnerships and Community Engagement at the University of Chicago's Crime Lab and Education Lab. With over 20 years of experience advocating for youth of color, he specializes in social-emotional learning, restorative practices, youth intervention, and mentoring.**

**He is the CEO & Lead Consultant of Dorsey Strategies & Advisory Firm, LLC, and the Founder of the E.Y.E. LEAD Foundation, which provides leadership opportunities and resources for young men of color, focusing on violence prevention, youth homelessness, and academic and career readiness.**

**Dar'tavous serves as the External Affairs and Committee Chair for the Gun Violence Prevention Expo with Strides for Peace Organization and sits on several advisory boards, including the State of Illinois Children and Family Services Advisory Council and COPA. His work has been featured in Chicago Sun-Times, WGN, ABC7, CBS, NBC, Politico, Better Government Association, and NBA Voices Champions.**

**He is a WVON 40 Under 40 Game Changer recipient, a proud member of Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity, Inc. and 100 Black Men, Inc., and actively involved in multiple community ventures. In his spare time, he enjoys spending time with his village, mentoring, running, cycling, and caring for his dogs. Committed to uplifting communities, he continues to drive change through advocacy, leadership, and strategic partnerships.**

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## HONORS COMMUNITY AWARDEE LEGACY OF HOPE AWARD



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R.A.G.E. ENGLEWOOD



**The Resident Association of Greater Englewood (R.A.G.E.) is a resident-led organization dedicated to uplifting and transforming Englewood through grassroots initiatives focused on Youth Development, Economic Justice, and Civic Engagement & Empowerment. Through programs like the Re-Up Our Future (ROF) Program, created and implemented in 2021, the Re-Up Our Future Scholarship has provided over 65 scholarships to Englewood scholars pursuing higher education. Scholars also receive mentorship and leadership training, ensuring they have the resources and support needed for academic and professional success. The Re-Up Economic Upliftment Program focuses on bridging economic disparities by providing financial literacy education, workforce development, and entrepreneurial support to residents, helping them achieve financial stability and growth.**

**The R.A.G.E. Ambassadors Program empowers community members with leadership development and advocacy training, fostering civic engagement and collective action. Additionally, R.A.G.E. spearheads initiatives such as Buy the Block, equipping aspiring homeowners and landlords with financial literacy and real estate knowledge to promote generational wealth within Englewood. With a block-by-block approach, R.A.G.E. mobilizes residents, connects businesses, and implements transformative programs that create lasting impact, making Englewood a model of community-driven change.**

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**HONORS COMMUNITY AWARDEE**  
**HARMONY IN THE ARTS AWARD**

**LEKEYA SHEARILL-POWEL**

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**Lekeya Shearrill-Powell has a BA in Theatre Education from Illinois State University and a Master of Arts in Teaching from Roosevelt University. She began her career in education as a second-grade teacher, creating songs and dances to teach concepts in Language Arts, Math, Science, and Social Studies.**

**Five years later, she founded Keys2broadway Educational Theatre company to remove logistical barriers preventing elementary and middle school students from receiving arts programming. Keys2broadway partnered with schools to provide quality onsite after-school Arts programming to every interested 3rd - 8th grade student, ultimately serving over 500 students per year from 2014 - 2020.**



**Lekeya is currently a Theatre Teacher at Ryder Math and Science Specialty school and is once again immersing students in the transformative power of the arts.**

THE IDEAL EDUCATION FOUNDATION CELEBRATES THE 30TH


# INFINITE HOPE SCHOLARSHIP GALA

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 15, 2025




## HONORS COMMUNITY AWARDEE TECH TRAILBLAZER AWARD






**NSBE Founders  
Dr. Arthur J. Bond  
& the Chicago Six**



**Dr. Bond, PhD EE**  
1968 Picture of Arthur Bond



**Edward Coleman, BSME**      **Anthony Harris, BSME**      **Brian Harris, BSIDE**



**Stanley Kirtley, BSCE**      **John Logan, BSCE**      **George Smith, BSEE**

1971 Pictures of the Chicago Six      SBE Logo Designer is George Smith

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**NSBE**  
PROFESSIONALS  
National Society of Black Engineers  
**CHICAGO**

The African American engineering students who came to Purdue University in the early 1970s were small in number, but they came with big dreams. The Civil Rights Movement had brought progress but also unfulfilled promises of social and economic equality. Aspiring Black Engineers at Purdue wanted to see more of their people and their communities empowered by knowledge of STEM.

Purdue undergraduates Edward Barnette Jr. and Fred Cooper teamed with their faculty advisor, Arthur Bond, Ph.D., to launch a campus organization, the Black Society of Engineers (BSE), in 1971. For the next four years, the work of this student group helped significantly increase the recruitment and retention of Black engineering scholars at Purdue.

In 1973, under the leadership of six close-knit Purdue engineering students from Chicago — Edward A. Coleman, Anthony Harris, Brian Harris, Stanley L. Kirtley, John W. Logan Jr. and George A. Smith — the BSE changed its name to the Society of Black Engineers (SBE) and a year later launched an effort to create a national organization to increase the number of Blacks in the engineering profession across the U.S. Letters of invitation mailed nationwide by the SBE drew 134 students from 28 schools to a gathering on April 10–12, 1975, at Purdue, where the National Society of Black Engineers (NSBE) was established.

## Vision

We envision a world in which engineering is a mainstream word in homes and communities of color, and all Black students can envision themselves as engineers. In this world, Blacks exceed parity in entering engineering fields, earning degrees, and succeeding professionally.

## Who We Are

A beacon of excellence, the National Society of Black Engineers (NSBE) stands as one of the largest student-governed organizations based in the U.S. NSBE champions the dreams and ambitions of collegiate and pre-collegiate students, as well as technical professionals, in engineering and technology fields. Boasting more than 700 chapters and a membership exceeding 24,000 around the globe, NSBE advances a critical mission: “to increase the number of culturally responsible Black Engineers who excel academically, succeed professionally, and positively impact the community.”

With a legacy spanning 50 years, NSBE has birthed countless businesses, empowered corporate leaders, moved multitudes of engineers to graduation, and enriched STEM education for hundreds of thousands of K–12 students worldwide. In essence, NSBE members, chapters, and supporters are fervently committed to shaping a brighter future where Black excellence reigns supreme.

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# INFINITE HOPE SCHOLARSHIP GALA

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 15, 2025

HONORS COMMUNITY AWARDEE  
EDUCATIONAL EQUITY AWARD

ONJALIQUE CLARK

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**Onjalique Clark is a Health Science Advisor and North Central Region Advisory Board member for Otsuka Pharmaceuticals, with over 20 years of experience. She has a sincere passion for improving lives through education and mental health. This role affords her these opportunities to have a positive effect on the quality of patient lives. Charity and philanthropy are also core values for Onjalique that know no boundaries. Whether from her early days in Girl Scouts, or as a tutor and University Ambassador, or her other extensive volunteer partnerships, she continues dedicated service that helps to support, train and develop the local community.**

**Additionally, she is part of a global Alliance of Women who donate supplies to deprived health centers in Sierra Leone, as well as books, shoes and scholarships to children in Ghana. Finally, as a thirty-nine-year member of Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc., initiated at Cornell University in 1986, she's held numerous leadership positions in her local graduate chapter, and served on Regional and International committees. Onjalique's greatest joys are mentoring, community service and creating meaningful impacts on the lives of others, at home and abroad!**

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# INFINITE HOPE SCHOLARSHIP GALA

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 15, 2025

HONORS COMMUNITY AWARDEE  
HOPEFUL MINDS ADVOCACY AWARD

KESHA HAMMOND



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**Kesha Hammond currently serves as a manager at the Blue Door Neighborhood Center<sup>SM</sup> in Pullman and Morgan Park. BDNC<sup>SM</sup> is Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Illinois' first community-based wellness center. In her role, she leads a team in the strategic planning and implementation of health and wellness programs. With a master's in public health and counseling, Kesha is in the final stages of completing her doctorate in community care and counseling, with an emphasis in pastoral counseling. Kesha is also a licensed clinical professional counselor and owner of Ascend Counseling & Wellness, Inc.**

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# INFINITE HOPE SCHOLARSHIP GALA

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 15, 2025

HONORS COMMUNITY AWARDEE  
*UNSUNG HERO AWARD*

AARON RUCKER

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**Aaron Rucker is a dedicated educator, veteran, retired Chicago police officer, and community advocate with a lifelong commitment to service and leadership. Born and raised in Chicago's West Pullman and Roseland neighborhoods, he developed resilience, persistence, and a deep appreciation for education from an early age. After earning multiple degrees, including a doctorate from Seton Hall University, he built a career in education and currently serves as Principal of William H. Ryder Math and Science Academy.**

**A decorated Army veteran, Aaron has demonstrated leadership in both military and civilian life, mentoring and promoting future leaders. His service also includes years as an officer with the Chicago Police Department, where he worked to protect and serve his community. His passion for service extends to caring for his mother, who suffered a stroke in 2018, inspiring him to advocate for elder care and volunteer as a caregiver.**

**Happily married, Aaron is a devoted husband and father to a son and daughter. As he approaches retirement, his focus remains on health, family, and making a lasting impact on his community. A proud member of Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity, Inc., he continues his lifelong mission of scholarship, service, and brotherhood, earning the respect of his peers as a true "brother's brother."**

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SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 15, 2025

## THANK YOU TO OUR TRUSTEES

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