



RAINIER SCHOLARS



Rainier Scholars | Four Phases

Transitions and Transformation

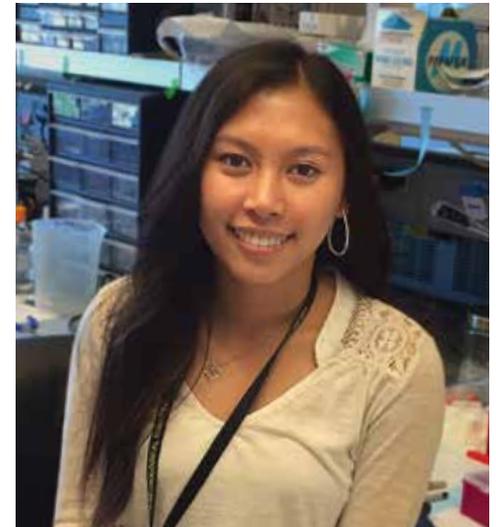
By Tom Moore

The mission of Rainier Scholars is to cultivate academic potential and help break down barriers to a quality education for low-income students of color. It is also about helping scholars and their families navigate the long and complicated pathway to higher education and a college of their choosing. It is a pathway that is well worn for families with college degrees and generational expectations of attending a four year school.

This “college-going culture” – one where parents and siblings have attended college – is unfamiliar territory for the

This is why Rainier Scholars is a 12-year program. As children grow, they transition from elementary school to middle and high school, and many can lose their way. As students mature, there are critical points along the journey where transformations take place. Early learning opportunities can be missed, middle school students may lose academic focus and high school students aiming for graduation may not know the difference between HS graduation requirements and college admission criteria.

Starting with this newsletter, we will explore the idea of transformation throughout all four phases of the program model. By seeing through the eyes of our students who are living the Rainier Scholars experience, we will witness how an investment in hard work and talent creates “transformative educational opportunities.”



vast majority of Rainier Scholars students. Over 90% of Rainier Scholars come from families whose parents do not have a four year college degree. As such, the expectations, the resources, and the road map leading to a college education are not available. Their households are not equipped with the Higher Education GPS that helps students and families navigate from pre-school to college.

With four phases – Academic Enrichment (Elementary School), Academic Counseling & Support (Middle School), Leadership Development (High School) and College Support (College) – Rainier Scholars provides an active framework of support and focus so that students and families can access opportunities, making transitions transformational in the best possible way.

A newsletter from Rainier Scholars

Fall 2017



Phase One: AEP

Choosing to be College Bound

By Tom Moore

All too often students of color from low-income backgrounds suffer from what can be described as educational inertia. Many come from a household where no one has completed college and future educational choices seem limited. As in the physical world, in this kind of environment one will tend to continue in the same direction and at the same speed until an external force is applied to change the trajectory and momentum. Rainier Scholars exists to provide just that change

“It all begins with the Academic Enrichment phase – and ends with new directions.”

Banded together as a cohort, students are immediately immersed into a rigorous curriculum. The work comes at them hard and fast: cell biology and genetics (What makes you, you?), probability and statistics (How do statistics lie?) history and culture (How do we fight to be free? What does it mean to belong?).

The critical thinking and curriculum focus stimulated by these essential questions serves to break the inertia and move students both individually and collectively, as a community of like-minded scholars, to

At the end of the 14-month program (2 full summers of day-long classes plus a school year in between where students attend after-school Wednesday and all day Saturday sessions) the scholars know they are college bound – and with that, everything changes. Their future is transformed. They have chosen a new direction where:

**Maybe becomes “I will”
no becomes yes
hard work is rewarded
potential nurtured
and college dreams happen.**



of course. It all begins with the Academic Enrichment Phase (AEP). For the 10-year olds who enter the AEP this is where a transition from one state of mind to another happens.

a deeper understanding of their true capabilities. They are introduced to new perspectives. Short-term sacrifices turn into long-term gains and mistakes into learning experiences, all within a framework of strengthening cultural identity and resiliency.

Following Cohort XV through the AEP

- 64 students in Cohort XV started in June 2016 and 57 scholars completed the 14-month AEP program in August 2017 resulting in a 90% retention rate.
- A noteworthy achievement for this cohort – 57 students started second summer and 57 finished.
- Cohort XV achieved a 98% placement in college preparatory settings.
- 51% of scholars qualified for HCC/Spectrum in Seattle Public Schools or advanced learning programs in Highline and Renton school districts.
- 47% earned placement in independent schools.

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Academic Enrichment Phase

A Legacy to Future Cohorts

Every year, the graduates of the Academic Enrichment Phase (AEP) – the successful completion of which actually confers upon them the distinction of becoming a Rainier Scholar – submit thoughts on what their legacy will be to future cohorts after this unique and transformative period of time. It is a compendium of writing from the hearts and minds of the brightest future of America. The latest edition is the 15th. Each one has been guided by the belief that a legacy is created not simply by your words but by your actions; it is the choices you make and how you live your life each day.

“A legacy is created not simply by your words but by your actions; it is the choices you make and how you live your life each day.”



Jayda Williams

“Now that I have completed the AEP, I have changed a lot. I want to graduate with a 3.5 or higher GPA, go to an Ivy League college and get a Master’s degree in chemical engineering. I want to show others it is possible”



Brandon Moreno-Hernandez

“As a Rainier Scholar I have made huge sacrifices so I’m able to get a good education. Having perseverance was a big thing for me because there were multiple times when I wanted to give up but I knew it would be worth it in the end. My legacy to future cohorts is perseverance.”



Alexis Berridge-Green

“Who you are is more important than the homework assignments you do. It is attitude that gets you places. Hard work + Integrity = Success. This is what I want to leave behind for future cohorts.”



Jimari Marks

“Rainier Scholars helped me realize that I am worth something and that I can make a positive change in this world. I wanted to quit, but I knew this was something that I had to finish. My legacy will be passed on to my children and their children and hopefully they will have their own legacy one day.”



Executive Director's Perspective

Change and Transformation

On the heels of returning to my childhood hometown for the first time in 20 years, and as I make plans to attend my 30th high school reunion next spring, I find myself reflecting more than ever on the critical moments



of change and transformation that have occurred over the course of my life, and more specifically, the people who have been part of those significant transitions along the way.

My secondary school years in Loudoun County, VA and then at Phillips Exeter Academy were filled with peers, teachers, mentors and coaches alike who saw that which I could not yet see in myself, helped me discover what was possible within me and inspired a vision of what I wanted “to be when I grow up.” Their belief in me eventually transformed into my own sense of confidence and readiness to pursue a life of meaning and impact.

One of the great joys in choosing a career in education is seeing that same process unfold over and over again for hundreds of young people who, when we meet them, have no clear idea or vision of what they are capable of or what they can become, but who 11+ years later, emerge into adulthood ready to be the community leaders and career professionals we so desperately need.

Along the way, just as was true for me (and many of you I imagine), scholars are surrounded by peers, teachers, mentors and coaches alike who share a message of belief in possibility and are unafraid

to inspire each scholar towards that which they are capable of achieving.

As surely as the season changes from summer to fall, so too do the Rainier Scholars students move through the various phases and stages of the program and school journey, drawing ever closer to the person they want to become, discovering what is possible when vision and potential are not limited by societal expectations or systemic barriers.

What a privilege it is to be part of that process, one that inspires me as much as the vibrant leaf colors and crisp clear sunrises on the water each autumn, and how grateful we are for all of you who support this “process of possibility” for our students.

Sarah Smith

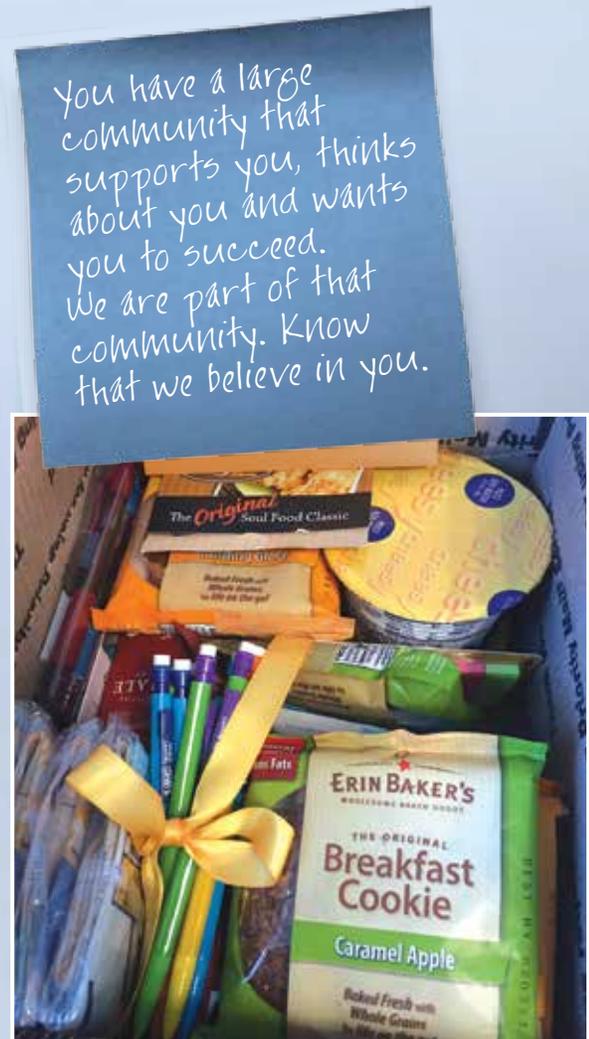
Sarah Smith, Executive Director

College Support

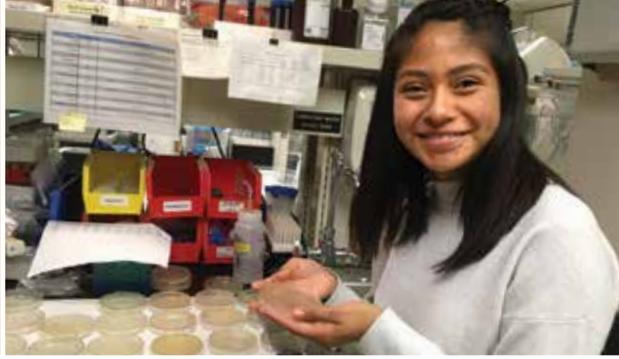
Care Package Gratitude

A big thank you to the 132 volunteers who participated in our college care package project this fall. With 167 scholars at 57 colleges and universities, the collective effort resulted in numerous boxes of hometown love being delivered to campuses near and far.

The best part of being matched with a scholar? The opportunity to include a personal note inside...



You have a large community that supports you, thinks about you and wants you to succeed. We are part of that community. Know that we believe in you.



Career & Internship Expo

Classrooms to College to Careers

The debut of our first-ever Career & Internship Expo, generously hosted by Amazon at Day I Tower in SLU, was an overwhelming success.

Over 80 Rainier Scholars students, from high schoolers to alumni, met with representatives from 30+ companies and organizations sharing career insights, employment opportunities, and how to build one's personal brand through LinkedIn, resumes and interviews.

This was a far cry from a typical career fair. Instead, scholars at the Expo were encouraged to bring their questions and LEARN through real conversation vs. hurried booth visits where attendees compete with the masses just to be seen. One scholar remarked "I enjoyed the laid back yet intimate feel of the career conversations I had with a wide range of companies." And the best indicator of success? Nearly every scholar and company said they would definitely do this again.

“What a great way to gain career advice and be exposed to internship opportunities.”



Corporate Partnerships

Rainier Scholars' circle of support in the business community continues to grow! In 2017, Tableau stepped up in a big way – sponsoring our annual luncheon for the first time, providing professional development workshops and hosting career connections with college scholars. At our Career and Internship Expo, representatives from Tableau shared professional advice and opportunities with a steady stream of scholars. According to Thomas Wilson, our Internship and Networking Manager "Tableau is looking to us for interns this summer." An invitation to their summer picnic provided a strategic opportunity to spread awareness about the program and build internal support for this new relationship.



Corporate support can take many forms – let us know how you'd like to be involved! For more information, contact:

Bethany Furubayashi, 206.407.2181, bfurubayashi@rainierscholars.org

Annual Luncheon

Save the Date!

Rainier Scholars Annual Luncheon

Tuesday, April 24, 2018, 12–1:30 pm
Sheraton Seattle Grand Ballroom





RAINIER SCHOLARS

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Welcome Board Members

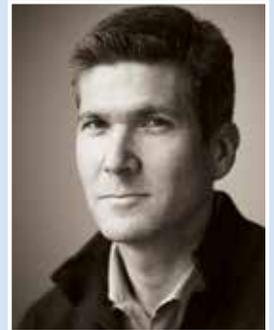
Lela Franco is a committed community volunteer who has served on the Boards of many organizations including the Jewish Day School, the local Juvenile Diabetes Research Foundation and the Patrons of Cystic Fibrosis. She currently sits on the Executive Board of the Holocaust Center for Humanity and the Advisory Board of the UW Stroum Center for Jewish Studies.



“I joined the Rainier Scholars board because I have a passion for education which I believe is the great equalizer. With so much disparity in access to opportunity for many of our young people, Rainier Scholars provides an environment where hard work and tough spirit are rewarded. We can’t ignore the role that privilege plays in academic success, but we can provide equity for students of color.”

Lela and her husband, Harley Franco, were honored in 2015 when AFP Advancement Northwest named their company, Harley Marine Services, that year’s “Outstanding Philanthropic Corporation.” Lela’s passion for education is matched by her commitment to make a difference. **“The seeds we sow for students today through Rainier Scholars will produce the community-minded leaders of tomorrow.”**

Adam Diamond is Managing Partner at Perch Partners, a strategic advisory firm based in Seattle and Silicon Valley. A senior strategic and operational leader, Adam has expertise in multi-channel retailing, brand positioning and early stage content start-ups. With over 20 years of experience in retailing and consumer brands, Adam has held a number of top management positions at companies including Skoben, Eddie Bauer, UEG and Lockerz.



“Many people talk about education as the gateway to future success for any student. Yet not all children have access to the significant resources necessary both in school and at home. As a result, these kids face seemingly insurmountable obstacles to realize their potential.

Rainier Scholars has truly created a sustainable and proven model to empower and transform the lives of kids in their program, regardless of their socio-economic circumstances. I could not be more proud to support Rainier Scholars’ mission and help build upon their legacy accomplishments.”