

Zena's House, Inc.

Where youth have HOPE!

SPRING 2024

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ZENA C. GYASI ACADEMIC SCHOLARSHIP 2024 RECIPIENTS!!!



We are proud and over the moon to announce **Anaya Jones and Jalen Johnson** are the recipients of the 2024 Zena C. Gyasi Academic Scholarship!! Each year since 2022, Zena's House awards the Zena C. Gyasi Academic Scholarship to two students who have demonstrated exceptional scholastic achievement, strong leadership qualities and engaged in community service. This year, we received a competitive 32 applications, (22 female, 10 male) from nine different high school students in metro Atlanta.

Both worthy recipients attended Westlake High School. Anaya will attend Georgia Tech and major in Biomedical Engineering and Jalen will attend Georgia State University and major in Biology /Pre-med. Each student will receive \$1,500 each to support their educational expenses.

We are extremely grateful to everyone who made a donation to support our scholarship fund. Because of YOU students can breath a little sigh of relief knowing they have funds available to offset their tuition and other school expenses.

Zena's House owes a very special thanks to our scholarship review team for their time and dedication to this process: Dr. Tamara Candis, Dr. Andrea Francis, Berdell Johnson, Dr. LaTisha Marshall, Anfernee Morgan, Ellen Richardson, Donna Scoggins, Antionette Sibley, Francis Tannor, Trinity Townsend, Chiquita Turner and Danielle Wallace. Thank you!

DONATE TO OUR SCHOLARSHIP FUND!

- * Cash App: 706-503-2524 (\$zenashouse)
- * Text Zena39 to 44321
- * Zelle to zenashouse85@gmail.com



OCTOBER 12, 2024

Join us as we celebrate TWENTY YEARS of serving our youth through impactful life-skills workshops, college tours, mentoring, and scholarships.

We indeed have something to celebrate!

Your donations, prayers, and service since 2004 has made our longevity and impact possible!

We look forward to celebrating with YOU!

Stay tuned for more details.



Board of Directors: Bernice Bronson, MPH *Tamara Candis, Ed.D. *Trinity Townsend, Esq.*Danielle Veal, MPA

Mailing Address: 5050 Union Street Unit 262 Union City, GA 30291 * 678-665-6506 * www.zenashouse.org

CONGRATULATIONS CLASS of 2024 OG GRADUATES!

Operation Graduate (OG) is a mentorship program in partnership with Creekside high school where we mentor seniors to ensure they graduate on time. It's a year-long program, where students are paired with dedicated mentors. They meet and communicate at least 4x a month and once a month we have a "lunch and learn" at Creekside to provide life skill sessions such as mock employment interviews, college prep, etiquette, and financial literacy.



**Mission accomplished! All TEN of our mentees graduated!!
#OG2410for10**

What a joy it was to see them walk across the stage. We are especially grateful for the support of our OG coach mentors, students, parents, Creekside administration and staff - Mrs. Yolanda Magee and Mr. Elijah Simon.



The path to graduation was not without hardships and challenges, but our coach mentors demonstrated incredible grace, patience and commitment to seeing our students succeed. The consistent communication, face-to-face engagements, all worked together for a triumphant success. We are proud of each of the students and wish them all the very best! **SPECIAL THANKS** to [Greater Metropolitan Atlanta Chapter of Jack and Jill of America](#), and [Publix](#) for their generous donations.



Money Move\$ Financial Literacy Workshop

We are always excited to talk about "loot, coins, paper, securing the bag, and dollaz", with our students. Understanding and having a good relationship with money is paramount to living a successful and productive life! In partnership with the Gladys S. Dennard Library at South Fulton, students and parents came to the library ready to learn! Our amazing and passionate speakers spoke on credit, credit scores, investing, banking, life insurance and building wealth. Thanks to the parents who attended and provided impactful testimonials of what they learned. Find on our social media pages.



The main takeaways were: 1. **SAVE** something from every cash gift (like birthdays, holidays, etc.) and paycheck. 2. Build and protect your credit by **paying your bills on time, every time**. 3. **A credit score is a number that indicates how well you pay your credit cards and loans on time**. It ranges from 300-850. A low score indicates you are less likely to pay your bills on time and banks and other financial institutions will likely deny you or charge you higher interest rates to borrow money. 4. Consider **INVESTING** into interest-bearing accounts which can result in growth due to compound interest over time (ex: certificates of deposits, CDs). Other investment options are mutual funds and stocks, etc. Do your research, it's not as difficult as you may think. Start with looking into the **Acorns** app to help you save and invest.

Students received a handy **Money Moves 101 resource sheet** to reference key points. Students were quizzed and those who answered questions correctly won cash prizes and digital banks to get into the habit of saving. **Big shout out to our phenomenal presenters:** Tamesha Walker, Financial Coach, Author and Realtor; Taleesha and ChiCoby Bates, Financial Coach and Author; Danielle Wallace, ZH Board Member. #saveyourmoney #highcreditscore #imnotbroke



Sponsor Spotlight: Dr. Stacey Kontoh



We are always thrilled to highlight those special people who take time to donate and support Zena's House. But we are especially excited to highlight Zena's dear childhood friend, Dr. Stacey Kontoh. Residing in New York and practicing for over 10 years, Dr. Kontoh is a Breast Imaging Radiologist who looks at images and diagnoses breast cancer. **Remember, the key to early diagnosis and successful treatment is annual screening.** Stacey is a graduate of the University of Texas at Austin and earned her medical degree from the University of Texas Southwestern Medical School.

Stacey has supported Zena's House since its inception. "Zena was literally a part of my family, as I had known her almost since her birth. Our families spent countless days/weeks together, leading me to affectionately calling her my 'sister/cousin' because our relationship rose above friendship - I literally saw her as a part of my family. Once Bernice started Zena's House in her memory, it was my honor to support an amazing cause in the name of an amazing part of my family." **How would you encourage others to support Zena's House?** If one is local in GA, consider volunteering your time to help the youth of the communities through Zena's House. Support, guidance, mentorship, friendship, etc. will go a long way in cultivating our "seeds" to grow and ultimately make positive changes in our communities. If one is

not local, consider donating to contribute to the funding and scholarships to cultivate our seeds. **What advice or encouragement would you give to parents or youth?** Continue to work hard, keep your goals in mind, and don't forget to give yourself grace. Nothing worth doing is going to be easy. Also, we are all human and make mistakes, and have our fair shares of failures. However, we must remember not to beat ourselves up, learn from our set-backs and use them to power forward as we push toward our goals!

We are so proud of Stacey and know Zena is smiling down, saying I'm proud of Stacey too! Thank you, Stacey!

Student Spotlight: Jerald Parks



Meet our recent Operation Graduate mentee and now high school graduate, Jerald Parks. Jerald was an outstanding student in our mentoring program and took full advantage of the opportunities presented to him. He volunteered at Fulton Leaders Awards Ceremony and the annual Creekside Breast Cancer Awareness Walk. We saw Jerald grow from a quiet listening-mode student to

an engaging and inquisitive mentee, always responding to text, emails and opportunities promptly and enthusiastically!

Jerald says "Zena's House helped me understand the importance of having a plan for my life and has helped me understand the concept of financial literacy. The advice Jerald says he would give his peers is to **'SEIZE THE DAY'**. "We always plan for tomorrow, while many of us may not see it. Live today and give it your all, TODAY."

Jerald will be attending "The Unsinkable, Indestructible, Albany State University" where he will major in Psychology and minor in Pre-law. It was a pleasure to see Jerald grow and blossom in our program and wish him the very best at Albany State University.



Invest in Zena's House with a donation! TEXT zenashouse to 44321

Thank YOU 2024 \$upporters!

Donors: \$1- \$99 \$100—\$999/year \$1,000+/year (*) Monthly

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Remembering Our Sweet Zena!

Zena would have turned 39 on April 10, 2024.
Help us celebrate her life with a donation of \$39 (or more).

Text Zena39 to 44321

Donations will support our 2025 scholarships.



How Can YOU Support Zena's House?

1. Become a monthly donor!
2. Post our events on your social media pages
3. Volunteer!
4. Ask your friends to donate
5. Go to [kroger.com/community-rewards](https://www.kroger.com/community-rewards) and select Zena's House as your charity



Zena's House is a non-profit youth development organization that provides life-skills workshops, mentoring, scholarships and exposure trips for middle and high school students in metro Atlanta. Our vision is to instill hope in youth through education, life-skills workshops, exposure, encouragement and love—ultimately to see youth so full of hope whereby they know and believe nothing shall be impossible to them!