

Zena's House, Inc.

Where youth have HOPE!

Spring 2022

Zena C. Gyasi Academic Scholarship RECIPIENTS!!

Zena's House (ZH) now awards SCHOLARSHIPS! It is a dream come true to launch the inaugural Zena C. Gyasi Academic Scholarship. I am so grateful to my sister Mrs. Ellen Tannor Richardson, and my two long-time friends, Dr. Melissa Hagan and Mrs. Katrina Sloan for coming together to help develop this scholarship fund. For one year, we held numerous meetings to discuss and plan every aspect of our new scholarship, including, scholarship name, amount to be awarded, number of recipients, scholar qualifications, and many other details that required solidifying prior to launching. We are extremely grateful to the Georgia State University Master of Social Work students who spent four months working with us to create the official application and promote the scholarship through various networks. We are delighted to report that through those efforts, we received TEN applications, which were reviewed and scored by our scholarship committee!

It is with great pleasure that we announce the FIRST EVER recipients of the Zena C. Gyasi Academic Scholarship,

Miss Princess Fayemi and Miss Esther Ceballo-Ortiz

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Princess is a senior at **Creekside High School** and will attend Washington University in St. Louis, Missouri in the Fall, where she will major in Chemistry/premed.

Esther is a senior at **Westlake High School** and will attend Stanford University in Stanford, California. She will major in Sociology and Human Biology. Congratulations to these two amazing young scholars! Each scholar will receive \$1,000 to support their educational expenses. We wish them all the very best!

A SPECIAL THANKS to our committee members, Board members, volunteers, Georgia State and Emory graduate students and donors for their time, skills and/or financial support. We couldn't do any of this without YOU! Zena's House looks forward to awarding more Zena C. Gyasi Academic scholarships in 2023 and beyond!

To make a donation to our scholarship program, please

TEXT ZENA4COLLEGE to 44321



See our videos and workshops at www.youtube.com/user/zena0485

The Law & YOU!



This year we hosted our Law and You Workshop as part of the Takeover Student Conference sponsored by Westlake High School. Close to twenty students attended and were thoroughly engaged in the panel discussion, featuring our Dream Team of speakers: Judge Shermela Williams, Attorneys Riah Greathouse, Trinity Townsend, and Ms. Shelly Faulk, and Officer Jason Cade. **The major takeaways from this session were,** 1. A felony is a serious offense and punishment ranges from 12 months to life. 2. 13-year-olds can be tried as adults. 3. SEVEN-DEADLY-SINS LAW 1. murder, 2. rape, 3. aggravated sexual battery, 4. aggravated sodomy, 5. aggravated child molestation, 6. armed robbery, 7. kidnapping.



Students role-played with Officer Cade to understand how crime and punishment works. Additionally, six students won the guidebook **When the Cops come Knockin': Guide to Criminal Law** authored by Attorneys and brothers Trinity and Travis Townsend. The session ended with Judge Shermela having the students take the following pledge: **"I will think my choices through and make smart decisions to stay OUT of the**

system." We encourage parents to have discussions with their kids about the law and the justice system AND have them take the pledge. There's something to speaking it out and affirming your stance!



Emory Graduate Students Evaluate Zena's House Programs

Zena's House had the opportunity work with two groups of Emory Graduate School of Public Health students as part of their Evaluation course. Group 1 (right) evaluated our Law & You, Social Media: Good, Bad and Super Ugly and Let's Get College-Ready workshops, with Mrs. Bronson as the point of contact and Group 2 (left) evaluated our Operation Graduate (OG) mentoring program with ZH board member and OG Coach mentor, Danielle Veal and OG Coach mentor, Katrina Sloan, as the point of contacts.



The students devised new evaluation tools and reached out to the past attendees and former mentees. The evaluation provided positive feedback about the impact Zena's House continues to have in our youth community. Six months after attending workshops, participants felt the information and knowledge gained from workshops was useful and applicable to their lives. Similarly, former mentees found the mentoring program to be impactful and continued utilizing many of the lessons and skills gained beyond high school graduation. For these reasons, we will be implementing the students' recommendations to stay connected with Zena's House alumnae and workshop attendees through social media, emails, and refresher workshops.

Special thanks to the students' Professor, Dr. LaTisha Marshall, for providing this opportunity for them to see real programs in action and for the evaluation tools created to help us better measure our IMPACT. Measuring our impact positions us for more funding opportunities and continued support of our programs!

Operation Graduate -c/o 2023!

we are excited to continue our mentoring program with Creekside High School. Recently, we held an Open House, and six students (and counting) were interested in becoming a part of our program. The goal of the program is to help ensure seniors graduate on time and with a plan of action for their future. The program includes monthly lunch and learns at the school, assisting students with goal setting, creating a support network for mentees, enjoying fun outings, and several other activities that create positive experiences for mentees through this milestone transition. We are still in need of more mentors! Want to join our village as a mentor or volunteer? Complete an application at www.zenashouse.org/what-we-do-1 or email us at bernice@zenashouse.org. **#OG #mentoringworks**



Sponsor Spotlight: Ms. Danielle Veal



We are pleased to highlight our very own Board member since 2019, **Ms. Danielle J. Veal**. Danielle calls herself an organic Georgia Peach! She was born in Atlanta and raised in Lithonia/Stone Mountain. She received her Bachelor of Arts in Psychology from the University of North Carolina in Chapel Hill and her Master's in International Development, Program Evaluation from Emory University. Ms. Veal is a member of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority Inc.

Danielle was introduced to ZH in 2018 when she volunteered as a pro-bono evaluator with the Atlanta area Evaluation Association. She and the team provided assistance to help ZH better understand their impact through surveys and data analysis. She later heard that Zena's House was looking for board members, so she applied, interviewed and the rest is history! Since becoming a board member, Danielle has led a financial literacy workshop, created digital content for organization events, served as a Coach Mentor for ZH Operation Graduate (OG) mentoring program and more!

Why do you support Zena's House? I support Zena's House because I deeply believe in the mission and vision of the organization and the importance of providing youth with opportunities that instill hope and serve as a source of inspiration. From the college trips to the tutoring and the scholarships, Zena's House lives out its vision in several ways and the Executive Director and Founder of Zena's House, Mrs. Bernice Bronson, truly has a big heart and lots of passion for this work. It is easy to support the organization when I know that it is led by someone who truly cares for youth in Atlanta and will go to great lengths to support students and provide them with meaningful opportunities to unleash their potential.

How would you encourage others to support Zena's House? I encourage others to support Zena's House by donating any amount, whether one time or regularly. If you can't give time, the easiest thing to do is to give money. You will be giving to an organization that will use that money to create a positive experience for a young person that needs it. Another way to support is to sign up to be a mentor. I was a mentor for two years and it was a great experience to support high school seniors in reaching their goal of graduation. If you have the time to offer, sign up to support a student as an Operation Graduation mentor. If you don't have time or money, follow Zena's House on IG and Twitter to look out for future opportunities to support. **What advice or encouragement would you give to youth?** My advice to the youth is to know that life is all about choices. Every choice you make has an outcome. Try to always give yourself permission to make a choice that is best for you and know that it's always okay to change your mind.

Thank you Danielle for believing in Zena's House and using your gifts and talents to help us meet our vision!

Student Spotlight: Miss Trinity Grundy

Meet Miss Trinity Grundy! Trinity is an upcoming sophomore and Magnet student at Westlake High School, where she is active in both The Westlake High School Orchestra and Thespian Society. Most recently, she served as the Student Director for the One Act Play and Spring Musical. She aspires to attend Spelman College, then law school and become either a corporate or Civil Rights attorney.

Trinity has attended workshops and volunteered with Zena's House since 2019. She was introduced to Zena's House by her mom, while volunteering at the 15th Year Anniversary Celebration and Fundraiser. There, she saw firsthand the positive impact Zena's House was making in the community and lives of other young people. Since then, she has stayed connected with ZH by volunteering at the 2020 Back to School supply giveaway and attending the 2020 and 2022 The Law and You workshops.

How has ZH helped you? "Zena's House has helped me by giving me additional information on topics that really interest me. When I am older, I want to be an attorney. Though my school offers a law-based pathway, I feel like ZH has given me the opportunity to directly speak to people that work in the field in which I want to someday work". **What advice would you give your peers?** "Don't allow others to affect your personal views. It is okay to have your own opinions and beliefs and not let what others believe cause you to doubt yourself. Having your own belief system is important because that is what makes you an individual. You should always be confident in who you are, stand on your beliefs and not follow the crowd." We Salute You, Trinity!



Want to donate to ZH? TEXT zenashouse to 44321

Thank YOU 2022 \$upporters!

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

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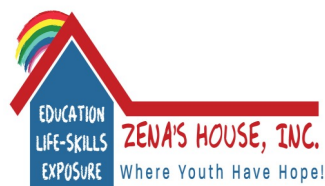
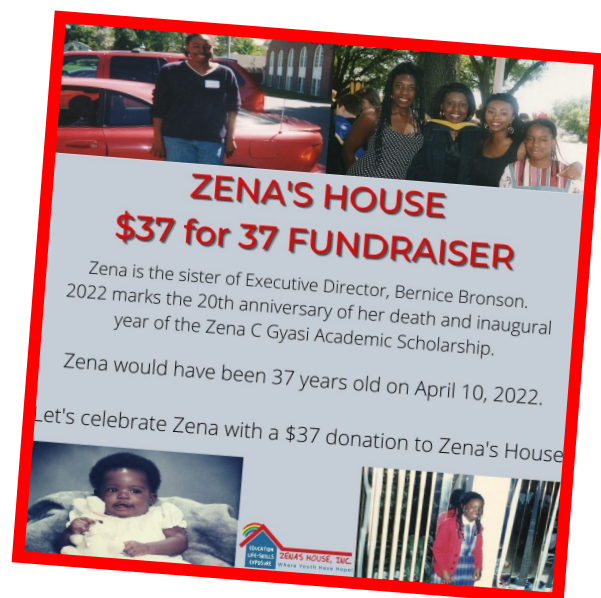
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Special thanks to the gentleman who gave us \$90 in cash at our Chipotle Fundraiser!!

Thanks to all who came out to our Chipotle Fundraiser and for everyone who donated to our \$37 for 37 Campaign! Missed it?? You can still donate! Text Zena37 to 44321



Zena's House is a non-profit youth development organization that provides life-skills workshops, mentoring 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!