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Letters

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SCHOLARS EXPRESS GRATITUDE

I want to thank The Boulé Foundation for sponsoring my studies at Howard University. I am now in my third year of study and plan on applying to medical school this summer. My undergraduate career thus far has been very rewarding, and I have had the opportunity to participate in a variety of options, such as an exchange program at Columbia University and research programs at Yale University and the University of North Texas Health Science Center. Once again, thank you for everything, and may this Christmas find you and your family blessed into the New Year.

*Camille McCallister
Washington, D.C.*

I would like to extend to Grand Grammateus Peyton Williams, Jr., and the rest of The Boulé Foundation the warmest season's greetings! As a 2007 recipient of your scholarship, in addition to my being a National Achievement Scholar, I am writing to thank you for all the help you have provided me over the years. In May I will graduate from Howard University with a bachelor's degree in journalism. I have been privileged to be on the dean's list every semester, and I serve in numerous leadership capacities. Most recently I was selected as the bureau chief for the ABC News on Campus program here at Howard.

Your generous investment in my future helped make this all possible, and for that I am eternally grateful.

*Candace M. Smith
Washington, D.C.*

Two years ago I became one of the students who was awarded a yearly scholarship by your organization, for which I am eternally grateful. I have had countless opportunities afforded me at this prestigious institution, and I have taken every chance to continue its legacy.

As an English major, I have met some of my idols, such as Amiri Baraka, Nikki Giovanni and Tony Medina, and I was able to sit and listen to our First Lady, Michelle Obama, at a conference she held on campus last semester. I have dedicated my time to campus organizations that have to do with service and social justice, things that were important to me before I became a Bison but have become even more important to me as values that every Howard University student should hold in high esteem. I am a mentor for America's Promise, vice president of our campus LGBT advocacy group, and assistant student advocate for the College of Arts and Sciences sophomore class student-council board.

I have been presented with all of these opportunities, and I am so grateful to be a Bison. I persistently strive to remain a shining example of the Howard tradition. Next year I begin my trek into finding a law school to attend so that I can fulfill my dream of being a civil-rights attorney. As a student at this Mecca in Washington, D.C., I find that I am at an advantage when it comes to social-justice platforms.

I thank you for the gift you have bestowed upon me, and I am continuing to work hard to make sure that your gift was not given in vain. Thank you, again, for helping me fulfill my dreams at Howard University.

*Theara Coleman
Washington, D.C.*

Archousa Says, 'Yes, We Must!'

Please help me spread the word: It's important we each do our part to help reelect our President in 2012.

As you know, his accomplishments over the past two years have been exceptional. President Obama has faced many challenges since the day he assumed his duties, and he has gained strength and focus hearing diverse perspectives. He sees challenges not as a threat to his own legitimacy but as a part of the essential give-and-take in a representative democracy.

There is much more he will accomplish if given the opportunity to serve a second term, and we must exercise our right as citizens by participating in the political process. We can begin to do this in our daily lives; while sharing a meal with family and friends we can remind each other of the pride we felt when he was elected. Let's encourage one another to make the commitment to register to vote – and don't forget to include first-time-eligible voters of the family!

Thank you for your cooperation. Yes, we *can* reelect President Obama; yes, we *must* begin the process and be vigilant in taking every opportunity to reelect him in 2012.

*Archousa Evelyn L. Hughes
Kappa Boulé*

How Much Is Too Much?

According to the Bureau of Justice Statistics, at the end of 2008 there were 2,424,279 inmates in the prisons and jails of this country, and on average it costs approximately \$22,600 per year to incarcerate each of them. Multiplying these two figures yields a product exceeding \$50 billion of taxpayer money invested in "houses of correction," where many are housed but very few are corrected. Mind you, the \$50 billion figure does not include the cost of supervising the approximately 5 million who are on probation or parole.

There was once a time when "a billion dollars" had meaning and was, indeed, awe-inspiring, but in the midst of bank bailouts, two wars, stimulus money and so on, it barely registers in our minds – even in this recession. In fact, this one-million-times-a-thousand dollar figure is tossed about so handily, it is almost numbing.

I dare say that most of the inmates are the educational flotsam and jetsam from our public-school system, from which they either dropped out or were passed along without meeting standards necessary for competitive productivity after graduation. Somehow we must stem this flow, or in ten years we will spend

more than \$500 billion on incarceration alone! Such budgetary proportions read like something out of a nineteenth-century prison colony instead of the United States of America in the twenty-first century.

Incidentally, according to Census Bureau guidelines of August 2009, \$22,050 is the threshold that defines poverty for a family of four in the United States. This is about \$500 less than the \$22,600 annual cost we spend to incarcerate one inmate. This should trigger both shame and motivation: shame for obvious reasons, but motivation because the "solution" lies in that cultural triangle of home, place of worship and school. We can't intervene in the first two because they are sacrosanct; hence, we must rely (maybe unfairly) on the school system to stanch this awful bleeding.

How we reconfigure the schools to address this problem is complex, but doing nothing moves us "merely along" to spending \$1 trillion in twenty years on incarceration. So as the old Fram oil-filter commercial advised, "You can pay me now or pay me later."

*Archon David L. Evans
Beta Beta Boulé*

READERS PRAISE GRAND GRAPTER

Congratulations on the outstanding and remarkable fall 2010 edition of THE BOULÉ JOURNAL. I am sure all Alpha Sigma Boulé Archons in particular and all Sigma Pi Phi Fraternity Archons applaud your competence, expertise and proficiency as Grand Grappter in making the journal a powerful, ongoing and lasting record of Sigma Pi Phi Fraternity history.

*Archon Livingston Francis
Alpha Sigma Boulé*

The Editor's Page is always meaningful and informative. Your leadership and excellent writing provided those who read "Two Steps From the Blues" in the fall issue the motivation to act. My Archousa, Evelyn Hughes, launched a campaign in November, which she will continue until the election of November 2012. Upon reading your December editorial she said she greatly appreciated your effort to awaken those who are asleep.

Thank you for your hard work. You continue to make us proud!

*Archon George M. Hughes
Kappa Boulé*

I just received my fall issue of THE BOULÉ JOURNAL, and it is fabulous! I love the format and emphasis on the Grand Boulé. Congratulations, and thank you for helping to make our fraternity so special.

*Archon Noel Hankin
Zeta Boulé*

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