

Ceremony honors local students with scholarships

Samaria Bailey Tribune Correspondent | Posted: Wednesday, June 24, 2015 6:30 am

Two-thousand local students received scholarships to a tuition-based school of their choice, from the Children's Scholarship Fund Philadelphia (CSFP), at a special ceremony on June 18, held at the Kimmel Center.

CSFP awarded the funds to low income kindergarten through eighth grade students who otherwise may not be able to afford paying full tuition at a school.

“You couldn't think of a better investment than the lives of children and families in the inner city,” said Ina Lipman, CSFP Executive Director.

According to their Communications office, CSFP “currently serves approximately 6,250 children...who are receiving an average of \$1,750 per child, per year. The average tuition for these schools is about \$4,000 per year.”

Students and parents who have received scholarships said the program helped them explore and capitalize on more options for quality education.

“The scholarship helped me because it made me realize there are people out there who care and are committed to my success, so that's a great feeling,” said Raushaun Williams, a CSFP alumni who will attend Drexel this fall.

He received a CSFP scholarship in the seventh grade to go to a Catholic school, years after bouncing around in public and charter schools.

“I wasn't getting a quality education,” Williams said. “There were a lot of behavioral issues with other students and no one on one help when you needed extra help.”

He stated “in 7th grade, in Catholic school, everything got better.”

Kevin Chapman, a parent whose two children received CSFP scholarships, said the funds allowed him to get “them back into a private, faith-based” school.

“We had them in private school in second grade but we couldn't afford it anymore,” Chapman said.



Scholarship

Children's Scholarship Fund Philadelphia alumnus and recent Roman Catholic High School graduate, Raushaun Williams addressing the audience. Williams will enter Drexel in the fall on a full scholarship where he plans to study biological sciences. — Photo provided by CSFP

“They went to a public school in our neighborhood, but it sunk to a low school rating. [And] it was awkward to be an achiever in that environment.”

Once they got into private school, Chapman said his children were able to “connect with people with like beliefs.”

Ashema Evans, parent of a first grader, secured a scholarship that will cover 30 percent of her son’s tuition at a Christian academy.

CSFP scholarships are all need-based and awarded by lottery.

“I feel like it will heighten his education and it will allow him to settle his behavior,” Evans said.

“And I’m trying to see the difference between public and private education.”