



LONG BEACH

STATE
UNIVERSITY

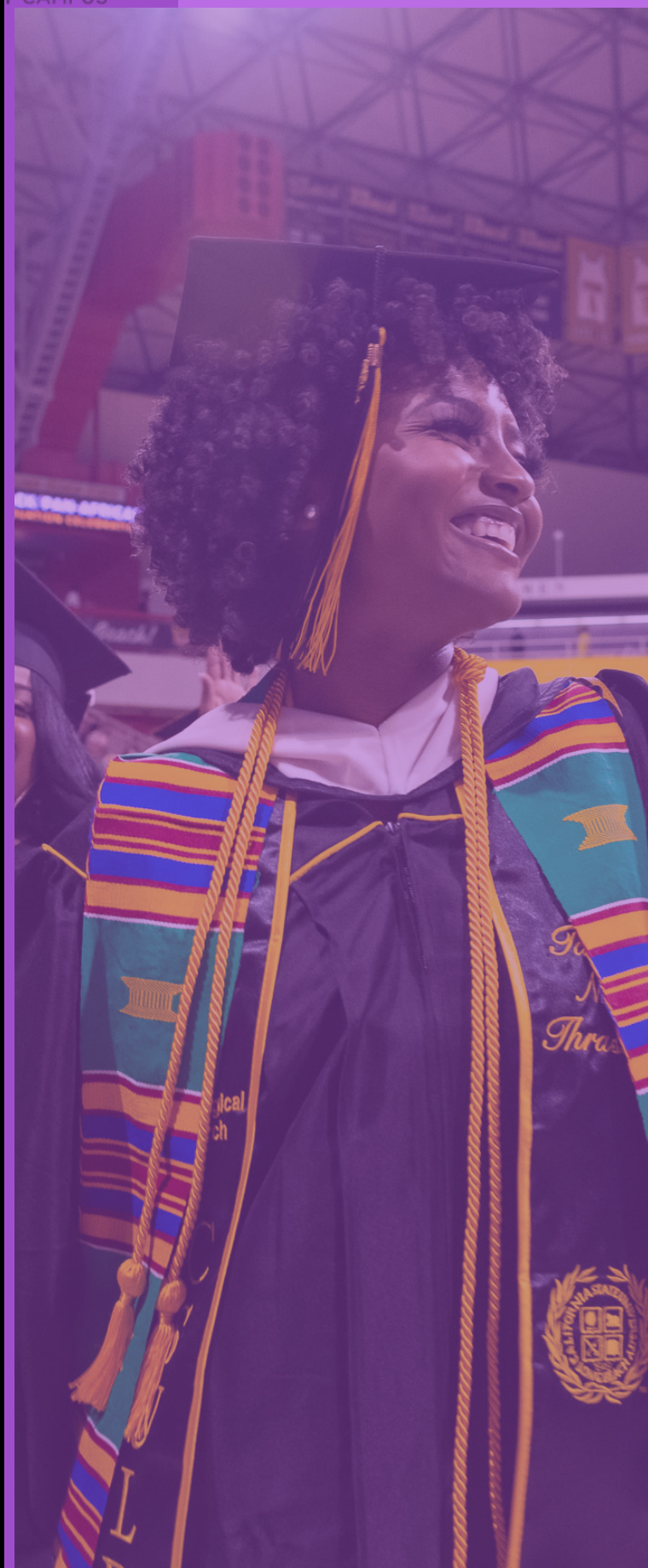
A CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY CAMPUS

BLACK ALUMNI SCHOLARSHIP



2022-2023

IMPACT REPORT



ABOUT Black Alumni Scholarship Gala

The Black Alumni Scholarship Gala serves to build a community that supports the mission Black Resource Center and scholarships for students supporting the advocacy of our African American population on campus.

Provide financial support, mentorships, jobs, internships, and connections within our community. Works together to increase the number students on our campus that successfully complete their degree.

The old Igbo and Yoruba African proverb, “It takes a village to raise a child” has been a staple in the Black community. It means that an entire community of people must interact with our young people for them to experience and grow in a safe and healthy environment. Villagers help look out for and support our children.

*Note: CSULB events and scholarships are open to all CSULB students, regardless of sex/gender, race/ethnicity, religion, etc.

PROGRAM AT A GLANCE

The Black Alumni Scholarship Gala, established by Dr. John Hamilton in 2019, stands as a beacon of support for young scholars of the African diaspora. In just a few short years, the gala has not just met expectations but has soared beyond them, becoming a pivotal event in the academic calendar. As of 2021, this prestigious gala has proudly **awarded an impressive \$62,000 in scholarships to nearly fifty deserving students.**

This gala is not merely a ceremony; it is a celebration of the excellence that has come before us and a commitment to the future of young minds, fueling their academic journeys and affirming their potential. By supporting the Black Alumni Scholarship Gala, you become a part of this illustrious legacy, directly empowering students to reach for their dreams and removing financial barriers.

Each year, the gala magnifies its impact, nurturing the aspirations of more students and expanding the horizons of what they can achieve.

**\$62,000
Awarded
Scholarships**

**49
Scholarships
Awarded**

PARTNERSHIPS

Matthew & Roberta Jenkins Foundation
Farmers & Merchant Bank
April Parker Foundation
Dr. John Sealy
Munzer Foundation
Dr. Jane Close Conoley
Long Beach City College
Port of Long Beach
Simply Wholesome
Rudolph J. & Daphne A. Munzer Foundation

PROGRAM STAFF

Dr. John Hamilton, Founder + Associate VP of
Success & Equity

Tracy Kelly, Chair, Community Relations
Specialist

Empowering tomorrow's leaders, the Black Alumni Scholarship Gala transforms dreams into realities for countless students. Their legacy is our future.





Masar Al khafaji

Computer Engineering

Class of 2025

Student Bio

Masar Al khafaji is a determined Muslim woman who has faced numerous challenges in her journey through STEM. Born in Iraq, she moved to the US in the fourth grade and quickly mastered English, standing out by fifth grade. In high school, she took on multiple AP courses, passing five exams that would later benefit her in college.

One standout experience was her leadership role in the Women In Engineering program. Under her guidance, the program hosted weekly events for younger girls, introducing them to the world of engineering. Her ability to bring groups to consensus showcased her leadership skills.

On the professional front, in 2022, she joined Merchsource in Irvine as an IT specialist. Her role involves improving tech experiences for users, and she continues to work part-time while managing her full-time studies. With a commitment to both education and work, she hopes to secure support to continue her academic pursuits.

Masar is driven to excel in engineering to support her family and inspire her siblings. Her success will show them, especially her younger sister, that they too can achieve in this field.

“

My main goal is to find something to excel at in order to help my family in the future.

”

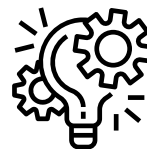
About Masar



Full time
Student



GPA
3.1



STEM



Working
student



Masar Al khafaji

Computer Engineering

Class of 2025

Letter of Appreciation

Dear BASG Committee Members,

I am immensely grateful for the opportunity to be considered for this scholarship. As a Muslim woman pursuing a STEM degree and overcoming cultural barriers, I have developed resilience and adaptability.

With a minor in applied mathematics and a major in computer engineering, I aspire to make an impact by focusing on computer security and promoting diversity in the field. Transferring to CSULB was a significant accomplishment, and my recent Information Technology internship with Merchsource has reaffirmed my passion. I am seeking financial assistance for my upcoming full-time studies and to pursue a certificate in Public Health Informatics and Technology.

I would also like to express my heartfelt gratitude to all the following donors who have contributed to making my educational dreams a reality: Mr. JP and Mrs. Alice Wang, Mr. David Woods, Mr. Pat Goggin, Mr. Nestor Martinez, Ms. Georgia D. Griffiths, Mr. William D. Foster, Mr. Kent Peterson & Mr. Kevin Peterson, The Port of Long Beach, Mr. Sprague, Sall Family, Mr. Thomas Jewett, Ms. Victoria E. Hall, and Mrs. Marjorie E. Halstead.

Thank you once again for your consideration and support.

With honor,

Masar Al khafaji



Samiyah Bryant-Taylor

Psychology
Class of 2025

Student Bio

Samiyah was born to a young mother of 14 and was diagnosed with Sickle Cell disease shortly after birth. Raised in a bustling household with the support of her grandmother, she experienced a tumultuous childhood characterized by frequent relocations. Despite these challenges, she remained committed to her education, believing it to be her pathway to a better life.

Her academic interests blossomed after a psychology course, leading her to pursue a degree in the subject with a minor in child development. Her career ambition is to become a psychologist specializing in child development and family relationships, with a side role as a professor to impart her knowledge and experience to new students in the field.

Samiyah takes pride in her high school graduation with high honors—a milestone not reached within her immediate family before.

Samiyah applies her strong work ethics towards her academic and professional pursuits. Samiyah aims to obtain a master's and a doctorate to practice psychology and contribute as a faculty member.

“I’m taking the lead in being a role model for my younger siblings by going through the trial and error of my college journey to help prepare them.”

About Samiyah



Full time
Student



GPA
3.2



First
Generation



Studying
Abroad



Samiyah Bryant Taylor

Psychology
Class of 2025

Letter of Appreciation

Dear CSULB Black Alumni Scholarship Committee,

Thank you for awarding me this scholarship and investing in my education.

I've received this scholarship in the past, so I know that in addition to receiving financial support I also gain the opportunity to access a community of people willing to be a resource for young adults who look like them.

It is an honor to receive this scholarship again and I'm grateful for everyone on the committee.

Best,
Samyah Bryant-Taylor



Joshua James

Counseling
Class of 2025

Student Bio

Raised by a single parent, Joshua James stands as a beacon of resilience and determination. As a first-generation college student, he's currently pursuing a master's in counseling with an option in Student Development in Higher Education at CSULB. Despite facing challenges, including a diagnosis of arthritis at age four which affected his education and family's financial stability, Joshua learned to advocate for himself and others.

Joshua's academic journey is deeply influenced by his personal experiences. As a Black individual with a disability and the son of a single mother, he faced societal stigmas. This inspired his decision to enter the realm of social work, wanting to be the support he lacked growing up.

In the short term, Joshua aims to gain diverse experience in student development through mandatory practicums, particularly within the California Community College system. He envisions a long-term career as a tenured faculty counselor in a community college, using his expertise to consult on student development.

“

I plan to develop programs that help children living in poverty around the world. I will teach them the skill of self-development.

”

About Joshua



Working
Student



GPA
3.9



First
Generation



Community
Volunteer



Joshua James

Counseling
Class of 2025

Letter of Appreciation

Dear Black Alumni Scholarship Donors

Thank you for your generous \$750 Black Alumni Scholarship award. I felt really honored to learn that I was selected as one of the recipients of this scholarship opportunity. This scholarship will be very helpful for supporting my academic goals next semester. I am a student in the Student Development in Higher Education program at CSULB and as a part of the program I am required to attend one local, regional, and national program.

Because of this scholarship, I will be able to attend the National Association of Student Personnel Administrators (NASPA) conference in Seattle, Washington and meet a requirement of my program. This conference will serve as a great networking and professional development opportunity for my career.

I want to attend so that I am on the cutting edge of best practices and research within my field. From attending the conference, I hope to one day develop the knowledge, networking, and research skills needed in order to contribute to the body of work of student affairs practitioners.

Thank you again for your generosity and support. It relieves a lot of financial burdens so that I can focus more on my schooling and become a better student affairs professional.

Best,

Joshua James



Darrell White

English Rhetoric & Composition
Class of 2024

Student Bio

From Long Beach, California, Darrell White faced hardships from a young age, losing his father at 2 years old and needing a male role model. This led to some unfavorable influences and a battle with addiction.

Celebrating five years of sobriety, Darrell holds two jobs, one at Long Beach City College aiding foster youth and another at CSULB. Darrell is now pursuing a bachelor's degree in Rhetoric and Composition. His passion for literature and writing, ignited during his incarceration by reading, now drives his academic journey. Darrell aims for a Ph.D., envisioning using rhetoric to uplift marginalized communities.

Darrell's professional aspirations center on education and community outreach. He has gained experience from Long Beach City College and CSULB, and through an internship with Stepping Forward LA, which aids former foster youth, leveraging his passion for Rhetoric and Composition in community work or academia.

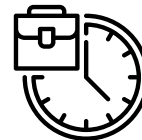
His achievements include active participation in multiple academic programs like EOPS, Guardian Scholars, and Umoja. They've spoken on student panels, volunteered for field trips, and were recognized by peers for their growth.

“

My vision is to be able to use my passion for rhetoric to help marginalized populations become informed members of society.

”

About Darrell



Working
Student



GPA
3.26



First
Generation



Study
Abroad



Darrell White
English Rhetoric & Composition
Class of 2024

Letter of Appreciation

Dear Black Alumni Scholarship,

I want to thank you all so much for helping me to get through school and pay for expenses. I was able to attend the Black Alumni Scholarship Gala this year and it was motivating and inspiring. All of the speakers did a great job reminding us of what Black excellence is all about.

This scholarship means more to me than financial relief. It is a reminder that I am supported, and the Black community wants me to succeed in my academic ambitions. I am excited to come back as an alumni and contribute to CSULB.

I was also excited to see the white patrons who donated, and I had the chance to thank them personally. It is good to know we are growing our village and little Black boys and girls who are our future scholars are in good hands.

All Best,

Darrell



Makana Woods

Kinesiology
Class of 2024

Student Bio

Makana Woods is a committed individual from Pasadena, California, who has navigated through various challenges to become a leader in her community. At a young age, she attended a performing arts school, where she overcame microaggressions and became the head of the step-dance team, fostering values of community and advocacy. These experiences propelled her to lead programs like the Miss Black Pasadena Scholarship and Mentorship Program in high school.

In pursuit of her passion for promoting wellness and community health, Makana chose to study kinesiology and healthcare, with a dance minor at CSULB.

Makana aspires to earn a Doctorate in Physical Therapy, lead fitness classes, and establish an organization that combines advocacy with the arts and athletic performance.

Her recent admission to the McNair Scholars Program marks another significant milestone, aligning her with her academic and professional objectives. Makana's journey reflects her determination to excel as a Black woman in her chosen fields and to be an advocate for her community.

“

I have a goal to establish an organization that grows students to be advocates in the world while also using their artistic and sports-performance activities.

”

About Makana



Full time
Student



GPA
3.25



McNair Scholar



Study
Abroad

Makana Woods

Kinesiology
Class of 2024



Letter of Appreciation

Dear CSULB Black Alumni Scholarship Committee & Donors,

It is with deep sincerity and gratitude that I write this letter to thank you for funding and organizing the Black Alumni Scholarship for students on this campus, and for selecting me to receive this award. It is a blessing to me, as your generosity and pursuit to support black college students has taken part in reminding me that I am acknowledged and empowered from afar to do all that I am called to do. I am thankful that you have come back to the university to pour into students after earning your respected degrees here at The Beach.

As an upperclassmen kinesiology student, I have enjoyed learning about the different components that contribute to sport and physical activity through exercise and daily movement, and how those components play a part in our ability to move and execute confidently in competitive and uncompetitive situations. In my scholarship this summer doing research as a McNair Scholar, the opportunity to learn more about biomechanics in human movement through a research study has only inspired me more to change lives as a physical therapist, and community dance and wellness leader.

This scholarship will help me financially as there will be an increase in my travels to campus as I will be assisting in kinesiology research, and continuing ministry work on campus. I will continue to assist in growing safe spaces for black students to express their faith and grow as a group in our relationships with God, through fellowship and bible study. This financial resource will truly help me more than you know.

Thank you for investing in students that have made the decision to break cycles through education and will continue to mold the future of our careers and the world.

Blessings,
Makana Woods

REAL STUDENTS REAL IMPACT

I desire to become a university professor and travel the world advocating for the lives of the marginalized and disenfranchised. I plan to develop programs that help children living in poverty around the world.

- Artist Knox

“

My education has allowed me to become a New York Times best-selling author for my contribution to Freedom Writers Diary: Voices from an Undeclared War. I am grateful for the opportunity to be a part of the CSULB Black Alumni community. Thank you for your generosity.

- Cynthia Ray

“

I plan to participate in research or a creative activity in the next academic year. Thank you so much to the Black Alumni Scholarship Fund and the Black Resource Center for the support that has been given to me through this financial scholarship.

- Emmanuel Okereke

“

Coming from a low-income family, I never would've thought that I could afford to study abroad. This summer I am working as an accounting intern and consulting extern to save up money. Thanks to your generous gift, I am closer to meeting the savings goal I have set to afford this experience.

- Gigi Givens

“

I want to represent my people and give them the proper chance at their freedom that they deserve. I want to make sure that other victims receive justice, and the perpetrators receive sufficient consequences.

- Jasmine Yarber

“

I am an out of state student, and I am constantly jumping through hoops and over hurdles to get myself through school. With the help of the Black Scholars community, I will be able to focus on my work and developing my future as opposed to having sleepless nights where I stress about my unpaid balance. I plan to pay this kindness forward in every way possible.

- Kayla Brooks

“

Thanks to your donations I'm able to go through my third year here at CSULB with no loans! This scholarship will greatly help offset the costs I will incur and contribute to the additional costs I have such as food, gas, and daily living expenses.

- Krisdeanna Griffin

REAL STUDENTS REAL IMPACT

I aspire to create more opportunities for Black students in STEM fields and contribute to the advancement of education. I want to express my sincerest gratitude for your belief in my potential and your investment in my future.

- Miontranese Green

“

I have been searching for apartments and working two jobs to afford said apartment, this donation I received from you guys is an enormous help. Not only is some pressure taken off me financially to pay back the school.

- Sol Vines

“

Thank you to the incredible donors of the Black Alumni Scholarship fund. This year I serve as Associated Student Incorporated (ASI's) first Black female Executive Vice President. This is an incredible honor...

- Diamond Byrd

“

Thank you so much for giving me the chance to share my story. Throughout my life, I had trouble with my identity of being Black. It hurt hearing comments from my family because I had different interests from the rest of them.

- Tatianna Bentley

“

Throughout college and my future career, I will serve my community and help others. I am very grateful to receive this honor. This scholarship will go toward my Spring 2023 tuition. I am on track for a 4.0 this semester, and I plan on continuing to work hard next semester! Thank you so much for your generous scholarship.

- Jette Wesson

“

I am currently majoring in Management Information Systems and hope to go into the field of cybersecurity. There were times when my dream of pursuing a higher education seemed impossible, but the financial assistance you have provided me has helped me tremendously and kept me going.

- Nathan Amanuel

“

This scholarship will allow me to lessen my hours at work in order to more hours at the clinic which I am extremely thankful for. It is people like you that help fund the future generations that allows for major growth our community so from the bottom of my heart I would like to thank each and everyone of you and God bless your souls.

- Malik Comford



LONG BEACH

A CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY CAMPUS

STATE
UNIVERSITY

STUDENT AFFAIRS DEVELOPMENT OFFICE

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