

Kevin T. Banks III- Lincoln High School, Class of 2018

My desire to attend college is rooted in both a fundamental need for evolution, progression and change; as well as, a passion and love for my community and the global impact I know I can make. My short term goal is to attend and successfully participate in the full college experience. College will help me become a pillar in my community in many ways. I would like to study civil engineering with an emphasis in architecture. My long term goal after graduating from college is to become an Architect and use my degree to help revitalize inner-city communities through the use of functional design elements and improving quality housing and structures within neighborhoods. I have witnessed firsthand dilapidated buildings, toxic materials, hazardous waste as a part of everyday life. Nobody should have to be subjected to sub-standard living conditions, especially those that could be unhealthy. My plan is once I am finished with my higher learning education to come back to my community and put my degree to use. I would like my work to focus on the revitalization of communities like mine.

As a young Black man from a single-parent household, I would like to defy the odds by becoming the first member of my immediate family to graduate from college. I am determined to make a positive impact on society but more importantly on my community. Being the second oldest of 8 (5 from my mother) and the oldest boy with 6 younger brothers it is important for me to be a role-model to my brothers especially since our father has not been in any of our lives. I would also like to be a positive role-model to the youth from my neighborhood and show them the importance of a quality education and while we can use sports as a means to get to school we should focus on our educational endeavors to gain success. So many people in my neighborhood do not have the means to pay for college and we use sports as a way to hopefully get out but if that doesn't happen a lot of people give up. I just want the opportunity to go to school and to become a professional in my field of study and give back to my community and help other young men like me realize that there are options available if we just apply ourselves.

Aside from work in my field of study, I also plan to continue to provide volunteer services within my community as a coach and mentor. This is work that some may say is in my “blood” as I come from a long line of coaches, volunteers and educators. My mother, Kimberli Coons-Banks, has raised me to always give back to others but especially to the youth. I will continue to carry on my family legacy and be a steward for my wonderful community no matter what.

Fortunately, I only anticipate one major roadblock being able to hinder my success in both my short and long term goals. Unfortunately, that roadblock is money and financial backing. Being a successful product of a single parent home, I have more than enough love, support, motivation, commitment, dedication; you name it, my family is there to be a part of it and assist me in any way they can. However, with that also comes the lack of disposable finance, income or money. I am determined not to go into debt so I must find a way to fund all of my endeavors. I know this will take a lot of hard work and dedication on my part but I am confident it can be done. I will continue to apply for and secure funding for not only my education but in the future for grants and projects to help develop inner-city communities. Eventually, I plan to achieve a status of financial independence and hopefully be able to administer my own programs like these in hopes to give back beyond volunteerism and reinvest into the future financially as well.

I am honored to be considered for and have the opportunity to participate in programs such as this one. A Bridge for Kids and many programs like it can help me achieve my goal and dream of becoming a college student and eventually an architect and giving back. As your organization would invest in me, I can assure you I will pay it forward many times over.