



YELLOWSTONE SCHOOLS

SPRING 2024

A world of difference thanks to Yellowstone Schools

***You were there for De'Mya, and
now she is paying it forward!***



De'Mya Jones
Yellowstone Schools
8th Grade Class of 2019

Your generosity is allowing De'Mya to thrive at Spelman College. Because of you, she is one step closer to her dream of helping others as an attorney. Keep reading to find out how!

Yellowstone Schools alum De'Mya Jones grew up in an unstable home in a challenging neighborhood. "My family has been stuck in an unsuccessful generational curse," she says, "but I do not want to contribute to that statistic."

She met her mentor, Leigh Tomforde, in Kindergarten at Yellowstone. Tomforde and her family have given her emotional and educational support and have felt like a second home. Leigh is still a big part of De'Mya's life today. "A lot of people helped me get to where I am," reflects De'Mya. "They believed in me, and it's one of my

biggest dreams to be able to serve someone else in the same way that my mentors have served me."

If it weren't for you, De'Mya wouldn't have had the opportunity to attend a highly-rated high school where she won an award for her essay, "Breaking the Cycle." It's a powerful and vulnerable essay about poverty, her experience growing up in Third Ward, along with the lessons she learned and the people who have helped her along the way.

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Find out how you are helping third graders practice compassion!



Your Compassionate Support Creates Opportunities



My role gives me the opportunity to witness firsthand what your compassionate support helps deliver every day.

You helped Caleb, a ninth grader, enter a prestigious mentoring program

in the field of engineering. Your example inspired our compassionate third-graders to learn about generosity and sacrifice. And you put alum De'Mya Jones on the path toward serving our community as a criminal defense attorney.

I know for a fact that when an entire school adopts a guiding belief that all scholars are born with purpose and destined for success, the stage is set for students to achieve greatness. It breaks generational poverty and trauma. It allows students to dream and hope for something bigger than they even thought they could.

If it wasn't for your generosity, your commitment, and your faith, these students would not have the opportunity to rise.

Thank you for your continuing commitment to Yellowstone's mission. 🙏

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Last year, she was accepted into one of the most selective colleges in the nation—Spelman College. Spelman is consistently ranked #1 among historically Black colleges and universities in the U.S. News and World Report's annual school rankings. **And you helped her get there!** With her first semester at Spelman complete, she hopes to one day become a criminal defense attorney, inspired in big ways by her uncle who was wrongfully convicted of a crime. "There is injustice in America right now, and I want to do something about it," she says. De'Mya recently played the role of defense attorney in her school's mock trial, leading her team to victory.

De'Mya is making changes in the world, and you made it possible. 🙏

Rising Star Soars...

You are making a difference in Caleb's life!

Ninth grader Caleb is called a "standard-setter" by his biology teacher, Rubiona Grainger, because he sets the bar high for his peers. According to Grainger, "Caleb could run circles around the average college senior—he's that brilliant."

Thanks to you, Caleb had the opportunity to apply to a mentoring program at the Nanosystems Engineering Research Center for Nanotechnology Enabled Water Treatment (NEWTE), affiliated with Rice University. This highly selective and prestigious program connects a high school student with two different mentors—one a PhD candidate and one an undergraduate—who are studying in a STEM field.

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So when Caleb got a letter in the mail with the results, he was nervous. The program accepts only 19 students out of hundreds of applicants. What's more, mentees will have the opportunity to gain insights into STEM-related career paths, explore personal passions, and even tour a college campus and lab.

He opened the letter and read the big bold letters, "Congratulations!" He couldn't believe it—he'd been accepted! Grainger says that she

"We can't just pray about it, we have to do something!"

Because of you, students are giving back to their community and practicing compassion.

Marlena Smith gathered her third-grade class for circle time and, as usual, started with prayer requests. One student raised her hand and said she was really concerned about the homeless because of how cold it was. Others echoed the same concern. Temperatures were expected to drop into the lower 20s that night.

After they prayed, Smith saw the opportunity to teach her compassionate third graders about generosity and sacrifice. She read from James 2:14-26 about having faith and doing something about it. "Faith without works is dead," she read.

"Boys and girls, we can't just pray about it, we have to do something."

All the third graders excitedly agreed and after some thinking, they said, "Let's make some hot soup for the homeless!" Smith loved the idea, but challenged them, "When you give something, you also have to give something up of yours. So in order to do this, we're going to have to give up the time we normally spend watching our Bible movie on Friday." Although the third graders love

is so proud of him and not surprised at all. "I want him to go further and further—his mind is capable of so much!"

Caleb is looking forward to learning more about how math relates to the field of science. "I don't really know what to expect, but I love to problem solve and I love to try new things." He will be meeting with his mentor through April 2024.

Without you, opportunities like this would not be possible for Caleb to achieve his dreams. 🙏



Smith, Caydence, and D'Raymond prepare chicken noodle soup.

Bible movie time, there wasn't a single voice of dissent.

The next day they spent their free time cutting up vegetables, measuring broth, and gathering spices to cook the soup. Smith later distributed the soup to those affected by the freezing temperatures.

Yellowstone Schools isn't only an academic institution—it's a place where students learn to give back, practice compassion, and live a Jesus-centered life. You are helping students get there. 🙏

Be a HERO

Your SPECIAL love can make all the difference for a student.

The unique model at Yellowstone Schools provides public funding to support our special education programming in our upper school, helping students like Josephine thrive. Josephine is a remarkably bright 8th grader who was struggling to keep up. With a change in her testing environment, the guidance of a supportive specialist, and tools to help her take charge of her work, she is now thriving.

Unfortunately, many students in the lower school do not have access to the benefits of a special education program right now, and these funds must be raised through philanthropic support. Kwame is really struggling with reading, and his educator does not have the right support to give him what he needs. He's giving it his all, but due to his dyslexia and ADHD, his needs look different from others. A special education program for the lower school would give him the attention and resources he needs—and deserves.



Lower school student taking some quiet time after lunch.

Last year, we received a generous 3-year grant to launch our lower school program. However, we need additional help to supplement the grant. “We know so many of our lower school students are struggling,” says Candice Lapid, lower school principal, “and we are trying to get them the help they need through tutoring programs, but it’s not enough. *We can’t help them if we don’t know what their needs are.*” 🙌

Will you help students like Kwame get his needs met?

YES! I want to help struggling students get the support they need.

Please use my gift to impact a scholar at Yellowstone Schools!

- \$50 = One hour of life-changing support.
- \$100 = Two hours of life-changing support.
- \$150 = Three hours of life-changing support
- \$200 = Four hours of life-changing support.
- \$_____



We appreciate you!

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