



**Drake Dixon:** *College is great at the University of Virginia. Despite the recent tragedy, I have excelled quite a bit in my classes. My chemistry and biology professors are fantastic, they really provided me with deeper understanding of the material. Chemistry lab was very challenging, as I had to adjust how I write lab reports to how they wanted it, and produce at least five pages in each report every week. However, I was able to barely achieve an A in that class among many students. I hope to continue the success in my route to medical school!*

**Saira Euceda:** *I hope you are doing great during these holidays. I have been very busy with work. With a 'C' average, I earned passing grades this semester. However, I wanted to do better. I am looking forward to improving in the next semester.*

*Thank you very much for the support in my education; I am very grateful.*



**Megan Ganley:** *I've had a fantastic first semester of college. All in all, it's been everything I've ever hoped for and more. While most students arrived late August, I came a week early to audition for the Marching Virginians marching band color guard. After loooong days, I was pleased to learn I had made the squad. Despite daily practices from 5:30 to 7 pm, I'm loving the camaraderie and the fun of attending and performing at all home games. Free tickets and great seats each Hokie game? Awesome.*

*Of course, while these are interesting diversions, the main reason I'm at Virginia Tech is that it houses the nation's #3 program in Industrial Design, which the head of the college told me is "the hardest program to get into in the entire Commonwealth, including law school, med school, vet school." While I don't know about all that, I do know this: I love it! We started off the semester working with circles. (I promise it's more sophisticated than just drawing round things.) My professor liked my work so much, he used my drawings as the exemplars. We moved on to squares and then constructing our drawings in 3-D. It's challenging and creative and fun! Seems I chose the right major.*

*Finals week is finally over, and I'm back home for winter break. It was a stressful few weeks, but I made it out alive. My Foundations Architecture class was the most difficult to complete. I was so excited about all of the projects, and I spent a lot of time making sure everything was perfect. Luckily, I had plenty of time to work on them because I only had one final in my Geosciences class.*

*Right after Christmas, I get to attend the Military Bowl Game. Even though Virginia Tech didn't have a great season, we managed to make it this far, and the marching band gets to go. I'm really excited for the opportunity, and I'm sure it's going to be great. Working my internship at PhaseOne Consulting Group around the game has been tricky, but they've been happy to work with me.*

*However, little of this would have been possible without the honor of your scholarship! Thanks for all the support.*



**Diamond Gantt:** *I have had a wonderful college experience as a freshman at Hampton University, in part due to the generous book scholarship from the High Bridge Foundation, Inc. Those funds helped to lighten the financial burden I faced in attending Hampton and allowed me to focus on being a student. Although I am only a first semester student of four months, I know that Hampton is the university for me. I have become very active on campus, participating in organizations such as the campus ministry, NAACP, and my freshman class executive team.*

*I have met many new friends who are very intelligent and who encourage me to strive for better. I have also discovered that Hampton is extremely family oriented and fosters a friendly environment, which made the experience of being away at college a lot easier. One way the university encourages that atmosphere is by pairing graduating seniors (“Ogres”) with freshmen (“Baby Ogres”); just the name itself makes me feel as if I’m part of a family! This student mentorship was key in making me and the others in my freshman class feel welcomed at our ‘Home By The Sea’. My “Big” was so helpful in making my transition to Hampton as smooth as possible, transporting me to stores (we can’t have cars until junior year), getting me food (classes sometimes meant I’d miss a meal or two), and even sending inspirational messages when she knew I was having a rough time with a class or something else.*

*It has been a wonderful experience, and I am so happy that I made the right choice! Over these few months I have not only found my niche, but also my passion for learning. I had many highs, and a few lows; carrying a course load of 18 credits was not without its challenges, but I survived. Mostly it’s been a positive experience. Ultimately, I thank God for a smooth transition and successful first semester. Thanks again to the High Bridge Foundation, Inc. for all of your financial help and support.*



**Ayibongwe Ndlovu:** *I hope this finds you well. College is good, I’m getting to know people here and there. Some of my classes didn’t go well, but that’s nothing major. I’m working on it. I enjoy the freedom and atmosphere around here, cool teachers and people.*

*I want to thank you all one more time for the lovely scholarship. It moved me to have total strangers treat me like family. Well, now we’re not strangers but we’re all family. Thank you for making this possible.*

*From the bottom of my heart, thank you. Stay blessed.*

**Brina Olunkwa:** *My first semester of college went very well. I made a lot of friends at my school, and I enjoyed my classes. Thank you so much. I am so grateful for the scholarship assistance you provided during this school year.*

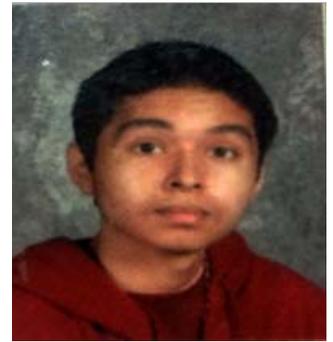
*Happy Holidays!*



**Hector Pardo:** *I was lucky enough to receive one of your awesome scholarships which, by the way, has aided me greatly. I come from a family in which my generation is the first one to attend a four-year university and receive a degree. My college life has been great and the transition was not that difficult (for the most part), and I think I've finally found my place.*

*I wish to thank you for awarding me with this scholarship that has helped me pay tuition and alleviate the burden on my parents. I love my parents and I hate seeing them work so hard just to provide for me when they have a hard time providing for themselves.*

*I really cannot thank you enough.*



**Trisha Pilgrim:** *My first semester at Emory was definitely a tough one. I spent the first half of the semester sick. I got the "freshman flu" as it is called, and since my immune system is already compromised due to my MS, getting better took almost forever. Aside from illness, I tackled too many commitments outside of class. I was not getting nearly enough sleep, so I would end up dozing off during my classes. This was not an entirely bad thing because I could catch up and meet with my teachers, but in classes like chemistry and calculus, I was at a loss. I took 17 credits coming into the semester, but I had to drop calculus because I simply was not ready.*

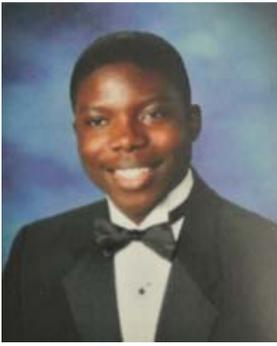
*I am retaking it next semester with a professor I am familiar with. Aside from my struggles, however, I am active in helping others. I joined a service and step community called Ngambika. I hope to lead in this organization and am running for the Community Service Chair position. And I had the opportunity to volunteer with other students on Emory's Freshman Day of Service.*

*Moreover, I've found that I love my language class. I wanted to take Spanish, initially, but couldn't get into the class due to a small number of open spots. So I took Italian, instead. I've grown to appreciate the culture and the language. I'm proud to say that I can actually speak it fairly well for a beginner.*

**Dy'mon Walker:** *By far, college has been the best experience I have ever had. Homecoming was amazing, and Morgan State won with a score of 21-20! I've witnessed my first probate with the Sigmas and pulled an all-nighter in the library for finals. I am a part of two organizations, Leading Ladies and National Council for Negro Women at Morgan State. This semester has been amazing, and I am looking forward to the next!*

*Thank you and have an amazing holiday.*





**Lucien Wobembong:** *College is going well. I was able to make some new friends and reunite with old ones, but it saddens me to have to say goodbye to the new ones. Now that first semester has ended, we're definitely going to have different schedules. But the good thing is that we have each other's phone numbers, so we can always meet up when we're both free.*

*I like GMU because it's quiet, and there's always a space when I want to take a nap, study, or just be alone. There's so much to do at GMU that I literally do not know where to begin. I have joined two organizations: Phi Beta Lambda and Mason Information Systems and Operations Management Association, but sadly I have not gotten the opportunity to go to any of the meetings to get to know the other members. This is due to the fact that the meetings are held at night and on days that I'm working.*

*In terms of classes, I did pretty well in most of them, except Microeconomics. The whole concept of economics is new to me, so I did not really understand most of the materials covered in class. Although the first semester was a disappointment, it does not represent my usual academic performance. Please give my sincere gratitude to the donors. My family and I thank them for their generosity.*