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Dear Friends,

2013 saw the exciting launch of the High Bridge Foundation's Scholarship Program. As you read this message, our five scholars have finished their first semester in college and are gearing up to start the spring semester after their winter breaks. We gathered brief comments from them and have their permission to share these with you.

*Erica is studying Government and Politics at the University of Maryland: The things that I love about UMD are immeasurable, but a few include the silent floors in McKeldin Library (which is open for 24 hours!), the friendliness and helpfulness of students and professors, and the many activities hosted in the Student Union. Just walking down the mall on a nice fall day puts me in an amazing mood. The food is not spectacular, but it isn't awful either. The diners host weekly theme nights, like "Oktoberfest", and food on those nights is usually really good. Time has been flying by.*

*Arnasha is studying Management at North Carolina State University: I am having a wonderful experience here at NC State. I am meeting new people, which I enjoy because I am more of an introverted person. So that is an accomplishment for me. My classes are going well, and my study habits are effective. I joined the Black Business Student Association. I know I will gain a lot of knowledge in my field through this organization. I meet monthly with a professional mentor from Ernst and Young. I plan to use the Co-op Office and the Career Services Office to get a start on resume-building and explore internship opportunities for the summer.*

*Earica is at Syracuse University's S.I. Newhouse School of Public Communications: Syracuse is great. I feel like I made a good choice in terms of academic rigor. My classes are challenging, however I meet with my professors and teaching assistants for extra help to maintain good grades and gain a better understanding of the course content. I am a writer for the Freshman magazine on campus and a member of the National Association of Black Journalists, where we discuss current events and how people of color are portrayed in the media today. I take time to go out and enjoy the non-academic aspects of college with my friends. I like the food here, but I do miss my mom's cooking.*

*Vong is studying Business Administration at The University of Texas at Austin: Austin is awesome. There are a lot of opportunities here. I am working with and learning from really cool people. In addition to my full-time course load at UT Austin, I have two jobs to pay for tuition and expenses that aren't covered by the scholarships I received. As the saying goes, "No sacrifice, no victory." I am doing very well both at school and at work. So, at the end of the day, it's all worth it.*

*Mercedes is majoring in Electrical Engineering at North Carolina Agricultural and Technical State University: My first semester at NC A&T has been interesting, exciting, and very fulfilling. I joined the marching band as a dancer with Golden Delight. We performed in the fall as a part of the Marching Machine. Managing classes while going to practice every day took a lot of dedication. Although it was a challenge, it taught me how to manage my time wisely. My favorite thing about the campus is that the people are so friendly and willing to help whenever needed.*

Your generous support made these experiences and opportunities possible. Thank you for helping our scholars realize their dream of a college education and so much more.

On behalf of the Board of Directors, I wish you a New Year filled with joy, good health, and prosperity.

Very sincerely yours,

Mayumi Hairston Escalante  
President

P.S. Please feel free to contact me at [mayumi.escalante@highbridgefoundation.org](mailto:mayumi.escalante@highbridgefoundation.org) if you need another copy of my previous letter, which serves as an official receipt for your 2013 tax return.