

PTS NEWSLETTER

PIERRE TOUSSAINT SCHOLARSHIP FUND — ARCHDIOCESE OF NEW YORK

F A L L - W I N T E R 2 0 1 9 E D I T I O N

A WORD FROM THE DIRECTOR



Scholars, Danielle, Malaika, Junelle & Jessica with Director, Leah (C), in West Africa

With each passing year, our program continues to grow and our programs expand, providing more opportunities for our scholars to network, be of service, and take advantage of some of the global learning opportunities offered to them. Some have been fortunate to participate in study abroad programs at school, while others take advantage of

cultural & spiritual enrichment trips offered to them through the scholarship program. Earlier this year, four scholars were able to travel to Panama for World Youth Day; and just this past summer, I had the great fortune of traveling with another four scholars to West Africa (Ghana, Benin, Togo and Nigeria). Learn more about Junelle and Elise's travel experiences in this newsletter, and be sure to check out the scholar interview with an alumna about her Jesuit Volunteer Corp experience in South Dakota. Until next time, work hard & pray often! - Leah



Pierre Toussaint Scholarship Fund presents

"RISE UP WITH THE LORD" PRAYER LINE

Join us every Tuesday
and Thursday morning for
10 minutes of guided prayer

7:30AM

720-820-1469



ARCHDIOCESE OF NEW YORK
CULTURAL DIVERSITY APOSTOLATE
Black Ministry



WELCOME OUR NEW CLASS OF PIERRE TOUSSAINT SCHOLARS

JOSHUA A. - ST. JOSEPH UNIVERSITY *

St. Joseph Church, Yorkville / Xavier High School, Manhattan

REGINALD A. - ST. BONAVENTURE UNIVERSITY*

St. Luke's Church, Bronx / Cardinal Spellman High School, Bronx

PATRICK B. - PENN STATE UNIVERSITY

St. Peter's Church, Manhattan / Fordham Preparatory School, Bronx

GABRIELLA B. - IONA COLLEGE *

Annunciation - Our Lady of Fatima Church, Crestwood / Maria Regina HS, Hartsdale

JUSTIN D. - CUNY CITY COLLEGE

St. Nicholas of Tolentine, Bronx / Cardinal Hayes High School, Bronx

LETICIA F. - BINGHAMTON UNIVERSITY

Our Lady of Victory - Sacred Heart Church, Mt. Vernon / The Montfort Academy, Mt. Vernon

SARAH G. - VILLANOVA UNIVERSITY *

St. Peter's Church, Manhattan / Notre Dame School, Manhattan

TYLER G. - CUNY CITY COLLEGE

St. Joseph of the Holy Family Church, Manhattan / Cristo Rey New York HS, Manhattan

ELIZABETH H. - GEORGETOWN UNIVERSITY *

Immaculate Conception & Assumption of Our Lady, Tuckahoe / School of the Holy Child, Rye

THOMAS H. - UNIVERSITY OF MASSACHUSETTS AT AMHERST

Blessed Sacrament Church, Staten Island / Msgr. Farrell High School, Staten Island

**DENOTES CATHOLIC COLLEGE/UNIVERSITY*



WELCOME OUR NEW CLASS OF PIERRE TOUSSAINT SCHOLARS

CHELSEY L. - MANHATTAN COLLEGE*

Corpus Christi Church, Manhattan / Notre Dame School, Manhattan

JAMES M. - IONA COLLEGE *

Annunciation-Our Lady of Fatima Church, Crestwood/Archbishop Stepinac HS, White Plains

CHRISTOPHER M. - FORDHAM UNIVERSITY *

Our Lady of Mount Carmel Church, Bronx / Cardinal Hayes High School, Bronx

BYANCA M. - LEMOYNE COLLEGE *

St. Charles Borromeo-Resurrection Church, Harlem / Preston High School, Bronx

JENNY N. - FORDHAM UNIVERSITY *

St. Nicholas of Tolentine Church, Bronx / Academy of Mount Saint Ursula, Bronx

RAMSES P. - GEORGETOWN UNIVERSITY *

St. Charles Borromeo-Resurrection Church, Harlem / Xavier High School, Manhattan

MEMPHIS P. - VILLANOVA UNIVERSITY *

Our Lady of Refuge Church, Bronx / Regis High School, Manhattan

SELENA P. - ST. FRANCIS COLLEGE *

Our Lady of Mount Carmel Church, Bronx / Aquinas High School, Bronx

SHYNA Q. - SUNY STONY BROOK

Annunciation – Our Lady of Fatima Church, Crestwood / Cardinal Spellman HS, Bronx

ADRIANNA R. - BINGHAMTON UNIVERSITY

St. Joseph of the Holy Family, Manhattan / 47' American Sign Language & English HS, NYC

LILLIAN S. - MANHATTANVILLE COLLEGE *

Immaculate Conception Church (150th St.), Bronx / Cardinal Spellman High School, Bronx



WORLD YOUTH DAY 2019 by Junelle Addei

Some of the items I had on my packing list for Panama were clothes, comfortable shoes, camera, sleeping bag, flashlight, toiletries, rosary, journal, my passport, and lots more. However, none of these items could have prepared me for the amazing experience I had in Panama. None of the packing I did would have prepared me for the spiritual encounter I had, not just with God, but with those around me. I chose to take this 'walk' to World Youth Day because there's no better feeling in the world than being around young Catholics. I feel like my very best, authentic self when I have Christ around me and in my space. Therefore, by being able to be around other people who feel just as passionate, curious, or even concerned about their faith brought out my full self, in all its shades and shapes. (And I don't just mean getting tanner from the Panamanian Sun or losing a few pounds from all the walking!) World Youth Day was an invigorating experience. I was constantly around all this amazing energy. You could feel the excitement of those around you lift your spirit. There were people from all over the world such as the USA, Canada, Mexico, Ghana, Colombia, Brazil, Korea, Poland, Germany, Guatemala, Haiti, Nigeria and many more countries. There was never a moment throughout my time in Panama when we weren't either chanting, singing, praying,

or dancing. The Panamanian residents, from the toddlers to the elderly, were also very kind and welcoming. It's hard to describe how much love and joy was in this space: the joy to be around people from different walks of life and various parts of the world all gathered to encounter Christ in a unique way that deepens your faith. My experience was also revitalizing because this pilgrimage called you to become new. In our first Mass, the priest explained that Jesus was calling us to pour new wine into new wineskin. Through this pilgrimage God was asking us to shed our old behavior and calling us to have a conversion of mind, body, and spirit. It wasn't easy to accept this call, to just drop my bad habits or let go of my former ways. Even the thought of pouring new wine into new wineskin was challenging to comprehend. But throughout the course of my trip I learned to trust in God despite my fears. I realized that when fear of change or commitment to a better self knocks on my door, I will let my faith answer. I finally understood what it meant to let go of what lies behind and push forward in what the Lord has prepared for us. I know that I still have a long way to go. I know that there will be times when I pour old wine into new wineskin or vice versa. But that's okay, because life is meant to be a pilgrimage. It's meant to be a



journey with no real destination. Just trials and triumphs until we meet face to face with God. The last thing I wish to highlight about my experience is the great words of Pope Francis when he celebrated Mass. He said Christianity is not about rules and it's not about laws. It's about a person and that person is Christ. Christ is real, because love is real. Christ is concrete because love is concrete. However, this truth is hard to see sometimes because people have lost that sense of love. It is being dissolved by racism, discrimination, xenophobia, and all the intolerances that divide us. Pope Francis believes that young people still have a passion to love. Our desire to rebuke all kinds of discourse that seek to separate those who are not like us is powerful and moving. We have an instinct which does not eliminate legitimate differences but rather finds a way to harmonize them in unity. That's not just any kind of love. It's the true love of God. Through this I realized how important it is for young people to bring this passion of love, commitment, joy, and acceptance back into the Church.

MY PEDIATRIC DENTISTRY INTERNSHIP by Darling Mendoza



This summer I was blessed with the opportunity to intern at Open Bright Pediatric Dentistry with the help of Leah, Br. Tyrone and the Pierre Toussaint Scholarship Fund. I am extremely grateful to Ms. Malla Haridat, who presented at the scholars annual winter workshop. With her guidance, my resume is now at the professional level I had hoped I could achieve.

My career goals have always been to attend dental school and become a dentist one day, and this recent experience has made me certain that helping patients become confident and have a healthy smile are what I want to pursue. As a child, my mother

worked as a Dental Assistant and I would frequently go to her dental office with her after school. Every day when I left the office I would be full of questions; curious about what I saw and would want to learn more of. As I continued to grow, I wanted to know the science behind every concept.

Another thing that has driven me to become passionate about the field of dentistry is having the ability to medically change someone's life in a positive way. Dr. Laurence "Laurie" Hyacinthe is a phenomenal pediatric dentist who works hard to provide children, from all over the world, with a healthy smile and a fun experience at her awesome dental office.

Dr. Laurie and her staff, which includes the dental assistants, hygienists, receptionists, office managers, and Dr. Laura Van, who is also an astonishing pediatric dentist, were all generous enough to educate me on so many new things.

As an intern at Open Bright Pediatric, I was given the opportunity to have hands-on experience, which allowed me to work very closely with patients. The staff and doctors at Open Bright taught me how to properly address patients during different scenarios, especially helping younger patients, in hopes of them feeling safe and comfortable. I began my internship by learning basic tooth anatomy, surfaces and notations used. I learned about all the instruments in the office, along with their usage, how to properly sterilize and pack dental instruments, properly dispose of hazardous waste, set up dental trays for different procedures, and how to turn over and set up the dental rooms for each patient. Towards the end of my internship I was taking different kinds of radiographs on patients which would be an important use in trying to find a diagnostic. I even had a few chances to chair-side assist the doctor on procedures such as sealants, fillings and extractions. Overall, my favorite part of each day was leaving the office knowing that I had learned something new, and that I played a part in helping children have a healthy and confident smile.

I'd like to thank everyone who made this experience possible, especially Leah, Br. Tyrone and Dr. Laurie. I appreciate everyone at Open Bright Pediatric Dentistry who educated and inspired me to work even harder to fulfill my career path. It was an experience I'll never forget and I'm honored to have interned at one of the city's top pediatric dental offices with help of the Pierre Toussaint Scholarship Fund.

ALUM SPOTLIGHT-DEBORAH ADEWALE by Peter Thomann

PT: So where did you go to high school, Deborah?

DA: *I went to Susan E. Wagner High School on Staten Island.*

PT: Oh! So, you grew up on Staten Island?

DA: *Yes, grew up on Staten Island. Lived in Stapleton, still live in Stapleton. I was born in Nigeria and moved to Staten Island with my mom when I was about four. We've lived on Staten Island ever since.*

PT: And after Wagner you went to?

DA: *Fordham University at Lincoln Center.*

PT: After your undergraduate years, what made you choose the Jesuit Volunteer Corps (JVC)?

DA: *I knew I didn't want to go to grad school right away. Fordham put me through the ringer when it came to education. I was looking at service programs that had three qualities: (1) educationally enriching (2) spiritually enriching (3) and something that would give me work experience. I also wanted to move out of New York.*

PT: Oh, wow! That sounds cool.

DA: *Yes, and then I went on an immersion trip with the Pierre Toussaint Scholarship Program to New Mexico with the Black & Indian Mission. The trip turned my view about what it means to be native in America. It shifted my whole view and really made me think about South Dakota as an option rather than international country..*

PT: Wow....so how did you end up deciding?

DA: *Discernment...it's one thing I loved about my Jesuit education. I had a lot of opportunity to practice on reflecting on what is the best thing, what draws me closer to God, what do I want to do and how does that relate to what God wants. So, through discernment, I decided to go to South Dakota.*

PT: Was it hard to pick up and move from New York to South Dakota?

DA: *Hell yeah!*

PT: Like that's the complete opposite!

DA: *If you wake up at 2:43AM in New York, you can find something to eat. If you wake up at 2:43AM in South Dakota you're gonna run into a deer or a cow. *Laughter* So, that was the biggest shock for me. Being in such a rural area. Being on a reservation. I worked for a Catholic mission and there was a point of realization when I was there living on a Native American reservation, in a Catholic mission, understanding the historical trauma the Catholic Church has imposed on native people. That was really heavy and I felt like I shouldn't be there. But the mission was doing good work. They had a school, a recovery center, family programs and a radio station.*

PT: Wow. So certainly a different experience. What tribe did you work with?

DA: *The Rosebud Tribe and they were Lakota people.*

PT: What is a good headspace to enter JVC with? What kind of discernment would you recommend?

DA: *You're not really helping anyone. You are going for yourself. Being realistic about your intention is important. JVC may contribute to a broken system but it makes a lot of people enter harm reductive work once they finish their commitment with JVC. It leads you to something better..it's why I'm in social work school now.*

PT: Ah. So where are you in social work school?

DA: *I'm at Columbia University School of Social Work.*

PT: Did you utilize the PT Scholarship then? Are you grateful for the Pierre Toussaint Scholarship in your grad school years?

DA: *OH YES I AM! When I came back from South Dakota, Leah reminded me about the opportunities for grad school. I ended up forgetting she told me that and then I started at Columbia. Over the summer I went to an alumni dinner on Staten Island and I told her I was at Columbia. Leah was surprised and encouraged me to apply for the grad school scholarship. And it was so helpful when that check came in! *Laughter**

PT: Leah really does have the best presence and is always looking out for us.

DA: *She always has the resources. It's the social support that I love most and would love to give back to. I really want to give PTSF an ounce of what they gave me.*



MY ROME EXPERIENCE by Elise Brockenberry

Plane rides always give me anxiety, but the kind that's exciting, making you too anxious to sleep the night before, and thrilled during takeoff when you get butterflies in your stomach as the plane ascends, and everything below starts to look small and far away. Last January for me was no different. I'd spent a month trying to figure out how to fit my whole life into a suitcase that would weigh 60 pounds or less, and triple checking my packing list every day. When else would I have an opportunity to travel halfway around the world for a full semester? Everything had to be perfect! But this time, once that plane took off and I looked down at the tiny grid that was New York City, the butterflies in my stomach became a swarm of anxiety: could I really do this? Five months studying abroad in Rome, unable to hop on the train to the Bronx and see my family when I was missing home! Unable to walk over to the hair for a haircut! It was the simple, mundane comforts that were causing the most stress and the anticipation was overwhelming, making the 8-hour plane ride feel like it would last forever.

I touched down first in Paris, staying for 2 weeks at one of St. John's several campuses. With my friend by my side, and mostly leading the way, we learned to navigate the subway, our surrounding neighborhood and the cultural and language barriers. But as soon

as I started getting the hang of things, I was in the airport yet again, anxiously awaiting my flight to Rome. Once again, I was questioning if I could actually do this? And day one felt so long, I knew this semester would drag on. But day 1 turned into day 2 which turned into week 4, 5, 6... and before I knew it, I was once again struggling to fit my life into suitcases, 60 pounds or less, restlessly awaiting my 9-hour flight home.

The beginning half of 2019 went by in a flash, but like one of those adventure packed montages you see on television. I began in Paris, wandering the streets and admiring the Louvre, then *flash* I'm in Rome, studying for mid-terms, teaching English at a local elementary school, and filling myself with four cheese penne and bruschetta. By February *flash* I'm taking a weekend off to lazily explore Barcelona, enjoying the lively atmosphere, learning about their history and culture just by seeing flags in the streets, and appreciating the beach a little extra because I knew it was bitter cold in New York. Within a couple of weeks, my friends and I set off for Marrakech, Morocco- my favorite- going camel back riding, relaxing in a Hammam bath, and hiking the Atlas Mountains.

Four countries in five months! My thrilling adventures, along with my new temporary life in Rome, allowed me to shake off

my shell of anxiety and fully open myself up to the experience I was lucky enough to have. Even my classes allowed me to immerse myself in different cultures, as the campus largely centered all its classes on migration and other international topics. I was exposed to a more holistic view of the world, one that didn't revolve around American history and values, and didn't conveniently sensor textbooks. It gave me the opportunity to analyze my positionality in the world, as an American, through the eyes of other cultures.

To top it all off, I attended Easter Mass at the Vatican, with my family. The crowd alone was a true testament to the way faith facilitates the coming together of a community. People laughed and cried and even crawled over chairs to see the Pope. Despite the large number of people, I felt as comfortable and welcomed as I do back at my home parish.

All in all, I think that if I could attribute one word to my study abroad experience, it would be community. Despite being separated from my family and the environment that I was familiar with, I formed bonds with people that I'd known for 4-5 months, that are closer than those of some people that I've known for years. I hope to integrate all that I've learned into my life, now that I'm back home, as I know that this has been an experience that I will never forget!

RETREAT 2019 by Daniel Minott

The Pierre Toussaint Scholars (PTS) Annual Retreat was held May 31 to June 2, 2019. The PTS Retreat gathers recent high school graduates and college students together to spend a weekend filled with prayer and worship. The 2019 retreat took place at the Graymoor Spiritual Life Center in Garrison, New York.

The Retreat leaders consisted of Fr. Steven Bell, Fr. Kareem Smith, and the amazing PTS Coordinator & Advisor, Ms. Leah Dixon. Both Ms. Leah and Fr. Kareem played key roles as mentors and advisors to all the scholars. Fr. Kareem, a fairly



young priest in comparison to what I'm used to, introduced us to a powerful and moving gospel song during the retreat. The song, "Lord I Need You," written by Matt Maher, was sang by the group each night. The song grew on me throughout the weekend. I never considered myself a singer but after listening to the other scholars sing, I was moved to join my voice with theirs in praise and worship during this song.

Retreat leader Fr. Steven, posed questions and scenarios on several issues facing young Christians. For example, he raised the issue of how young people should be open to seeking help. However, he stressed that young people should choose how, from whom, and when they seek the proper/appropriate help. Scholars were invited to share the ways they thought young people should open themselves to help. I was inspired by the various ideas and stories shared by the other scholars. This exercise was very helpful and reminded me that PTS is like a second family.

On Friday, May 31st I spent most of the day reuniting with scholars I met at my first retreat in 2017. I also met new scholars who were rising freshmen. The next day, Saturday, June 1st scholars participated in sessions conducted by Fr. Steven. In one of his presentations he discussed that students should never try to solve problems by themselves, nor think they have to go through a tough time alone. Fr. Steven asked us to form groups where we discussed ideas and had to come up with solutions on how to seek help to handle adversity and challenges as young adults/students. Each group then presented their ideas. One idea that I considered to be the best was making an announcement during mass that informed parishioners about where to get help if they were ever in need.

On the last day, Sunday June 2nd we spent much of it in prayer and worship. Fr. Kareem reminded us of the words of the song "Lord I need you." At this point, I realized that the message we were to take away was that we can do nothing without God's help. Further, that God helps us in many ways including sending others to help us, and that we should never be afraid to ask for help and should welcome it.

Now that I am back home and have reflected on my time at the PTS retreat, I learned so much about seeking help from God and opening up myself to receiving that help. I had moved away from my studies for the past year and this Retreat has helped to rebuild my confidence and desire to return to school. I know now that I never have to face adversity alone, and I will ask for help when I need it. I am looking forward to returning to college and I am more motivated to work on acquiring a diploma of my own.

On Sunday, June 1st scholars wore FDNY shirts in memory of Captain Martin J. Egan, Jr. the father of a Pierre Toussaint Scholar who lost his life responding to the World Trade Center from the Fire Department Headquarters on September 11th.

PTSF WEEKEND RETREAT 2019



SCHOLARS & ALUMNI ACTIVE THROUGHOUT THE YEAR

DAY OF REFLECTION



DAY OF SERVICE



STATEN ISLAND GATHERING



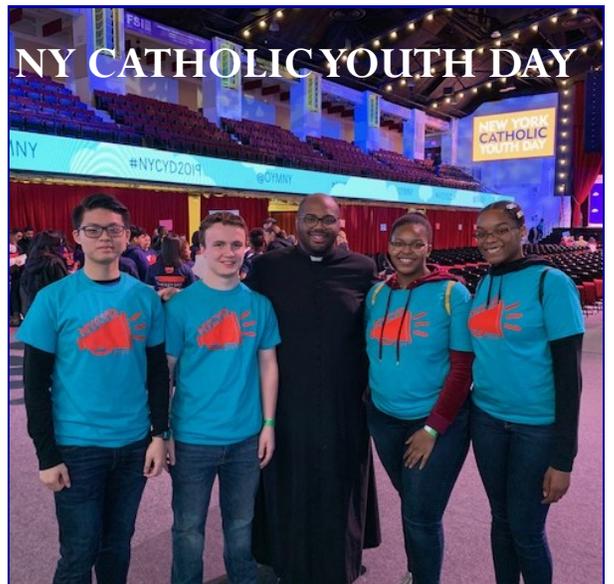
ALUMNI @ CITIFIELD



ALUMNI @ YANKEE STADIUM



NY CATHOLIC YOUTH DAY



FR. KAREEM BEING HONORED



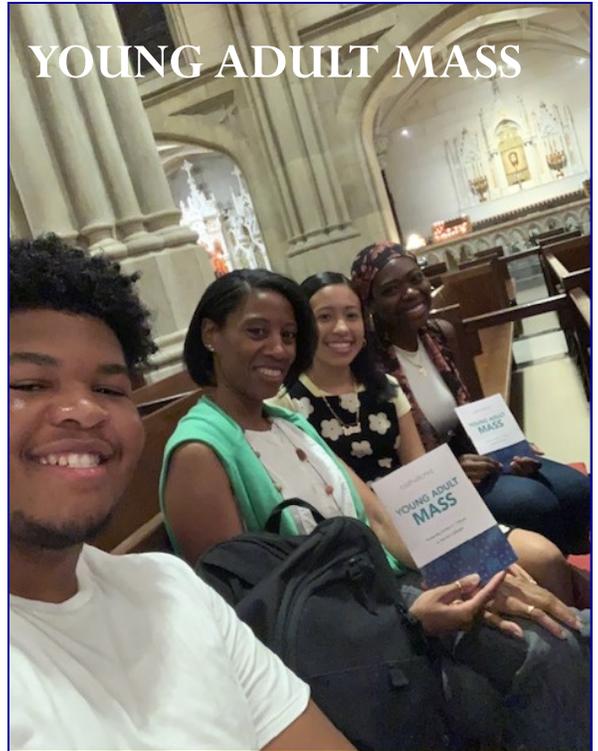
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CATHOLIC CHARITIES INTERNS



YOUNG ADULT MASS



CITY COLLEGE SCHOLARS



BUSY PERSON'S RETREAT

A self-paced, online retreat to nourish your heart and soul.

Take a few minutes each day to reflect on how you can make each day count.

TUE|SEP|3 through FRI|SEP|6

Register by Thursday, August 29

Register at tinyurl.com/BusyPersonRetreat

This is a free online retreat led by a team of clergy and other pastoral leaders.



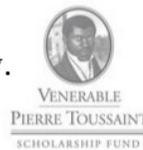


DECEMBER 3, 2019

GIVING TUESDAY

The Strength of a Pierre Toussaint Scholar,
The Power of the Pierre Toussaint Community.

#PTSGivingTuesday



Join the Scholars as they pledge to give \$40 to support their fellow Scholars at College Pierre Toussaint, a secondary school in Sassier, Haiti. They've committed to give \$40 and will work to have their gift matched by a friend/family member to double their impact.

**Students
Supporting
Students!**

TO CONTRIBUTE VISIT:

www.obmny.org/make-a-gift

The Pierre Toussaint Scholarship Fund (PTSF) and Program was established in 1983 and is administered by the Archdiocese of New York, Office of Black Ministry. PTSF provides scholarships and mentorship to graduating high school seniors of diverse backgrounds, from public, private and parochial schools throughout the Archdiocese of New York, to assist them with educational fees and expenses associated with their college studies.

Students selected into the PTS Program are chosen based on their strong academic record, their active participation with their parish and school communities, and their demonstration of good character and sound leadership ability. Scholarship awards are renewable for subsequent, consecutive years of undergraduate and graduate studies, based upon scholars meeting certain academic and service requirements. PTSF also provides scholars with ongoing mentorship and advisement: spiritual, educational, professional career, and personal.

To obtain more information regarding the Pierre Toussaint Scholarship Fund/Program and/or to offer support for the PTSF, contact the office at 646-794-2681 or via email at obm@archny.org.

THE PIERRE TOUSSAINT SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM IS A MINISTRY GENEROUSLY SUPPORTED BY
THE BLACK & INDIAN MISSION FUND, AND CATHOLIC CHARITIES ARCHDIOCESE OF NEW YORK...
AND PARTIALLY FUNDED BY THE CARDINAL'S ANNUAL STEWARDSHIP APPEAL.

THANK YOU TO ALL THE SUPPORTERS OF THESE VERY SPECIAL CHARITIES, COLLECTIONS AND APPEALS!

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