

PTS NEWSLETTER

PIERRE TOUSSAINT SCHOLARSHIP FUND — ARCHDIOCESE OF NEW YORK

SPRING - SUMMER 2019 EDITION

A WORD FROM THE DIRECTOR



Scholars, Junelle, Guadalupe, Juliemarie & Naomi in Panama for World Youth Day with Director, Leah (C),

What an exciting year as we celebrate our 13 PTS graduates, one of the largest graduating classes to date; we also welcome our incoming class of 21 new scholars! With each passing year our program continues to grow and our scholars never cease to amaze me with their continued successes. You can read about one such success story by checking out the article written by PT Scholar Mark and his product development.

In addition to the many opportunities that our scholars have had throughout the year, I had the great experience of traveling to Panama for World Youth Day with an awesome group of scholars and other young adults. It was a blessing to witness, first hand, our young people so fully immersed in their faith. I encourage you to read Guadalupe's article on her World Youth Day experience and transformation.

Until next time, work hard & pray often! - Leah



35th Anniversary Pierre Toussaint Scholarship Fund Awards Dinner



Right: Alumnus Sam R. and Scholar Abdul M. speaking with Mr. Peter Johnson Jr, Esq. Honoree and P.T. Medallion Recipient.
Below Left: Scholars David L. & Alexis R. with the Honorable Mayor David Dinkins.



PT Scholars with Maurice DuBois, co-anchor CBS-2 Evening News, who served as the M.C. for this year's Awards Dinner.

The Annual Pierre Toussaint Scholarship Fund Awards Dinner was held at the New York Athletic Club on Monday, November 5, 2018. Celebrating 35 Years of Empowered Leadership and Faith-Filled Service, this year's honorees were Mr. Peter Johnson, Jr., President of Leahey & Johnson, P.C. and Dr. Ramon Tallaj, Chairman of the Board of SOMOS Community Care.

Thanksgiving Service Project at St. Mark the Evangelist Church



On Wednesday, November 21, 2018, the Pierre Toussaint Scholars and Alumni returned for a second year to assist the parish of St. Mark the Evangelist in Harlem with their annual Thanksgiving dinner - serving the greater Harlem community. Scholars worked to prep food and set up the school cafeteria while enjoying fellowship with the parishioners.

2019 Annual Scholars Winter Workshop



The Annual Scholars Winter Workshop was held on Friday, January 4, 2019 at the Catholic Center in the Cardinal's Board Room. This year's topic, "Learn How to Manage your Finances", focused on the importance of budgeting, credit, and giving back. Scholars engaged in an interactive workshop facilitated by Mrs. Nancy Wheeler of Financy.

ONE TOPIC by Mark Akhimien

After months of minimal product development, OneTopic is finally at the stage when it needs to be used in trial niche scenarios. That being said, I wanted to take this time to explain what OneTopic is. In short, we create websites called “info pages” which format user data into a simple uniform design. There are numerous presentation and data management use cases of the OneTopic technology, but the most immediate minimum viable solution we could use to test our site is to create eCards. In most cases eCards are online greeting postcards, however, in our case, eCards is a term used to describe how our technology can be used to replace business cards. The standard business card includes a logo and limited contact information such as name, email, phone number, and business address. A person would give a business card to a prospect and that prospect would have to manually add the users contact information back onto their phone in order to follow up. As the number of business cards received increases, so does the chances a prospect remembers who you were or discussions had, as does the incentive to avoid storing contacts for all the representatives seen on the business card or brochure. OneTopic can systematically break this entire process down into two steps: prospect holds their iPhone camera in front of our icons, and the prospect can click the notification which allows them to view all the information about the representative, or the company’s online brand, in one place.

I have been working on OneTopic since my sophomore year of college. I spent a lot of time brainstorming the best way to deliver value in my product, then hand build the web pages that would enable us to provide a reliable service. It has been difficult to manage everything amongst the working class chaos of daily college life, but I found myself spending many nights and weekends piecing over details so I can create the best product possible. I spent the fall semester seeking website consultations that could help us move the site forward to no avail. I believe I will have to do more handiwork for the time being if I truly want OneTopic to succeed. -Wish me luck!

HERE I AM, SERVANT OF THE LORD by Guadalupe Pimentel



Arriving in Panama City, I was unsure of what to expect since this was my first World Youth Day. However, any anxiety I felt about being welcomed in a new country was quickly gone. Panamanians were very welcoming; "Hola! Welcome to my country! Enjoy it here!" My first moment of awe came during the welcoming Mass. It was amazing to see tens of thousands of young people present near Panama City's Cinta Costera. We had all come together to worship and praise the Lord. I was especially amazed to see people from Communist countries come and enjoy the freedom of their faith. When Mass started, there was

an incredible stillness. The speakers weren't working at first, but when they were fixed, we began to hear the words of the Archbishop of Panama. "Do not be afraid. You need to be heard. You need to keep making us adults nervous."

While in Panama, it felt like I was isolated from the rest of the world because I was so at peace with myself and with my faith. I remember telling my fellow P.T. Scholar, Junelle, that it felt like we were so far away from the evils of society. The message of this year's WYD was "I am the servant of the Lord. May it be done to me according to Your Word, "(Lk 1:38). This was a very important message for me because it was God who during a catechetical forum back in 2016 showed me that my purpose in this world was to become a teacher. However, during my junior year, fall semester, I started to have some doubts about whether the teaching field was right for me. I prayed and asked God to give me a sign. Yes, it sounds cheesy, but it actually happened. During the first catechesis, we were asked to walk around the hot auditorium and when the music stopped, we were to high five and introduce ourselves to the person in front of us. For the two rounds that I participated in, I stood face to face to elementary school teachers. In a room with a couple hundred pilgrims, God had made me meet other teachers who cheered me on in my pursuit. It was a loud and clear sign. I just needed to be patient and let God work His will. Other highlights of WYD were: seeing a smiling Pope Francis speed by in the Pope-mobile a couple of feet away from me, meeting pilgrims from Mexico and instantly bonding, falling and scraping my knees (I will forever remember Panama by the scars on my knees), singing 'The Servant of the Lord' with Junelle, being woken up at 5:55 am by a scream on a microphone at the vigil and creating a strong bond with the group of girls I lived with during this transforming experience.

WYD is a special blend of emotions that everyone should have the opportunity to experience. I am extremely thankful to the Pierre Toussaint Scholarship Program for it gave me this once in a lifetime opportunity. It is a beautiful experience of fatigue, joy, faith, and love that come together to strengthen oneself as a person. WYD is not a trip, but an investment in our faith. I returned to New York, tired, but renewed and ready to continue to be a servant of the Lord.





CONGRATULATIONS TO OUR 2019 GRADUATES

MARK A.

UNIVERSITY OF MIAMI (MIAMI, FL)
BA IN BUSINESS TECHNOLOGY & MARKETING
CONCENTRATION ENTREPRENEURSHIP

PARISH: SACRED HEART, BRONX
HIGH SCHOOL: LOYOLA SCHOOL

“The Pierre Toussaint Scholarship Program played a major role in providing me with the funds needed to be successful in my academic life. It was often the difference between an A and B in some of my classes, and it made me feel secure about supplies for my courses. As a student who went a semester without the fellowship, the difference clearly shows in my performance. The retreats were the perfect escape for me, and I wish I could be closer to everyone up north.”

(POST GRADUATE PLANS: “I will begin working with my start up full time, as the founder and head of business development.”)



DEVIN A.
XAVIER UNIVERSITY OF LOUISIANA
(NEW ORLEANS, LA)
BA IN FRENCH

MINOR IN BIOLOGY & CHEMISTRY

PARISH: ST. CHARLES BORROMEIO, HARLEM
HIGH SCHOOL: ALL HALLOWS HIGH SCHOOL

“The Pierre Toussaint Scholarship Program has a commitment to excellence, faith, and charity that is unparalleled. The program has helped me in strengthening my faith and devotion to God because I was given the opportunity to attend yearly retreats that were centered around God. With God in my life, I can do all things. Another highlight is that the program helped me academically and financially throughout college, when their assistance was especially needed because of the expenses of school.

There were times in which financial aid was not enough to pay for the school year, yet I was able to continue my education because of the funding of the program. As of now, I am attending veterinary school, and I am fortunate to have been an active scholar in the program. Bless Up Ya’ll!”

(POST GRADUATE PLANS: “I am studying veterinary medicine at St. George’s University School of Veterinary Medicine in West Indies, Grenada. After having completed 3 years on the island and one year in the states, UK or Canada, I will have attained a DVM - Doctor of Veterinary Medicine Degree - to practice in the USA or UK.”)

CONGRATULATIONS TO OUR 2019 GRADUATES



JASMINE A. K.

NEW YORK UNIVERSITY (NEW YORK, NY)

BA IN BIOLOGY, PHILOSOPHY & ART

CONCENTRATION IN CREATION

PARISH: ST. LUKE'S, BRONX

HIGH SCHOOL: EXIMIUS COLLEGE PREPARATORY SCHOOL

"I am so thankful for the scholarship, the advice and mentoring I received from Leah and my fellow scholars. This organization did not only transform me from a shy person into a confident individual but it held me accountable for my actions and nurtured me even when I was unable to see my potential as a scholar. The morning prayer line and the idea that I had a support system backing me up and believing in me every step of my college career inspired me to keep striving and to become a better person. Through interactions with my peers during our workshops and retreats, I gained new perspectives and insights to help me grow as a person, a member of this community and a citizen of the world."

(POST GRADUATE PLANS: "I have decided to take a gap year to travel and explore myself as an individual, then return to pursue a medical career.")



DANIELLE B.

**SOPHIE DAVIS SCHOOL OF BIOMEDICAL
EDUCATION AT THE CITY COLLEGE OF NEW YORK**

(NEW YORK, NY)

BS IN BIOMEDICAL SCIENCES

PARISH: HOLY ROSARY, BRONX

HIGH SCHOOL: ST. VINCENT FERRER HIGH SCHOOL

"Throughout my years in undergrad, the Pierre Toussaint Scholarship Program has provided me with a tremendous amount of emotional support and spiritual guidance. I have formed deep bonds with my fellow scholars who I know will last beyond our academic years. We all challenged one another to strive for excellence both in the classroom and in our spiritual lives. I would like to give a special thank you to Leah for being my guardian angel throughout college. Leah never failed to comfort me during my most stressful moments and I am extremely grateful for that."

(POST GRADUATE PLANS: "In the fall of 2019 I will be attending CUNY School of Medicine in the hope of someday becoming an OB/GYN.")





CONGRATULATIONS TO OUR 2019 GRADUATES

EMELY E.
PROVIDENCE COLLEGE (PROVIDENCE, RI)
BS IN BIOLOGY

CORE FOCUS IN PSYCHOLOGY

PARISH: ST. AUGUSTINE OUR LADY OF VICTORY, BRONX
HIGH SCHOOL: NOTRE DAME SCHOOL

“The Pierre Toussaint Scholarship Program has been one of the most meaningful and influential aspects of my college experience. Before I started college I attended the annual student retreat at the College of New Rochelle, where I met a then recent graduate from Providence College. During the retreat she gave me some of the best advice that any incoming freshman deserved to hear regarding expectations and ways to succeed in school. This was the start of what would be four years full of advice and guidance. For the past four years, the Pierre Toussaint Scholarship Program has been a constant source of support that I did not experience any where else. The program allowed me to meet other students who were experiencing similar things as I, and allowed us to build a network of support for which I will be eternally thankful. I have also been given ways to network with alumni who are in the same career that I intend to pursue and have been given great advice. Leah has also been one of the most helpful and caring people that I have ever met and she has helped me with my college experience in so many ways. Overall the Pierre Toussaint Scholarship means so many things to me including friendship, guidance and faith; I could not have asked for a better group of people to have been a part of my college experience. Without this program I don’t think I would be the student I am today.”

(POST GRADUATE PLANS: “After graduation I am hoping to gain employment as a Clinical Research Assistant for a year, as I go through the medical school application cycle.”)



MAYA G.
HOWARD UNIVERSITY (WASHINGTON D.C.)
BA IN POLITICAL SCIENCE

MINOR IN THEATER ARTS

PARISH: ST. CHARLES BORROMEIO, HARLEM
HIGH SCHOOL: PRESTON HIGH SCHOOL

“The Pierre Toussaint Scholarship Program has been a ray of light throughout my college journey. It has helped me meet all my academic requirements by equipping me with some resources I need. The program has time and time again reminded me to keep God at the center of it all; which has really kept me going. Overall, the program has been a source of support throughout the most transformative time of my life and has helped keep me on the path to success. Without the scholarship I would not have been able to perform at my best and enjoy my entire experience. I appreciate all this program offered me and the small prayers, thoughts and words of hope that have been given for me.”

(POST GRADUATE PLANS: “I am still currently in the process of finding a job within my major. I am applying every day and hope to get a job in the coming weeks.”)

CONGRATULATIONS TO OUR 2019 GRADUATES



DEANNA G.

**VASSAR COLLEGE (POUGHKEEPSIE, NY)
BA IN POLITICAL SCIENCE & BA IN BIOLOGY
PARISH: ST. CLARE OF ASSISI, BRONX
HIGH SCHOOL: CARDINAL SPELLMAN HIGH SCHOOL**

“The Pierre Toussaint Scholarship Program has been so much more to me than its name suggests. PTS is a family, a source of friendships, and a never-ending support system. Throughout my undergraduate career, PTS has provided me with financial assistance and much encouragement, allowing me to pursue my studies globally in Cuba, Scotland, England, and Ireland as well as domestically in Washington D.C. PTS has provided a space for me to grow spiritually while also preparing me for life after my undergraduate studies through workshops on many topics, from mental health through financial literacy. I wish my fellow graduates the best of luck in their future endeavors and I will hold all of the PTS family in my prayers as I pursue my graduate studies!”



(POST GRADUATE PLANS: “I am excited and blessed to say that I will be moving to New Haven, Connecticut and attending graduate school at the Yale School of Public Health beginning in August 2019. At Yale, I will be an MPH Candidate studying Health Policy with a concentration in Global Health.”)



KEITH G.

**UNIVERSITY OF CONNECTICUT (STORRS, CT)
BA IN COMMUNICATIONS
PARISH: ST. CHARLES BORROMEO, HARLEM
HIGH SCHOOL: CARDINAL SPELLMAN HIGH SCHOOL**

“PTS Program has been home and family to me for the past 4 years. What makes this program special is that the family doesn’t just end here! I know that I am graduating but I will always have the support of the office and the scholars. This is highlighted through the constant support and love that the program offers students. To my fellow scholars, we are a special breed! Do not take for granted anything this program has to offer you because these are opportunities that many other students like us wish they could have experienced. Always put your best foot forward and know that your PTS family will always support you!”

(POST GRADUATE PLANS: “I will be completing my summer internship at Travelers Championship located in Hartford, CT but actively seeking employment for an entry level job.”)



CONGRATULATIONS TO OUR 2019 GRADUATES

DAVID L.

PACE UNIVERSITY (NEW YORK, NY)

BBA IN MARKETING

CONCENTRATION IN ADVERTISING & INTEGRATED
MARKETING COMMUNICATIONS

PARISH: ST. NICHOLAS OF TOLENTINE, BRONX

HIGH SCHOOL: CARDINAL HAYES HIGH SCHOOL

“The Pierre Toussaint Scholarship Fund has guided me into becoming a scholar and professional while keeping me grounded in my faith. The skills that I have learned through PTS workshops has helped me begin my life as a business professional. However, most importantly, the Pierre Toussaint Scholarship Fund has provided me with a network of current scholars and alumni who I look to for motivation and inspiration. The scholars have lifted me up every step as we climbed towards success over the past four years. My wish to the current and incoming scholars is to position yourself and make yourself available to all the opportunities available through PTSP. This is a fruitful and prestigious scholarship program and you should recognize that. To my fellow graduates... WE DID IT! I'm extremely proud to have grown and developed through these past four years together. I'm ready for all of us to start this next chapter of life together.”

(POST GRADUATE PLANS: “I will be working as a Marketing Representative for an insurance agency in the Financial District. I aim to get my licenses and certificates over the next year. By 2021, I plan to pursue my advanced education, obtaining my Masters in Strategic Management at Pace University.”)



JULIO R. G.

UNIVERSITY OF NOTRE DAME (SOUTH BEND, IN.)

BA IN POLITICAL SCIENCE

MINOR IN BUSINESS ECONOMICS

PARISH: BLESSED SACRAMENT, STATEN ISLAND

HIGH SCHOOL: MSGR. FARRELL HIGH SCHOOL

“Throughout my time in the program, I have encountered a welcome, helpful environment that has allowed me to accomplish all I have to this day. The financial assistance helped me to afford the school of my dreams and I cannot be more thankful for that opportunity. The Winter Workshops and Retreats gave me both spiritual and general guidance into how I should use the gifts I have been given. I particularly enjoyed the retreats where I got to know and meet people I would have never encountered otherwise. Overall, the Pierre Toussaint Scholarship Program has both supported and guided me to where I am today and I could not be more thankful.”

(POST GRADUATE PLANS: “I will be attending Fordham University School of Law studying to attain my J.D.”)



CONGRATULATIONS TO OUR 2019 GRADUATES

**SPENSER W.
JOHNSON AND WALES UNIVERSITY**

(PROVIDENCE, RI)

BS IN ADVERTISING

PARISH: HOLY FAMILY, NEW ROCHELLE

HIGH SCHOOL: NEW ROCHELLE HIGH SCHOOL

“Pierre Toussaint has been a great support system throughout my college career. As someone who always likes to try new things and build my resume, Pierre Toussaint has allowed me to experiment with different internships and study abroad opportunities. Pierre Toussaint has made me confident in my abilities from the amazing retreats and career workshops.”

(POST GRADUATE PLANS: “My plans after graduation are to travel to California to combine my major and internship experience within the entertainment industry.”)



**VINCENT W.
MANHATTAN COLLEGE (BRONX, NY)
BA IN HISTORY**

MINOR IN BUSINESS & PHILOSOPHY

PARISH: BLESSED SACRAMENT, STATEN ISLAND

HIGH SCHOOL: MSGR. FARRELL HIGH SCHOOL

“It was a great privilege to participate in the Pierre Toussaint Scholarship Program. I enjoyed our meetings, workshops, community service projects and the supportive people I met. I appreciate the financial assistance, professional development and community of faith that this program has offered to me. A highlight for me was working with legally blind teenagers in the summer through Catholic Charities Guild for the Blind, I wish my fellow scholars great success, happiness and fun! Thank you Leah for all of your kindness and hard work.”

(POST GRADUATE PLANS: “I will be a part of the NYC Neighborhood 360 Fellowship for 10 months. I will work with the NYC Department of Small Business Services and the Staten Island Chamber of Commerce in order to enhance the vibrancy of commercial districts with downtown Staten Island.”)

Additional Graduate:



**XAVIER W.
HOFSTRA UNIVERSITY (HEMPSTEAD, NY)
BA IN FILM STUDIES
PARISH: ST. CHARLES BORROMEIO, HARLEM
HIGH SCHOOL: CARDINAL HAYES HIGH SCHOOL**

ARCHDIOCESE OF NEW YORK
PIERRE TOUSSAINT SCHOLARSHIP FUND

Annual Scholars Retreat

Friday, May 31– Sunday, June 2, 2019

Graymoor Spiritual Life Center
Garrison, New York

Bus Service will be provided.

The Annual Pierre Toussaint Scholars Retreat is a required program for all scholars.

“So do not fear, for I am with you; Do not be dismayed, for I am your God. I will strengthen you and help you; I will uphold you with my righteous right hand. Isaiah 41:10

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 has provided scholarships to graduating high school seniors of diverse backgrounds from public, private and parochial schools throughout the Archdiocese of New York, to assist them with the educational fees and expenses associated with their college studies. Students selected into the PTSF 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 their meeting certain academic and service requirements. PTSF also provides the scholars with ongoing mentorship and advisement: spiritual, educational, professional career, and personal.

To obtain more information regarding and /or to support the Pierre Toussaint Scholarship Fund 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, THE ALFRED E. SMITH FOUNDATION AND CATHOLIC CHARITIES...
AND PARTIALLY FUNDED BY THE CARDINAL'S ANNUAL STEWARDSHIP APPEAL.

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

PIERRE TOUSSAINT SCHOLARSHIP FUND—OFFICE OF BLACK MINISTRY—ARCHDIOCESE OF NEW YORK
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