



# BAY SCHOLARS

ANNUAL REPORT 2019



# To our Bay Scholars Community

A

As I reflect on the past year for Bay Scholars, I find myself grateful to be in community with our Scholars, partner schools, and community partners. I am delighted to share the 2019 annual report for Bay Scholars.

This report is compiled as the twelfth—and largest—class of Bay Scholars settles into their respective high school communities, beginning their journey to higher education. Over the past decade, Bay Scholars has grown to serve 500 students at 14 schools across five counties in the Bay Area.

The work of Bay Scholars focuses on identifying talented students who face significant socioeconomic challenges, and connecting them with high-quality educational opportunities to support their academic, social-emotional, and personal development.

To help their success, Bay Scholars actively engages students on their educational journey. Opportunities such as mentorship, college campus visits, summer leadership programs, and professional and community events enrich student development as they prepare for college.

From its inception, Bay Scholars has aimed to be a hub for change. By maintaining a focus on college matriculation and completion, this goal is materializing. One hundred percent of Bay Scholars students have matriculated to college.

In the pages ahead, you will meet some of our students, like Simone Fernandez, Bay Scholars Class of 2019, and learn what drives them. You will see the impact they are beginning to have in their communities—impact made possible by access to education.

The growth of Bay Scholars is exciting for our community, and we recognize this would not be possible without the generous investment of our donors. Bay Scholars is deeply grateful for your ongoing support. We remain committed to serving students struggling to overcome adversity with the goal of thriving - because of your partnership with Bay Scholars, our students are able to access life-altering educational communities across the Bay Area.

Now, I am thrilled to share with you the efforts of our community. I hope you will enjoy reading about them.

With Gratitude,



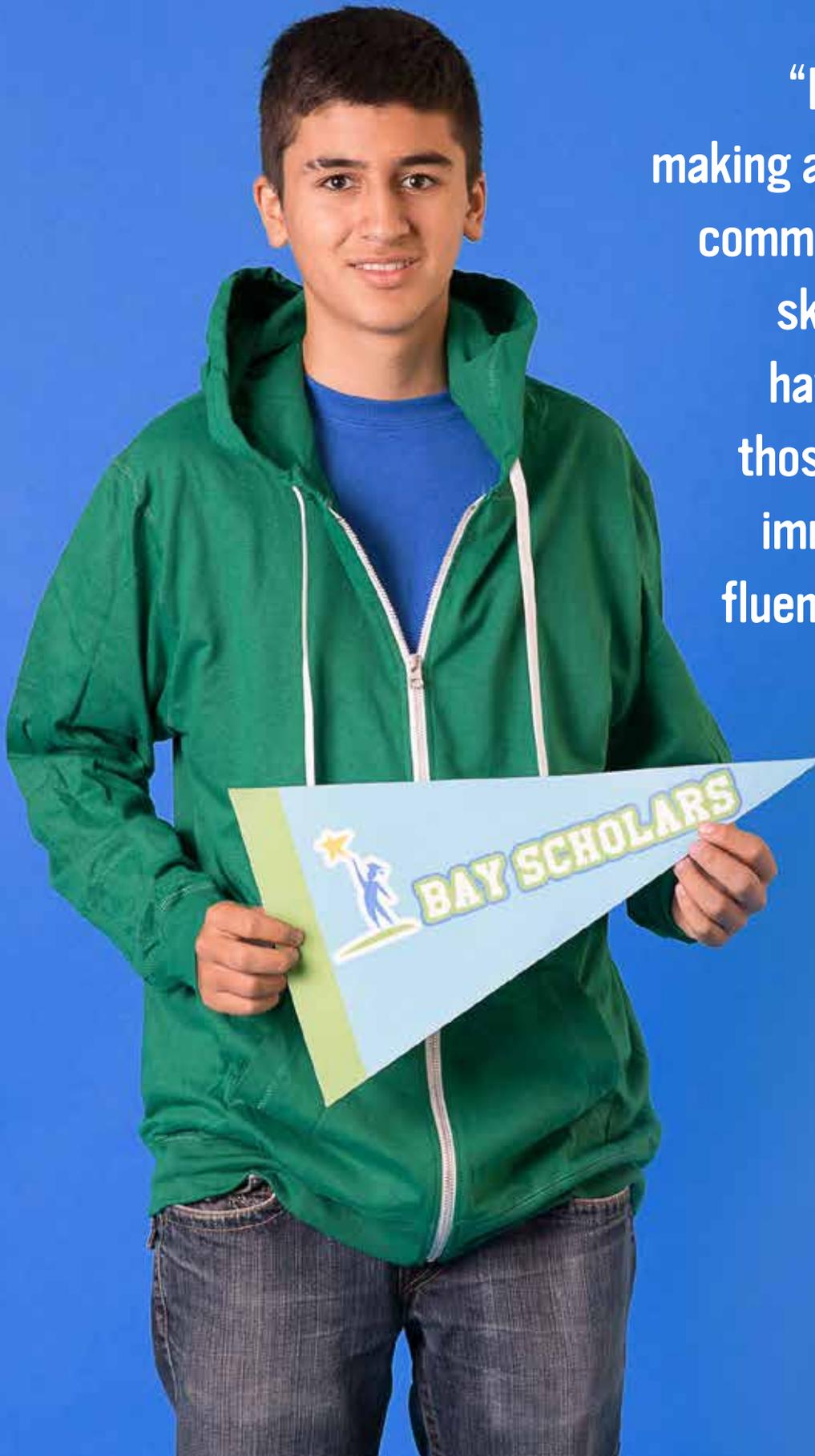
Caitlin Curran Kavanagh



**“I’m an entrepreneur in the making and I enjoy sharpening my communication and negotiation skills. I’m a man of God and have a strong desire to help those affected by the current immigration policy. I’m also fluent in Spanish and English.”**

**Isaac B. Chavez Ceja**

Bay Scholars Class of 2022  
Junipero Serra High School  
Wants to study Business  
Administration and/or  
Economics in college and  
minor in Latin American  
Studies.



**“My major goal throughout my whole school career has been to work to make my mom’s efforts of immigrating to America and working to put me through Catholic education worth it. I’m a supportive leader, good at making plans and sticking to them while considering the ideas of others. A hardworking and focused individual in both academics and extracurricular activities.”**

**Sharleene Halog**

Bay Scholars Class of 2022  
St. Joseph Notre Dame High School  
Wants to go to a prestigious college  
where she can get a degree in  
psychology and eventually  
pursue a career in psychology.



# MISSION

Bay Scholars promotes a life-altering experience connecting promising youth with transformative educational opportunities at Bay Area Catholic college prep high schools.

## Our Vision

Bay Scholars are thoughtful, engaged, motivated and talented students in search of a transformational education.

### The Bay Scholars Method

**Recruit promising students from low income families**

E.g. family of four earning below **\$58,000**



**Award incoming students a four-year \$14,000 merit scholarship for high school**

**Partner with 14 Bay Area Catholic college prep high schools**

**Connect Scholars with unique enrichment experiences**

**Provide a gateway to college and beyond.**



In 2008 Janet & Clint Reilly founded a scholarship fund that has grown into Bay Scholars. Now, with its own community of generous donors, Bay Scholars supports hundreds of students each year.

The program focuses on reaching inner-city and minority students, who often face extreme economic and life challenges, and connecting them with a great college prep education. Without economic help, the best high schools are often out of reach, effectively closing the door to college and the future for these students.

The Reilly Family Foundation has a continuing \$500,000 annual pledge which, in addition to providing for scholarships, also covers all operating expenses for the organization.

**This ensures that every dollar raised for Bay Scholars goes directly to scholarships.**



# KEY FIGURES

**\$5,516,750**

Awarded in scholarships to date

**1,936**

scholarships awarded

**507**

current Scholars 2019-20

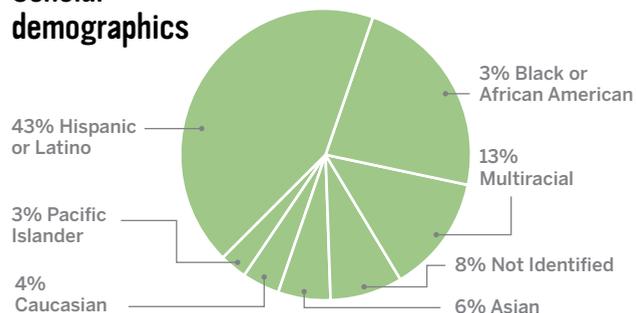
**839**

scholars welcomed into the program since its founding

**251**

graduates as of Spring 2019

## Scholar demographics



**\$19,750**

The average tuition per year at a college prep school in the Bay Area—and costs continue to rise

**\$3,500**

Annual scholarship award given by Bay Scholars (18% of tuition)

## PROVIDES ACCESS TO:

College prep education; College counseling; Personal and academic support; Sports teams; Electives; Leadership development opportunities e.g. Student Government, captain of sports teams; Annual retreats; travel opportunities; Holistic support

## Matriculation destinations

Colleges that Bay Scholars graduates in the class of 2019 plan to attend

### CALIFORNIA SCHOOLS

- California State Fullerton
- California State Sacramento
- California State San Francisco
- California State San Jose
- California State Sonoma
- City College of San Francisco
- Contra Costa College
- Diablo Valley College
- Dominican University
- Holy Names University
- Laney College
- Menlo College
- Notre Dame de Namur University
- Saint Mary's College of California
- San Francisco School of Esthetics
- Santa Monica College
- Skyline College
- UC Davis
- UC Merced
- UC Riverside
- UC Santa Cruz
- University of La Verne
- University of the Pacific



“I am a determined and hard-working person when I need to be. But I also love to have fun. I am also involved in debate and recently attended a debate camp. I like to study injustices in the black community and hope to have an impact on them one day.”

**Brandon Sturdivant Jr.**

Bay Scholars Class of 2021  
Archbishop Riordan High School  
Favorite classes are math and  
conceptual physics.



# GIVING THANKS BY GIVING BACK

There was something in the air that day — while the state of California was ravaged by wildfires and smoke choked the Bay Area, over 300 guests filled the Julia Morgan Ballroom in support of the Bay Scholars community and the Fifth Annual Giving Thanks by Giving Back luncheon. It was most distinctly optimism and gratitude in the ballroom air that afternoon and it filled us with hope. The engaging presence of California Attorney General Xavier Becerra lifted up the stories of our Scholars — each of whom possesses within them the potential for success — as he spoke of his own educational journey and the transformative role college played in his life. The afternoon proved to be an inspiring celebration of the Bay Scholars community.

## SAMIR HOOKER'S BAY SCHOLARS WELCOME

I grew up in one of the toughest housing projects in San Francisco, Westside Courts, with my mother, sister, and stepfather — who I call my real dad. My biological father was a drug addict, and my childhood with him was filled with both physical and emotional abuse. I went back and forth between my mom and dad, until my mom won full custody of me.

My beautiful mother, who is in attendance today, was and is still sick. For the majority of my childhood she spent weeks at the hospital, so the only person to take care of us was the man in my life, my stepfather, Jonathan.

On September 1, 2012, my stepfather was shot several times, murdered a block away from where I was sleeping. All those shots he took, I felt like I took too.

After his death, my mother said to me “pressure makes diamonds son, so you should be the shiniest in the world right now!” I was determined to not let his death break me. I enrolled in middle school and met one of my mentors, Kim Freudenberg, who led me to Sacred Heart Cathedral and Bay Scholars. I worked extremely hard to get into Sacred Heart Cathedral, but I wouldn't have had the means to attend if it wasn't for the SHC Piro Program

and the generous financial support of Bay Scholars.

I am now thriving at Sacred Heart Cathedral, earning over a 3.5 GPA, playing basketball, and serving as a student ambassador. I still feel different from a lot of my peers in school. Sometimes I see a basketball teammate's dad come to the games, and I never see my own. My peers live in nice homes, in safe places, with things I simply can't afford. But I am grateful every day that Bay Scholars has provided me with opportunities that I never thought would be possible. Being at Sacred Heart Cathedral, I have access to things such as service immersion trips to help the less fortunate, tutors from USF that are on standby whenever needed, great teachers, and a loving community. Through the education I am receiving at SHC, I hope to someday go to UCLA, and better my life and the life of my family. Most importantly, I will live our school's motto, “Enter to Learn, Leave to Serve”.

Last spring, when Mr. and Mrs. Reilly visited campus as part of the Bay Scholars spring speaker series, I met Stefan Gartrell, who runs his own organization helping youth. Today, he is helping me build out my long-term plan. I want to share my story with others and start my own non-profit to help adolescents deal with traumatic



losses in their lives. This amazing connection with Mr. Gartrell was made possible through Bay Scholars, and I am so thankful. Bay Scholars is so much more than a scholarship

organization. They have taken a genuine interest in me as a young man and have motivated me to be a better person, despite all my tribulations. Because of the generosity of Bay Scholars

## ERIC GREER'S BAY SCHOLARS REFLECTION

Bay Scholars students, Samir Hooker of SHC and Eric Greer of SJND with California Attorney General Xavier Becerra.



and each and every one of you here today, I am on a path to college and a better future. On behalf of myself, my mother, and all Bay Scholars families, thank you from the bottom of my heart.

**G**ood afternoon everyone, my name is Eric Greer and I am currently a senior at Saint Joseph Notre Dame High School in Alameda. I have been a member of Bay Scholars since my freshman year. I would first like to start by thanking Bay Scholars, they have designed such a positive scholarship organization that has helped many students, including myself, prosper and mature in ways in which I would never be able to do without them. This is something I am truly grateful for. Bay Scholars has positioned many kids to be set up for success in their future endeavors, including college and career aspirations.

Now a little about myself, I was born and raised in the rugged area of East Oakland, surrounded by criminals, high school dropouts, and even dopefiends. With the separation of my parents, it made it hard for a young, maturing kid to be focused on becoming successful, especially surrounded by all the negative influences in my East Oakland neighborhood. When I was 7 years old, I was enrolled in Saint Elizabeth Elementary by my grandmother. She was afraid of me attending a public school in Oakland due to safety in my neighborhood, and she worried about the type of education I would receive. Attending Saint Elizabeth was a positive step forward in my life. For once I could just be a kid at school and enjoy childhood experiences such as free time, making new friends, and most importantly enjoying the small things in life without

worries. There were no interferences or distractions and school was overall a safer place to be.

Once I started to grow I became more knowledgeable of what was going on in my neighborhood, I had become less interested in school and oftentimes would be caught with the wrong crowd of people. It wasn't until I came to SJND that I began to focus and make wiser decisions by myself. SJND has helped me grow in my maturity and cherishing all the gifts, blessings and people we have in our lives. The Faculty and Staff have always taught me to treat everyone as a family, no matter who you are and to always have a positive attitude. Now, thinking of everyone as family was not something I thought about in my neighborhood, I feared strangers were all dangerous and up to no good. It took some time but eventually, I have come to understand the school's mission and how I've grown both academically and athletically from it. I have begun to focus more on school and also my future and would not have been able to have done so without maturing and opening up to those around me.

I found my true self without the help of Bay Scholars and the generosity of their organization and founders. It was also the help of my coach, Mr. Lippi who granted me the opportunity to be on the basketball team. Our team

is built on family connection and this has helped me personally open up and show people my true colors. Usually, when you do such a thing you are oftentimes categorized as 'soft' in my neighborhood, but our team has helped me mature and look past people's judgments and to be my true self at all times. I have gone from a kid who was stereotyped by many with "no future" to someone who is proud of who they became through the welcoming community of SJND

**"I would not have found my true self without the help of Bay Scholars and the generosity of their organization and founders."**

and for this I am truly thankful. I would not be the intelligent, young man I am today without the help of everyone in this room.

Bay Scholars is led by Caitlin Kavanagh, who is a kind wholehearted person who loves each and everyone one of us at Bay Scholars. She is driven and a very joyful person at all times, when she walks into the room her smile brightens up the place as she always seems to have a positive attitude that affects all around her.

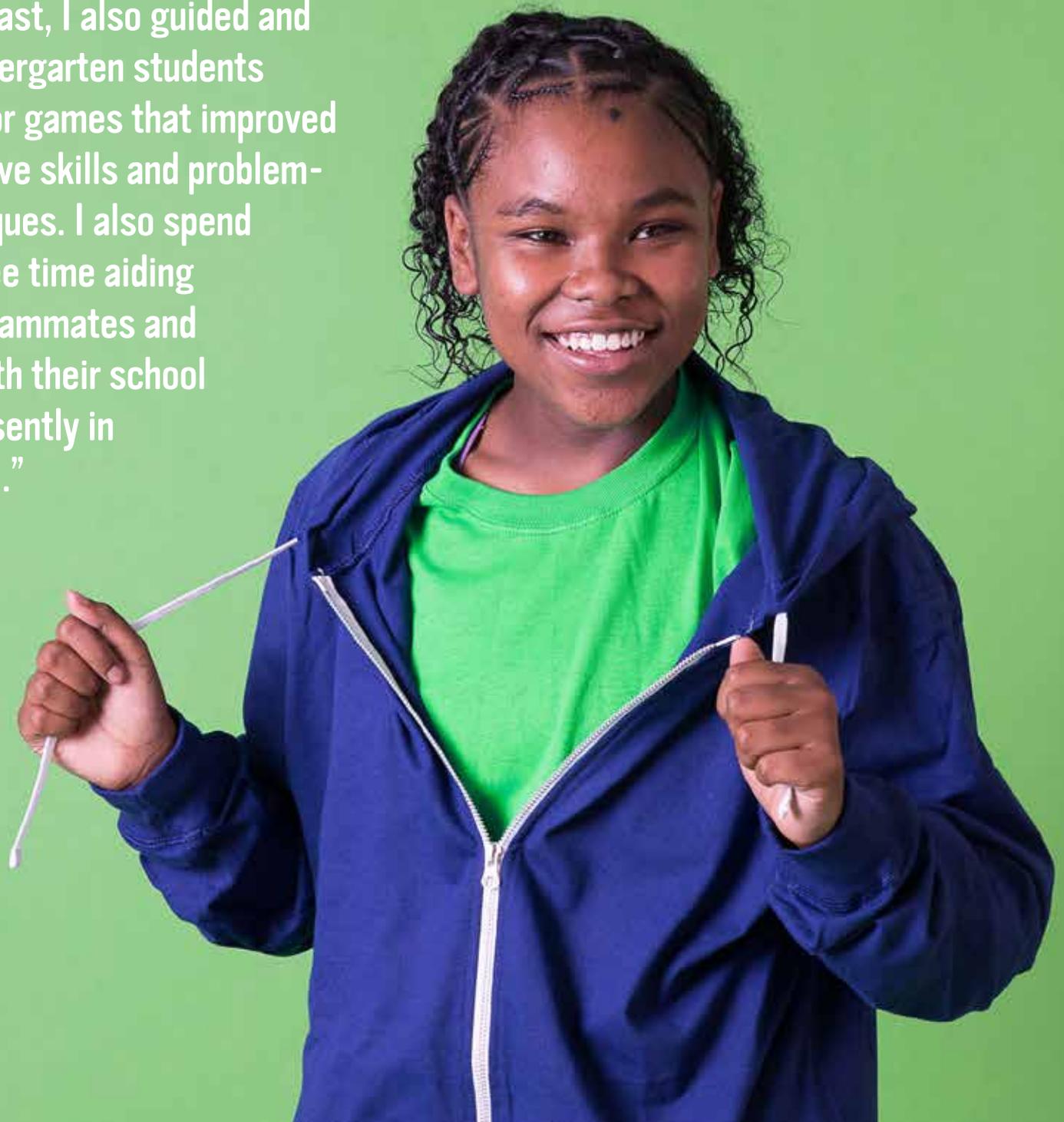
Caitlin comes to SJND multiple times each year and asks us who we want to be in the future "What will your title be?" This question has helped me think about my future and my title will be "Eric Greer, Pharmacist."

Thank you Bay Scholars for all you do for all of us! Thank you - from all of the Bay Scholars students - to everyone in this room for your support! GOD BLESS.

“I have lived in San Francisco for my whole life. Recently I traveled to China with fellow scholars from Sacred Heart Cathedral to learn about the different ways Chinese culture is taught and how their school program works. In the past, I also guided and supported kindergarten students through outdoor games that improved their cooperative skills and problem-solving techniques. I also spend some of my free time aiding and tutoring teammates and classmates with their school work. I am presently in varsity softball.”

**TaLiyah Cato**

Bay Scholars Class of 2022  
Sacred Heart Cathedral  
Wants to become an  
architect or engineer.



# BAY SCHOLARS COLLEGE VISITING DAY

Since 2015, more than 130 Scholars have participated in Bay Scholars College Visiting Day, a program created in partnership with the Institute of Governmental Studies (IGS) at UC Berkeley and The Center for Academic and Student Achievement at the University of San Francisco.

Through an on-campus visit and the opportunity to connect with professors, admissions counselors, current students, and alumni, College Visiting Day provides Scholars with an opportunity to make the idea of going to college tangible.

## UC Berkeley

“This gives Bay Scholars a chance to tour the campus, sit in on a class, and get a presentation on college admissions. It’s a win-win: We help give the Scholars an inspirational glimpse of their own futures as college students, and we help further the Berkeley mission. People know of Berkeley’s amazing academic reputation, but fewer are aware of how much the university works to make itself accessible to low-income students or those who might otherwise not go to college. Almost a quarter of Berkeley freshmen are first-generation college students. Plus it was a lot of fun!”

—Ethan Rarick, Director, Robert T. Matsui  
Center for Politics and Public Service at  
University of California, Berkeley



## University of San Francisco

“The program is, in essence, a preview to the academic and social experience at USF as well as early access to support and resources. Scholars who participate in the program will live on campus for two weeks prior to Orientation regardless of their academic year housing, and take courses that will apply towards graduation as well as build their academic and social network at USF. I serve as the academic success coach for these students and work with them from orientation until commencement. MSP is a four year program, focused intensely on the first year, the most critical time of transition.”

—Charlene Lobo Soriano, Ed.D., NCC  
on the Muscat Scholars Program at USF:

## Alumna Q&A

# SIMONE FERNANDEZ

*Simone Fernandez is an inspiring Bay Scholars alumna, currently attending San Francisco State University, with a passion for superheroes, diversity, and fair representation in media. Simone shares a bit about each of these below.*

**Please share a little bit about your educational path and where is has taken you so far and where you hope to go from here.** Saint Mary's was one of the best decisions in my life. I'm grateful for being able to attend a high school that gave me the opportunity to learn a wide variety of topics. In the beginning, I struggled but I was able to grow from what was challenging for me and end my four years with memories that will last forever. From my best friends to my past classes Saint Mary's, without a doubt, helped build who I am today. I hope to accomplish more in life and choose a path that will build my potential.

**Please share a bit about someone who influenced you during your time at Saint Mary's.** It's very hard to choose one because the environment I was in had many people who helped influence me on my journey. However, Ms. Numo, Ms. Walton, Ms. G, and Mr. Gonzalez are the teachers from my high school who either pushed, helped, or was a voice of

wisdom on my journey; who I'll never forget. Ms. Numo was my art teacher for two years and helped me open the door of infinite possibilities when it came to my art and my very own imagination. She challenged norms and encouraged me to pursue ideas no matter how crazy they seemed. You want to do a 4ft tall portrait of a valkyrie? Do it. But do it from your inner artist. She helped me realize how your voice and vision can be shared through artistic expression, and how important it is. Ms. Walton was a teacher whose class you never wanted to miss. She gave me confidence and unlocked my knowledge about diversity and taught me things I use for my characters to this day. Ms. G was someone who always listened to me rant about Marvel. She opened her room for me to hang-out with her and is someone who I relied on to have nerd discussions with. Speaking of nerds Mr. Gonzalez is someone who helped make my vision happen. He helped me create the Marvel Club, something I made my senior year



**Bay Scholars alumna, Simone Fernandez, with Nicole Perlman, screen-writer of Guardians of the Galaxy and Captain Marvel at an SFFILM science fiction writing workshop for young women.**

of high school that is continued by my very dear friend Jade Johnson. He was perfect because we both love Marvel and could talk, or argue, about movies and characters all day. I saw him every Tuesday of my senior year and then he became my mentor for my art project Excelsior. Excelsior

is my senior project that allowed me to take my knowledge of diversity and my passion for superheroes and combine them to showcase individuals of very diverse stories. They are all original and Mr. Gonzalez helped me build who they are.

**What about the Marvel universe - and your own universe of characters - appeals to you? Why is that genre something that resonates with you?**

The Marvel Universe appeals to me, and probably others, because of how human the characters are and their individual stories. The vast majority of characters tackle very super problems but also very human problems. They're faced with real-world issues that affect us in some way and the way they are portrayed makes them almost relatable. Tony Stark was an alcoholic and had issues with PTSD in a very real sense. Marvel's betrayal of his journey of trying to overcome his PTSD wasn't fabricated or toned down, it was realistic and possible. By that example when you dissect into the Universe, year by year, it is starting to "reflect the world outside our window," a phrase Stan Lee lived by. In fact, Marvel comics were the first comics in American mainstream media to portray a black character without stereotypic features or characteristics. Said character was in a group called the Howling Commandos, a group of WWII soldiers of very mixed backgrounds: a Jewish man, African American, Italian American, and Chinese American soldiers. When it comes to what I resonate with I believe it has to do with the complexity of characters, mostly villains. I've seen a quote somewhere that states sometimes, "a villain is just someone whose story wasn't heard". And even the actors playing them in the cinematic sense understand that. Characters such as Loki Laufeyson or James Buchanan Barnes neither had an intense motive but was violently influenced and tortured to pursue a powers agenda to torment and control. The Marvel Universe then takes that and shows how it complicates heroes and shows their own flaws as well; the movies do



an exceptional job with telling the stories too. My own universe I would like to be the same. I want characters that people can recognize or resonate with. From appearances to personalities, to challenges they face, I put effort into making faces we haven't seen before or whose stories haven't been told enough.

The genre of superheroes has always appealed to me since I was a kid. Watching people come from very unique backgrounds and stories shape who they are either as a hero and villain intrigues me. What they have to overcome either translates into their strengths or weaknesses. The Marvel Universe has been close to my heart ever since I started watching it with my brother when we were younger and that spot has only grown with the many movies and tv shows they continue to make. I'm a nerd at heart and I'm not afraid to show it.

**Simone's original art pieces from her senior project.**  
**"Excelsior is my senior project that allowed me to take my knowledge of diversity and my passion for superheroes and combine them to showcase individuals of very diverse stories."**



**Why is representation in media important to you and what you hope to do about it.** It's important to me because I know what it's like to be left behind when it comes to characters. The lack of representation is noticeable especially when you can't relate to a majority of characters on screen. It was rare when I saw someone who looked like

me. As I got older I not only started to understand how I didn't see a lot of people on tv that look like me but that many people, in general, were also portrayed negatively; factors like gender, race, etc. play a huge part in the story or details with the character as well. I hope to be able to create something a lot of people can relate to as well as make them more comfortable with who they are. I want to create stories that share different perspectives and show how being different is okay and being who you are is even better. When someone sees another person that they can relate to on-screen, in my experience, it helps bring familiarity which then results in that connection with the story even more.

**What is the value of the college education you are about to embark on?**

My college education is something I am incredibly thankful for. It's valuable to me but mostly my future. What I can learn from not only classes but other people cannot be measured. What I learn and what I choose to do affects what I will do in the future. I'm excited to learn, make mistakes, and learn from those mistakes. Meeting new people and making connections helps build my foundation at SFSU as well. I'm proud of where I've come from and I'm also

proud that I've made it here too. I'm choosing film as my major and I hope to do big things in life and pursue a career of creativity and art.

**Anything else you want to share??**

Whoever reads this please know that you matter and find the light that sparks your imagination and run wild. Be a nerd and most of all be you.

# OUR DONORS

*Bay Scholars would like to recognize the following who have committed to making a difference in the lives of our Scholars.*

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**Bay Scholars promotes a life-altering experience connecting promising youth with transformative educational opportunities at Bay Area college-prep high schools.**

Clinton Reilly with students from the Bay Scholars program





BISHOP O'DOWD  
HIGH SCHOOL

**Bay Scholars**

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SACRED HEART CATHEDRAL  
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