**2018-2019 CPS DREAM FUND SCHOLARSHIP**

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**What’s the Chicago Public Schools DREAM Fund Scholarship?**

The CPS DREAM Fund Scholarship is Chicago’s first city-wide scholarship opportunity for graduating high school undocumented immigrant students, financed completely by private donations and employee-based contributions. Started in 2014, it has been able to assist 22 graduates of the Chicago Public Schools ineligible to complete the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) to support their transition into their first year of college (both 2 year and 4 year) with scholarship awards (including renewals) that have ranged from $250 to $2,000, each. The press release on the 2014 class can be found on the next page. Members of the Scholarship Fundraiser Planning Committee are constantly looking for events and opportunities to highlight the scholarship recipients, raise awareness about the path to college for district DREAMers, and identify sources of funding (donations are accepted throughout the year). Please contact Luis Narváez (LNarvaez2@cps.edu; 773-553-2077), Director of Strategic Projects at the Chicago Public Schools, for more information or to make a donation.

**Scholarship Application Requirements**

Applicants must:

* Be Chicago Public School students (including district-managed, options, charter, and contract schools) in their senior year of high school
* Be ineligible to receive federal or state financial aid
* Possess a minimum of a 3.0 GPA (weighted)
* Have scored a minimum of a 900 on their SAT
* Must have attended high school in Chicago for at least 3 years (to adhere to Illinois DREAM Act standards)
* Plan to attend a regionally accredited 2 or 4 year university by the following fall (including out of state; Chicago STAR Scholars can put a hold on their award until their third year of college)
* Complete application (will open up in Spring 2019): https://cps.academicworks.com/opportunities/2156

**Facts About the CPS DREAM Fund Scholars**

* They represent all geographical areas of the City of Chicago and have attended both neighborhood as well as selective enrollment high schools
* The represent multiple nationalities, with Central & South America, Europe, and Asia represented
* 100% are currently employed
* 62.5% work over 20 hours per week due to their financial need
* They are active on their campus, including Residence Hall Advisors, Research Assistants, Social Justice Club members, Phi Theta Kappa Honor Society members, and elected Student Government officials, among others
* Some have been awarded renewal scholarships due to their outstanding academic achievement

**DONATIONS NEEDED:**

***Are you a business owner interested in contributing to our annual fundraiser (taking place in the Spring of 2019)? We are looking for donations of food, drinks, and raffle items. As a 501c3 charitable organization, any donations made to the event will be tax-deductible. Please contact a member of the planning committee for more information, and thank you in advance for considering helping our most vulnerable students!***

**CPS DREAM FUND SCHOLARSHIP PRESS RELEASE, SEPTEMBER, 2014**

# CPS Students “Dream” Big

## http://cps.edu/Spotlight/PublishingImages/Spotlight_DREAM.jpgDreamer Fund gives immigrant students a chance at college

“I’ve always considered myself an American,” said Hector L., a 2014 graduate of Brooks College Prep. “Until recently, I didn’t realize how much being an immigrant would affect my future.”

Hector, who was brought to the U.S. from Mexico by his parents when he was a year old, is among the first to benefit from the CPS Dream Fund – a scholarship fund for talented students who are undocumented, and therefore have limited access to college aid.

Undocumented students are ineligible for federal financial aid. Because of their immigration status, many private scholarship opportunities are out of reach as well, leaving these students with few options when it comes to paying for college.

“It’s heartbreaking when you see your friends getting scholarships and financial aid that you can’t qualify for,” said Hector. “Opportunities like the Dream Fund are what kept me motivated to keep trying.”

Launched in 2013, the CPS Dream Fund reflects the passion and generosity of District employees. It required two years of research and development by the Office of College and Career Success, and is funded almost exclusively by donations from CPS staff.

“At the end of every school year, I would always see outstanding students struggling to enroll in college because they were Dreamers,” said Marcia Boyd, Scholarship Coordinator for CPS. “So we figured it was time for CPS to begin taking care of our own.”

The Dream Fund’s first recipients were Hector, who now attends Harold Washington College, Maham A., a student at Lake Forrest College, Carla B., who attends Dominican University, and Amairani L., a student at the Illinois Institute of Technology. All four graduated from CPS high schools last June and all are the first in their families to attend college.

“I’d started to think college was unattainable for me,” said Maham, a Canadian immigrant whose parents were born in Pakistan. “I wanted to go, but was so discouraged about how I would pay for it when I wasn’t eligible for loans or financial aid. This scholarship lifted a huge burden off my shoulders.”

All of the scholarship winners are grateful to the college and career counselors who told them about the Dream Fund and made sure they completed the application fully and on time.

“I sometimes waited until the last minute on some of the deadlines,” said Carla, “but my counselor kept on me to make sure I got it done.”

Almost as valuable as the scholarship are the strides these students have made in the eyes of their immigrant parents.

“Growing up, I saw my dad go from job to job, struggling because he didn’t have an education,” said Hector. “He always wanted me to do better, and I’m so grateful that I will have that opportunity.”

They are excited too for what scholarships like this will mean for future students who face the same obstacles.

“The Dream Fund raises awareness about students like us who have untapped potential and can do great things if given the resources,” said Maham. “Without scholarships like this, a lot of kids like us would just be lost.” To make a donation to the CPS Dream Fund, visit <https://cps.networkforgood.com/projects/65081-cps-dream-fund>