



2015-2016 HIGH BRIDGE SCHOLARS



Thomas Booker is a native Washingtonian and graduate of the Duke Ellington School of the Arts in Washington, D.C. Trained by the Rutgers Summer Acting Conservatory and the British American Drama Academy in Oxford, England, he has performed in over twelve plays since 2012 at venues including the Duke Ellington School of the Arts, Folger Theatre, Ford's Theatre, and the Kennedy Center. Teachers describe him as someone who always maintains high standards for himself and has consistently demonstrated an ability to rise to any challenge, academic or artistic. He will attend SUNY Purchase to seek a Bachelor of Fine Arts in Acting. He plans to pursue a career in the Theatre.



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Brice Hurling-Spears was the valedictorian of the first graduating class from the Academy of Health Sciences at Prince George's Community College in Largo, Maryland and received his Associates Degree in Liberal Arts – General Studies on the same evening. He was awarded his degree with Highest Honors, having made the Dean's List all four semesters. He will attend Hampton University to study Biology/Pre-Medicine in pursuit of his ultimate goal of becoming an anesthesiologist.

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Adedotun Oseni-Adegbite has always been interested in technology, especially console and computer video games, since he was young. Frequent defeats led him to study the games and computer science, in general. Realizing that being computer savvy would improve his gameplay, he took C++ and Java programming classes for their application to video game design and production. A graduate of Sherwood High School in Sandy Spring, Maryland, he will attend the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, where he looks forward to diving in to his deepest passions: video games and programming.



Julia Rodriguez graduated from Falls Church High School in Virginia. A leader in her school and community, she was appointed to Fairfax County Public Schools' Student Advisory Council and the Superintendent's Minority Student Achievement Oversight Committee. Out of her experience as a domestic violence survivor, she created a new awareness initiative within her school and the county for students seeking relief from such circumstances. She will attend Champlain College in Burlington, Vermont to study Public Relations, a first step in reaching her goals of attending law school and securing a career in crisis management.



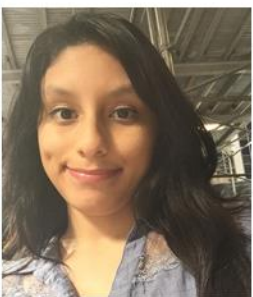
Miriam Tekle was born and raised in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. Moving to the United States four years ago, she had one goal: to take full advantage of the opportunities that came her way. Her transition to American life was not easy, but it helped her become an independent young woman. Her origin both motivates and encourages her to reach her full potential. A graduate of James W. Robinson Secondary School in Fairfax, VA, she will attend the University of Mary Washington to major in Chemistry and follow the Pre-Medicine track. Upon graduation, she plans to further her education by attending medical school.



2015 HIGH BRIDGE BOOK AWARDEES



Amber Bush graduated from Bowie High School with a 3.8 cumulative grade point average even though she was active in several organizations, including the Student Government Association, the National Honors Society, Ladies With Class, and Xclusive Step Team. Since the age of fourteen, she worked at Rita's Water Ice. She will attend Towson University and major in Mass Communications in order to pursue a career in public relations or marketing.



Vanessa Herrera was born and raised in the Washington Metropolitan area and has lived in Hyattsville, Maryland for more than 10 years. Having completed more than 400 hours of community service, she loves to help others whenever possible. She graduated from Northwestern High School as the salutatorian of her class of 366 students. She will attend the University of Maryland Honors College and double major in Accounting and Finance. She hopes that with all her hard work she will achieve her goal of becoming a forensic accountant at the FBI.

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Emily Hutcheson, graduated a year early from Mount Vernon High School and will attend Missouri University of Science and Technology, where she plans to double major in Environmental and Architectural Engineering. During high school, Emily played volleyball and also placed in several powerlifting competitions, breaking six state records and a world record along the way. She was a lead facilitator for KAST (Kids Are Scientists Too), a program that provides STEM-related lessons to elementary school children throughout Northern Virginia.



Pauline Tran is a graduate of James W. Robinson Secondary School in Fairfax, VA and will attend Virginia Commonwealth University. During her freshman year, she joined the crew team as a coxswain, hoping to learn how to be more independent. She learned a lot from that experience, like the importance of teamwork and how to balance extracurricular activities and academics while maintaining a healthy lifestyle.



Thomas Weaver graduated from Bishop McNamara High School in Forestville, Maryland. There, he served as the Lead Defense Attorney on the Mock Trial Team. He recently completed his fifth year as a member of the 100 Black Men Saturday Leadership Academy. He holds a summer legal internship at the United States Attorney's Office of the District of Columbia where he currently works for the Office of Community Engagement and External Affairs. He was elected President/Legal Intern of their Leadership Academy, leading student members who graduated from the Drug Education For Youth (DEFY) Program. He will attend Morehouse College as a Bonner Scholar.