



Gates Millennium Scholarship provides path to fulfilling dreams for two Ben Davis High School graduates



Michael Araya and Derrick Moore, both recent graduates of Ben Davis High School, received life-changing news in April.

“It felt amazing,” said Michael.

“I was just thinking, ‘Praise the Lord,’” said Derrick.

Derrick and Michael are each recipients this year of the Gates Millennium Scholarship, which will pay their expenses for any accredited college or university in the United States. The scholarship is funded by a grant from the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation. The two students spoke about their scholarships at a news conference with MSD Wayne Superintendent Jeff Butts.

Fifty-two thousand students nationwide applied for this scholarship, and 1,000 high school students received it.

Derrick has decided to use his scholarship to attend Azusa Pacific University in southern California. His goal is to become a politician.

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“I really want to attend a Christian university because I want to develop my faith as well as my academics,” Derrick said. “While developing my faith, I plan to study finance and gain the knowledge of how money affects different business decisions.”

Michael had many college choices in front of him, three of them from the Ivy League. He has been accepted to Harvard, Columbia, Princeton, Duke, Stanford, and Johns Hopkins Universities. He has chosen to attend Stanford.

“I honestly thought it was a dream or a prank when I got my Harvard and Stanford acceptance emails,” Michael said.

Michael is still undecided as to what he will study in his undergraduate work, but is considering biomedical engineering, African-American studies, physics, and psychology with pre-med requirements for all fields. He ultimately wants to become a neurosurgeon.

“My family is really proud of me and I wouldn’t have gotten there if it wasn’t for them and God,” he said.

“The entire Wayne community is proud of both Michael and Derrick,” said MSD of Wayne Township Superintendent Jeff Butts. “They have made the most of the multiple pathways to success available at Ben Davis High School.”

The Gates Millennium Scholars Program was established in 1999 to provide outstanding African American, American Indian/Alaska Native, Asian Pacific Islander American, and Hispanic American students an opportunity to complete an undergraduate college education in any discipline area of interest. The scholarship also provides funding for master’s and doctoral level studies in computer science, education, engineering, library science, mathematics, public health, and science. The program has awarded more than \$750 million in scholarships between 2000 and 2012.

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