



SUPPORTING HIGH ACHIEVEMENT OF PHILADELPHIA PUBLIC HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS

## White-Williams Scholars

# White-Williams Scholars Newsletter Inaugural Issue

Spring 2008

Issue: 1

Welcome to our first e-Newsletter! In an effort to keep in better contact with our friends, supporters and alumni, we will be sending out quarterly e-Newsletters. This first issue highlights Shahidah Kalam Id-Din, an alumna of the White-Williams Scholars program and our College Connection English Instructor. Her story of ambition and success is a true inspiration.

### 2008 Graduation & Alumni Reunion

#### Celebrating our Scholars

Senior Scholars, families, supporters and alumni gathered at World Cafe Live on Tuesday, May 13th to celebrate the accomplishments of our graduating Scholars. This year's Alumni Valedictorian Award was presented to Dr. Wesley T. Proctor (High School of Engineering & Science '89), Executive Administrator and Youth Pastor of Victory Christian Center. The evening included a dance performance by Roneisha Smith-Davis (CAPA '08), reflections from Dr. Proctor, and the presentation of the new Reverend Olivia Stuard Henry Book Scholarship named in honor of our oldest living alumna who is 101 years young.



View photos from this year's Graduation & Alumni Reunion on our [website](#).

### Alumni Profile: Shahidah Kalam Id-Din '89

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## **Shahidah Kalam Id-Din - White-Williams Scholars Alumna Extraordinaire!**

At White-Williams Scholars, we hear many remarkable stories about the achievements and successes of our alumni. The story of Shadidah Kalam Id-Din is particularly awe-inspiring. After graduation from Germantown High School, Shahidah attended Haverford College on a full academic scholarship and then went on to receive her Master's degree from Harvard's Graduate School of Education. She's currently waiting to hear whether she has been accepted into Columbia University's Doctoral program. She recently shared with us her memories of White-Williams Scholars and how she and her siblings benefited from the program.



### **Balancing Act**

Shahidah is one of ten siblings, the 4<sup>th</sup> oldest, from a hard-working Muslim family. After attending private school for most of her formative years, she entered Germantown High school in 11<sup>th</sup> grade. She and the older siblings worked part-time throughout high school to help take care of their own needs. Despite the pressures of school, work and family responsibilities, Shahidah served as editor of the school newspaper, working two days a week on the paper after school and three days a week at her part-time job.

### **A Little Help**

During her junior year, Shahidah and her sister, Bayyinah, were told about the White-Williams Scholars program by their counselor. Excelling in school had always been expected, so the stipend proved to be a reward and an unexpected benefit for something the girls were already doing. She and her sister would use the small stipend to pay for transportation, to buy lunch and sometimes for tokens to help with their younger siblings' transportation. Two of her younger brothers, Rafiq and Jeremiah, attended Carver High School for Engineering & Science and were also White-Williams Scholars. All four of the siblings fondly remember the benefits of WWS and have said that it was a "life-saver".

### **Why It Worked**

Shahidah says the support WWS offered made her feel appreciated for working hard in school. WWS was unique in that many other programs at that time made people "jump through hoops" before they offered assistance. Many who are

serious about going to college must work extra hard to stay ahead of the curve by keeping up their grades, staying involved in extracurricular activities, working part-time and still trying to maintain some normalcy in their teenage lives. The recognition and reward helped to keep her motivated and focused on her studies which positioned her for future success.

### Where Are They Now?

Shahidah encourages young people to find their passion and be willing to work hard to better themselves. Her love of writing and teaching has led her to working on several projects including serving as a writing instructor for College Connection, an after school, college prep program founded by White-Williams Scholars. She truly enjoys reconnecting with the program and helping to prepare today's students for academic excellence.

Shahidah's other sibling Scholars are highly accomplished as well. Bayyinah graduated from Temple University with honors, obtained a Master's degree from Ohio State, and is currently in the dissertation phase of her PhD at Michigan State University. Jeremiah and Rafiq both graduated from the University of Virginia. Jeremiah obtained a Master's degree from New College in CA and now works as an elementary school teacher and social justice activist in the Bay Area. After obtaining a Master's from the University of Virginia, Rafiq graduated from NYU Law. He is a recent Echoing Green Fellow and has started a charter school located in Brooklyn.

Shahidah and her siblings are shining examples of many White-Williams Scholars success stories.

For more stories on our [alumni](#), for information about our [programs](#), or to [donate](#), please visit our website: [www.wwscholars.org](http://www.wwscholars.org).

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*The mission of White-Williams Scholars is to inspire and support high achieving Philadelphia public high school students of limited financial means to fulfill their potential. We provide monthly stipends, academic enrichment and college preparation to over 1,400 students each year.*

For more information, please visit our [website](#).

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