



AMERICAN
experience
FOUNDATION

**2018
ANNUAL
REVIEW**





The American Experience Foundation (AEF) enriches the lives of low-income students through inspirational travel experiences and educational opportunities to cultivate the next generation of hospitality industry professionals. AEF invests in young people in our community, supporting their college and career readiness.

AEF is the 501 (c)(3) charity affiliated with Destination DC, the official destination marketing organization for Washington, DC. Through our affiliation with Destination DC and its nearly 1,000 member businesses, AEF is uniquely positioned to open doors for students, filling a need for career exposure and creating paths to success through inspirational travel opportunities and real-life educational experiences.

OUR ANNUAL PROGRAMS PROVIDE

- ★ **Free field trips** to the nation's capital for low-income students from DC and across the country
- ★ **Internships** and **educational opportunities** to connect students with hospitality industry professionals
- ★ **Scholarships** to qualified students and alumni from DC's four high school Academies of Hospitality & Tourism

DC ACADEMIES OF HOSPITALITY & TOURISM



LEADERSHIP



INSPIRE

“When I was a kid, I loved to spin my globe and dream of exploring the world. Through travel, I’ve met remarkable people, had incredible experiences and enjoyed lifelong friendships.

Early mentors helped me understand that I could also build a career in travel and tourism. I am incredibly proud of how the American Experience Foundation introduces tourism to students. The industry has given me many opportunities to excel, and I’m committed to creating experiences that inspire young people to think beyond their communities and enjoy the world of travel, too.”

ELLIOTT L. FERGUSON, II

President & CEO, Destination DC



TRAIN

“As a business owner, I know firsthand how critical our employees are to success. I look for hard working candidates who are eager to learn, because I can train specific skills, but the drive to achieve is innate.

Through the American Experience Foundation, teens are exposed to countless career paths. I share my story and workplace, and other local businesses do the same. We get to meet and interact with students, helping them identify what they could achieve – and with hard work, how to get there.”

GREG CASTEN

President, Oceanpro Industries
Co-Chair, AEF Committee



EDUCATE

“There is nothing I like more than encouraging people to think big.

Through the American Experience Foundation, I’ve been in Washington, DC’s Academies of Hospitality & Tourism classrooms coaching students on both the practical and aspirational parts of their marketing, events or business projects. I’ve seen students gain confidence, wisdom and stature, and I’ve learned a lot from them, because the best coaching goes both ways. Through these programs and our support as industry partners, students are better positioned to take on the college and career opportunities that follow high school.”

MICHAEL AKIN

President, LINK Strategic Partners
Co-Chair, AEF Committee

2018 BY THE NUMBERS



SCHOLARSHIPS

6

Awarded



STUDENTS

760

Total student
engagements

223

Participants in
educational programs

185

At experiential learning
special events

164

On
field trips

158

Interns at hospitality
industry employers

24

At Culture Crew
programs



PROJECTS

20

Educational programs

5

Washington, DC field trips

5

Culture Crew dinners



PARTNERS

66

Corporate and
non-profit organizations

DERANIQUE GRAYDON

Sophomore, University of the District of Columbia
AEF scholarship winner 2016, 2017 & 2018
Ballou High School Graduate 2017
AEF Career Ready Intern 2017

I was a part of the Academy of Hospitality & Tourism at Ballou High School, where I found my passion for the hospitality industry. However, what I did not know was how I was going to pay for college. I knew that if I wanted to be successful in this industry, I had to have a degree.

I was in my sophomore year of high school when I won my first AEF scholarship. It was unbelievable! I felt like I was flying. I had never won anything like that in my life. In my junior year, I applied for the AEF scholarship again and low and behold, I won!

Because I was determined to get an internship before college started, I was able to secure a Career Ready Internship with the AEF and Destination DC in the summer of 2017. At first, I was terrified, just thinking, what if I do something wrong?

What if I'm given this big task and I don't finish in time or I calculate something wrong? I didn't know what to do.

Nonetheless, the day finally came and when I got to the office, I forgot what fear was. I felt so at home, like I had been there for five months instead of five minutes. I was greeted by so many beautiful and friendly people. Everyone was so nice! They made it so easy and comfortable to be there. I still email some of the staff to update them on my college life and they respond back with positive and uplifting replies.

This spring, I won an AEF scholarship for the third time! Because of these scholarships, I was able to go to college without wondering how I was going to pay. I am now in my second year at the University of the District of Columbia, majoring in business.

“AEF has changed my life drastically. They have made me more confident in what I want to do with my life and they have made me more sure of where I want to see myself in the next 5 to 6 years. I just feel like I could do anything.”



TRAVEL INSPIRES

FIELD TRIPS

Each year, hundreds of thousands of students travel to the nation's capital to deepen their knowledge of American history, democracy and culture.

AEF's unique programming helps deserving low-income students have the same opportunity, introducing them to the joy of travel and the unique heritage of Washington, DC. Not only is the classroom brought to life through experiential learning, students are inspired to try new things, step out of their comfort zone and look at the world differently.

These trips are not only about having fun. Emphasizing the power of our industry, students meet business leaders at each stop on their trip to learn more about future career possibilities in hospitality and tourism.

All field trips are supported with generous in-kind donations from local businesses and attractions.

“When I learned I was going to Washington, I was super excited! I couldn't believe it! My favorite part of the experience was getting on a plane, being a tourist and learning more about the history of the United States. I also learned how to meet new people, have more confidence and see things in a positive way.”

JULIA*

8th grade student from Puerto Rico who participated in the July Rite of Passage trip

Pictured: Washington Nationals, Madame Tussauds, Big Bus DC Tours, Newseum, Jaleo Crystal City



BACKYARD BOUND

Through AEF's Backyard Bound program, local students from the District and region explore their hometown, building local pride and a sense of ownership in our nation's great institutions.

- ★ The Foundation School of Montgomery County Maryland - January
- ★ The Foundation School of Prince George's County Maryland - February
- ★ Charles Hart Middle School, Washington, DC - April

RITE OF PASSAGE

AEF's Rite of Passage program brings the classroom to life for students outside of the area, providing a customized itinerary of DC's historical, political and cultural icons.

- ★ Indian River Middle School, Canaan, New Hampshire - May
- ★ Five schools in Puerto Rico impacted by Hurricane Maria: Dr. Antonio S. Pedreira (Moca, PR); Aristides Cales Quiros (Guayanilla, PR); Su Luis Muñoz Rivera (Quebradillas, PR); Superintendencia De Escuelas Católicas de San Juan (San Juan, PR) and Pablo Colon Berderia (Barranquitas, PR) - July, in partnership with the **Student Youth Travel Association**

“Being a part of the ‘American Experience’ has served not only to transform and enrich the lives and knowledge of our students, but it’s also served as a lesson regarding the importance of giving back, having passions and serving others in need. The experience helped give our youth, teachers and parents some critical hope for the future.”

ALEX URDANETA

President
Viajes A+/A+ Educational Tours,
San Juan, PR



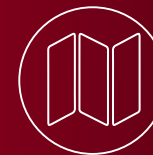
HOW CAN YOU HELP?



Offer affordable hotel room rates for students



Donate tickets to your attraction or a meal at your restaurant



Provide tour operators, guides or other travel services

PEOPLE INSPIRE

AEF programs directly invest in students in the District studying hospitality and tourism by offering experiential learning opportunities and connecting students to the breadth and diversity of industry professionals.

More than 30 educational programs this year, both in and out of the classroom, inspired and supported students' college and career readiness while providing AEF's partners a way to invest in their future workforce and customers.

The Atlantic 10 Conference and its NCAA 2018 Men's Basketball Championship is a great example. Forty students from DC's four hospitality academies attended an educational panel focused on athletic and hospitality careers at **George Washington University**. They heard from former athletes who successfully transitioned to athletic directors, hospitality professionals and academics.

Students were able to see their lessons come to life when they were treated to a VIP tour of **Capital One Arena** and volunteered at a tournament game.

“The Atlantic 10 shares the American Experience Foundation’s commitment to service and education. Our championship was enhanced by our work with AEF and the Atlantic 10 was proud to play a role in influencing young people in the community.”

KEITH GILL

Executive Associate Commissioner
Atlantic 10 Conference



THE CULTURE CREW

In 2018, AEF and the Boys & Girls Clubs of Greater Washington created the Culture Crew, a new experience for six teens interested in the culinary arts and cultural leadership.

Culture Crew members experience the region's best in dining and hospitality: expand their palate and build an appreciation for different foods; gain a deeper understanding of different cultural traditions and issues that touch the world they live in; and learn about the variety of career paths available to them in the culinary industry.

Inaugural partners include **Union Market, Occasions Caterers, Ivy City Smokehouse** and **Profish**.

“Food is interesting to me because it’s a way of understanding different societies and their history and people. Food is never static, but a lens for culture. I am not a chef, but I’m passionate about the tradition of food, cooking it and sharing it. Creating the Culture Crew has been a way for me to explore that passion and AEF’s help in making the program a reality has meant so much.”

RANISHA JACKSON

Senior, Duke Ellington School of the Arts; student founder of the Culture Crew



HOW CAN YOU HELP?



Give a hospitality academy class a behind-the-scenes look at your business



Share your expertise at a school by serving as a presentation judge or practicing interview skills with students



Invite the Culture Crew for a meal and reveal what food culture means to you

ENSURE STUDENTS ARE COLLEGE & CAREER READY

AEF programs are designed to support and challenge students as they prepare to take their next steps after high school.

AEF connects students with exceptional career preparation and development opportunities, including **National Job Shadow Day**, which introduces the day-to-day of professionals in our industry, and the DC Career Academy Network's **Career Ready Internship program**.

Through AEF's network of industry businesses, students are placed in six-week-long summer industry internships. These internships are paid by the DC Department of Employment Services, so there is no cost to the employer.

In addition, AEF hosts trainings and special events – such as our Internship Luncheon at the **Hyatt Regency Washington on Capitol Hill** – for both employers and interns to maximize their learning experiences.

“There is no way to describe the gratitude I have for AEF. The internship opportunity has led to my first job in the hospitality industry and the scholarship helped pay for my first year of college. Their investment of time and demonstration of care has made me feel valued and well-prepared for the workforce. My experience has given me a strong foundation for the beginning of my career.”

ZOE ROBERTS

2017 AEF scholarship winner; Career Ready Intern-turned-employee, Hyatt Regency Washington on Capitol Hill; Wilson High School graduate, 2018; George Mason University freshman



This summer, AEF and Destination DC welcomed our third annual Career Ready Intern, Dijon Kerns, a rising senior at Ballou High School, a member of the Academy of Hospitality & Tourism and an aspiring architect.

2018 SCHOLARSHIPS

Annually, AEF offers a \$2,500 scholarship to a student attending each of Washington, DC's four high school Academies of Hospitality & Tourism, and to alumni currently enrolled in higher education. Awards are based upon demonstrated need of the applicant, solid academic performance and interest in a career in hospitality. Congratulations to this year's recipients:

GREGORY MCCARTHY LEADERSHIP AWARD

- ★ Daren Dorsey, Senior, Ballou High School

ALUMNI SCHOLARSHIP

- ★ Deranique Graydon, University of the District of Columbia and graduate, Ballou High School

HOSPITALITY ACADEMY AWARDS

- ★ Perpetua Nkem, Senior, Columbia Heights Educational Campus
- ★ Sharnae Niblet, Sophomore, Maya Angelou Public Charter High School
- ★ Lauren Bryana Brown, Senior, Wilson High School
- ★ Diamond Hunter, Senior, Wilson High School



HOW CAN YOU HELP?



Host a student on
Job Shadow Day
on February 2



Register to be a summer
or semester-long
Career Ready
Internship employer



Donate to the AEF
Scholarship program

BUILDING A STRONG INDUSTRY

AEF empowers young people through inspiration and education, and strengthens our industry by invigorating the workforce pipeline of talent between schools and employers.

JULY 4TH CELEBRATION

The 6th Annual July 4th VIP Celebration welcomed over 400 guests and 30 corporate partners to the Potomac View Terrace at the American Pharmacists Association's rooftop. The annual fundraiser netted nearly \$70,000 to support AEF programs, while guests enjoyed a spectacular party and view of DC's famous fireworks. Special thanks to our annual lead partner, **American Airlines**.



NAF NEXT 2018

Sought for our industry expertise, the AEF team presented two workshop panels at the annual National Academies Foundation (NAF) Next 2018 Conference. NAF is the national governing body for high school career academies, including DC's Academies of Hospitality & Tourism.



HOW CAN YOU HELP?



Sponsor and host your VIP guests at the signature July 4th celebration



Advise AEF on your company's workforce needs or challenges



Build an organizational relationship with AEF

AEF TEAM

LEADERSHIP COMMITTEE

Michael Akin, Co-Chair, President, LINK Strategic Partners

Greg Casten, Co-Chair, President, Oceanpro Industries

Nizam Ali, Co-Owner, Ben's Chili Bowl

Benoit Barroud, General Manager, Big Bus Tours DC

Michael Black, General Manager of Operations, Uber DC

Elliott L. Ferguson, II, President & CEO, Destination DC

James MacGregor, Vice President of Local Markets,
American City Business Journals Inc.

Gregory McCarthy, Vice President Community Engagement,
Washington Nationals

Thomas Penny, President, Donohoe Hospitality Services

Stacy Smith, General Manager, Hyatt Place National Mall

Gail Smith-Howard, General Manager, Hyatt Regency
Washington on Capitol Hill

STAFF

Claire Carlin

Executive Director, AEF
VP of Partnerships & Alliances, Destination DC
202-789-7048
claire@americanexperiencefoundation.org

Lisa Waldschmitt

Foundation Manager, AEF
202-789-7065
lisa@americanexperiencefoundation.org

“Hyatt Regency Washington is proud to partner with AEF and collaborate to ensure our youth have a chance to experience our wonderful industry through the Career Ready Internship program. By partnering with AEF, we bring our purpose to life by providing experiences that are meaningful and educational, so that young adults can be their best and become the hospitality professionals of the future.”

GAIL SMITH-HOWARD

General Manager,
Hyatt Regency Washington on Capitol Hill



THANK YOU, PARTNERS

FOUNDATIONS



Madame Tussauds
Newseum
Potbelly
Smithsonian Enterprises
Starr Transportation
Student Watchers
WashingTours & Events

JULY 4TH



American Pharmacists Association
Ampa Events
Atmosphere Inc.
Bialek's Music
Citi Open Tennis Tournament
CityPASS
Cresa Washington DC
District Winery
Five Star Entertainment
Hargrove
Herron Printing

Jason Dixon Photography
Madame Tussauds
Meltzer Group | NFP
Occasions
Plants Alive!
PMI Parking
Right Proper Brewing Company
Showcall
Stage Right Entertainment
TapSnap
Washington Business Journal

ANNUAL



Atlantic 10
Atlas Performing Arts Center
Buca di Beppo
Centerplate
Charity Off the Hook
Citi Open Tennis Tournament
City Tap House
Destination DC
District Distilling
District Doughnut
Embassy Row Hotel
Ford's Theatre
Hyatt Place National Mall DC

Hyatt Regency Washington on Capitol Hill
Ivy City Smokehouse
Mastro's Steakhouse
Occasions Caterers
Paul Stuart
Profish Limited
Roti Modern Mediterranean
Shakespeare Theatre Company
Shear Madness
Step Afrika!
Texas de Brazil
U.S. Travel Association
Union Market
VIDA Fitness
W Hotel
Warner Theatre
Well Dunn Catering
The Wharf
ZBest Transportation

PROFESSIONAL ORGANIZATIONS

Meeting Planner International (MPI) Potomac
NACE Greater Washington DC
Association of Meeting Planners
Washington Area Concierge Association

AWARDS RECEIVED



Washington Area
Concierge Association



Professional
Convention
Management
Association (PCMA)
Foundation



National Association
of Catering Executives
(NACE)

INDIVIDUAL DONORS

INSPIRATIONAL

Elliott L. Ferguson, II & Telesa Via
Karen & Daniel Nadeau

LEADERS

Michael Akin
James C. Appleby
Jennifer Aronson
Ron Bracco
Carolyn Callahan
Ken Dolan
Jamal Edmonds
Robin A. McClain
Nirav Shah
Steven VanRoekel
Jessica Wasserman
F. Montgomery Woods

MENTORS

Claus Aagaard
Kola Aina
Martyn Buckley
Claire Carlin
Alma Chapa
Grendys Garcia
Crispus Gordon, III
Martin Hamburger

Oriana & James MacGregor
Jackeline Medecky & Robert Vizza
Kimberly Newman
Tonia Reynolds-Pope
Melissa A. Riley
Julie Scott
Karen Strelitz
Gail E. Smith-Howard
David Veckerelli

COLLEGE & CAREER READY

Nizam Ali
Carylann Assante
Dominique Baker
Wharton Berger
Amanuel Biedemariam
Socrates Cala
Terri Carter
Meg Caulk
Benjamin Clark
Matt Curran
Marie Daschbach
Megan Eckler
Margaret Giddens
Alexandra Gnafakis
Mark Herron
Bakari Ahmed Ibrahim

Chelsea & Ryan Kaiser
John Kim
Stuart Levy
Catherine Manganiello Hagle
Janna & Stephen Marks
Dave McKlveen
Susan Norton
Jay Ollom
Charlotte Perry
Glenn Rock
Elizabeth Salter
Martina Dawn Sarsfield
C. Greg Staley
Roni Stevens
Christopher Suranna
Emmanuel Twum
Andrea & Mike Van Wambeke
Terry Williams
Alex Wilson

WORKPLACE LEARNERS

Parvez Ahmed
Angela Anderson
Elisabeth Bayer
Theresa Belpulsi
Ray Bialek
Teah Blanks
Shannon Burke

Nicholas W. Cechak
Lori Chalk
Ian Chyun
Steph Compton
Cheryl Crowell
Brian Curiel
Bianca D'Ambrosia
Kathryn Denis
Anne L. DeSantis
Meredith DeSantis
Brittany Dobson
Jessica DuBose
Carleigh Dworetzky
Don Evans
Laurette Farmer
George Ghiorghis
Rich Goldstein
Colleen Gorman
Amanda Gowin
Dana Hansen
Erin Harroun
Chris Hayes
Cara Hedgepeth
David Iselin
Ricky Johnson
LaJuana Jones
Elizabeth Karpe
Evan Koppel
Pam Lackland
Ruth Lawton
Kim Leonard
Jeanine Littrel

Erika Loomer
Chas Lum
E. David Luria
Kirsten & Trevor Lyman
Shannon Lynch
Joshua Maxey
Christina McAree
Hayley McGuirl
Ellie McMullen
Amil Mendez
Erin O'Boyle
Kirsten Olean
Krista Olson
Kyle Oppenheim
Richard Robinson, III
Aldo Rodriguez
Wes Santos
Lori Scott
David Sears
Rauf Shakir
Barry Ivan Silber
Allison Silberman
Stacy Smith
LaVonne Snowden
Carly Stedman Norosky
Armand Thelen
Terry Tillman
Laura A. Vargo
Sean Wallace
Gil Welsford
Sue Wickers
Diana Yetman

*Partners and donors recognized contributed to the American Experience Foundation between October 1, 2017 and September 30, 2018.
If we missed you, or you would like to be recognized differently, email lisa@americanexperiencefoundation.org.*



**DONATE
TO AEF**

Please visit AmericanExperienceFoundation.org to make your contribution.
The American Experience Foundation is a 501(c)3 charity, EIN 30-0019421.
Your donation may qualify as a charitable deduction for income tax purposes.



American Experience Foundation
901 7th Street NW, 4th Floor
Washington, DC 20001
202-789-7065

The American Experience Foundation, EIN 30-0019421 is the 501(c)(3) charity affiliated with Destination DC,
the official destination marketing organization for Washington, DC.

Photos © American Experience Foundation 2018

AMERICANEXPERIENCEFOUNDATION.ORG