

2024 ANNUAL REVIEW





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



WHAT WE DO

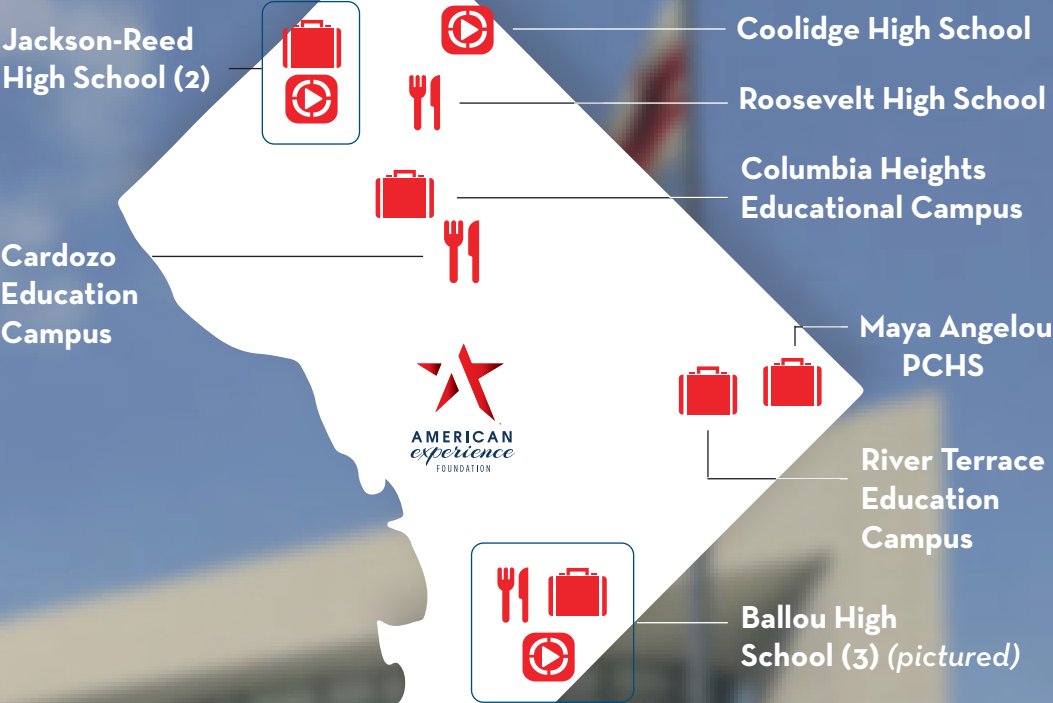
INSPIRE through free *field trips* to the treasures of our nation’s capital for students from DC and across the country

TRAIN through *internships* and *educational opportunities* to connect students with industry professionals

EDUCATE through *scholarships* to qualified students and alumni from DC’s high school Academies of Hospitality & Tourism, Culinary Arts and Mass Media

By leveraging our partner, Destination DC, and its over 1,000 member businesses, AEF is uniquely positioned to open doors for students, fill a need for career exposure and create pathways to success.

Cover: Jaden Marshall and Sydney Mabry, seniors at Jackson-Reed High School’s Academy of Hospitality & Tourism, network with Ray Bialek of Bialek’s Music at the **Destination DC** Marketing Outlook Meeting at the Washington Hilton in August. *Chris Ferenzi Photography* **Facing page:** Two time AEF Scholarship winner, Abide Kao, a senior at Columbia Heights Educational Campus’ Academy of Hospitality & Tourism, receives her scholarship at the *Building Futures: Honoring DC Hospitality Scholars* event in May from AEF Executive Director Claire Carlin and AEF Board Chair Emeritus Michael Akin. *Kalorama Photography*



-  **ACADEMIES OF HOSPITALITY & TOURISM**
-  **ACADEMIES OF CULINARY ARTS**
-  **ACADEMIES OF MASS MEDIA**

EXPLORE. INSPIRE. TRAIN. EDUCATE.

Dear friends and colleagues,

As we look back at 2024, we are deeply grateful for everything we've accomplished together at the American Experience Foundation.

DC students experienced many firsts.

- ★ Their first kayak trip to **explore** the Potomac River and consider a career in outdoor hospitality.
- ★ Their first ride on a double-decker Big Bus through the streets of New York City, **inspired** by the intricacies of tour logistics.
- ★ Their first boardroom presentation, **training** them for many more to come.
- ★ Their first scholarship to support a college **education**.

With the educators at our partner schools, we've created meaningful opportunities to ensure that DC students gain access to experiences that help them envision themselves in a variety of hospitality careers.

None of this would happen without you. Your belief in the power of hospitality experiences enables each AEF work-based learning event to deliver significant impact on a modest budget.

As we look ahead to 2025, we are inspired by the achievements of our students.

Thank you for supporting them by contributing your time, expertise or resources.



John Snedden
Chair, Board of Directors
American Experience Foundation
Founder & Owner
Rocklands Barbeque & Grilling Company



Claire Carlin
Executive Director
American Experience Foundation
Senior Vice President, Partnerships & Alliances
Destination DC

IN 2024

1,040

Total Student Engagements



159

Students on
FIELD TRIPS



835

Students on
EDUCATIONAL
PROGRAMS



37

SCHOLARSHIPS
Awarded



9

INTERNS
Hosted at AEF



\$160K

Goods & services donated by
INDUSTRY PARTNERS

SINCE 2015

4,650

Total Student Engagements



795

Students on
FIELD TRIPS



3,800

Students on
EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS



94

SCHOLARSHIPS
Awarded

\$175K+

SCHOLARSHIPS
Awarded



190

INTERNS
Hosted at AEF



\$775K

Goods & services donated by
INDUSTRY PARTNERS

EXPLORE

As DC Public Schools expand their career and technical education programming (CTE) to **MIDDLE SCHOOLS**, AEF is a key partner in helping young students explore the world of professional possibilities and bridge the gap as they make the transition to their future high school Academies.



“I would like to express my gratitude to AEF for the opportunity you gave my scholars. What we experienced today is a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity that I am so happy to be a part of. I look forward to many more experiences and opportunities.”



Mische' Walden
Professional School Counselor
John Hayden Johnson Middle School

This page: John Hayden Johnson Middle School's Academy of Mass Media explores careers in the arts at three of DC's coolest venues: The Anthem (I.M.P.), The John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts and ARTECHOUSE.

Facing page: Middle school students, part of the CTE on the Rise program, join AEF Career Ready Interns to tour the Ronald Reagan Building and International Trade Center and learn from Executive Chef Houman Gohary.

INSPIRE

Through unforgettable **FIELD TRIPS**, AEF inspires students to think big. Students meet executives, entrepreneurs and early-career professionals during behind-the-scenes experiences.



“ I have a unique role leading the team at New York City’s largest hotel. We’re happy to show AEF students the wide array of professionals here, including our pastry kitchen with more than 20 full-time chefs. It’s a great way to wow them with real-life hospitality careers.”



Dan Nadeau
General Manager
New York Marriott Marquis

Facing page: Members of Coolidge’s Academy of Mass Media, including Director Dr. Zakiya Edens, tour Manhattan on a Big Bus during AEF’s annual New York hospitality trip.

This page: Students from Roosevelt’s Academy of Culinary Arts tour the kitchen of the Park Hyatt New York with Sous Chef Sasha Logan; students from Jackson-Reed’s Academy of Hospitality & Tourism take a photo of the skyline from SUMMIT One Vanderbilt.



BACKYARD BOUND

When AEF goes Backyard Bound in Washington, DC, scholars explore both the consumer perspective and behind the scenes of the hospitality industry. In January, 65 students spent two days with partners who showcased hotel, media, culinary and meeting planner careers. Special thank you to the Hyatt Place Washington DC/White House for overnight accommodations.

THANKS TO THOSE WHO MADE BACKYARD BOUND POSSIBLE

- ★ Brittany Edlow
- ★ Capital Hilton
- ★ Carmine's NYC Family Style Italian
- ★ Clyde's of Gallery Place
- ★ Hyatt Place Washington DC/White House
- ★ International Spy Museum
- ★ Knead Hospitality + Design, The Grill
- ★ Monumental Sports & Entertainment and the Washington Wizards
- ★ National Portrait Gallery and Smithsonian American Art Museums
- ★ Pendry Hotels & Resorts Washington DC - The Wharf
- ★ The Anthem
- ★ The CALPRO Group, Inc.
- ★ USA Guided Tours
- ★ Washington Auto Show

This page: Students gather in the Kogod Courtyard of the Smithsonian American Art Museum before a scavenger hunt during the AEF Backyard Bound field trip in January; A young chef from Ballou's Academy of Culinary Arts shows off his knife skills to professional chefs at the Capital Hilton; International Spy Museum Vice President of Operations Michael Kruelle instructs students on the finer points of customer service before they explore the museum. [Photo by Kayden Johnson]

Facing Page: Students from the Academies at Ballou and Coolidge pose for a photo in front of Times Square; a photographer from Coolidge's Academy of Mass Media takes a photo at SUMMIT One Vanderbilt; Hotel Manager David Sharkey and the team at the New York Marriott Marquis welcome Academy students for breakfast and a behind-the-scenes tour of the hotel.

NEW YORK TRIP

AEF hit the road with 55 students in March to explore the Big Apple. From Times Square to Harlem, students explored the similarities and differences in tourism that they see in Washington, DC and New York City and how each destination promotes its attractions, hotels and neighborhoods.

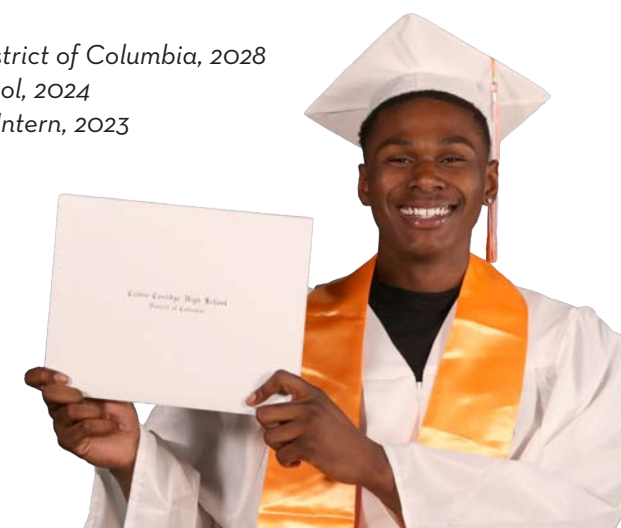
THANKS TO OUR NYC PARTNERS

- ★ Apollo Theater
- ★ Big Bus Tours New York
- ★ New York Marriott Marquis
- ★ Park Hyatt New York
- ★ Pod Hotel Times Square
- ★ Red Rooster Harlem
- ★ SUMMIT One Vanderbilt

“This is my second Backyard Bound experience and I loved it. This year, I served as photographer and content curator for the experience due to my skills and abilities from my Academy of Mass Media. AEF allows me to showcase my talent, learn and build my business at the same time. I even had a chance to go to the press area at the Wizards game!”

Kayden Johnson

University of the District of Columbia, 2028
Coolidge High School, 2024
AEF Career Ready Intern, 2023



TRAIN

AEF helps ensure diverse voices become part of management teams and the c-suite in the hospitality, tourism and culinary industries. When AEF creates **WORK-BASED LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES** for students with industry partners, students meet role models and build their professional skills and networks.



“I prioritize leveraging my network to provide opportunities for DC scholars and I’m always happy when our high school interns come by my office to check in. I usually send them off with a question to consider about how they’re preparing to achieve their goals. The next time one of our students meets with an executive, I hope we’ve given them skills to present their contributions with the confidence that they will make a great team member for their future employer.”



Elliott L. Ferguson, II
President & CEO
Destination DC



Facing Page: Coolidge Academy of Mass Media student Malachi Previl interviews Mayor Muriel Bowser at the opening of the Downtown Holiday Market.

This Page, left: Members of Coolidge High School’s Academy of Mass Media network with industry professionals like Kelly Martin of the National Geographic Society at Destination DC’s Open House event. **Right:** In October, Cornell University Nolan School of Hotel Administration welcomed 50 Academy of Hospitality & Tourism students. They toured behind the scenes at the country’s top hospitality program, talked with current students and enjoyed a stay at the Statler Hotel. Thank you to Erin Rodriguez, Associate Director of Admissions.



HOLIDAY CELEBRATION

At the **Destination DC Member Holiday Celebration**, over 40 students participated in work-based learning, networked with industry leaders and joined AEF in an unforgettable holiday experience.

SCHOLARS HAD HANDS-ON EVENT EXPERIENCE

- ★ Academies of Hospitality & Tourism acted as hosts, registration and fundraising promoters
- ★ Academies of Mass Media captured photo and video content and holiday portraits of guests
- ★ Academies of Culinary Arts managed omelet stations, created festive drinks for attendees to enjoy and taught the art of cookie decorating

THANK YOU TO EVENT PARTNERS

- ★ JW Marriott Washington DC
- ★ Encore
- ★ Booked by Blaze
- ★ Jon Armstrong Photography

“I could not be more grateful to be a part of Destination DC’s Member Holiday Event at the JW Marriott. I enjoyed networking with students from other academies, as well as checking in with members of DC’s hospitality industry. Moments like this allow me to test my skills in the different areas of hospitality, so I can be prepared when I enter the workforce.”



Evelyn Consolla
Temple University, 2028
Jackson-Reed High School, 2024
Student-President Jackson-Reed Academy of Hospitality & Tourism



OPEN HOUSE

Students from Coolidge’s Academy of Mass Media interviewed, recorded and filmed hospitality professionals at a special studio created for **Destination DC’s February Open House**. Along with capturing stories, students received career advice and edited testimonials from industry professionals.

“AEF has been deliberate about creating environments where students can explore, try new things and receive feedback. I’m happy to welcome scholars to our projects and share LINK’s work in our community.”



Michael Akin
President, LINK Strategic Partners
AEF Board Member

This page: Students from Coolidge’s Academy of Mass Media interview Michael Akin, president, **LINK Strategic Partners**, and others during the **Destination DC Open House**.

Facing page: Academy students helped produce the 2023 **Destination DC Member Holiday Celebration** at the JW Marriott Washington DC. *From top to bottom:* Leaders from Jackson-Reed’s Academy of Hospitality & Tourism sell prize tickets to raise money for AEF’s programs; photographers from Coolidge’s Academy of Mass Media capture photo and video; young chefs from Roosevelt’s Academy of Culinary Arts customize an omelet.

AEF IN ACTION

1

Jackson-Reed High School, Marketing Outlook Meeting

In August, five student-leaders of the Jackson-Reed Academy of Hospitality & Tourism attended **Destination DC's** annual Marketing Outlook Meeting. They enjoyed VIP treatment as they networked with hospitality leaders from across the industry and learned about the marketing plan for Washington, DC.

2

Coolidge High School, Downtown Holiday Market

In December, five Coolidge Academy of Mass Media students attended the opening of the **Downtown Holiday Market**, shot b-roll and photography and engaged with market vendors and visitors. A highlight was interviewing **Mayor Muriel Bowser** and **Downtown DC BID President & CEO Gerren Price** about what the annual holiday tradition means to DC.

3

Columbia Heights Educational Campus, TOMODACHI Amway Japanese Exchange

In March, the Academy of Hospitality & Tourism at Columbia Heights Educational Campus welcomed 16 students from Rikuzentakata, Japan, through the **TOMODACHI Initiative** and the **US-Japan Council**. AEF and **Ben's Chili Bowl** hosted a welcome dinner where Nizam Ali, chief administrative officer, shared his family's story and discussed ways that tourism can help destinations be more resilient and rebuild following natural and man-made disasters.

4

Ballou High School, SkillsUSA

In July, students from Ballou's Academies of Hospitality & Tourism, Culinary Arts and Mass Media competed at the **SkillsUSA National Leadership & Skills Conference in Atlanta**, including Kwaliq McMillian, who designed this year's DC state pin which featured the iconic skyline and cherry blossoms.

5

Roosevelt High School, ProStart Competition

In April, students from Roosevelt's Academy of Culinary Arts competed in and won the DC **ProStart** hosted by the **Restaurant Association of Metropolitan Washington's Educated Eats**. The team, comprised of juniors and seniors who focus on both culinary and restaurant management, showed their skills at April's **National ProStart Invitational** in Baltimore.

6

River Terrace Education Campus, Starr Tours

In February, students from River Terrace's Academy of Hospitality & Tourism hit the road on a hop-on, hop-off tour with **Starr Tours** to celebrate Career and Technical Education Month. They learned how to plan a bus tour in DC, visited the monuments and the **National Museum of African American History and Culture** and took a behind-the-scenes tour of the **Ronald Reagan Building** and **International Trade Center**.

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ADVANCED INTERNSHIP PROGRAM

The Advanced Internship Program (AIP) is a paid, school-year long internship for high school seniors to help them prepare for college and careers. AEF welcomed two AIP interns who discovered what it's like working in an office, spoke at AEF and Destination DC events, shared their day-to-day experiences on TikTok and built their professional networks.



TAKING OVER AEF SOCIALS

AIP interns showcased their experiences through running AEF's TikTok channel. Check them out at [@amer_exp_found](#)



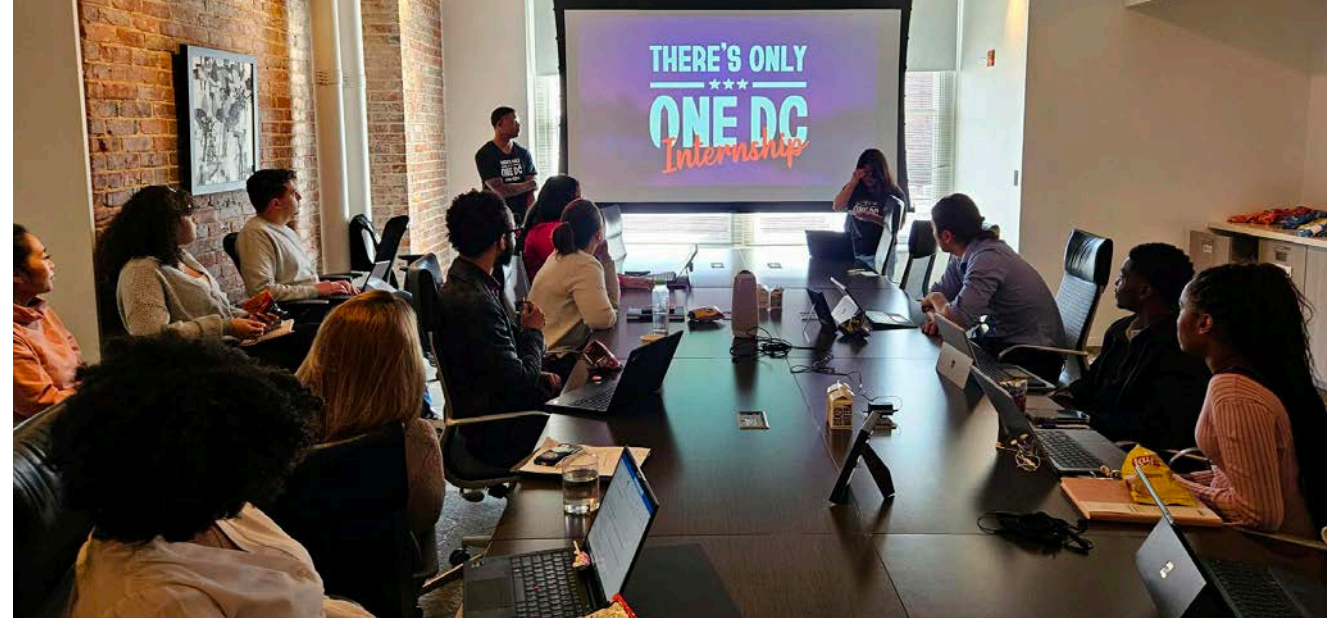
John "JT" Thompson
Bowie State University, 2028
Ballou High School, 2024

“My internship helped me connect with so many different people from all careers and backgrounds. Having these kinds of great experiences has made me more confident in myself and my future. I know I have an entire city rooting for my success.”



Melany Mendez-Casas
Catholic University, 2028
Coolidge High School, 2024

“This internship gave me a real insight into how many different departments and companies can work together to accomplish their goals and build successful events, campaigns and programs! I really enjoyed the vibe and community in the office and felt very supported by everyone.”



PLANNING SUMMER INTERNSHIPS

AIP school-year interns drew from their own experiences to plan the #Only1DC curriculum for the incoming summer Career Ready Interns.

This page: JT and Melany take the AEF and Destination DC teams through their ideas for the #Only1DC summer internship curriculum; Melany celebrates the conclusion of her internship by kayaking with REI Co-op, Kayak & Paddleboard Rentals at National Harbor with Destination DC Director of Membership Jennifer Rodrigues, Destination DC Lead Destination Program Manager Erika Jones, AEF Associate Director Lisa Waldschmitt; JT speaks at the AEF holiday party in December; JT and Melany present at a Destination DC committee meeting at the National Press Club in May; Melany, Lisa and Destination DC's International Tourism Sales Manager Darren Gan celebrate the Chinese New Year Festival at the Embassy of the People's Republic of China in the United States of America; Melany presents on her internship at the Office of the State Superintendent of Education's AIP Capstone Celebration.

CAREER READY INTERNSHIPS

- Asly Argueta Benitez

Coolidge High School
- Christian Osbourne

Ballou High School
- Kyla "Mista" Barnes

Maya Angelou Public Charter School
- Nealia Williams

Coolidge High School
- Valerie Benitez

Jackson-Reed High School

Career Ready Internships (CRI) is the marquee summer internship program for DC’s CTE Academies. AEF hosted five CRIs, rising high school seniors and college freshmen. They explored Washington, DC using the theme #Only1DC. This included site visits to meet business owners, general managers, marketing specialists, directors of sales and head chefs for in-depth learning about hospitality career paths.



AEF intern alumna and two-time AEF scholarship winner **Mattison McDonald** was this year’s senior intern. She helped facilitate the program during her summer break from Washington & Jefferson College.



Through the Office of the State Superintendent of Education, the CRI program connects Academy students to paid summer internships across DC. Interested in hosting your own CRI? Contact AEF to learn more.

“My experience with this internship was a 1,000/10! I enjoyed every moment spent with other interns and my mentors. I felt cared for and welcomed. The staff at AEF helped me to determine my major and consider the next steps in my career. I hope to come back to DC and work with the team again.”

Mista Barnes
*Maya Angelou Public Charter School, 2024
AEF Career Ready Intern, 2024*



Career Ready Internship Networking Luncheon

This year, AEF’s annual luncheon for interns and employers across DC was hosted by the **Washington Hilton**. **Elliott L. Ferguson, II**, president & CEO, Destination DC, **Ismail Essaghir**, director of rooms, Washington Hilton and **Charmaine Lewis**, director of human resources, Washington Hilton encouraged the interns to pursue hospitality and tourism careers.



Final Project Presentations

Once again, the **Texas A&M University Bush School of Government and Public Service** hosted the CRIs’ final project presentations. Interns got to experience the DC campus where professors, diplomats, military service members and international business professionals also present their findings. Thank you to **Jay Silveria**, executive director and **Brenden Chaney**, program manager of events.



NYC with the Student & Youth Travel Association

Long time partners the **Student & Youth Travel Association** invited AEF interns to participate in their annual conference. Four interns went behind the scenes of a Broadway show, joined professional conference sessions, networked and participated in **Your Big Year’s** Global Citizens Challenge where they engaged with students from New York City.



CRI PARTNERS

CONNECTING INTERNS TO INDUSTRY LEADERS

Weekly, AEF interns presented to a panel of industry professionals who gave constructive feedback. Year after year, interns report these experiences make them more confident in public speaking and optimistic about making further connections with professionals to gain opportunities after graduation.

Thank you to this year's judges

- ★ Andrew Roby, Andrew Roby Events
- ★ Angela Kramer, Friends of Peirce Mill
- ★ AnnaGrace Hale, Destination DC
- ★ Bianca DeStout, Visit Cincy
- ★ Blake Buege, LRA PR
- ★ Brea Govan, Events DC
- ★ Brittany Edlow, Destination DC
- ★ Carlie Smith, Destination DC
- ★ Carole Lambert, LINK Strategic Partners
- ★ Casey Paul, Destination DC
- ★ Charles Williams, II, Hotel Indigo Old Town Alexandria
- ★ Charlie Ross, Destination DC
- ★ Christen Miller, Destination DC
- ★ Christine Faiman, CMP, Marriott International
- ★ Claire Carlin, Destination DC
- ★ Diamond Hunter, Destination DC
- ★ Grace Kelleher, Destination DC
- ★ Holly Rattanakone, Destination DC
- ★ Jennifer Porter, Destination DC
- ★ Jennifer Rodrigues, Destination DC
- ★ Jim Kelley, Fern Expo

- ★ Jordana Rozenman, Destination DC
- ★ Khadija Elmewafy, George Mason University
- ★ Laura Calhoun, Destination DC
- ★ Lee Callicutt, CSTP, Visit Montgomery
- ★ Marshall Kennedy, Howard University
- ★ Mercedes Lardizabal-Colina, Ronald Reagan Building and International Trade Center
- ★ Michael Akin, LINK Strategic Partners
- ★ Morgan Simonet, Destination DC
- ★ Natalie Walker, Eastern Point Collective
- ★ Sandra Mosely, Destination DC
- ★ Shelby Luzzi, Destination DC
- ★ Susan O'Keefe, Destination DC
- ★ Taylor Hartley, Capital Turnaround
- ★ Tony Scurry, MBA, CMP, 7 Pointe Planning, Inc
- ★ Valerie Sumner, VRS Meetings & Events Inc
- ★ Zoe Roberts, Destination DC

“ I love this internship because I had the opportunity to meet new people and visit new places. I learned a lot about the arts and tourism in DC. The presentations every week helped my language skills and confidence talking in front of people I do not know, especially since English is not my first language.”



Asly Argueta Beniteza
AEF Career Ready
Intern, 2024
Coolidge High
School, 2025

“ It is always an honor to be asked to judge the CRI presentations. As a tourism professional it is important to give back to our community and what better way than to work with students considering a career in hospitality and tourism. Each year I am inspired by these young people, and I know they will accomplish great things in the future.”



Lee Callicutt, CSTP
Senior Destination Sales Manager
Visit Montgomery

“ Volunteering to judge the CRI presentations has been the highlight of my summer for the past two years. I went into this thinking that I was going to share my experience and knowledge with the students, but I came out of it realizing that I learned more from them. Their ability to stand up in front of a room of their peers and strangers, overcome their fears and take constructive criticism on the spot is humbling and inspiring. They are our future, and it's reassuring to see how bright that future is because of them.”



Bianca DeStout
Senior Sales Manager, Visit Cincy



Thank you to this year's industry site visit partners.

Anacostia Business Improvement District
★ Ashley Templeton

Anacostia Community Museum

Ben's Chili Bowl
★ Nizam Ali
★ Virginia Ali

Big Bus Tours
★ Bill Heater

Cake-wich Craft Bake Shop
★ Aleatra Dimitrijeviski

DC Public Library
★ Bianca Farmer
★ Linnea Hegarty
★ Stacey Lucas

City Cruises
★ D'Mani Harrison Porter

Fogo De Chão
★ Genevieve Ladino
★ Daniel Sun
★ Ashley Young

Hyatt House Washington DC/ The Wharf & Canopy by Hilton The Wharf DC
★ Michael Anderson

International Spy Museum
★ Chris Falcioni
★ Michael Kruelle
★ Lucy Stirn

Ivy City Smokehouse/Profish
★ Gregory Casten

Moxy Washington, DC Downtown
★ Stephanie Brown
★ Erich Hosbach
★ Whitney Galloway

Museum of Illusions
★ Elle Kendall

National Geographic Society
★ Claire Cho
★ Kelly Martin
★ Darien Wright

Pendry Washington DC – The Wharf
★ Gabriella DeFreitas
★ Vanessa Peters

Placemkr 2500 Penn
★ Janelle Cash
★ Vivian Cohencious
★ Regina Graham-Willett

Planet Word 1 ▶
★ Tracy Jabbal

Rocklands Barbeque & Grilling Company 2 ▶
★ Johanna McDonough
★ Bishop Snedden
★ John Snedden

Ronald Reagan Building and International Trade Center
★ Chef Houman Gohary
★ Mercedes Lardizabal-Colina
★ Victoria Lomboy
★ Jacie Roberts

Smithsonian American Art Museum
★ Cindy Aaron
★ Geoffrey Cohrs
★ Amy Hutchins

Smithsonian Asian Art Museum
★ Susan Bruser
★ Olga Panova
★ Isabelle Schwarz

Sycamore & Oak
★ Dana Hall
★ Lucian “Louie” Sweetenberg

University of Maryland Eastern Shore
★ Candice Mott
★ Dr. Erinn D. Tucker-Oluwole

Washington Hilton
★ Ken Jarka
★ Jessica Sierra
★ Bari Marx
★ Anadina Mercedes
★ Trent Boshart
★ Jacqueline Nnaji
★ Samantha Terry
★ James Wescoe
★ Tarik Smallhorne
★ Michael Dawkins
★ Cynthia Talmadge
★ Mohamed Khalif
★ Joseph Tolbert
★ Everett Ramos
★ Samantha Terry



EDUCATE AEF

In 2024, AEF awarded a record \$47,000 in **SCHOLARSHIPS**. Since 2015, AEF has provided 95 scholarships totaling over \$175,000 to deserving students and alumni who have demonstrated success, leadership and service at school, at work and in their communities.

\$175K SINCE 2015

“This inaugural scholarship event represents not just an investment in individual students and professionals, but in the sustenance and growth of the regional workforce. We were thrilled to collaborate with our peers to highlight the vibrant opportunities available in hospitality and to ensure a thriving future for the food service sector in Washington, DC.”



Shawn Townsend
President & CEO
Restaurant Association of Metropolitan Washington

HONORING DC HOSPITALITY SCHOLARS

This year, hospitality industry organizations joined forces for a scholarship event, *Building Futures: Honoring DC Hospitality Scholars*. Hosted at the **Westin Washington, DC City Center** and emceed by **Molette Green** of NBC4 Washington, the night culminated in over \$70,000 awarded to DC students.



Scholarship Presentation Partners

- ★ American Experience Foundation & Destination DC
- ★ Educated Eats & the Restaurant Association of Metropolitan Washington
- ★ Washington Hospitality Foundation & the Hotel Association of Washington, DC
- ★ Washington Area Concierge Association

Event Partners

- ★ Westin Washington, DC City Center
- ★ Encore
- ★ David J. Claypool, Kalorama Photography
- ★ Bell's Reines
- ★ Ben's Chili Bowl
- ★ Giant National Capital Barbecue Battle

2024 AEF SCHOLARSHIP AWARDS

AEF SCHOLARSHIPS

- 


Abide Kao*
Columbia Heights Educational Campus, 2024
- 

Belinda Alcoser-Gonzalez
Jackson-Reed High School, 2024
- 

John Thompson
Ballou High School, 2024
- 

Kaleb Bland
Coolidge High School, 2024
- 


Khalil Malloy
Columbia Heights Educational Campus, 2024
- 


Melany Mendez-Casas
Coolidge High School, 2024
- 

Trevon Bernado
River Terrace Education Campus, 2024

*Multiple Year Scholarship Winner

AEF ALUMNI SCHOLARSHIPS

- 

Jean-Pierre Roberts*
Eastern Connecticut State University, 2025
Jackson-Reed High School, 2022
- 


Mattison McDonald*
Washington & Jefferson College, 2027
Coolidge High School, 2023

DAVID ISELIN MEMORIAL SCHOLARSHIP FOR COMMUNITY SERVICE

- 

Adame Temesgen*
Arizona State University (Master's), 2026
University of Rochester (Bachelor's), 2024

RAY BENNETT MEMORIAL SCHOLARSHIP FOR LEADERSHIP

- 


DeAnna Mozee
Roosevelt High School, 2024

AKIRA WILSON MEMORIAL SCHOLARSHIP FOR ENTREPRENEURSHIP

- 

Evelyn Consolla
Jackson-Reed High School, 2024

JOE SHYMANSKI MEMORIAL SCHOLARSHIP FOR PHOTOGRAPHY & MEDIA

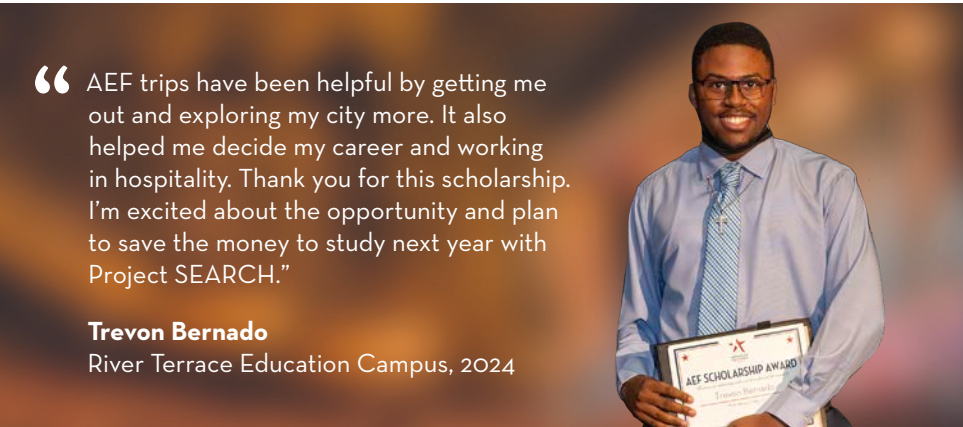
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Ty Monroe
Coolidge High School, 2024



“ I want to express my deepest gratitude for the incredible honor of being selected as a scholarship recipient. Winning this prestigious award has not only provided me with financial assistance but has also affirmed my dedication to academic excellence. I am truly grateful to AEF for your belief in my abilities and for investing in my future. Thank you for making my dreams a reality.”

Abide Kao
Columbia Heights Educational Campus, 2024



“ AEF trips have been helpful by getting me out and exploring my city more. It also helped me decide my career and working in hospitality. Thank you for this scholarship. I'm excited about the opportunity and plan to save the money to study next year with Project SEARCH.”

Trevon Bernado
River Terrace Education Campus, 2024

“ I am honored to serve on the AEF Board of Directors after working closely with the team for many years as the Director of Jackson-Reed's Academy. It was important to me that we not only offer scholarships but ensure that students have the confidence and ability to apply for them in the first place. Sitting down with a student to talk through their essay ideas or remind them of deadlines is the difference between feeling alone in the process versus knowing you have people who support you and believe in your success.”



Alex Wilson
Director [Retired], Academy of Hospitality & Tourism, Jackson-Reed High School

AEF ALUMNI HONORARIUMS

- ★ **Cenaria Fells-Watson***, Towson University
- ★ **Charity Jones**, Spelman College
- ★ **Tenielle Parker***, North Carolina A&T State University

AEF HONORARIUMS

- ★ **Aaron Perkins**, Columbia Heights Educational Campus
- ★ **Adorre Fells-Watson**, Columbia Heights Educational Campus
- ★ **Akilah Hunter**, Columbia Heights Educational Campus
- ★ **Antwon Gibson**, River Terrace High School
- ★ **Anya Blakney**, Coolidge High School
- ★ **Cailin Santos**, River Terrace High School
- ★ **Christian Jil Imus**, Columbia Heights Educational Campus
- ★ **Darren Heard**, Ballou High School
- ★ **Hassan Purnell**, Ballou High School
- ★ **Jocelyn Salazar**, Columbia Heights Educational Campus
- ★ **JohnTay Taylor**, River Terrace High School
- ★ **K'ناسيا McKenzie**, Columbia Heights Educational Campus
- ★ **Malcom Straker**, River Terrace High School
- ★ **Miram Bezabih**, River Terrace High School
- ★ **Nalisa Jacobs**, Ballou High School
- ★ **Saniya Lewis**, Jackson-Reed High School
- ★ **Saniyah Heyward**, IDEA PCS High School
- ★ **Treasure Brooks**, Ballou High School
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- ★ **Kayden Johnson**, Coolidge High School
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CELEBRATE

MEMBER VOLLEYBALL TOURNAMENT

The annual Destination DC Member Volleyball Tournament brought 20 DC hospitality industry teams to the courts. These teams, individual competitors and pep rally fans raised enough funds to support three scholarship awards. Thank you to our partners at the **Capitol Hill Volleyball Classic** for your many years of support.

Event Partners



- ★ Capitol Hill Volleyball Classic
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- ★ National Cherry Blossom Festival
- ★ Pirate Ventures, Hook Hall and Kraken Kourts & Skates
- ★ Red Star Massage
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- ★ The Keegan Theatre
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- ★ Pirate Ventures and Kraken Kourts & Skates

HOLIDAY DINNER EVENT

- ★ Limani



JULY 4TH

Each July, AEF is joined by over 300 friends, scholarship winners, educators, supporters and their families for the annual July 4th VIP Celebration. This year, the event raised over \$90,000 towards work-based learning, scholarship and career readiness resources.



Event Partners

- ★ American Pharmacists Association
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- ★ White House Nannies, Inc.

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- Broadway at The National
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- Cake-wich Craft Bake Shop
- Cambria Washington DC Convention Center
- Canopy by Hilton Washington DC The Wharf
- Capital Hilton
- Carmine's Italian Restaurant Washington DC
- City Cruises
- Clyde's Restaurant Group
- DC Festival of Magic
- Destination DC
- DEZ Customz
- Embark DC
- Embassy Suites by Hilton Washington DC Convention Center
- I.M.P.
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- New York Marriott Marquis
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- Silver Lyan/Riggs Hotel DC
- Smithsonian's National Zoo & Conservation Biology Institute

Sponsors

- ★ Hargrove, from Encore
- ★ Washington Area New Automobile Dealers Association (WANADA)
- ★ Honda of Chantilly
- ★ NFP, an Aon company



“The AEF July 4th celebration is a world-class experience; there is no better place to host VIP guests. The event is even more valuable because it supports our future event and hospitality workforce, an endeavor that closely aligns with our organizational philosophy.”

Tara Higgins
President, Hargrove
Senior Vice President, Encore



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- 1 Donated to the Ray Bennett Memorial Fund
- 2 Donated to the Akira Wilson Memorial Fund
- 3 Donated to the Joe Shymanski Memorial Fund
- * Donated to both a scholarship fund and the general fund

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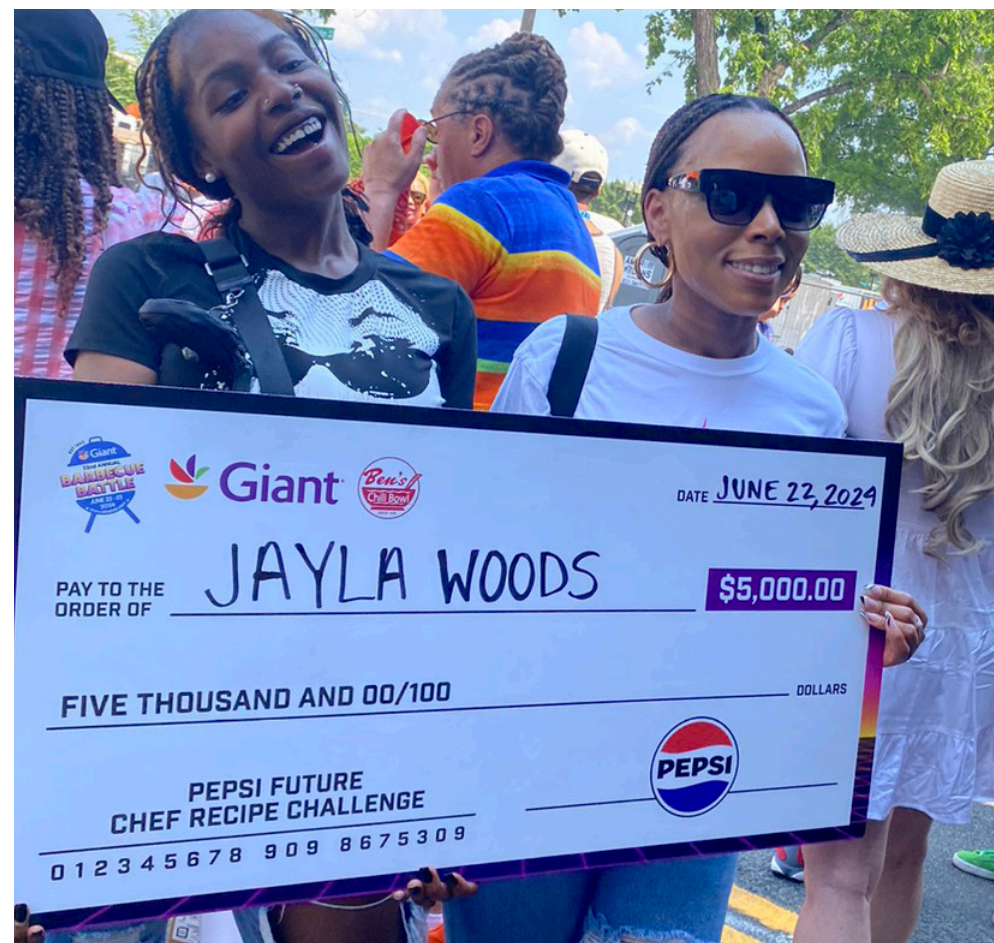
This Page: Students from Ballou High School attend the 2024 Careers at the Airport Workforce Expo at National Airport. The event is a collaboration between AEF and the Metropolitan Washington Airports Authority to expose young people to the career possibilities in aviation; AEF Student Advisory Board member Zoe Roberts helps an Academy student brush up their resume just in time to apply for spring internship opportunities.





This Page: Overlooking Times Square, Academy students hear from the New York Marriott Marquis Hotel Manager, David Sharkey, about the day-to-day life running one of the city's largest hotels; Academy of Hospitality & Tourism students from Ballou High School party at the opening ceremonies of SkillsUSA National Leadership & Skills Conference with hospitality and tourism educator Anthony Taylor; AEF Career Ready Interns explore the world through the National Geographic Society thanks to Darien Wright, Chief Financial and Operating Officer.

Facing page: Academy students went behind the scenes at Enchant Christmas and heard from Enchant and LINK Strategic Partners about producing and marketing a large seasonal attraction; AEF Student Advisory Board Chair Zoe Roberts accepts the NAF Alumni of the Year Award at the NAF Next 2024 conference; Jayla Woods, Ballou High School's Academy of Culinary Arts, celebrates her second place win with educator Chef Shanel Howard at the 2024 Pepsi Future Chef Recipe Contest held at the Giant National Capital Barbecue Battle; Academy directors and educators, along with AEF staff, meet at Nationals Park for their annual school year work-based learning planning meeting. Attendees also heard from the Washington Nationals' Director of Youth Planning, Ashleigh Hazley, about NatsPrep, a year-long program that connects Academy scholars with professionals and executives in the Nationals organization.



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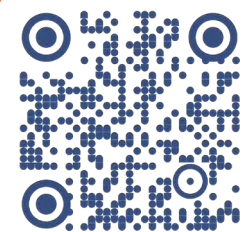
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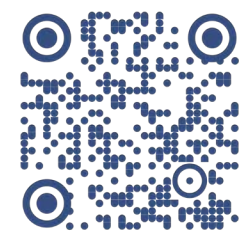
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Back Cover photo: Academy students get inspired by the Martin Luther King, Jr. Memorial during a Backyard Bound field trip in January.
[Photo by Kayden Johnson]

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