



## Children's Scholarship Fund

November 27, 2018

Dear Friend,

In this season of giving, I am writing to thank you for one of the greatest gifts I have ever received—the gift of an education made possible by your support of the Children's Scholarship Fund (CSF).

My mother learned about the Children's Scholarship Fund from a teacher at my public school who believed I would excel in a private school setting, and my mother immediately applied. We were fortunate to be awarded the scholarship when I was entering fourth grade, and my parents were given the ability to choose a school they felt was best for my sisters and me. This truly was a turning point in our lives, and soon, my sisters and I started a different educational journey.

Your generosity opened the door to a quality education and a brighter future for me and my sisters, and I want to take this opportunity to thank you.

Supported by our teachers and embraced by the staff, the school we attended, Incarnation School in Washington Heights, created an environment and culture of expectations, instilling a sense of agency. If we put in the work, good things will happen. The teachers believed in us, and we fed off their energy and persevered through the eighth grade, empowered by our scholarships from the Children's Scholarship Fund.

I was fortunate to earn another scholarship to attend All Hallows High School in the South Bronx, where I graduated on time as valedictorian, despite battling cancer throughout eighth and ninth grade. I went on to earn a full scholarship to Columbia University, where I graduated with a BA in financial economics and history and received honors such as the Dean's Award for Leadership Excellence and serving as one of the graduation speakers.

After college I began a career in finance, which has taken me to California, and recently back home to New York City, where I will begin a new job in January. A job to which CSF, through their ongoing relationship with me, opened a door once again.

Throughout it all, I have always strived to give back, helping others just as you helped me. I don't know if you realize the ripple effect of your support, but now my family knows what it means to see intergenerational poverty interrupted at the hands of a good

education. One of my sisters graduated from Hofstra University last year and is planning to attend medical school, and the other will graduate from Fordham University.

I know I am lucky that I have beaten the odds. **But let me also make this clear: I am not an anomaly, but rather, one of more than 174,000 students who received a CSF scholarship over the past 20 years and whose life was forever changed.** The first scholarship I received to attend Incarnation paved the way for scholarships to attend All Hallows High School, and later Columbia University, all of which gave me the opportunity to develop myself intellectually and professionally.

Because of my scholarships, I had access to educational opportunities and internships that, in turn, opened the door to a career that started in public finance and led to my current role as a Vice President at Morgan Stanley.

The education I received is allowing me to create a better life for my family and me, and to drive systemic change in the community I live in and the organizations I choose to be a part of. I am also fortunate enough to have been surrounded by adults—some of whom I've met through CSF—telling me I could do more, and never once telling me I was “dreaming too big.”

**Your generosity is contagious. I know that without the help of philanthropic individuals like you, I would not have had the same experience.** Many of us who have received scholarships from the Children's Scholarship Fund are now giving back ourselves, helping the next generation succeed.

I am proof your investment in a CSF scholarship pays off, and that the more than 26,500 scholarships CSF and its partner programs are providing in the 2018-19 school year can easily transform a student's life for the better. That is also why I am hoping that you will renew your support for CSF this year, so that even more children can receive the gift of a quality education in the year ahead. Every \$1,871 raised funds a one-year scholarship and helps another child succeed. By renewing your support, that child can remain in their school one more year, and once they graduate, allow another child to begin this journey.

**There is no other way to say it: Your generosity changed my life.** One generous donation turned into a scholarship. That scholarship opened the door for a better educational opportunity. That educational opportunity opened more doors that helped me become a better person and acquire the fundamental tools I need to succeed. Here I am, a son of working class immigrants, now a working professional, with a deep appreciation for philanthropy and education, and an understanding of the hard work required to achieve the American Dream. Most importantly, I have a burning desire to give back to

our youth who are the future of America by equipping them with the educational skills needed to continue making this nation great.

Thank you for your generosity, and I hope that you will join me and continue to support CSF scholarships in the year ahead. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact CSF President Darla Romfo at [dromfo@scholarshipfund.org](mailto:dromfo@scholarshipfund.org) or (212) 515-7136. I hope that you have a wonderful holiday season and wish you all the best in the new year ahead.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jason Tejada", with a stylized flourish at the end.

Jason Tejada  
Children's Scholarship Fund Alumnus