



Friends of the Bardwell Scholarships

Spring 2016
Issue 30

Changing Lives One Degree at a Time

Spring 2016 Graduates



Asim Allakim

BA, North Park University 2016

Ever since I can remember I was obsessed with music. I would spend countless hours as a child listening to my parents' jazz collection. I think I played their albums more than they did. I would spend my summers with my grandparents on their country farm in Michigan. My favorite pastime was accompanying my grandmother to church. I was thrilled by the whole church experience particularly listening to the choir sing. I remember at the age of six asking my mother for voice lessons. She looked at me crazily because we were a poor black family struggling financially to keep our heads above water and the family budget did not include luxuries such as voice lessons.

Undaunted, I took advantage of every singing opportunity that presented itself. I sang in church choirs and school chorales. At

Allakim continued on page 2...



Maria Rubi Amaro

AA, HWC 2016

I have been so blessed to have been given the opportunity to be a Bardwell Scholar. I got the opportunity to meet wonderful people who always looked out for me and made sure I was getting educated.

I'm the first generation from my family who is attending college and when I was applying for college, I felt so overwhelmed because I didn't qualify for financial aid and I didn't have a job. My dad was going to pay for two tuitions, my sister's and mine. Yes, I have a twin sister and we both wanted to go to college and have a career.

When I was introduced to the Roger Bardwell Scholarship it gave me an opportunity to get educated and go to college. I'm thankful for every single person that contributes to the Bardwell Scholarship. You have impacted my life and I know that the lives of many others have

Amaro continued on page 2...



Maria Esmeralda Amaro

AS, HWC 2016

My name is Maria Esmeralda Amaro and I'm a Bardwell scholar. Being a Bardwell Scholar is the best because I got the chance to meet so many amazing people. I will never forget them and I will always be thankful to have gotten the chance to meet them. I would like to thank all of those who have helped me finish my education and graduate from Harold Washington College with an associate's degree.

Receiving the Bardwell Scholarship has been extremely helpful to my family and me financially. I'm a person that loves to learn new things everyday. I also love to go to school; that's why I'm a full time student. Since graduating high school, I have been determined to become the first one in my family to graduate college and make something out of myself. I love children. This is why I babysit for kids who need a babysitter.

Amaro continued on page 3...

Allakim continued from page 1...



the age of 16 I found a private teacher and paid for lessons out of my part time jobs. Later, I went into the military and worked on computers by day and sang at night. I was blessed with the gift of song writing so after

the military, I went to California following the dream to make it in music. I started a musical production company and wrote and produced songs while I continued to sing in church choirs.

Just as I started achieving some success as a songwriter, my mother developed Alzheimer's and I made the decision to return to Chicago and help my family look after her. I took a 9-5 salesman job locked away in a small cubicle for 8 hours a day quietly despairing over the direction that my life had taken. Then a miracle happened in the form of the Credit Crunch of 2009. I was laid off and I wisely decided that if I wanted to be successful in music, I needed to go to college and learn how to do it on a professional and polished level. I knew that my raw talent could be refined and polished so I chose a community college to begin my egress into higher academia. I chose Harold Washington College.

It was at HWC that I was fortunate to meet Hedy Cohen and gain entry into the Roger Bardwell Scholarship Foundation.



RBS provided the much needed financial and mentoring support that I so required.

Hedy Cohen encouraged me and guided me every step of the way! She also directed me to North Park University,

a fantastic Christian four year university where I completed my musical academic education. I am graduating this spring with a BA in Praise and Worship Music with a minor in Jazz. I will forever be grateful

Amaro continued from page 1...

changed because of you. You have allowed students like me to get educated and have a career.

I'm thankful that this Spring semester 2016, I will be graduating with my Associates in Arts. I will be transferring to NEIU and get my bachelor's degree elementary education. I want to become an elementary school teacher because I want to motivate children to have the courage to speak up and become lovers of education. Specifically, I want to become a Spanish/English bilingual teacher and take part in helping children become fluent in their second language, English. Finally, I want to be an example, not only for my future students, but also for my family when I become the first to graduate college with a degree and a career.

Maria Rubi Amaro
AA, HWC 2016
Bardwell Scholar



to Hedy Cohen and The Roger Bardwell Scholarship Foundation. In paraphrasing the great poet Langston Hughes, my dream is no longer deferred! It is now finally realized! And I owe it all to Hedy Cohen and The Roger Bardwell Scholarship Foundation.

Asim Allakim
AA, HWC 2013
BA, North Park University 2016
Bardwell Scholar

Amaro continued from page 1...

I have babysat my brother since he was a baby. The relationships I've formed with children I've baby sat over the years has inspired me to want to help children accomplish their dreams. My career dream is to become a teacher and work with elementary school students. I would like to work as a teacher in my community because I want to help students believe in themselves so they can do whatever they want. I want them to see that money doesn't have to be an issue to stop them from becoming who they want to be.

To conclude, I'm looking forward to transfer to a four year university and finish my education. I want to continue my education and become a teacher. Thank you for letting me be a Bardwell scholar.

Sincerely,

Maria Esmeralda Amaro

AS, HWC 2016

Bardwell Scholar



Asim Allakim carries on the tradition of receiving new shoes for graduation

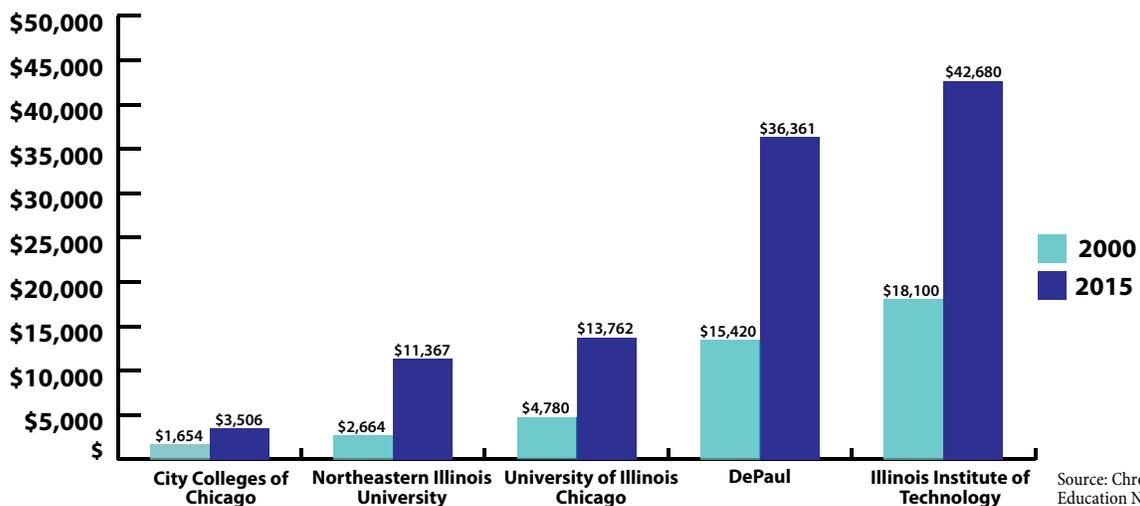
Local Tuition and RBS

Do you ever wonder how RBS can help so many students with such a small budget? It's a continuously challenging task. This graph gives you some idea of the cost of tuition and how it has escalated in the time we've been helping.

Many of our students qualify for financial aid (Pell Grant, Map Grant) which often covers their school costs. For others, undocumented or international students or those who don't qualify for financial aid, their options are more limited. We try to help international students at the same level we would for Chicago residents. For others, we may pay tuition costs at HWC, or cost share with the student and their family.

You can easily see the enormous cost of attending university, yet our students must transfer if they are to succeed. We work closely with Ellen Goldberg, the HWC transfer director, to see that they choose their university wisely and apply for any monies available. Many students get cost reductions for high grade point averages. RBS continues to assist them at the same level we would if they were still students at City Colleges and after that, they must take out loans.

As costs escalate, RBS appreciates your contributions more than ever. With little or no administrative costs, RBS maximizes your contributions to see that they assist as many students as possible to achieve a bachelor's degree and beyond.



Source: Chronicles of Higher Education November 2015.



Bardwell Lunch

Perhaps the most auspicious day to celebrate the 14th RBS luncheon was April 1st, or better known as April Fools Day. I say auspicious because some think, and even claim, that to expect anything more than mediocrity from community college students, who usually come from humble backgrounds, is foolish. However, at Harold Washington, we celebrated on this day. We celebrated the tenacity, courage, and talent of the scholars, the support from donors, and the invaluable guidance and leadership of the organization’s director – Hedy Cohen.

Amid exquisite soul food and treats by our very own Trina Coleman and Alba Orizaba, we witnessed stories about successfully studying at an Ivy League, stepping into our first semester of college with the aspiration of soon helping immigrant children integrate in a new country with our college degree, excelling academically while responding to the needs of our elderly parents, serving our communities as Fire Marshals and assuming new responsibilities of home ownership. These stories of maturity and academic and professional excellence are a testament to the fact that any human being, with the right support, is capable of becoming a person of great merit.

Just like the RBS scholars, RBS graduation rates continue to speak for themselves. RBS boasts an astronomically higher graduation rate from two year colleges than the state of Illinois. And under the leadership of Hedy, support of its donors, and sharpness of its scholars, no wonder this is the case!

Beyond words about student merit, donor appreciation, and notes on outstanding graduation rates, this one

day a year seems to be a fine time to note everyone’s unique hue. For example, some personal memorable highlights of the event include Susan Sidell’s sweet and spontaneous message of her motivation to support, Tito’s continued commitment to serving at-risk youth, Johnny’s steadfast vision of annual fiscal progress, and even David Work’s baby’s accompaniment to Asim’s music!

Every year, a commitment to the belief that education improves the lives of all brings us together. Similarly, the legacy of Roger Bardwell to public education and to lead by example is best exemplified by the role that each of us plays in the life of the organization. Roger, I imagine, would be proud to see the kind of organization we are building together.

Yunuen Rodriguez
AA, HWC 2009
BA, Beloit College 2012
Bardwell Scholar

20



Sunday Joseph, Yunuen Rodriguez



Riley Jones



*Back row- L. Cl
Middle- H. Coh
Front- R. Amar*

...ean, Spring 2016



Johnny Phan, David Work, "Tito" Vasquez



Tamila Pashae, Hafsi Yakubu

16 Bardwell Scholars



*Mark, R. Jones, D. Work, A. Allakim, E. Vasquez, T. Coleman, D. Richardson, J. Phan, C. Rojas
en, T. Girten, H. Bustos, L. Loving, T. Foster
o, E. Amaro, A. Scaggs, J. Sanchez, Y. Rodriguez, J. Taylor*

Power of Reconnecting

I was in desperate need of mentorship and financial assistance when I first learned about the Bardwell Scholarship over 13 years ago. One of my mentors, Gaylord Bogguss, introduced me to Hedy and I immediately felt a connection to her. At the same time, I was incredibly nervous because I am most certain that I had the worst grades and GPA at Harold Washington College. My first few attempts at HWC were catastrophic and I was simply not in the proper headspace to be a successful college student. My GPA had slid under a 2.0 and I was by no means the ideal candidate for a scholarship. However, despite this, Hedy agreed to mentor and help me financially with the numerous economic and academic challenges I faced. Also, during this time, I learned that Hedy has this dynamic gift of seeing potential in students even when they do not recognize it themselves. And with this skill, she took a gamble on me and through her guidance and generosity, I pulled my GPA up significantly and realized that the potential was there. Still, by the close of the semester, I dropped out of school because I simply was not ready to embark on the commitment it took to be a successful student. Once I left, I lost touch with Hedy for several years, but an unexpected turn of events would allow me to reconnect with her at the most unforeseen place.

Over ten years later, I went back to the only college that truly felt like my home and I was more than ready to be a productive student. I abruptly stepped out on faith by quitting my job with no true plan other than to return to HWC where I knew I would find an answer. I had no savings, scholarships or grants to cover my tuition, but I was determined and refused to give up. I took out student loans and ran up credit cards to pay for my education because I was going to graduate from HWC no matter the sacrifice. I aspired to be an alumna because I wanted to forever be connected to a school that completely enhanced my life.

My first semester back, I was named a presidential scholar, made the dean's list and earned a 4.0 GPA. I graduated with honors the following semester obtaining an Honors Associate in General Studies and was accepted to Mount Holyoke College on a full tuition scholarship as a Frances Perkins Scholar. Days later, I attended the ceremony for the coveted

Friends of Harold Washington College Graduation Award, which I was a recipient of, and bumped into Hedy in the food line! We looked at each other for a second before realizing who was in front of us as we laughed profusely (Hedy has an infectious laugh). We were both shocked that we somehow managed not to run into each other throughout the year, but we were also extremely thrilled at how far I had come. After we caught up and exchanged information, Hedy hugged me as we said our goodbyes and as soon as she embraced me, I knew I was home.



Rekindling my mentorship with Hedy and reconnecting with the Bardwell Scholars has been quite the honor, which has also brought immense joy to my life. I am proud to be a Bardwell Scholar and I wear that designation with pride. Additionally, Hedy and the Bardwell Scholarship Program have continued to support me throughout my move to Western Massachusetts and during my time at Mount Holyoke College. With their assistance, I have completed my first year earning a 3.6 GPA my first semester and a 4.0 my second. I was also elected president of my scholarship association, sat on a panel with the Student of Color Committee and began working on a senior thesis on the spatial analysis of Chiraq. I have completely transformed at Mount Holyoke and have embraced the academic rigor and challenge of working alongside world-renowned professors. And Hedy and the Bardwell Scholarship community have played a significant role in my success here because of the confidence they have instilled in me and the

Power of Reconnecting *Cont.*

financial contributions that have helped me with the cost of books, school supplies and ink and printing paper, all costs that are not covered by my scholarship.

I am extremely privileged to be a Bardwell Scholar and will continue to wear that badge of honor as I enter into my last full year at Mount Holyoke College. I am eternally grateful to all the donors, volunteers and the entire team because of their support, encouragement and inspiring work to help students like me achieve their academic goals and transform their lives. I am humbled by their kindness and excited to one day give back to a program that has made me truly feel that I can be exactly who I set out to be. Hedy's nurturing spirit is significant to this program because she is unbelievably

warm and comforting and the continuous support that I have received from her goes beyond a financial award. She is my spirit mother and friend and I know that no matter how hard it gets, she is always there to serve as my beacon of light.

My family and I are everlastingly grateful,

April Lashann Graham

Honors AGS, HWC 2015

*Mount Holyoke College Frances Perkins Scholar,
18' President, Frances Perkins Scholar Association
Bardwell Scholar*

*"The whole purpose of education is to turn mirrors
into windows."*

Sydney J. Harris

More from the Bardwell Luncheon



Trina Coleman, Leonetta Clark, Diane Richardson



David Work with his daughter, Olivia



Andrea Scaggs and her grandchildren



Barb Udren, Riley Jones

Join US for the 2nd Annual RBS NIGHTS OUT

Books+Wine+RBS

Live Music • Hors d'oeuvres • Wine • Books • Silent Auction

Friday, August 26, 2016

7:00 p.m. - 9:30 p.m.

Bookends and Beginnings

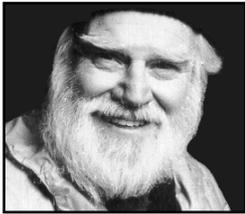
1712 Sherman, Alley 1

Evanston, IL 60201

Contributions, which are deductible to the extent the law allows, are always appreciated and enable us to continue this important work. Please ask your employer if they offer matching funds or corporate contributions to nonprofit organizations.

(The Roger W. Bardwell Scholarship Fund is a registered 501(C)3 tax exempt organization)

Contributions to the Roger W. Bardwell Scholarship Fund may be made by check and sent to:



Bardwell Scholarship NFP

1204 Monroe

Evanston, IL 60202

or

donate on our website through Pay Pal



CITY COLLEGES of CHICAGO

Harold Washington

Education that Works

For further information, or if you know someone who might be a candidate for a Bardwell Scholarship, please contact Hedy Cohen:

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