



Friends of the Bardwell Scholarships

Fall 2012
Issue 23

Changing Lives One Degree at a Time

Traveler for Life



Riley Jones III with Mayor Rahm Emanuel and Fire Commissioner Jose Santiago at EMT/Firefighter Graduation, November 1, 2012

My name is Riley Jones III and up until March 16, 2012, I physically attended Harold Washington College. Not only was I a student, I was a Bardwell Scholarship recipient, which meant my academic commitment had gotten me noticed. My story probably resembles many untold stories within Harold Washington, because of the struggles and challenges we all face in our personal lives. As indicated, my story is no different, except for the road taken, which all began in 1995 when I took an exam for the Fire Department. At that time I was looking for a career that would provide me a stable future and financial stability. Unfortunately, I was not considered for employment and virtually gave up on seeking that role again. That was until 9 months ago when I was offered employment as a fire fighter. The reason I was being contacted after 17 years was because an applicant who had tested with me by the name of Arthur Lewis Jr. recognized that the city implemented unfair selection criteria to select candidates for the job. Ultimately, he filed a lawsuit against the City of Chicago, which is now referred to as *Lewis v. City of Chicago*.

To my surprise, he won the lawsuit. Understand, this was a suit that went all the way to the U.S. Supreme Court. The Court doesn't hear every case submitted

and usually doesn't rule in favor of such discrimination cases, particularly when all nine justices agree. They ruled that the city had unfairly implemented practices that excluded the 6,000 minorities who applied as candidates for the Fire Department. In plain English, minorities, who were primarily African-Americans, were passed over. In their summary, the court ruled that the city had to compensate the 6,000 class members who were not considered during the 1995 exam. One of the compensatory measures was that no less than 111 members had to be hired by the fire department, in addition to a financial settlement for those who would not be hired.

This is when my world as I knew it began to change. I received a letter informing me of the court's actions and that a screening process was going to take place to identify those who still wanted to pursue the job. My initial response was, oh well, I am going to take the money and run. Understand, I took the exam in 1995 when I was 32 years old; I was now 48 years old. Not only was I 48, but I had been working 28 years in the Social Service and Criminal Justice field as a leader and administrator for a not-for profit organization called TASC (Treatment Alternatives for Safe Communities).

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I was responsible for overseeing of services for the Cook County area, which encompassed the 6 municipal court houses.

Because I was already established, I hadn't considered changing roles or professions, until a friend, who also had taken the exam, indicated he was going to pursue the opportunity and talked me into doing the same. Even after agreeing, I never really thought I would be considered because 2,700 candidates submitted their names for consideration. As fortune would have it, I kept getting deeper and deeper into the selection process. Despite that, I was still unsure if this was something I wanted to pursue until I began to look at the reasons why I didn't consider it. I was comfortable in my current role, I had the flexibility to create my own schedule and I was on the path to completing my associate's degree at HWC, which I knew would make me more marketable for other roles at my current organization and also in the public sector. However, the major factor I was not considering the role was that I was scared to leave my comfort zone.

Well, on March 12, 2012 all the fears I knew and those I had not dealt with came to a head when I received a call from the Chicago Fire Department offering me the job. I was shocked, ecstatic and scared all at the same time. Why? Because I was told if I wanted the job, I had to report on March 16th, which was 4 days away. I knew that as a professional, it is courtesy to provide your employer with at least a 2 weeks notice. Additionally, I had to consider how or why I would throw away 28 years in 3 days. I wish I could tell you it was an easy decision, but it was not, because I loved my job and the organization, but I realized I had an opportunity to further stabilize my future.

I also didn't want to set myself up for failure. I was beginning to allow doubt about my short comings kick in and there are always going to be naysayers. It is not because they are hating, but because they have concern and want you to be succeed. For me, I had to seek counsel from my family, who were very supportive, but were split about this decision. Eventually, I decided to place the decision in the hands of my faith and prayed on it. In circumstances like this you have to seek a higher power. For those of you who were faced with similar challenges, I am sure you know what I mean, because without faith, we may not have anyone else to lean on.

So, on March 15th, I submitted my resignation and reported for duty at the Fire Academy along with 110 other candidates who shared the same hopes, and were stepping out of their comfort zone, but with a rejuvenated spirit. On November 1st, the dream became reality as I graduated from the Chicago Fire Academy as an Emergency Medical Technician (EMT)/Firefighter. I will tell you that this has been the most I have ever been challenged, not just physically, but emotionally and intellectually.

I am sharing this story because the one thing that resonates for me is that in your journey to become successful, life doesn't play out like a television drama. However, what good is the opportunity if you are not prepared for it? With that said, take your studies seriously, don't take things for granted. If fear creeps in, embrace it and let it be your compass guiding you through and don't use it as a reason to hide. Always look to be prepared for any opportunity, so you won't have to live with regrets about not being able to take advantage of what comes your way.

Many thanks to Hedy Cohen and the Bardwell Scholarship Program, because they have been a huge support in my quest to improve myself. The resources and suggestions have been great, but what means the most is the personal involvement Hedy provides. The organization is great, but Hedy is the greatest. For those of you who have been blessed enough to have had the encounter, you know what I mean. For those who have not, please take to time to seek the opportunity.

Thank you for allowing me to share.

***Respectfully Submitted,
Riley Jones III
Chicago Emergency Medical Technician/Firefighter
HWC student
Bardwell Scholar***

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Adam Kreis and Peter Rosenbaum of Jenner & Block LLP
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TRANSFER MATION and Mentoring

October 19, 2012 was the day for TRANSFER MATION at HWC!! Ellen Goldberg, director of the HWC Transfer Center, put together a stellar day-long seminar for HWC students on a variety of issues related to a successful college career and transferring to the college of their choice. HWC staff and others volunteered their time to give these seminars and presentations to students who chose to be there.

Among the many engaging sessions was one called “Having (and Keeping) a Mentor” presented by Hedy Cohen, assisted by Anthony Foster. Hedy and Tony do the bulk of the mentoring for the RBS program, so it was an easy and familiar topic.

With so many interesting topics being offered, it is interesting how many students chose to hear about mentoring. Some wanted to seek out a mentor and didn’t know how to go about it. Others were lucky enough to have had mentors in their lives and some saw themselves as mentors.

Kudos to Ellen Goldberg for her outstanding work in making this day of TRANSFER MATION happen.



Anthony Foster and Hedy Cohen present “Having (and Keeping) a Mentor”.



Brother and sister Hugo and Yunuen Rodriguez

Becoming a Shimerian

Upon enrolling at Harold Washington College in the fall of 2008, I did not know what I wanted to major in, but I knew that I wanted to learn everything that is humanly known. I, like many students, entered college with the thirst for wisdom, knowledge, and innovation. I took my required classes to enrich what I had learned in high school and harden the basic foundation of knowledge; one lucky semester, I took a Logic 101 class with HWC’s famous humanities teacher, Mr. Richardson. Little did I know that he would become one of the important people to help launch me my academic trajectory.

After my logic class, I extolled the power of logical argumentation and began to surgically dissect arguments; I decided to major in Philosophy; I took as many philosophy classes as possible.

The years passed, my transfer counselor, Ellen Goldberg, guided me to a Great Books School in Chicago called Shimer College. After taking a class at Shimer, I quickly noticed that it had the ideal curriculum, just what I needed. I wanted to attend Shimer. **Sadly enough, higher education for most community college students is difficult to afford; consequently, not all continue onto academic paths as they would’ve liked. I didn’t want to become another victim of economic disadvantages.**

Luckily enough, I was presented to Hedy Cohen, another person who helped launch me my academic trajectory. She introduced me to Phi Theta Kappa, an honor society, and the Roger Bardwell Scholarship. And after graduating from HWC in Spring 2012 with an above average GPA, with the help of Phi Theta Kappa, and the Roger Bardwell Scholarship Program, I can now call myself a Shimerian.

*Hugo Rodriguez
AA, HWC 2012
Shimer Student
Bardwell Scholar*

A City Under Siege

This morning as I watched the news, they reported that just this past weekend in Chicago there were 7 deaths and 21 injured due to violence. It has come to a point that we are losing too many brothers and sisters in our communities. As a father I'm worried and scared for my children and our communities. I have a 14 year old boy going into high school this upcoming year and I pray he doesn't have to deal with this violence that is plaguing our city. I was once a perpetrator and a victim of violence; to this day I still walk around with a bullet lodged by my spine from having been shot twice. It's a crude reminder to myself of how real violence is on our streets.

I was fortunate, however, to find an escape from the cycle of violence and for me that escape was education. Through education I have been able to change my life and work on helping other do so as well. It wasn't an easy thing to do and continues to be a struggle. However through my education I can lead by example. I have had the pleasure of working with at-risk and gang involved youth as well as with citizens returning from prison. Recently I had an opportunity to be a panelist for a town hall meeting on WYCC, Channel 20, titled "A Plea for Peace" about the violence in Chicago. I was alongside the Superintendent of the Chicago Police Department, Garry McCarthy, and Grammy Award winning Rapper Rhymefest. It was an honor to be on this panel and have this discussion. The segment will air on, Sunday, November 25th, 2012 at 9:00 p.m. with an encore on Thursday, November 29th, 2012 at 7:00 p.m.

It was an awesome experience for me, however I feel it was just the beginning of the conversation. I feel this conversation should be held by all in this city. We need to come together and create a united effort and work together regardless of race, ethnicity, religion, or gender in order to bring about the change that needs to happen in our beautiful city before it's too late. On that note I challenge the entire Bardwell Family from scholars to donors to get involved in your communities because change only comes from within. If you want to make this world of ours a safer place you can't do it from the sidelines. You are all leaders in your communities; that being said, use your education and your talents to make that change in our communities. Even if it's one person at a time, a little goes a long way. Bring hope

to the hopeless and be that beacon of light in your community. Only together can it be done.

Edilberto (Tito) Vazquez

AA HWC 2006

BA NEIU 2010

MSW Jane Addams School of Social Work at UIC 2012

Bardwell Executive Board Member

Bardwell Scholar



Tito at "A Plea for Peace" at Kennedy-King College, October 11, 2012.

The Shoe That Fits

How do you determine the right shoes to purchase when you go shoe shopping? Do you think about the outfit they can go with? Do you think more practically? Is the name brand important in that decision? Or, are you of the mindset that a decent pair of black shoes will go well with anything? Is shoe shopping supposed to be this difficult? It shouldn't be, but depending on the criteria you place on your shoe selection, it can be quite a hassle.

As a recent graduate, earning a BA in business management, and as a recipient and member of the Bardwell Scholarship Program, all graduates are treated to a brand new pair of shoes. Wow, what an incentive! This gift is bestowed upon students who achieve this milestone. Yet, I hadn't realized how much the process of obtaining a degree and process of shoe shopping have in common!

A group of recent graduates and I travelled over to Macy's to make the purchase of new shoes. There were 2 men and 2 women. Having known about this trip prior to going, I knew exactly what I needed and wanted before we got there. I'm not sure if my fellow graduates did any pre-planning. However, the gentleman and I were able to choose our shoes in less than 20 minutes. On the other hand, the 2 young ladies were still shopping when the place was closing down... just kidding. It did seem that way though. During this process, there was something that was very evident as to how men and women make choices: men chose shoes based on simplicity and practicality -- safe purchases and simple designs. In contrast, the choices made by the women took more time and spoke to their character and personality. These were not "safe" purchases; they were bold and beautiful and seemed to fit comfortably on their feet.

There is commonality in the way you buy a pair of shoes and how you should choose your classes, based on what's a good fit for your brain and your future. As you comfortably go through class, you begin to walk the path that fits your feet. There is nothing more uncomfortable than wearing a pair of shoes that you don't like or that fit wrong. You wear them because you really don't have a choice, but the choice in the beginning could have been so much better. The same goes for choosing classes. Every now and then you will have to choose one

out of necessity, but you really don't like being there. So readers, if you are fortunate to become a Bardwell Scholar and complete your program for your degree, prepare yourself for a pair of shoes that fit your feet and personality. And while you're preparing to shop for those shoes, be sure to also make the correct choices for the classes that will help you get to your desired "milestone" in a productive and timely manner.

Anthony Foster

HWC

BA University of Phoenix 2009

MA University of Phoenix 2012

Bardwell Executive Board Member

Bardwell Scholar



Anthony Foster selecting shoes at Macy's

The Gift of Giving

Johnny Phan and several other Bardwell Scholars donated their time and services to raise money for RBS. Multitalented Johnny decided to make his donation in the kitchen and here is his story.

Have you ever just walked into a stranger's kitchen and acted as if it were your own? I did.

Knowing that someone placed a bid on my cooking service was exciting and nerve wracking at the same time. Feeling anxious, nervous and awkward, I walked through the front door of a stranger's house, and began cooking in their kitchen.

It was a beautiful house located on the coast of Lake Michigan in Wilmette. There was a large window facing the lake and the view was spectacular. That automatically calmed me down a bit.

After briefly touring the kitchen, I took out the cooking utensils and unpacked the ingredients that I had brought. What was funny was that the owner of the house and their guests hung out in the kitchen and watched me work. Again, that definitely made me nervous, but since everyone was so kind and down-to-earth, it eased me up a bit as I continued to prep the food that I was going to cook.

I made six entrees and a soup, all Southern style Vietnamese cooking that I had learned from my mother. After about an hour and a half, all dishes were served and I was able to give a brief description and talk a bit about each dish I made. Everyone loved it.

What did I gain from this experience?

- The great feeling of being able to give back to the foundation
- Stepping out of my comfort zone to do something this unusual was enlightening.

Amazing how much we learn when we're not even expecting it.

Johnny Phan

AA HWC 2003

BA UIC 2006

Bardwell Executive Board Member

Bardwell Scholar

Shoe Shopping!!!

My big day had arrived! As we walked in Macy's I could hardly contain myself. I'm a shoe lover and finding the right pair was a challenge. Thanks to Momma Hedy I was able to find a nice pair that I could wear every day. Momma Hedy has truly been a blessing in my life, without her help in everything I've needed I wouldn't have gotten this far.

Thank you so much Hedy for being the rock that I've needed when I felt I was going to melt away. Now I can happily keep moving in my brand new pair of shoes!! Masters degree here I come!



Lisa Ayala showing off her new shoes

Lisa Ayala

AA HWC 2007

BS NIU 2012

Bardwell Scholar



Johnny Phan cooking up a storm

Dreams Delayed, Not Denied

Delay does not mean denial. On August 29, 2012 I arrived at Mount Holyoke College and the realization of a dream began. George Eliot says: "It is never too late to be what you might have been." I am now embarking on the journey that has been delayed due to detours and roadblocks. The journey has been long but I am thankful for it.

My journey began again in January 2010 after losing my job during the economic meltdown of 2008. I have always wanted to attend college. My daughter encouraged me to enroll at HWC where she already a student. This was a time of adjustment for me, I had been out of school for over 30 years. At first I felt out of place, but thanks to the encouragement from the instructors, staff, and faculty, I was able to get a handle on how to maneuver this new adventure. I was excited to be back in school. I have always believed in the need for education and have a passion for learning.

The first semester I was amazed at how well I was doing. I received a lot of encouragement from family and friends. I made the Dean's List with a 3.8 GPA. I was overjoyed to be accomplishing the goals that I had set.

Despite this accomplishment, I was denied financial aid my second semester. That's when an instructor at Olive-Harvey College told me about the Roger Bardwell Scholarship. He thought I was a perfect candidate. I applied and received the scholarship. From that point on, my life has been different. I met Hedy Cohen and she made me feel that I could do anything. Because of the financial support of RBS, the mentoring, the support, and the love Hedy gave me, I was able to continue my education.

The most amazing thing happened as I continued my education. Professor Betty Harris, my former professor, told me about Mount Holyoke College. I was able to go for a visit to Mount Holyoke College in February 2011. Upon arriving at the college, I knew that was the place where I was to continue my studies. The campus was beautiful and it felt like home. The thought of leaving Chicago was bittersweet because it was so far away from my family, but I knew that destiny was calling me.

I have been at Mount Holyoke for two months now and it has been the most amazing time of my life. The

curriculum is challenging but I am working hard and I know it will pay off. I know that the power behind me is greater than the task ahead of me. I wake up every day and feel as if I am dreaming. I am part of The Frances Perkins Program, designed for non-traditional students, and it's like one big happy family. The support of students and staff has been phenomenal. I have found the place where I belong and I am working on becoming the person I might have been. I am living the life I was meant to live. This has been the most amazing journey imaginable.

I would not be in Mount Holyoke if it wasn't for City Colleges of Chicago, Hedy, and the Roger Bardwell Scholarship Program. I thank everyone who has ever contributed time, money, support, and encouragement to RBS because these resources help dreams come true in spite of age. I am proof that dreams delayed don't have to be denied.

Shirley Doty-Lewis
HWC
Mount Holyoke Student
Bardwell Scholar



Shirley Doty-Lewis proudly displays the banner for her new school, Mount Holyoke

Thank you to Contributors

Bardwell Scholarships continue to prosper through your generous donations. Contributions are always appreciated, and in these difficult financial times, it is particularly encouraging to see that education remains a priority for so many. As each contribution is of significance, we list them alphabetically and equally.

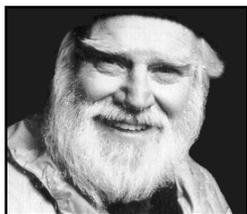
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Bardwell Scholarship NFP
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For further information, or if you know someone who might be a candidate for a Bardwell Scholarship, please contact Hedy Cohen:

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