

Dear Phi Beta Kappa Scholarship Committee,

Three years ago I would have stopped and laughed at the person who told me that I would be the first person to attend college in my family, and that I would not have to take out any loans to pay for it. The reason I would have felt this way three years ago is because I had just transitioned into a hard time into my life. My family life had crumbled and I had to face the responsibility of living on my own apartment while attending the last two years of high school. During the summer of my sophomore year my teacher uttered the words that would change my life. She asserted, "You have so much potential, but you waste it". Those words instantaneously changed my life as a student, and as a person.

Today, I would stand tall and tell that person thank you: for empowering in me. I would also tell them that their words stand true because I will be attending Morehouse College in the fall majoring in Biology/Psychology. The sciences have always interested me because it requires critical thinking. The physical sciences are distinctive because one can observe their theories everyday in nature and I feel that studying the physical sciences will allow me to research and synthesize ideas that can be integrated into everyday life. My lifetime goal is to use my education in the sciences to find a solution to the many disparities that exist in the healthcare system. Growing up in a disadvantaged community my entire life, I have experienced these disparities firsthand and I have observed family members, friends, and people within my community suffer at the hands of a broken healthcare system. I intend to cure this social ill that ironically, exist in the wealthiest nation in the world.

The reason I am able to have goals of this magnitude is because of people like you, people who have dedicated their lives to helping others achieve their goals. The time, contributions, and work you have done to give back to the community and help students like me, is one of the greatest deeds one can provide. For all of these things, I say thank you, and I want to say that it is an honor to be chosen as the 2009 PBKACA Scholarship Recipient. I want to show my appreciation not only through this letter, but through letting the committee know that I intend to follow in your footsteps. I ensure you all that I will use my opportunities to gain an education so that I can come back to my community and help disadvantaged students synthesize their own success story. Thank you for everything and I hope to be in contact with you soon.

Sincerely,

Derrius Quarles