



ANNUAL  
REPORT  
**2019**

# Message from

## Board President, Karlo Young and Executive Director, Jess Suriano

**B.E.S.T. is a shining example of Baltimore at its best.**  
For thirty-two years, we have believed in our young people, and in the power that excellence in education has to change a family and a community for generations to come.

The **Baltimore Educational Scholarship Trust's** commitment to the students and families in our program is expansive, and includes admissions and financial aid counseling; family engagement events; leadership development; cultural enhancement; academic and transition programming; college-bound support that incorporates SAT/ACT Prep and college visits; internship opportunities; and a broad and compassionate network of funders, Trustees and community partners.

When you consider **B.E.S.T.'s** impact in Baltimore, whether you are a student, parent, member school, funder or partner, the words that resonate are **SUPPORT, ACHIEVEMENT, FAMILY, LEADERSHIP, and LEGACY.** With your commitment, we are able to elevate and encourage our young people every step of the way. And as you know, Baltimore is at its best when our young people are thriving! We thank you for supporting us as we play our important role in making this happen.



  
Karlo G. Young  
Board President

  
Jessica Wolf Suriano  
Executive Director

## Our Mission

The **Baltimore Educational Scholarship Trust**, in partnership with our eighteen independent member schools, recruits and supports through the admissions process academically ambitious African American students with financial need from the Baltimore area. Once students are enrolled, **B.E.S.T.** positions them for success through academic preparation, character and leadership development, and support programs.

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# SUPPORT

## B.E.S.T. Admissions

At our founding in 1987, **B.E.S.T.** was charged with identifying and supporting academically talented African American students from families of lower income in the Baltimore region who have the ability to thrive at independent schools. More than three decades later, we continue to identify children seeking independent school admission in grades K-9 through strategic recruiting partnerships with schools and other non-profit organizations in our city. When a family is accepted into the **B.E.S.T.** program, they receive individual admissions counseling and support as they apply to our member schools, as well as a comprehensive overview of additional Baltimore area educational options. Included is an Independent School Entrance Exam (ISEE) Prep workshop and the ISEE Exam for students, a Financial Aid Workshop for parents, and a **B.E.S.T.** Member School Fair exclusively for **B.E.S.T.** families.



B.E.S.T. Current Parent Panel at our New Parent Welcome Dinner



From left: Peggy Bittner, Director of Programs and Alumni Relations; Crystal Alston '96, Director of Advancement; Kim Dorsey, Admissions Associate; Jessica Suriano, Executive Director; Rachel Minnis, Development and Program Associate; Alecia Pridgen, Director of Enrollment Management; Jill Wood, Director of Finance and Operations

# SUPPORT



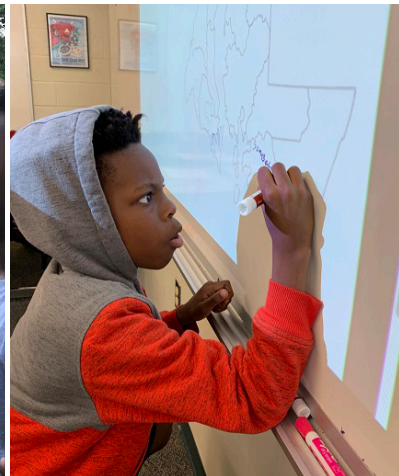
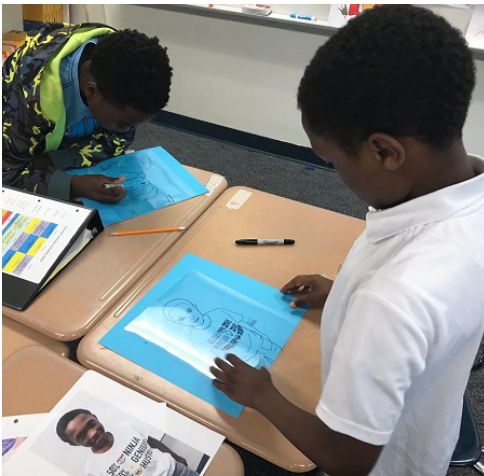
## B.E.S.T. Summer Scholars Program

Summer Scholars, our signature support program, prepares our newly enrolled **B.E.S.T.** middle and upper school students for the demands and expectations of their new independent schools. An engaging curriculum comprised of academics, athletics, art, field trips, study skills, advisory and affirmational programming provides the experiences necessary to support a smooth transition for our students, which enables them to focus their energy and attention on their academic success as they begin at their new schools in the fall. Additionally, Summer Scholars provides our students with the opportunity to develop a rich network of friends and faculty that will stay with them long after the summer is over.

**Our thanks to Roland Park Country School, Thomas Wilson Sanitarium for Children of Baltimore City, SunTrust Foundation, STX, and the Hippodrome Foundation.**



# SUPPORT



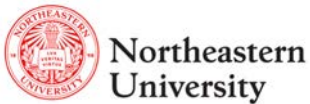
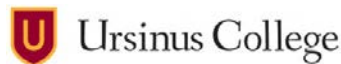
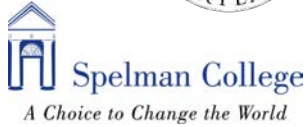
## B.E.S.T. 2018-2019 Student, Family and Alumni Programming

In addition to Summer Scholars, please see below for a comprehensive list of our programs:

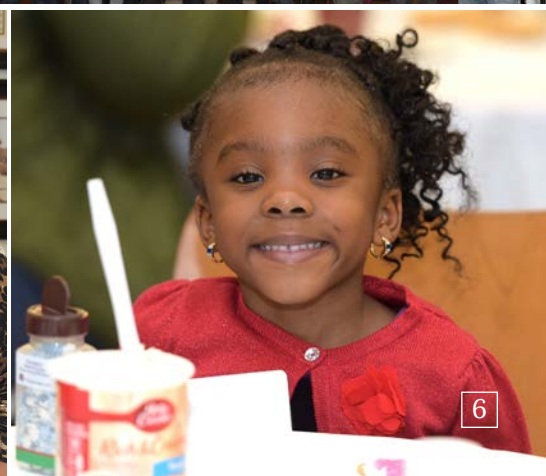
- National Museum of African American History and Culture with middle and upper school students and parents
- Annual Back to School Family Celebration
- *The Color Purple* at the Kennedy Center for upper school families
- "Maximizing the College Counseling Experience" Workshop for upper school families
- FAFSA Workshop for Senior Parents and Parents of College-Aged Alumni in partnership with Gilman School, Bryn Mawr School and Roland Park Country School
- 6<sup>th</sup> Annual *Leaders on Leadership* Breakfast for upper school students, funders, Trustees, and partners
- SAT/ACT Prep with Capital Educators for all **B.E.S.T.** juniors
- Mentor Day sponsored by Legg Mason's Women's Leadership Network for junior and senior girls
- Lower and Middle School Family Game Night
- Alumni Networking Holiday Party
- Family Holiday Party with Senior Speaker and Class of 2019 Celebration
- College-Aged Alumni Lunch
- INROADS Information Sessions for College-Aged Alumni
- College Visits to St. Mary's College & Howard University
- Torrey Smith Foundation Charity Basketball Game
- Young Men of Color Symposium at the Park School of Baltimore for 8<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> grade boys
- Maryland Zoo in Baltimore visit
- New Parent Welcome Dinner with Current Parent Panel
- Gilman Black Alumni Leadership Institute – 15 **B.E.S.T.** students selected to the cohort
- Art of Leadership, a program of Art With a Heart- 5 **B.E.S.T.** students selected to the cohort
- Independent Senior Project for **B.E.S.T.** seniors

# ACHIEVEMENT

**100%**  
of the  
**B.E.S.T.**  
Class of 2019  
is attending  
a four-year  
college or university



# FAMILY



# FAMILY



# LEADERSHIP

## Leaders on Leadership Breakfast

This annual Breakfast convenes **B.E.S.T.**'s leadership funders, Trustees and partners to spend the morning with our upper school students.



Dan Paradis, Head of Park School and **B.E.S.T.** Head of School Trustee with Upper School **B.E.S.T.** and Park School Students and Courtney Rollins, Park School Director of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (far right)



Karlo Young, **B.E.S.T.** Board President; Dr. David Fakunle '05, Alumnus Speaker; Alicia Wilson, Honored Speaker; Jessica Suriano, **B.E.S.T.** Executive Director



# LEADERSHIP

## *Legg Mason's Mentor Day*



B.E.S.T. Upper School Girls with B.E.S.T. Trustee, Tim Lorber at Legg Mason's Mentor Day

## 2019 Stanley I. Panitz Leadership Award Winners

Kai G. '20, Jemicy School  
Ashauna L. '20, Friends School of Baltimore

This award, in memory of the late Stanley I. Panitz, Founding **B.E.S.T.** Board Chair, is given annually to two **B.E.S.T.** Juniors in recognition of their academic achievement, their demonstrated leadership in both their school and the broader community, and their strength of character.



# LEGACY



## In Memory of **Redmond C.S. Finney, B.E.S.T. Co-Founder**

The following excerpt first appeared in a Letter to *The Sun* on August 7, 2019  
from Stuart O. Simms, Past Board President and Trustee Emeritus.

*There are those who exude character and integrity by their truly unselfish, self-effacing efforts to help young people. Redmond C.S. Finney was a spirited and determined member of generational change and equity in Baltimore's education and community activity. He was in a class of heads of schools in Baltimore...who neither settled for mediocrity nor condoned inequity.*

*Finney's exuberant interest in the achievement of others made you especially appreciate him. He lived like his mission was not so much to teach and coach, but to create the strong but compassionate leader. He took risks in doing what he thought was right for his students, his faculty and staff, his school and Baltimore. His joy in the successes of those around him, either big or small, was palpable. As a result, those of us who had the privilege of crossing his path are better for the experience.*

*His death is a loss not only to his family but also to the greater Baltimore community. His likeness may never be seen again. But those who knew him owe it to continue his mission.*



# WITH GRATITUDE

**B.E.S.T.** is proud to provide our students with the significant support, encouragement and resources necessary to help them achieve their many successes. Thank you to our generous donors who help make this possible.

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## GIFTS IN KIND

Hippodrome Foundation  
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This list includes all donors to the Baltimore Educational Scholarship Trust during the 2018-2019 giving year (July 1, 2018 – June 30, 2019). If an error has been made, please accept our sincere apology and notify Crystal Alston '96 at 410.752.2225 or [calston@besttrust.org](mailto:calston@besttrust.org).

\* Donor passed after making gift



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We want to thank our Member Schools for their incredible support of our shared students and families. For the 2019-2020 academic year, they are providing over \$7 million in financial aid to our 357 **B.E.S.T.** students in grades K-12. We are grateful to have such wonderful, committed partners.

## B.E.S.T. Member Schools



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