The Pittsburgh Promise

Executive Scholars

of Highmark

THE EXECUTIVE SCHOLARS PROGRAM BUILDS A PIPELINE BETWEEN HIGH-PERFORMING STUDENTS AND OUR MAJOR CORPORATE DONORS.

The program provides students with the chance to connect with the prestigious company with which they are matched and pursue professional development opportunities and relationships during their college years. High school seniors with a strong academic performance, a commitment to community service, and leadership skills are encouraged to apply.

The Executive Scholars Program is one of the ways that The Promise can help students transition not only from high school to college, but also from college to a career. We are very proud of our 2025 Executive Scholar Class. Congratulations!

EXECUTIVE SCHOLAR COMPANIES

UPMC

Highmark • PNC • BNY Mellon

American Eagle Outfitters • Giant Eagle

Cleveland Brothers Equipment Company • FNB

Highmark Wholecare • Howmet Aerospace • KeyBank

McGuinn Family Foundation • PPG

Thermo Fisher Scientific • Viatris

2025



Youssef Bey

Youssef attended Pittsburgh Carrick and founded CHS.UNION, a student-led platform celebrating the school's academics, athletics, and culture. He now studies Business Management at the University of Pittsburgh and hopes to build a career in technology.



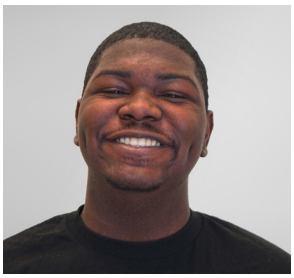
Zoe Blum

Zoe attended Pittsburgh CAPA, where she led the Jewish Student Union, participated in Girl Scouts, and volunteered with Days for Girls and Just Harvest. She now studies Occupational Therapy at the University of Pittsburgh.



Tyonna Carpenter

Tyonna attended Pittsburgh Milliones/UPrep, where she joined Anime Club, Student Voice, Student Envoy, and the Pittsburgh Global Travel Scholars program, traveling to France and Switzerland. She now studies Psychology at PennWest Clarion and hopes to become a psychologist.



Jaemir Hawkins

Jaemir attended Pittsburgh Milliones/UPrep, where he developed a strong interest in gaming and technology. He now attends CCAC and hopes to become a game developer, creating fun and accessible games for everyone.



Abigail Rush

Abigail is a graduate of Pittsburgh SciTech who balanced academics with the National Honor Society, Mock Trial, and Interact Club. She now studies Psychology at the University of Pittsburgh and plans to become an occupational therapist.

2024



Nadia Garnett

During her time at Pittsburgh Obama, Nadia demonstrated exceptional commitment to her education while balancing work at Chick-Fil-A, Market District, and volunteering at Breakthrough Pittsburgh. Now pursuing a degree in Radiology at CCAC, she continues to showcase resilience and dedication, overcoming challenges and working hard toward her academic and professional goals.



Jennifer Jackson

A graduate of Pittsburgh Allderdice, Jennifer is a passionate learner with a deep appreciation for science, the outdoors, and community involvement. Jennifer is currently pursuing a degree in Biology at Robert Morris University.



Gerataya Porter

Gerataya, a graduate of Pittsburgh Perry, was an active member of the Boys and Girls Club and the National Junior Honor Society. She is deeply dedicated to her academic journey, embodying the qualities of a scholar student with a commitment to excellence and compassionate care. Currently, Gerataya is pursuing a Nursing degree at the University of Pittsburgh, aspiring to make a positive impact in the healthcare field.



Jack Small

A proud graduate of Pittsburgh Obama, Jack excelled both academically and athletically, earning the title of salutatorian and competing year-round in soccer, hockey, and volleyball. He was a dedicated leader, active in student council, Youth and Government, and the National Honor Society. Jack is now pursuing a Biology degree at Chatham University, driven by his aspiration to become a Physician Assistant.



Destiny Trent

At Pittsburgh CAPA, Destiny excelled in balancing academics while working multiple jobs. Dedicated to education and personal growth, she strives to serve as an example for others aspiring to further their education. Currently, Destiny is pursuing a degree in Neurosonography at CCAC.

2023



Sam Alawadhi

Pittsburgh Allderdice alum, Sam, has a dream to use computer science to create an initiative to help immigrant students. During his time at Allderdice, Sam participated in Global Minds, acted as a delegate in Model UN, and served as President of the Engineering Club. Following the path to realizing his dreams, Sam is now studying Computer Science at Point Park University.



Madina Mada

At Pittsburgh Perry Traditional Academy, Madina was a superb scholar. She was involved in the African Club, Gwen's Girls, National Honor Society, and volunteered at Allegheny General Hospital. Her love of helping people led her to nursing. Madina is now a Nursing student at Carlow University.



Asiya Perez

As a Pittsburgh SciTech alum, Asiya Perez is a community enthusiast. She participated in the Feminist Student Union, Interact Club, Boys and Girls Club, robotics, and volunteered as a firefighter. Asiya is now a Nursing student at Robert Morris University.



Brooklyn Wrzesinski

At Pittsburgh Carrick, Brooklyn enjoyed playing basketball and getting good grades. Brooklyn is a Nursing major at CCAC with a desire for giving back. Her journey began when her mother was diagnosed with cancer, inspiring Brooklyn to pursue a path in healthcare.



Thomas Zielmanski

Thomas attended Taylor Allderdice High School where he played baseball and was a proud member of the National Honor Society. His unwavering dedication to his family and personal growth is evident in his strong work ethic and consistent academic performance, reflecting his commitment to excellence in all endeavors. Thomas attends Penn State University.

2022



José Andres Aiello

Andres has a passion for business and aspires to own stores selling his own fashion designs. During high school, he volunteered as a basketball coach for the Jewish Community center and Friendship Circle Pittsburgh. Andres is a graduate of Pittsburgh Allderdice pursuing a business degree from Clarion University.



Fatemeh Al-Nagash

Fatemeh was an active student at Pittsburgh Brashear. She enjoyed dedicating time to the STEAM program, Big Brothers Big Sisters, and Breakthrough Pittsburgh. Her passions include art and the emotions it provokes in people. Fatemeh is attending the University of Pittsburgh where she studies biology.



Holden Eagle

During his time at Pittsburgh Allderdice, Holden became impassioned about sports. He was involved in basketball, track and field, and cross country. Holden is studying data science at Duquesne University, where he will continue to compete in sports. He aspires to have a career that aligns with his passions.



Morgan Snyder

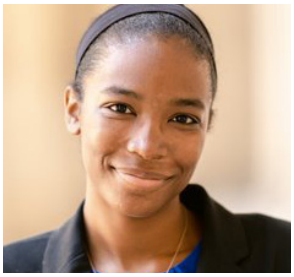
At Pittsburgh CAPA, Morgan was involved in the Superintendent's Student Advisory Council and serving as a Student Representative to Pittsburgh's District 7 in the Pittsburgh Youth Participatory Budget Council. Feeding her passion for access to equitable healthcare, she is pursuing a nursing degree at Indiana University of Pennsylvania.



Chloe Wellons

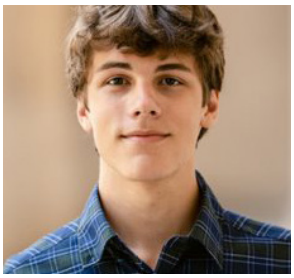
Chloe aspires to impact the lives of children in foster care, an issue that is very close to her heart. During her time at Pittsburgh Brashear, she participated in the Black Student Union, Tobacco Free Allegheny, and Dietary for Allegheny Heath Network. In line with her passions, Chloe is attending the University of Pittsburgh pursuing a degree in social work.

2021



Azriah Crawley

While attending Pittsburgh CAPA, Azriah worked a job and participated in several extracurriculars including the Frisbee Team, Black Student Union, and Mock Trial. Azriah currently attends the University of Pittsburgh with the career goal of becoming a lawyer.



Benjamin Gradek

Ben loves to give back by volunteering at a nursing home and Waverly Presbyterian Church. While attending Pittsburgh CAPA, he achieved High Honor Roll and was a member of the National Honor Society. Ben is studying computer science at the University of Pittsburgh.



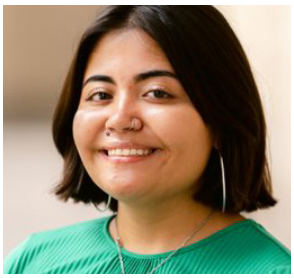
Jah'liyah Smith

While attending Pittsburgh Westinghouse, Jah'liyah was cheerleading captain, Class Council member, and Promise Ambassador. She has showcased her leadership by being a part of different organizations such as YouthPlplaces and Neighborhood Learning Alliance. Jah'liyah is studying graphic design and American Sign Language at Temple University.



Lauren Smith

Lauren won many scholarships and awards for her outstanding academics and humanitarian work, including the SciTech Student of the Year and the Challenge Program Award for Community Service. Currently studying information systems at Carnegie Mellon University, she wants to impact the lives of others and push for a better world.



Madison Young

At Pittsburgh Brashear, Madison was a cheerleader, Co-Editor-in-Chief of the school newspaper, and was ranked top 20 in her graduating class. She studies journalism at Temple University and wants to be an investigative broadcast journalist. Madison is passionate about creating video content to inspire and entertain others.

2020



Julie Piasecki

In addition to being valedictorian at Pittsburgh Brashear, Julie participated in Drama Club, school musicals, International Thespian Society and was president of National Honor Society. Julie also worked as a Promise Student Ambassador. Julie is studying health care administration at Slippery Rock University.



Janine Kwizera

At Duquesne University Janine is studying biology with aspirations of becoming an OB/GYN. This profession will allow her to fulfill her goals of caring for others and making a positive impact on society. As a graduate of Pittsburgh Allderdice Janine received an award for perfect attendance.



Aaliyah Thomas

Aaliyah is pursuing a nursing degree at Chatham University. She plans to work as a travel nurse before training to be a nurse anesthetist. As a Global Leadership Council Member at Pittsburgh CAPA she earned a scholarship to participate in an immersion program in Japan.



Sachin Thiagarajan

Driven by a passion for learning and a desire to become a physician, Sachin is a pre-med major at University of Pittsburgh. He hopes to work with Doctors Without Borders and serve as a trauma surgeon in the U.S. military.



Eli Anish

Eli is a dedicated runner having won many competitions and awards including back-to-back District Individual Cross Country Championships. Building upon his athletic success at Pittsburgh Allderdice, Eli runs competitively for University of Pittsburgh where he is studying health sciences.

2019



Zachary Beckman

At Pittsburgh Obama, Zachary was valedictorian, class treasurer, and captain of the baseball team. His near perfect attendance record proves he is motivated by learning and being active in his school and community. Zachary is pursuing a pre-med track at The University of Pittsburgh and plans to become a doctor to make a real difference in the world.



Jaclyn Acrie

Jaclyn is passionate about reforming the criminal justice system. She is a legal studies major at Point Park University and hopes to become a civil rights or criminal defense attorney. She enjoys figure skating and playing softball. Jaclyn is proud that her hard work at Pittsburgh Allderdice has paid off and attending college has become a reality.



Nyjah Burr

During her time at Pittsburgh University Prep, Nyjah received many awards, including the Leader for Change Student Envoy award and The Challenge Program Huntington Bank Award for academic achievement in STEM. Her internship at West Penn Hospital led her to study nursing at CCAC. On a recent service trip to Jamaica, Nyjah learned that a small group of people can make a huge difference.



Thomas Saba

Thomas is studying at The University of Pittsburgh to become a physical therapist with hopes of working for a professional sports team. He attended Pittsburgh Allderdice, where he was a member of the Dragon Fit Club, volleyball team, and ski club. Beyond his love of sports, Thomas participated in the Carnegie Mellon University Music Preparatory School.



Taylor Blake

Taylor stayed active at Pittsburgh Carrick by participating in National Honor Society, student council, tennis, soccer, softball, cheerleading, and tutoring younger students, all while maintaining a part-time job and working as a Pittsburgh Promise Ambassador. Taylor is attending The University of Pittsburgh to study chemistry.

2018



Emma Ewing

At Temple University, Emma is pursuing her passion for both the performing arts and science by studying dance alongside the pre-med track. She graduated from Pittsburgh CAPA with a Gene Kelly Award, among other awards for dancing. Emma worked as a YMCA Camp Kon-O-Kwee Counselor and volunteered at Sacred Heart Parish.



Noor Nader

Studying microbiology and pre-medicine at the University of Pittsburgh will allow Noor to achieve her goal of becoming a neurologist. She is passionate about science and interested in how scientific ideas impact humanity. Community service taught Noor about teamwork and helped in the development of leadership skills.



Austin Taylor

Austin is studying biology at the University of Pittsburgh. He aspires to become a cardiologist. In addition to being a Pittsburgh Promise Ambassador, Austin was also a member of National Honor Society and the track team. He won both the Gerwig Unselfish Service Award and the Carl H. Christ, Jr. Senior Engineering Award.



Alexandra Borelli

Alexandra wants to help those suffering from Alzheimer's disease. She is in the physician assistant program at Gannon University and hopes to someday help find a cure for the disease. She was President of the National Honor Society, Class Council Vice-President, and valedictorian of her class at Pittsburgh SciTech.



Zha'Rae Lowery

Zha'Rae graduated from Pittsburgh Allderdice. She's in the medical program at CCAC and she aspires to help people by becoming a doctor. She is the first person in her family to attend college and she's proud that she is pursuing her education while also raising a child. While pursuing her degree she also works at Taco Bell.

2017



Sarah Ossman

Sarah graduated from Pittsburgh Carrick, where she was captain of the basketball and softball teams. She is an information technology major at Pittsburgh Technical College. Sarah received various academic scholarships in addition to her Promise award.



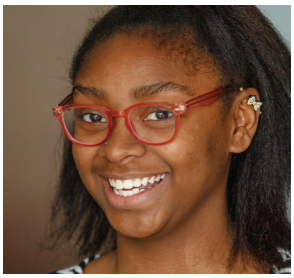
Vergel Prima

Vergel is studying homeland security at CCAC. Passionate about community service, Vergel believes a great deal can be achieved by working together. Vergel is a graduate of Pittsburgh Brashear.



Rebecca Boles

Rebecca is a biology major at La Roche College. A Pittsburgh Brashear graduate, Rebecca loves science and innovative technology. She would like to become a pathologist and travel around the world helping others who don't have access to proper healthcare.



Syerra Hopkins

Syerra is a criminal justice major at Cheyney University. She plans to become a lawyer one day. A graduate of Pittsburgh Brashear, Syerra is proud to be the first in her family to attend college.



Brandon Dean

Brandon believes that education opens the pathway to a life of opportunities. He attends Robert Morris University to study business administration. A graduate of Pittsburgh Brashear, he enjoys playing sports and working on cars.

2016



Mathew Johnson

Mathew is an accounting major at Duquesne University. He aspires to become a Certified Public Accountant after he graduates, and to someday establish his own accounting firm. Mathew is an avid lover of music. He graduated from Pittsburgh Carrick where he was very active in athletics and played five sports.



Greta Gasswint

Greta is a dancer as well as an engineering major at Penn State University. Devoted to science and the arts, she sees herself as a community leader, a role model, and an innovator. Greta is a graduate of Pittsburgh CAPA, where she wrote for the school paper, participated in school musicals, and was valedictorian of her class.



Jordan Anderson

Jordan graduated from Pittsburgh Obama and now studies public health at Temple University. She hopes to open her own orthodontist practice one day. In high school, Jordan helped to establish a garden in conjunction with her school's Food Revolution Club and volunteered with a local food pantry.



Joy Padolf

Joy is studying international relations at Duquesne University where she hopes to learn more about the way the U.S. interacts with other countries in order to break barriers across borders. A Pittsburgh Allderdice graduate, Joy enjoys art and music and recently submitted her own film to the Make a Change Film Festival.



Dylan D'Alessio

Dylan D'Alessio attends Carlow University, where he received an academic scholarship. A business management major, he's focused on developing the skills to someday start his own business. While attending Pittsburgh Brashear, Dylan was on the basketball team and also volunteered as an assistant coach for a children's league.

2015



Raj Pohrel

A computer engineering major at Penn State University, Raj did not have a computer growing up in Nepal. As the first in his family to attend college he hopes to become a computer engineer. Raj volunteered at a program called Computer Reach, restoring computers for students overseas. He is a graduate of Pittsburgh Brashear.



Samantha Oliver

Samantha is attending Penn State University to study business. She has been playing soccer since she was seven years old, which led her to become a volunteer soccer coach and referee. Samantha is a graduate of Pittsburgh Carrick and a Lawrence and Elizabeth Held Scholarship recipient.



Sarah Conte

Sarah attends the University of Pittsburgh to pursue nursing and is a graduate of Pittsburgh CAPA. Sarah plays the clarinet, oboe, and piano, and has played at the Byham Theatre. In addition, Sarah volunteers her time at the Western Pennsylvania Humane Society.



Angelica Advent

Angelica attends the Community College of Allegheny County and hopes to become an ultrasound technician. She is passionate about helping others and created a club at Pittsburgh Allderdice that makes jewelry for women diagnosed with cancer. Angelica also cares for her sister with special needs.



Ra'naa Billingsley

Ra'naa is a nursing major at Duquesne University and a graduate of Pittsburgh CAPA. She hopes to become a nurse and eventually open her own spa. Ra'naa was a member of her school's Black Student Union and Women's Student Union. In addition to her Promise Scholarship, Ra'naa received two academic scholarships from Duquesne University.

2014



Alexis Mighty

Alexis is a pre-medicine major at University of Pittsburgh–Greensburg. She enjoys helping animals and hopes to one day own a veterinary clinic. A graduate of Pittsburgh SciTech Academy, she served as a Pittsburgh Promise Ambassador working to promote college readiness in her school.



Aysar Gharaibeh

Aysar accomplished a personal triumph when he was accepted to his first choice among colleges, Carnegie Mellon University. Aysar studies business and hopes to one day receive his MBA. He is passionate about traveling and meeting new people. Aysar is a graduate of Pittsburgh Allderdice.



Brianna Blotzer

Brianna studies radiology at La Roche College. She hopes to one day earn her MD and become a radiologist. Brianna takes pride in her perfect attendance record during her high school career at Pittsburgh Brashear. She also plays the violin and has been in orchestra since the sixth grade.



Courtney Killmeyer

A Pittsburgh Brashear graduate, Courtney is pursuing a degree in nursing at Indiana University of Pennsylvania. Courtney has been dancing for fourteen years and teaching dance for three years. Apart from her Promise Scholarship, Courtney was proud to receive the Sutton Scholarship and the EWEAA Scholarship.



Joshua Patton

Joshua is a graduate of Pittsburgh Brashear and attends Allegheny College. He is interested in political science and spanish and hopes to eventually attend law school. Joshua enjoys literature and traveling. One of his favorite memories is traveling to Peru as a World Affairs Scholar with the World Affairs Council of Pittsburgh.

2013



Jacob Himes

Jacob is studying chemistry and Japanese at Temple University. At Pittsburgh Allderdice, Jacob was as a member of the Congressional Youth Leadership Council, National Honors Society, and United States Leadership Academy. He also received Temple University's Dean's Scholars Scholarship.



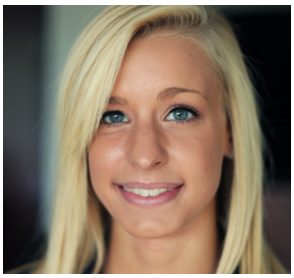
Caitlin Miller

Caitlin attends Point Park University and is pursuing degrees in communications and public relations. A graduate of Pittsburgh CAPA, Caitlin is passionate about community service. She teaches children at her local dance studio and was a National Honors Society peer tutor.



Qawiyah Muhammad

A graduate of Pittsburgh Allderdice, Qawiyah attends Chatham University and is pursuing a degree in nursing. Qawiyah is interested in helping others and she gives back by volunteering at the Jubilee Kitchen. In addition to her Promise award, she received a Ben Carson Scholarship.



Katie Spinneweber

A graduate of Pittsburgh Brashear, Katie is studying in the competitive five-year Physician Assistant Program at Seton Hill University. In addition to her Promise Scholarship, Katie was awarded an academic scholarship with Seton Hill.



Emily Van Horn

Emily studies computer science at Slippery Rock University. Graduating valedictorian from Pittsburgh Perry, Emily was involved with the drum team. In addition to her Promise award, Emily received the Northside Leadership Conference Scholarship and Slippery Rock University's Merit Scholarship.

2012



Juliana Collins

A graduate of Pittsburgh CAPA, Juliana attends Temple University and studies psychology. She hopes to help those who are struggling with mental illness. Juliana is also the proud recipient of multiple awards for her writing.



Maria Whaby

Valedictorian of her graduating class at Career Connections Charter High School, Maria attends the Community College of Allegheny County and studies nursing. Maria is also proud to be a member of the National Honors Society.



Cory Hanlon

A graduate of Pittsburgh CAPA, Cory attends Carlow University and studies nursing. Cory was an active hospital volunteer and hopes to pursue emergency room medicine. Cory was also awarded the Pittsburgh Penguins' 2012 Inner City Scholarship and Academic Scholarship at Carlow University.



Sharese Dunmore

A graduate of Perry High School, Sharese is a student at Chatham University majoring in nursing. Sharese is proud of her volunteer participation to clean her neighborhood and collect items for those in need. She hopes to work one day as a pediatric nurse.



Amanda Dugan

A graduate of Pittsburgh Langley with a 3.96 GPA, Amanda attends La Roche College and studies psychology. She is proud of her work as a volunteer at the Highmark Caring Place. In addition to The Promise Scholarship, Amanda was awarded the Langley Alumni Scholarship and La Roche Merit scholarship.