

### *Guilford ABC Scholars: Welcome, New Freshmen!*

Guilford ABC is a busy place this year with two seniors, two sophomores and two freshmen. Arriving in late August, the scholars were welcomed by Resident Director Lisa Brady, Resident Tutor, Kishundra King, and ABC Board members.

Senior **Cleo Adebisi** returned from a summer of travel and study. Beginning with a trip to Nigeria, Cleo met many family members for the first time. Volunteering at a local pre-school, she appreciated the benefits of her parents' emigration to the US. Returning home, Cleo participated in a two-week creative writing program at Syracuse University. Being a senior "feels great (!)" and Cleo looks forward to studying communications and international relations in college, and to helping promote human rights.

Senior **Kymar Stewart** attended the Accounting Leadership Institute at Bryant University over the summer which expanded her interest in international accounting. She also enjoyed quality vacation time bonding with family and getting to know her new brother. This fall, Kymar is taking a full course load, including AP Economics, Investing and Money Management, and Accounting 2. Kymar describes being a senior as bittersweet—a mix of happiness "of making it this far" and knowing that she will be leaving soon and "will miss everyone that I have met because of this program." Sophomore **Rebekah Calderon** spent her summer volunteering at her mother's pre-school, helping out with special-needs children. This experience helped her "walk away with more of an open mind," recognizing that peoples' brains work in different ways—and that a child who might seem weird at first may actually be struggling. Returning to ABC, Rebekah felt she knew the ropes and could ease smoothly into the new year. She is interested in several career possibilities, including musician, physician's assistant, and occupational therapist.



*L to R: ABC Scholars Dorcas Saka, Rebekah Calderon, Jada Allison, Katrina Green, Kymar Stewart, and Cleo Adebisi*

Sophomore **Katrina Green** has also enjoyed a smooth second year transition. Coursewise, she especially likes chemistry and art, looking forward to those days when she has both. Katrina spent a portion of her summer visiting family in Florida. Getting to know extended family was great and she was especially happy to meet her baby cousin whom she'd only seen in photos. Katrina loves kids and is exploring medical careers that would let her work with young infants.

While working at Hole in the Wall recently, she was thrilled to meet a customer who had been an ICU nurse, working in a neonatal unit!

Guilford ABC is pleased to welcome two outstanding freshmen this year.

Freshman **Jada Allison** learned about ABC from her sisters, both of whom are ABC graduates, from Wilton and Syracuse. Growing up in Brooklyn, NY, Jada admits that coming to Guilford has been a bit of a culture shock, with Guilford a much smaller town. Adjusting to life in the ABC House has been both fun and challenging, given the compromises necessary to live with five housemates. A highlight of this fall has been spending time with her host family, cooking together, picking berries, and going out to eat. Jada's interests are many, including math, Spanish, dancing, and TV production.

Freshman **Dorcas Saka** also comes from New York City and first learned about ABC in 7th grade from a high school counselor who spoke at the KIPP charter school she attended. Dorcas was surprised by the size of Guilford High School; with over 1,000 students, it's the largest school she has attended. Negotiating the crowded halls makes it a challenge just to get to classes on time. Dorcas very much enjoys her host family and activities which have included movies and a trip to a water park.

We look forward to a great year with each of the Scholars!

## ABC Alumna Lori Pleasure Remembers her Four Years in Guilford with Fondness

While in town to celebrate Guilford ABC's 40th Anniversary reunion and benefit concert, alumna and long-time ABC supporter Lori Pleasure took a few minutes to share fond memories of her time as a Guilford ABC Scholar with Board member Charlene Blake.



*Guilford ABC Alumna Lori*

Lori recalled arriving in Guilford as a freshman, bringing a drive to excel academically and succeed in the ABC program. The program provided the tools and support to ensure her success. Members of her support team included Guilford ABC founder Joe Arnold, her host family the Goldsmiths, her academic advisor Hope Whitehead, and board members. In addition to practical support, these mentors offered her new experiences such as sailing on LI Sound and visits to the Metropolitan Museum of Art.

The program also presented challenges — living away from family, sharing a house with teens from other inner city communities, and acclimating to Guilford's suburban culture. The ABC House resident director and resident tutor helped the scholars create a "home away from home."

From a young age, Lori wanted to help others. Through ABC, "I witnessed firsthand the power of kindness and the determination of the founding GABC board members as they created and shaped the program that gave me 'A Better Chance' in life. The education I received helped pre-

pare me both for college and my professional career. It also influenced my desire to make a difference in my community, in my work and in the world."

Lori currently serves as Legal Liaison for Emory University's Office of Quality and Risk. In addition, she and husband, Guilford native Morris Pleasure, co-founded a multi-media corporation WaterSign Media, which specializes in music production and "seizing opportunities for independent artists." WaterSign sponsored this fall's ABC 40th Anniversary concert in collaboration with the Guilford High School Jazz Ensemble. The couple recently established We Are One Voice, a non-profit organization committed to assisting youth-driven causes through music and music education.

Asked for advice she would offer today's ABC scholars, Lori responded, "I would tell [them] to embrace their experiences while participating in the program. The friendship and support they provide to each other



*Lori and Morris Pleasure*

will help them make it through the program and provide the foundation for lifelong sisterhood as Guilford ABC Alumnae. All GABC scholars share the drive to succeed and do well. The bonds we formed, based on our shared drive to succeed, included pursuing academic excellence, and college and career aspirations, while living and learning in the Guilford community."

**Guilford ABC Program**  
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**[www.guilfordabc.com](http://www.guilfordabc.com)**

*Photos courtesy of  
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## Scenes from Guilford ABC's 40th Anniversary Celebration

Twenty-one Guilford ABC alumnae arrived in town on October 24th and 25th — many for the first time since they graduated from Guilford High School — to help celebrate GABC's 40th anniversary.

Celebratory activities began with a Friday night gathering of longtime supporters, host families, board members, current scholars, and alumnae. The event allowed ABC to thank many of those who have supported the program over the past 40 years. In a remarkable gesture, alumnae Lori Pleasure and Cindy Banks reached out to more than 60 fellow alumni and presented the ABC board with a generous contribution designated for enrichment activities for GABC scholars.



*Guilford ABC Scholars and Alumnae*

On Saturday, the alumnae toured their old high school and viewed the new GHS currently under construction, enjoyed lunch with the current scholars at the ABC House, and visited the Hole in the Wall consignment shop.

The highlight of the weekend was a sold-out benefit concert at GHS featuring



*ABC President Barbara Pine with Lori Pleasure, Cheryl Harvey McPherson and Scholars*

Guilford's own Morris Pleasure, a multi-faceted songwriter and performer who has performed with a wide range of musicians including Ray Charles, Natalie Cole, Janet Jackson, and Roberta Flack.

The GHS Jazz Ensemble opened the concert with a fine performance led by director Thomas Boates, featuring solos by several Jazz Ensemble members and joined by Morris Pleasure.



*Morris Pleasure with mentor Carol Wright*

Following opening remarks by ABC Board President Barbara Pine and Keith Bishop of Bishop's Orchards, a major sponsor of the evening, Morris Pleasure was introduced by one of his earliest teachers and mentors, Guilford piano instructor and author Carol Wright. "Mo" Pleasure took the stage with his combo and performed a few numbers before presenting the audience with a rare treat, a performance with his long-time colleague Roberta Flack. The thrilled audience responded to Ms. Flack's set with a standing ovation.



*Roberta Flack meets with scholars backstage*  
(photo by Kelley Fryer, The Courier)

The weekend wrapped up with a Sunday morning networking brunch for alumnae hosted by board member Winnie Seibert. Guilford ABC is grateful to the many sponsors, volunteers and organizations that made this celebration a memorable and resounding success.

## Hole in the Wall Supports Guilford ABC



*Hole in the Wall staff enjoying ABC's 40th*

Hole in the Wall, Guilford's oldest and only not-for-profit resale and consignment shop operates solely for the benefit of Guilford's ABC program.

For its many regular and loyal customers, Hole in the Wall is recognized for offering amazing values and legendary service in a warm and welcoming environment. The shop accepts both donations and consignment merchandise including quality in-season clothing, housewares, jewelry, shoes, books and seasonal goods. The shop's professional

staff is supported by a cadre of loyal volunteers, many of whom have worked at Hole in the Wall for more than a decade. ABC Scholars help out in the store on weekends during the school year.

Hole in the Wall is located at 35 Boston Street, across from the Guilford Savings Bank. It is open seven days a week: Monday-Friday 10-5; Saturday 10-4; and Sunday 12-4. Donations are accepted daily; for a consignment appointment, call the shop at 203-453-2088.

[www.guilfordabc.com/hole-in-the-wall/](http://www.guilfordabc.com/hole-in-the-wall/)



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## ***Guilford A Better Chance***

*Guilford's ABC program, now celebrating its 40 anniversary, is dedicated to helping to close the opportunity gap for talented minority students. ABC Guilford prepares its scholars to succeed academically and to take a leadership role in all their future endeavors.*

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