

MEMPHIS CHALLENGE



2020

YEAR IN REVIEW

**PAUSE
PIVOT
PERSEVERE**

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Esmond Arrindell and Cassandra Webster

Dear Memphis Challenge Family, Friends and Supporters:

Mankind marks time with clocks that tick off seconds, minutes, hours, and days—our calendars count these days into weeks, months, and years. Yet the God we serve marks time in millennia, increments of thousands and thousands of our years. The vastness of time underscores the unlimited capacity from which all goodness flows—and the limits of our ability to take in all that exists in the universe as we race against time.

Then along comes a limiting experience that slows our clocks, making each day a slow-motion passage through time. Maya Angelou said, "At some point, the thinker must think," and this COVID-19 induced slow-down is just such a moment. The lockdown occasioned by this global pandemic has caused a collective pause – giving us the time we all need to stop, re-examine and determine how we shall emerge into the post-pandemic world to come.

Chief among our musings is this key question: "How can the Memphis Challenge remain relevant to the community we serve?"

Because we are resilient, we go forward in faith. We began by asking questions and listening to what you, our MC family, had to say. We held focus groups and identified our weak links in order to made them stronger. Then to properly pivot into the future, we followed the data and accepted that change was inevitable, and the direction was clear.

Practicing what we preach to students, we acknowledged to one and all that nothing would be quite the same. After all, growth can only happen when you accept the need to change and prepare to make change happen. And that is exactly what we did.

Perseverance is our fuel as we continue to look for new ways to bring your ideas to life:

- ◆ We turned lemons into lemonade and moved our workshops online.
- ◆ We allowed our community of students, collegiates, and alums to amplify their voices, providing them a safe space to exhale and to be vulnerable and transparent during these turbulent times.
- ◆ We participated in city-wide coalitions to contribute to Memphis and make sure the city saw our role and our worth

So, as we round the circle to close out this year and turn the calendar to 2021, we do so knowing that we have a committed community in the Memphis Challenge family. We do so knowing that we are a cherished resource for balancing and enriching the lives of the students, collegiates, alum, and parents in our circle. We do so knowing that the possibilities for successful service are also infinite. We do so knowing that our mission is to seek and listen to input, then to . . . Pause, Pivot and Persevere!

Onward through 2021!

Sincerely,

Cassandra Webster | Executive Director

Esmond Arrindell, MD | Board Chair

Pause. Pivot. Persevere. YEAR IN REVIEW

2020

JAN Midsouth Mission of Mercy Project

FEB Last Dance – In-Person workshop

PAUSE AND PIVOT

MAR Parent Webinar: Creating Calm Can Do Attitude in Chaotic Times

APR Parent Webinar: You're Stronger Than You Think

MAY Closing Celebration Senior Drive-By
Awarded Tech Solutions Scholarship

JUN SOLE MATH
Virtual Internships

PERSEVERE

JUL Parent Focus Groups

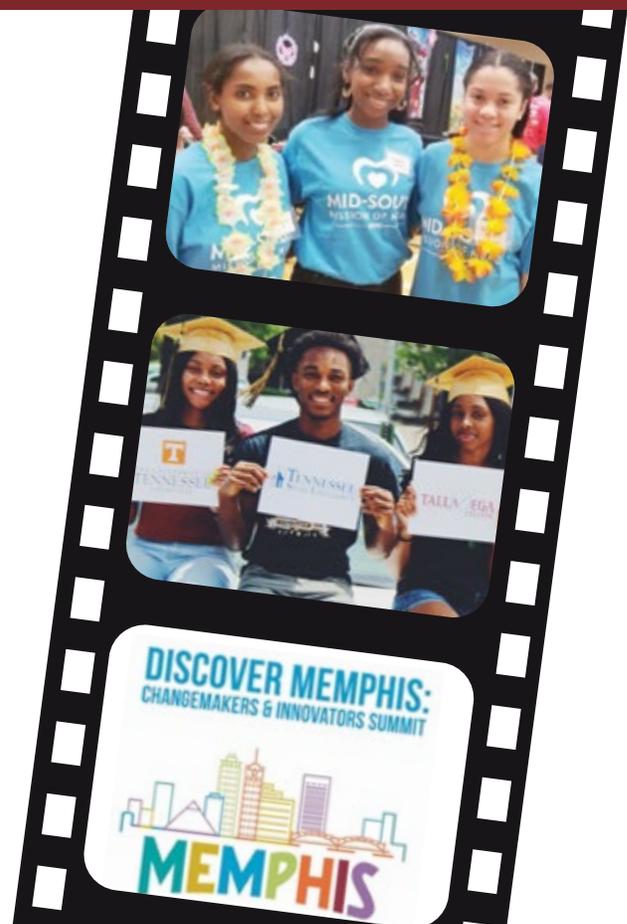
AUG Virtual MC Interviews

SEP Orientation

OCT Discover Memphis: ChangeMakers and Innovators Summit

NOV 1989 Society Launch

DEC Holiday Virtual Celebration



Meet the Challengers: 2020 Student Profiles

Senior Memphis Challenge



25

TOTAL STUDENTS

19 Females | 6 Males

22 African American

1 Asian American

1 Hispanic



27

AVERAGE ACT SCORE

8

WORKSHOPS

Senior Summit

Refining the College Essay

Being Financially Fit

Mastering the Interview

Majors, Minors & Concentrations

Surviving Senioritis

Real Talk: The Elephant in the Room

Managing Stress

4.0

AVERAGE GPA

Junior Memphis Challenge



33

TOTAL STUDENTS

27 Females | 6 Males

28 African American

2 Biracial

3 Hispanic

4.0

AVERAGE GPA



8

WORKSHOPS

Breaking through Procrastination

Managing Stress

How to Stay Curious

The Career of Your Future

Resume Writing and Portfolio Building

Networking

Making a College Choice

Public Speaking

9/10 Movement – 10th Grade

34

TOTAL STUDENTS

22 Females | 12 Males

31 African American

1 Asian American

2 Hispanic

3.9

 AVERAGE GPA

9/10 Movement – 9th Grade

19

TOTAL STUDENTS

11 Females | 8 Males

18 African American

1 Hispanic

3.8

 AVERAGE GPA

8

WORKSHOPS

The Importance of Time Management
 Study Skills for a Lifetime
 Managing Stress in High School
 Power of Positivity:
 How to Practice Optimistic Thinking

How to Be Financially Fit
 How to Master Public Speaking
 How to Reflect on the Past and Learn
 from Mistakes
 The Art of Internet Etiquette



“In society today, things are changing drastically, and I believe the Memphis Challenge will help me find my voice in my city.”

- Zoe Tripp, Middle College High School Class of 2021

39

 HIGH SCHOOLS REPRESENTED

Bartlett | Bluff City | Bolton | Briarcrest Christian | Central | Christian Brothers | City University School | Collegiate School of Memphis | Collierville | Cordova | Crosstown | East | Freedom Prep | Germantown | Harding Academy | Hollis F. Price | Houston | Immaculate Conception Cathedral School | Kingsbury | KIPP Collegiate School | Manassas | Melrose | Memphis Academy of Health Sciences | Memphis Catholic | Memphis Rise Academy | Memphis School of Excellence | Memphis University School | Middle College | Power Center Academy | The Soulsville Charter School | Southwest Early College | Southwind | St. Agnes Academy | St. Benedict at Auburndale | St. George’s Independent School | St. Mary’s Episcopal School | T-STEM Academy | White Station | Whitehaven

2020 Class of

AWARDED MORE THAN \$6 MILLION IN SCHOLARSHIPS



VICTORIA BARNES
Collierville High
Saint Louis University



HANNAH BLACKWELL
Memphis Central High
Louisiana State University



KIERAN BOWIEN
Memphis Central High
Southwest Tennessee
Community College



AISHA BUTLER
Memphis Academy of
Health Sciences
Howard University



TRINITY CHISM
White Station High
Ogelthorpe University



JOSHUA JAMES CLAYBON
White Station High
Washington University
in St. Louis



CHRISTIANA FLORES
St. Benedict at
Auburndale
The University of
Memphis



TYSAN GREEN
Immaculate Conception
Cathedral School
The University of
Memphis



KYLER HALL
Collegiate School of
Memphis
Rhodes College



DANIEL HARVEY
White Station High
Rhodes College



JADE JONES

Collierville High
University of Tennessee
Chattanooga



JOSHUA MACKIE

Lake Cormorant High
The University of
Southern Mississippi



MYLES MACKLIN

White Station High
University of Tennessee
Knoxville



ZAIRE MATTOX

Soulsville Charter School
Tennessee Tech



**LA'QUAYSHA
NEWBY**

Collegiate School of
Memphis
Tennessee State
University



JADA PARK

Soulsville Charter School
Howard University



**BRIWANA
PATTERSON**

Soulsville Charter School
Baptist College of
Health Sciences



LESLIE RENDON

Compass Midtown High
Savannah College of Art
and Design



**JASMINE
SAULSBERRY**

Whitehaven High
Talladega College



**JYMAE
SAULSBERRY**

Whitehaven High
University of Tennessee
Knoxville



JAELYN STOVALL

Collegiate School of
Memphis
The University of
Memphis



**TREVOR
WATTERS-
SAULSBERRY**

Whitehaven High
Tennessee State
University



AMIAH WILLIAMS

St. Mary's Episcopal
School
Emory University



**HEATHER
WILLIAMS**

City University School
The University of
Memphis



NICOLE WILSON

City University School
University of Tennessee
Martin



Over the past five years, Memphis Challenge students have used their hands, their voices, and their hearts to tell impactful stories that reflect their own communities. **Tell Me A Story** is an arts immersion project designed to amplify the voices of Memphis Challengers.

2016: Storybooks inspired to build character in children and teens.

2017: Movies portraying the anxieties and triumphs of Memphis youth.

2018: Zines highlighting student views on social justice while commemorating MLK50.

2019: Hand sculptures embellished with artistic representations of views on community, heritage, and the heights of their own goals.

Tell Me A Story: Facing the Change mirrored student life in 2020. James Baldwin said it best, “not everything that is faced can be changed. But nothing can be changed until it is faced.” Thirty-two Memphis Challenge students worked collaboratively with their peers to reimagine the project to reflect the real-life fears students experienced during the unprecedented COVID-19 pandemic. The students produced two virtual showcases and debuted them at the closing celebration in May. *Grind City High* and *The Light At The End of The Virus* were the culmination of 56 hours of creative efforts by Memphis Challenge students.



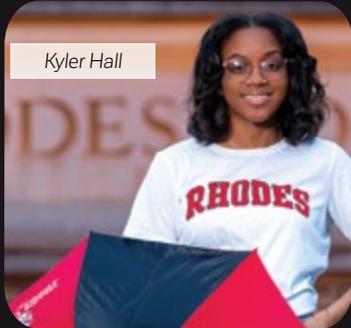
The Memphis Challenge Tech Solutions Award

The Memphis Challenge Tech Solutions Award is a \$2,400 scholarship provided to four Senior Challengers (\$600 each) to assist with the purchase of technology – computer, printer, software, etc. – to be used toward their college education. This award is sponsored by a Memphis Challenge alum who wishes to remain anonymous.



Thank you so much for the Tech Solutions Scholarship Award to help purchase technology for college. I am incredibly blessed to have had the opportunity to become a part of such a supportive family of individuals. Thank you for the many lessons and additional insight on how to lead a successful life.

- Joshua-James Claybon, MC Class of 2020, Washington University



The Memphis Challenge tech solutions scholarship removed a tremendous burden from myself and my family. Throughout high school, I was given a laptop to use for all of my assignments, and once I graduated I no longer had a laptop. Because of the tech solutions scholarship, I was able to purchase a brand new Apple Macbook Pro that I use daily, especially to attend my online classes. While completing my first year of college remotely during the pandemic, this laptop has helped me to stay in contact with my teachers, peers and advisors. I am forever grateful to Memphis Challenge and donors for awarding me with this scholarship and sowing a seed that will be used for years to come. Without this scholarship, I would be missing an essential component to my college experience.

- Kyler Hall, MC Class of 2020, Rhodes College



“As a pre-medical student studying the Spanish language and biology, the availability to technology is incredibly important in order to complete the majority of my educational requirements. This scholarship has afforded me the opportunity to purchase a printer as well as additional accessories. Not only has Memphis Challenge given me the tools to be a successful leader, diligent student, and involved citizen, it has also provided relief to a burden that many students are facing due to COVID-19. Due to the immense amount of support from the Memphis Challenge’s students, alumni, program leaders and directors, I am certain that I will continue to flourish alongside other Challengers who participate with the program. I look forward to utilizing their guidance and having their encouragement in my future endeavors.

- Victoria Barnes, MC Class of 2020, Saint Louis University



I am so thankful to share that I used my Tech Solutions Award to get a new laptop. My old laptop worked very slow on a graphing software I need for calculus. I was able to trade my old laptop for a new Macbook Pro. I still use the software this semester, so I am happy to have a working computer to graph in my Calculus I class. It is so nice to have a reliable computer available, as over half of my classes this semester are online.

- Amiah Williams, MC Class of 2020, Emory University

MC Student Ambassadors



Kenneth Burnett
Senior, Bartlett



Lauryn Clark
Senior, St. George's



Nina Collymore
Senior, Middle College



Xochitl Figueroa
Senior, Power Center
Academy



Paris Hall
Senior, Immaculate
Conception



Mikayla Higgins
Senior, Whitehaven



Kalisa Lee
Senior, Collegiate
School of Memphis



Kamran Lewis
Senior, Memphis
School of Excellence



Cortney Sheppard
Senior,
Harding Academy



Kirsten Thomas
Senior, St. George's



Blanca Willis
Senior, White Station



Yasmine Wooten
Senior, Power Center
Academy



Alexius Brunson
Junior, Central



DeAndre Deener
Junior, St. George's



Terrell Embry
Junior, Crosstown



Jordan Greene
Junior, Briarcrest



Jacob Milan
Junior, East



Makhia Smith
Junior, Central



Zoe Tripp
Junior,
Middle College



Jonathan Akangbe
Sophomore,
White Station



Mayyadah Alzaben
Sophomore,
St. George's



Alonzo Daniels
Sophomore, Central



Jacob Mackie
Sophomore,
Lake Cormorant



Daisy Rodriguez
Sophomore,
City University



Dai'ja Taylor
Sophomore,
Southwind



JOIN THE 1989 SOCIETY

Help us reimagine Memphis Challenge as we expand our programming and enhance our impact.

In 1989, Memphis Challenge was founded by J.R. Pitt Hyde to inspire and develop future Memphis leaders. That same year, Anita Baker’s hit, “Giving You the Best That I’ve Got,” was the #1 single. We’re proud to proclaim that, since its inception, Memphis Challenge has continued to GIVE YOU THE BEST THAT IT’S GOT!

The result is – today, there are more than 3,000 brilliant and bold Memphis Challenge alumni making their mark on Memphis and beyond. They attest to the value and relevance of MC programming.

In this virtual world of social isolation, Challengers need reassurance and guidance more than ever. We must innovate to fill the gaps, so that no one falls through. To help tailor, develop and present programming for these uniquely challenging times, we have created the 1989 Society Giving Circle. This initiative takes its inspiration from our founding year as reassurance that we are up to the task that lies ahead.

The goals for the Giving Circle are to:

- ♥ Increase Tech Solutions Scholarship Awards by 40 percent
- ♥ Host 10 webinars for collegiates
- ♥ Provide 250 self-care packages to Challengers and collegiates
- ♥ Provide mental health and stress management resources to Challengers and their families

Donors receive:

- ♥ Name included on the virtual wall, 1989 swag and/or video spotlight



To date, the 1989 Giving Society has raised \$15,000 to help us reach our goals. If you would like to join the 55 alumni and friends who have contributed, visit www.memphischallenge.org to learn more and make your pledge.

ALUMNI ENGAGEMENT STRATEGY

- ◆ Initial Focus Groups
- ◆ Alumni Council
- ◆ Create programs targeted toward alumni
- ◆ Communications/execute a fundraising strategy

“Man, Memphis Challenge raised me. Taught me professionalism, introduced me to NSBE, and gave me friends who I connect with to this day!”
– C. Barksdale, MC Class of 2010

“Memphis Challenge played an important role in my growth and development as a young woman. I am proud to be a member of the 1989 Society and give back.”
–R. Martin, MC Class of 2009

“MC gave me incredible opportunities and training for social and professional growth. Memphis Challenge will always be near and dear to me.”
– M. Tate, MC Class 2002

COVID-19: A COLLEGE STUDENT'S PERSPECTIVE

In the fall of 2019, I was excited to begin my college experience at Xavier University in Louisiana, yet nervous at my course load and the challenges I would face. As challenging as my fall semester was, my spring semester was much more difficult. Immediately following our Mardi Gras break, we were informed that, due to COVID-19, we would all have to return home and finish the semester online. I was utterly disappointed. No one imagines their first year of college being interrupted by a global pandemic, yet I was left with a week to pack up my dorm room and say goodbye to my friends. I was stressed and frantic that week, but, once I was home, the adjustment was less overwhelming. I knew Xavier was taking precautions for its students, as every university should.

During the stressful time of quarantining, I found it hard to occupy my time inside. In order to stay sane, I made sure I spent some time outside, whether it was taking a walk or playing with my brother. That ensured that I got some sunlight. I also made sure I didn't spend all day in my room. I got up and walked around just for a change of scenery. I also started a job with Bridge Builders, and waking up at the same time everyday gave me some structure back to my life.

To my fellow collegiates, I encourage you to stay focused on your goals, short term and long term. Remember what you're working towards and stay motivated. This pandemic will pass, and we'll still be on track to achieve those goals. I was excited to return to school because, while I loved being home with my family, I experienced a sense of freedom at college, and I was excited to get back to it and my friends.



– Angela Carter, MC Class 2019

FUNDERS

Programming made possible by the support of our partners who we thank for their commitment to inspiring and developing future Memphis leaders.

- ◆ Anonymous Donor
- ◆ Arts Memphis
- ◆ AutoZone
- ◆ Baptist Memorial Health Care Foundation
- ◆ Memphis Challenge Board of Directors
- ◆ Delta Dental Foundation
- ◆ Delta Boulé
- ◆ FedEx
- ◆ Friends, parents of Memphis Challenge
- ◆ Hyde Family Foundations
- ◆ Jack & Jill of America, Inc. Memphis Chapter
- ◆ First Horizon Foundation
- ◆ 1989 Society
- ◆ Shelby County Government
- ◆ University of Memphis TRIO-Upward Bound
- ◆ Women's Foundation for Greater Memphis

MEMPHIS CHALLENGE

Inspiring and developing future Memphis leaders.

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