

# OLIVER SCHOLARS

## OLIVERFEST UNLOCKED



### SCHOLARS JAM

OCTOBER 2ND - 7:30PM  
INSTAGRAM LIVE

\*\* GUEST DJ'S INCLUDE OLIVER SCHOLARS ALUMNI DJ CLAY NICE '92 AND DJ KISS '96 \*\*



### SATURDAY SYMPOSIUM

"THE RETURN OF BLACK BOY JOY"  
OCTOBER 3RD - 1PM

DON LEMON #OLIVERFEST DR. KHALIL GIBRAN MUHAMMAD



### SATURDAY SYMPOSIUM

"BLACK, BROWN & GIFTED"  
OCTOBER 3RD - 2:30PM



SHANIQUE YOUNG, DURET '19 AT DUKE UNIVERSITY, PANELIST  
DR. STEPHEN L. GEDDIS, EDUCATION CONSULTANT, PANELIST  
DR. DONNA Y. FORD, OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY, PANELIST  
MICHAEL I. METZLER, CEO, PANELIST  
DR. DANIELLE R. MOSS, CEO OLIVER SCHOLARS, MODERATOR



### SATURDAY SYMPOSIUM

"ROAD TO INCLUSION"  
(Access, Opportunity, and Partnership)  
OCTOBER 3RD - 3:30PM

SHANIQUE GARCIA '19, HELLINE RAMIREZ-GUERRA '17, MIKAEL YISRAEL '16, JOSHUA REAVES '18, PANELISTS  
OLIVER SCHOLARS, MODERATOR

Join Oliver Scholars for our **7th Annual Gala** celebrating 36 years of academic excellence, scholarship, leadership, and service.

Due to the extraordinary circumstances of this year, we have reimagined and transformed our traditional event into:

### Oliver Fest 2020 - A Virtual Gala!

This special weekend fundraiser will help ensure that Oliver has the resources needed to continue serving our bright and talented young Scholars.

The two-day event will be held on October 2nd and 3rd and will kick off on Friday night with a community-building virtual celebration with celebrity DJs, followed by the Saturday afternoon Opportunities Unlocked Symposium featuring esteemed thought leaders and alumni in panel conversations, and concluding with the grand finale --Gala(-ish) -- not quite a traditional Gala, but plenty of fun!

You can sign on as a [Sponsor](#) or simply purchase an [All Access Pass](#). Just because we are socially distanced doesn't mean we can't celebrate together!

Keep reading for more details and information!

## Dear Oliver Scholars Family,

This past January marked my first anniversary as CEO of Oliver Scholars. As I began my second year of leadership at this amazing organization, I did so with my hands, heart, and mind open to all the possibilities and promise that Oliver Scholars holds. As March began, and the rumblings about a pandemic became louder, the senior leadership team and I began planning for what we all assumed would be a six-week shut down - requiring just minor tweaks and shifts in how the organization functions.

Then, like most of you, as the days became weeks and the weeks became months, we realized that 2020 was not going to be an ordinary year. And so the board and staff leadership reluctantly made the tough call to take our annual spring gala online, and to push it back to October.

Somewhere between sheer panic and exuberant enthusiasm, we began to imagine what an online experience could look like. And then we began to reach out to a number of friends to join our Benefit Committee and help us take our ideas live. I have discovered a couple of things along the way. First, there really is no substitute for being in-person and in community with the people we care about. Second, technology can provide transformative experiences that are accessible to a wider audience if you use it the right way.

So, I'm thrilled that Henry and Alexia Fernandez have hitched their commitment to equality and philanthropy to the Oliver Scholars star. I'm excited about the upcoming "Black, Brown and Gifted" conversation with some of the nation's leading experts in the field of gifted education, like Dr. Michael Nettles of ETS and Dr. Donna Y. Ford of Ohio State University. I am overjoyed that Oliver Trustees, renowned Black Studies Scholar and Author Dr. Khalil Gibran Muhammad and CNN Anchor and Journalist Don Lemon, will grace us with a meaningful conversation about "Black Boy Joy" in these times of uncertainty. And, I can't wait to hear our alumni experts and current scholars tackle issues related to grounding and situating Black and Brown students at independent schools so that they can thrive.

I am pretty certain that if we were having a traditional gala, and were dressed in our finest regalia, we would have had a wonderful evening. But, I'm also sure that we would not have been able to offer such robust and diverse conversations. If you know how important and relevant Oliver Scholars' mission is in this moment, then Oliver Fest is the perfect event to deepen your commitment to our work. I don't want you to simply support the event this year. Our scholars need you to spread the word and encourage the folks in your circle who believe that every student deserves the kind of support and nurturing that are unique to the Oliver Scholars experience, to join our movement. Everybody can't do everything, but everybody can do something!





# Want To Get Involved?



Gather support for and spread the word about our signature fundraising event:

- **Become A Sponsor:** Similar to the traditional table model, you can purchase a preset Sponsorship package outright and invite your friends and colleagues to be your guests! Packages begin at \$1,500 for a single attendee.
- **Build-A-Table:** Grab some friends and fundraise your way to a preset Sponsorship level. All-Event Access Passes are \$1,000 - gather 10 people at this level and you can sign on to the Diploma Package. Tables of 10 or more can come together for a pre-Gala-ish Virtual Happy Hour! And for those who already have a Sponsorship package, Build-A-Table is a creative way to attract and invite additional participation from your social and professional circles and networks -- a new, virtual approach to the traditional ticket sales strategy!
- **Be A Guest:** Oliver Fest is a 2-Day celebration featuring 3 exciting parts. You can get an All Access pass to attend each event or sign up, à la carte (e.g., \$19.84 for the Scholars Jam or \$500 for a Symposium Access Pass). Join us however you can!
- **Fundraise & Friendraise:** Invite new folks into the Oliver Community and encourage support at any level. Oliver Fest is a wonderful opportunity to help raise awareness about Oliver -- create a page and help spread the word about the event! You can set a goal and have your friends and colleagues help you reach it through donations of any size. People who opt to purchase Sponsorships, Access Passes or any of our à la carte offerings may also do so through your page, helping you to meet your overall goal!

To get started, check out our handy [How-To Guide](#) to help you set up your online fundraising page. If you have questions or need assistance with your page, please do not hesitate to contact: [Carinda Greene](#), Assistant Director of Development.

# Alumni Spotlight



**Oliver Fest Alumni Team Captain,  
Tiffany Caton '02!**

Fellow alumni, I'm inviting you to join me and the rest of the Oliver community at Gala(-ish)! Although COVID-19 required Oliver to cancel their original fundraiser back in May, it did not stop their work to support Scholars and prepare them to be the leaders the world needs. Now, Oliver and the Scholars need Us - the alumni family - to rally together and support in any way that we can so that they can continue unlocking opportunities for brilliant minds.

There are various ways to get involved: attend an event, share a post on social media, reach out to other alum and spread the word, and donate. (Sign up [here](#) and join the Oliver Fest [Alumni Team](#).) Definitely make sure to join us for the 10/2 Kick-Off Scholars Jam featuring music by DJ M.O.S. and DJ Kiss! Oliver's own **Clayton Wynter '92** will spin the pre-party while **Nicholas Olmo '98** will close out the event with a musical trip down Oliver memory lane!

**See you at Oliver Fest!**

Sincerely,

Tiffany Caton '02

Oliver Fest Benefit Committee





# A Scholar's Story

When Miles Sylvester first interviewed for the Oliver Scholars program in 2016, he caught the Nomination Committee's attention because of the dedication to community service he initiated on his own.

This conscientious young man began volunteering at City Harvest in 2015, first participating in the organization's annual Food Drive. His awareness of the importance of giving back was the perfect mindset for a future Oliver Scholars student; not only does Oliver support the educational success of our participants, community service is one of its three defining pillars.

"Miles is a remarkable young man," says Dr. Moss, "To see someone his age so attuned to the needs of our community, the struggle we as a group face, and the self-awareness that he can and must do something to improve lives puts a smile on my face. Miles is our future and a Scholar who makes me proud."

As the harsh reality of the COVID-19 crisis became clear in March, it would have been natural for Miles to become consumed with the transition to distance learning and the other difficulties that the pandemic created. Instead, the 17-year-old decided to reach out to City Harvest to tell them he was going to start a GoFundMe campaign, which he launched on April 22 with a goal of \$5,000.

"I enjoy the fact that I know I am helping those in need during trying times," says Miles, whose fundraising goal has now been surpassed. "City Harvest is a great organization that helps families and children and as a resident of New York City it is a responsibility of mine to help them."

City Harvest reports that nearly 1.6 million New Yorkers have lost work and income since COVID-19, and food insecurity is expected to surge nearly 40%. Because of the pandemic, this GoFundMe campaign was the Scholar's most ambitious effort and the most challenging one yet. However, Oliver Scholars has prepared the senior for challenges both known and unforeseen.

"Oliver has given Miles the opportunity to dream big," explains his mother, Maxine Maxwell. "He understands that he is capable of creating what he wants and he is developing a strong academic foundation as he moves forward to the next chapter in his life."

"Being an Oliver scholar means that someone sees the potential in you," says Miles, who has his eyes set on attending Yale University as an architecture major. "Oliver Scholars has given me the tools and skills to compete with students who have had access to private education their whole lives. The program has given me the courage to fight for a better education as well the passion to help those in need."

