

SCHOOL OF THE FUTURE



2010 GRADUATES

The School of the Future, a collaboration between the School District of Philadelphia and Microsoft, graduates its first class on June 15, 2010. Without exception, each graduating senior has a definitive opportunity to continue his or her education after high school. All have earned acceptance to at least one postsecondary institution—a commitment they made to each other as ninth graders. Here are just a few of the 118 individual stories comprising the School of the Future's class of 2010.

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MAHCAIYAH WEARING-GOODEN

Where She's Headed: Green Mountain College in Poultney, Vermont. Mahcaiyah selected Green Mountain College after also earning acceptance to Lock Haven University, Penn State University, St. John's University, and others. **What She'll Be Studying:** In addition to the liberal arts, Mahcaiyah will be studying environmental sciences as part of her long-term plan to become a climatologist. **Background:** From an early age, Mahcaiyah was fascinated by the weather. Now, given the challenges of global warming, Mahcaiyah is driven to change the world for the better. **Key Perspectives on School of the Future:** Inspired by the dedication of her educators and the bonds she's built with classmates (including close friend Natania Harris, who will be attending Villanova University next fall on a full academic scholarship), Mahcaiyah believes in the transformative power of "going about your life in a positive way." **Quote:** "This school helped me learn who I really am and how much I'm capable of. I never knew my full potential until I got here."



ERIC WESTON

Where He's Headed: Community College of Philadelphia. Eric also earned acceptance to other colleges and universities, including Indiana University of Pennsylvania (IUP). **What He'll Be Studying:** Eric will be studying sound recording and music technology at Community College of Philadelphia. Concurrently, Eric is entering the Digital Service Fellows, an award-winning AmeriCorps program for recent Philadelphia high school graduates interested in information technology. Following his time at Community College of Philadelphia, Eric will transfer to a four-year institution. **Background:** Eric began producing music at age 12. Entering high school, Eric mostly considered a future in the technology sector until his learning experiences at School of the Future helped him realize how to bring together his technical proficiency with his passion for music. **Key Perspectives on School of the Future:** Eric credits the counselors at School of the Future for their assistance in applying to postsecondary institutions and finding corresponding resources. Eric believes his experiences at School of the Future led him to a clarity about his interests and how to apply them. **Quote:** "Without this experience, I wouldn't have become a leader. I carry myself differently now, and I have higher expectations of myself."



LORENZO BRIDGES

Where He's Headed: Clark Atlanta University in Atlanta, GA. Lorenzo selected Clark Atlanta University after also earning acceptance at Claflin University, DeVry University, Indiana University of Pennsylvania (IUP), Kutztown University, and Lincoln University. **What He'll Be Studying:** Lorenzo will be studying advertising at Clark Atlanta University and will be moving to Atlanta, GA this summer to become acclimated to a new city. **Background:** During his time at School of the Future, Lorenzo was active in sports, citywide student government, and an anti-truancy task force. Before getting his driver's license, Lorenzo traveled an hour each way on public transit to attend School of the Future. **Key Perspectives on School of the Future:** Lorenzo believes the increased scrutiny that came with being the School of the Future's first students, along with the significant leadership changes during the school's first four years, helped him to become flexible and resilient in the face of challenging situations. **Quote:** "If I hadn't gone here, my life would be totally different."



ZAHKIA THOMAS

Where She's Headed: Penn State University (University Park campus). Zahkia selected Penn State after also earning acceptance to 11 other colleges and universities. **What She'll Be Studying:** Zahkia has already been accepted into Penn State's engineering program. As part of her long-term plan to work for NASA, she'll also be participating in the Air Force ROTC program at Saint Joseph's University. **Background:** Between ninth and tenth grade, Zahkia participated in the Villanova Engineering, Science, Technology, Enrichment, and Development (VESTED) summer program, which offered a four-week exploration of engineering and technology. She describes the chemical engineering portion of the program as "the best week of my life." **Key Perspectives on School of the Future:** During the School of the Future's first orientation session her freshman year, Zahkia and her fellow classmates were told that college acceptance would be a requirement for graduation. While the requirement eventually changed, Zahkia says she and her classmates "still hold it in our hearts." **Quote:** "Our school gave us a sense of pride, and taught us to never stop learning. I know we're going to take this world by storm."