

Middle school produces its first college graduates

Adrien Herron (Sonoma State) Reetah Boyce, Isis Fuller, and Bakare Awakoaiye (Howard University)



Financial Report **2017-18**



Isis Fuller and Bakare Awakoaiye graduate summa cum laude from Howard University

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Akanke Peyton

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MISSION

To sustain an educational institute in the best traditions of our ancestors. We will give birth to the genius resident in every child, assist parents in their efforts to become models of right behavior and right order for their children, and provide a working environment that allows our educators to follow their passion of teaching and loving our children.

ILE OMODE SCHOOL

8924 Holly Street, Oakland, CA 94621

(510) 632-8230, <http://www.ileomode.org>

MEMBERSHIP

The school is a member of the Council of Independent Black Institutions (CIBI).

COVER PHOTO: Staff

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From the Director

It's nearly impossible to exist in this community, and not be a historian, a veritable connoisseur of historical stories. It is, one of the unique aspects of Africans in America, in that we view recent events through a historical lens much more so than others. Every police shooting of an unarmed Black man, is examined through the prism of racial violence and Black Codes - Bull Connors exist for us in the moment. Similarly, all discussions of health care and medical research for our community is viewed with skepticism and a touch of distrust, because it is impossible for us to not always consider the syphilis experiment conducted at Tuskegee University.

For me, in the role that I play, history is much more than allegorical, but is rather textbook. It represents the playbook I draw from in managing, building, and growing our school. What would Booker T. do? How would Mary respond? Their words, and the thoughts and expressions of dozens of other ancestors surround me daily, and provide a Council of Ancestors.

Their actions and ideas were rooted in their time. Washington had to make concessions to appease white northern philanthropists and southern racists, who could level the school to the ground without warning, provocation, or consequences. However, there were also moments when they spoke to the generations to come, as Mary McLeod did in her "Last Will and Testament", when she said, "I leave you finally a responsibility to our young people... They must not be discouraged from aspiring toward greatness".

Nevertheless, the work they did was driven by the same unrelenting passions and visions for tomorrow that empower us today - elevating the race. Being, as was described in the early twentieth century, "race (wo)men".

This year we graduated our largest 8th grade class, saw our largest high school cohort graduate, and witnessed the commencement of 3 alums at Howard University. These successes invigorate us, yet we remain hungry for so much more. It must be the same feeling that Mary McLeod felt in a famous picture when she stood on a dirt road, before a line of her "girls", each in starched whites, black skirts, and hats - mirroring their teacher.

Just as we make no apologies for doing all that we can for our children, I make no apologies for spending every hour of the day in pursuit of the very best for our children and families. And what drives me, is the same realization that drove so many before me, "there is no cavalry". No one is coming over the hills to our rescue, we are all that we have, and the strength our ancestors exuded makes it evident that "we're all we need".

Jahi Awakoaiye, Director



The Year at a Glance



[1] Khalid at the Science Fair [2] Babas coaching the basketball team [3] Pre-school during Ancestors Day [4] Unveiling the new basketball uniforms [5] Spelman recruiter visit [6] Graduation in June [7] Baba Tyehimba's afterschool chess program [8] 8th graders completing Intermediate Algebra at Laney College [9] High school senior, Barry Brand receiving a "Books and Materials" scholarship from Ile Omode [10] End of year field trip at Santa Cruz [11] Community cleanup day [12] Honoring our scholars



About Ile Omode

Educating Our Children Since 1986

Ile Omode has served students from Oakland and surrounding cities for 30 years. Initially begun as a home-based day care serving preschool children, the independent private school continues to grow.

From its 3-story building in East Oakland, the school serves students from preschool to 8th grade; providing a preschool, elementary, and middle school.

Ile Omode students meet a rigorous African-centered curriculum lauded for its strength across an array of disciplines, including language, science, technology, and mathematics. Students have:

- Engaged in extensive community-driven research projects
- Developed science projects
- Coded computer applications
- Enrolled concurrently in an advanced Algebra course at a local college.

Our tuition remains one of the lowest in the areas, while our services, including providing laptops/tablets, musical instruments, daily breakfast and lunch, included afterschool services, is untouchable. We strive to remain affordable for families and support parents' effort to provide the best for their children.

2017-2018 Donors*

*From September 1, 2017 through August 31, 2018; does not include cash contributions or local fundraisers when no donor information was provided. List includes all unrestricted donations.

Asante ("thank you") for every contribution

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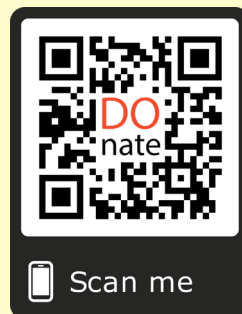
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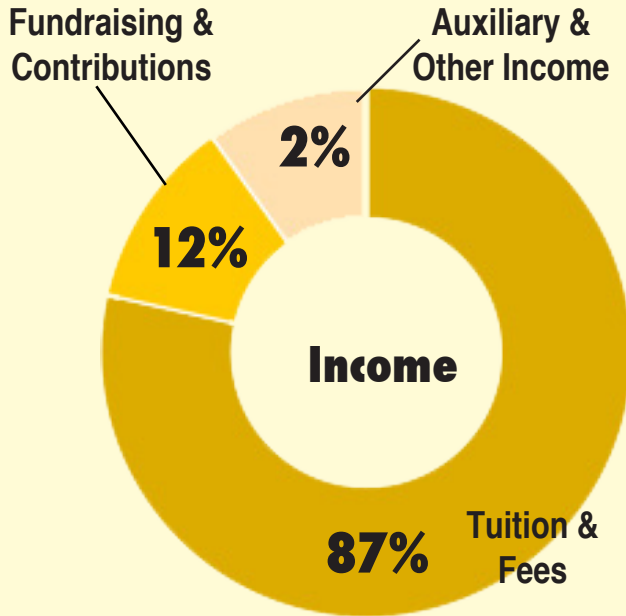
Ile Omode Parents
Anonymous



2017-18

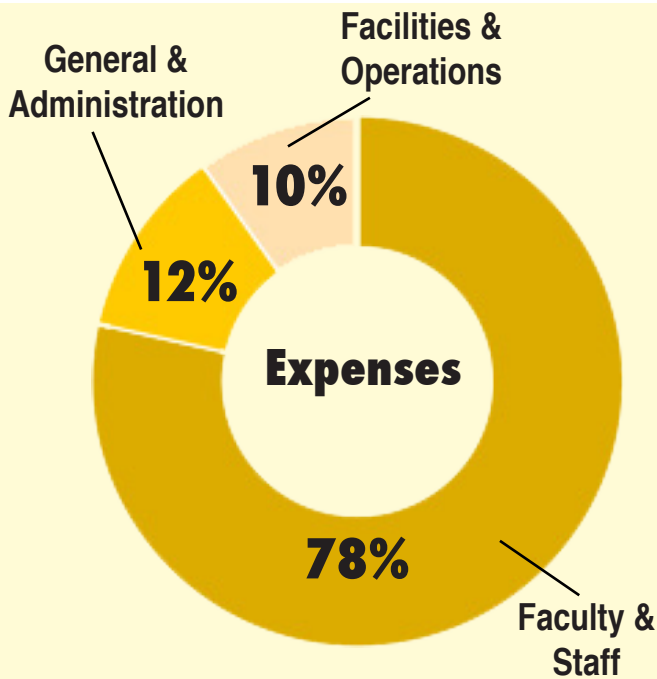
Operating Income and Expenses

Fiscal year runs from September 1, 2017 to August 31, 2018



2017-18 Income

Tuition & Fees	\$754,592
Fundraising & Contributions	\$79,544
Auxiliary & Other Income	\$36,585



2017-18 Expenses

Faculty & Staff	\$667,162
Facilities & Operations	\$84,014
General & Admin	\$98,905

Big Harvest from a Small Garden



For years Ile Omode has endeavored to provide high quality meals to our students, many of whom have to be introduced to “fresh vegetables”. We provide a full breakfast and lunch each day and nothing is processed. Although our garden is small it remains an instrumental part of our food program and our curriculum.

The produce is used in the kitchen, showing our students the process from, “seed to stomach”. Towards this goal, support for our garden from **Annie’s Grants for Gardens** for \$3,000 has helped us both sustain and expand the garden.

Unspent Grants

Grants received at the end of the fiscal year to fund projects in 2018-19.



THE CALIFORNIA ENDOWMENT

\$25K
Kitchen



AT&T

\$5.5K
Playground

ATD

Investment Group

\$6.2K
Books & Equipment



Moms Against Poverty Supports Mama Rose's Kitchen at Ile Omode

Since its inception, Ile Omode's cafeteria, has operated on a shoe string budget - determined to provide healthy and substantial meals to our children, while at the same time, minimizing the cost to our families. That challenge was accepted by Mama Mildred Rose, who brought her decades of professional cafeteria experience, coupled with her single-parents' natural instinct to save money.

She spends nearly as many hours preparing food to serve as she does purchasing food and supplies. In an effort to reduce the cost, she travels between multiple stores weekly - CostCo for a sale on pancake mix; Grocery Outlet for a great buy on breakfast sausages; Jetros 2 for 1 sale on all paper goods. Sometimes, she has to be creative or use her negotiating skills. Safeway may have a great deal on breakfast cereal for \$1.49, but might impose a limit of 3. At times, she's traveled to multiple Safeways, or she'll "call the manager", and no store manager is a match for a petite, yet determined bargainer with Southern roots (Louisiana).

She had considered switching to ordering items and having them delivered, for if not all, at least some of the purchases, but the added cost of shipping and the concerns with the quality of food delivered - especially produce, fruits and vegetables, continued to move her away from this as a solution.

Two years ago, a chance meeting with Oakland Councilwoman, Desley Brooks, brought a big change. Brooks is the council person for Ile

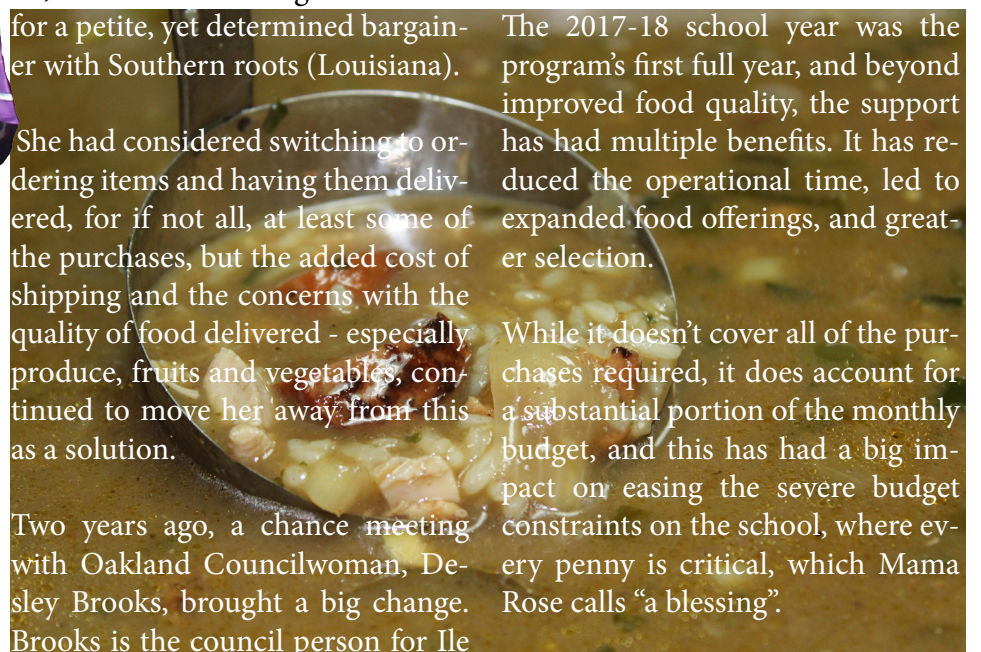
Omode, in District 7, and she had begun working with Moms Against Poverty (MAP), a non-profit created by an Iranian family in an effort to support children in need. MAP has a local program in Oakland, MAP's Nutrition Outreach Program in Oakland.

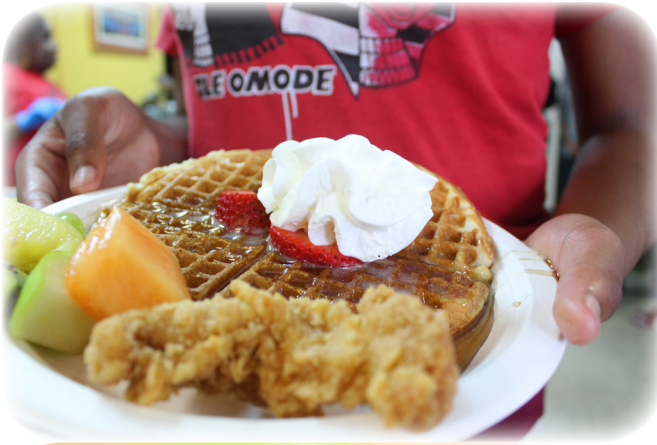
Ile Omode wasn't a direct fit because they were interested in providing food directly to families, and not supporting a kitchen. However, after visiting the school, and seeing how children are served, they decided to support Ile Omode's food mission.

Each month, Mama Rose submits an order that is fulfilled by Amazon through Whole Foods, and the entire cost is covered by MAP. Mama Rose, who was at first leery about delivered food, quickly became a convert. She says, "delivery is fantastic, and at least 90% of the food is organic"; providing a food quality we couldn't have previously afforded.

The 2017-18 school year was the program's first full year, and beyond improved food quality, the support has had multiple benefits. It has reduced the operational time, led to expanded food offerings, and greater selection.

While it doesn't cover all of the purchases required, it does account for a substantial portion of the monthly budget, and this has had a big impact on easing the severe budget constraints on the school, where every penny is critical, which Mama Rose calls "a blessing".





Lunch @ Ile Omode



First STEM Day

On May 17, 2018 Ile Omode held its first STEM event: The Real MVPs of STEM to expose our students to African Americans in STEM careers. The event included a panel discussion and career fair that informed students and families about opportunities in the STEM field.

Our panel included doctors, educators, sports executives, account executives, and a filmmaker. Panelists shared their experiences of advancing in STEM careers and offered students insight on skills necessary to compete at a high level. Many panelists discussed their experiences being the only African Americans in their field. Ebonee Slater, account executive at Deloitte, described her experience of wanting the presence of more people like her.

Students were eager with their questions and asked panelists about college courses, majors, and internships that would be useful for careers in STEM. The panel encouraged students to develop strong math, science, and analytical skills and to pursue internships.

The companies held an interactive fair which included Bayer, Wells Fargo, Kaiser, Coupa, Stanford, Negus, the Warriors and Deloitte. Students had the opportunity to visit tables and participate in demonstrations. Mama Donna Collins instructed students on how to dissect a pig heart, while Mama Vicky Jenkins showed students the variety of household products produced at Bayer, a local pharmaceutical company. Tre Jenkins, of the Warriors organization, explained to students how there are careers beyond sports, and Mama Geanie Asante and her team from Wells Fargo taught children about financial planning for college. Our first event was a huge success. We hope to continue to bring our community together to demonstrate the success of African Americans in STEM careers.

-Carlynn Wooten-Scott



Tree Planting at Ile Omode



A Partnership with **Trees for Oakland Flatlands**

A year ago the school's Beautification Committee, led by Mama Charemon Cooks, sought to organize the community around improving the safety and visual appeal of our neighborhood and immediate surroundings. We organized a community cleanup which resulted in significant media attention; just days after the event, NBC news conducted a story on our efforts, and the challenges, to clean the immediate surroundings.

The news story was witnessed by a local non-profit, Trees for Oakland Flatlands

(TOF), and they wanted to assist us in our efforts. TOF works to provide free trees to Oakland residents with a goal of increasing the urban forest while, "combating climate change, and provide a more equitable distribution of trees within Oakland".

Over the year the group met with our organizers and considering our goals, they recommended trees and helped facilitate design and planting plans. Finally, in May, we were ready to plant three African Sumac trees.

Parents and volunteers met on a Saturday in work jeans and old boots and quickly turned to the task of planting two of the three trees, and prepped the area for the third tree. They also did some maintenance work in the garden and put some final touches on the new shed.

The following Monday, the school held a tree planting ceremony, planting the final tree, and the entire community celebrated, while remembering that our first duty is to protect and support the Earth.

8th grade students continued Ile Omode's record of 100% private high school acceptance. The students from the Class of 2018, the largest ever, were admitted to a number of area private schools. Although they had a number of options, they were ultimately drawn to just two schools - Bishop O'Dowd High School in Oakland and Moreau Catholic in Hayward.

Bishop O'Dowd is no surprise for Ile Omode students. Over the years, the school has been the most popular destination for the school's graduates; landing over 43% of the graduates in the last 7 years. This year seven students were admitted with four deciding to attend, including Selma Apará, who received the school's presidential scholarship.

Selma joins a select list of students who have received Bishop O'Dowd's presidential scholarship. Since Zenzile Riddick's acceptance in 2011, nine students have been recipients, and nearly all have enrolled.

This year however, Moreau Catholic, received the majority of Ile Omode students. This was surprising since before this year, not a single student had ever even applied to the school. Baba Jahi Awakoaiye, Ile Omode's director, was looking for another destination school, and in the fall spent considerable time meeting with Moreau's director of admissions, the principal, vice-principal, and other staff.

Baba Jahi said he, "was interested in expanding opportunities for our students, and Moreau caught my attention, but its course offerings and financial offerings were attractive for our families". After several visits, and a subsequent visit by the entire 8th grade, nearly every student was sold, and 10 of the 12 students applied.

Bishop O'Dowd still remained attractive and just as many students applied to the East Oakland parochial school. For Joshua Lynch, it was a difficult



choice between St. Mary's High School in Berkeley, his father's alma mater, and Bishop O'Dowd, which is just blocks from his home. He joins Myles Moore, whose high score on the nationally administered High School Placement Test made him a near lock for admission,

Hall, and Eastside College Prep, but all three boys ultimately chose Moreau.

For Neranti his interest in studying computer science was the prevailing factor, "I really liked the computer curriculum and the robotics courses".

2018 Class admitted to Head Royce, Athenian, Bishop O'Dowd, Bentley, Moreau Catholic, Stuart Hall, Eastside College Prep, St. Mary's, and College Prep

considering his sister is also a recent graduate.

Neranti Gary, Yhzekel Kahsai and Adesina Tyler, all of whom received at least one presidential scholarship, had a number of options. Adesina was admitted to four schools, and Yhzekel and Neranti's list include such Bay Area stalwarts as St Joseph, Bentley, Bishop O'Dowd, Head-Royce, Athenian, Stuart

Along with the long list of acceptances the 2018 class were the recipients of over a dozen scholarship. All total, 75% of the students received scholarships which totaled nearly \$90K.

The students are well positioned for success in high school, and we fully expect them to continue to carve a path for future students.



A self-proclaimed “Grandmama’s baby”, Baba Abubakar is the most senior instructor at Ile Omode (22 years), and is liable to drop some old school wisdom at any given moment. His proverbial way of speaking inspires the children to reflect and think critically about the world around them. He uses his knowledge and love of the martial arts to teach the children about mental discipline through the physical body. And he never forgets to challenge the students to explore their spirituality and purpose through our cultural lens. No matter the subject matter, Baba Abubakar is committed and steadfast when it comes to sustaining our beloved institution.

Baba Abubakar Adisa Omari was born in Oakland, California at Highland Hospital in the 1950s. He was raised in West Oakland until the second grade before moving to Sobrante Park in East Oakland. He graduated from Castlemont High School and attended Merritt College before joining the Nation of Islam. During his time with the Nation, he was introduced to the martial art Kenpo (a fist style introduced by Bruce Lee). Martial arts became increasingly popular in the 1960s among the Black community.

He began his career at Ile Omode

sistent and were reinforced daily. The children knew the Nguzo Saba by heart and often referred to them when resolving conflicts.” It was a space where African Americans could come and reconnect with their African roots, unapologetically, during a time where our communities were being flooded with drugs and violence. He recalls everyone in the community having an African name and always dressing in traditional African garb. This being a clear statement of cultural empowerment and love of self which is a principle he wishes to impart to all of his students. This experience laid the foundation for him to later make the evolution of Black consciousness the theme of his 8th grade social studies course, “African-American Identity”.

His most enjoyable aspect of teaching the youth at Ile Omode is “making a mark in terms of their personal development and future”. He sees teaching as a necessary learning process in order to provide current and relevant material for his students to engage and analyze. He enjoys “coming into new information while preparing lesson plans to make the students conscious and attached to the love of self.” He wants all of his students to proudly love and understand themselves and their people, a core value of Ile Omode. He wants to graduate cohorts of intelligent, confident, and successful young people who will move our people to new heights.

Baba Abubakar sees Ile Omode as a pillar of hope for the community, knowing that “every-

Abubakar Omari

A force of love, discipline and knowledge

in 1996 as an after school instructor but quickly became a full time teacher. This was his first time formally teaching a class and he recalls it being an enjoyable experience. Although he was originally asked to teach an adult martial arts course that never materialized, he realized that teaching the youth was his divine calling.

one who walks by is always impressed by our children.” He would like to see a greater balance between the “new school” and “old school” ways of teaching children through preparing them for college, trades, and entrepreneurship. It is critical for schools like Ile Omode to continue to flourish because the community needs a powerful and nurturing space for our children to thrive and grow. With the leadership of instructors like Baba Abubakar, we will surely achieve his vision and the vision of the entire Ile Omode community. -Mama Kara Cotton

In the 1990s Ile Omode was a cultural hub for Black families, “The African values were con-



The 3rd Annual Huey P. Newton Oratorical Festival entitled Legacy In The making (L. I. T.) was hosted by Ile Omode School at Bishop O'Dowd Theater on March 25, 2018. Students performed poetry, speeches, drama, and originally written hip hop verses that captivated and entertained all in attendance.

The event originated as an extension of our literary and performing arts program. Baba Ajamu Stewart (4th/5th grade teacher) wanted to celebrate African culture in a space where students could express themselves creatively. From the literature of the Harlem Renaissance, to the improvisation of Jazz, to the freestyle battle style of hip-hop, our culture lives in the art of expression. As he states "Our students are a continuation of this culture and must have the tools to understand and contribute to this rich legacy."

Our program has grown significantly. We outgrew our school and moved the production to Bishop O'Dowd where we had standing room only. Over 200 parents, grandparents and community members were in attendance. Our relationship with O'Dowd and the contribution of Jonathan Angeles, O'Dowd's theater audio and visual technical operator, who provided sound, lighting and technical support were invaluable.

The desire among students has also grown, with many asking about their chance to hit the stage. This year middle school students composed their own songs centered around contemporary social, political, and economic issues facing the black community. Students

transformed from shy and reclusive adolescents to creative, articulate and energized performers.

Our younger students per-



formed a diversity of literary pieces including poetry, drama and hip hop. First graders opened the show and won over the crowd with a classroom recital of Langston Hughes' "Genius Child". Our second and third graders followed up with Iwe, a dramatic and engaging play about character. Fourth and fifth graders rocked the crowd with

Wooten Scott and Mama Charemon Cooks. Much of the costs still derived from teachers' pockets and donations. To help offset the cost of the event we published the verses written by students into a book that was sold to market, promoted, and raised funds for this years event. However, as we continue to grow, our aim is



Our culture lives in the art of expression; empowering and activating critical thinking

poetry, spoken word, and closed the show with a hip hop cypher calling all parents to stand on their feet. By the end of the show the entire theatre was dancing, clapping and singing.

What started as a tribute to our rich literary history through poetry recitation has grown into a full production. Last year, we were self funded and supported through the volunteerism and leadership of parents Mama Carlynn

to have a fully funded program.

We anticipate an even greater turnout this year. Parents, grandparents, and extended family were on their feet cheering with excitement at the conclusion of last year's event. The excitement and anticipation is still present and students are preparing to provide another outstanding show this year.



Howard University Graduates



Reetah Boyce, Bakare Awakoaiye (c'10), and Isis Fuller each graduated from Howard University; joining its 150th graduating class. Howard University awarded 2,217 degrees on May 12, 2018, and 3 of those degrees were conferred to Ile Omode's own - three young people from Oakland, who moved across the country to study at one of the leading universities in the country.

The Ile Omode alums were honored by the year's commencement speaker, Chadwick Boseman, of Black Panther fame. The 2000 Howard alum told the graduates when "you are deciding on next steps, you would rather find purpose than a job or career".

Well, it seems they've found a little of both. Reetah graduated magna cum laude from the College of Business with a degree in Computer Information Systems, and prior to graduating she had already accepted a position.

She moved to Denver, Colorado, where she works for Gusto, which was originally established in San Francisco, and

provides online human resources services, such as payroll.

For Reetah, Ile Omode, "allowed me to stay focused on my goal of getting into college because that was the expectation".

Bakare and Isis graduated summa cum laude, the highest academic distinction, from the College of Arts and Sciences with degrees in biology. The two also were inducted into Howard's

chapter of Beta Kappa Chi, the national scientific honor society.

Isis will continue her education and will attend Emory University in Atlanta to pursue a graduate degree in public health.

Bakare returns to Oakland where he will spend a year interning in Genentech's Cancer Immunology Department, while applying to medical school, where he intends to earn an MD/PhD.



He was the recipient of his college's honor medal and was inducted into Phi Beta Kappa, the nation's oldest honor society - earning a 3.95 GPA.

“...probably would not have even thought about Howard without Ile Omode”

For Bakare and Isis their enrollment at Howard was especially special because they first visited the uni-

versity when they were 7th graders at Ile Omode. The two joined seven other students in 2009 to comprise Ile Omode's first middle school college tour.

Isis says, she "probably would not have even thought about Howard without Ile Omode".

While the three are leaving Howard, they have certainly left the door open because two alums are entering freshman in 2018.



Adrien Graduates from Sonoma State

In May, Adrien Herron earned her bachelors degree from Sonoma State University in anthropology with a minor in American Multicultural Studies.

Prior to 2008, Ile Omode offered a traditional elementary that ended in the 6th grade. In 2008 the school expanded to include a full middle school, and **Adrien was the first 8th grade graduate in 2009.**

She credits Ile Omode with providing her a “close connection” to her culture, and attended St. Mary’s High School in Berkeley. Like Zora Neale Hurston she chose to study anthropology because she enjoys, “discovering how cultures develop, and how humans have changed so much over time”.

She appreciated her time at Sonoma and found the faculty to be very receptive, although she was the only African-American in her major.

Since graduating she works at a school in San Francisco while applying to graduate school, where she hopes to study medical anthropology and public health, seeing the importance of crafting policy which values the uniqueness in cultures.



KaRa interning at Under Armour in Baltimore

HIGH SCHOOL ALUMS

Orisegun Orangunwa, Kpazawala Windross, and Malia Jenkins (c’17) completed their first year in Google’s Code Next, an effort to identify and cultivate



Junior prom at Envision - Milan Gibson & Nzyja Walker

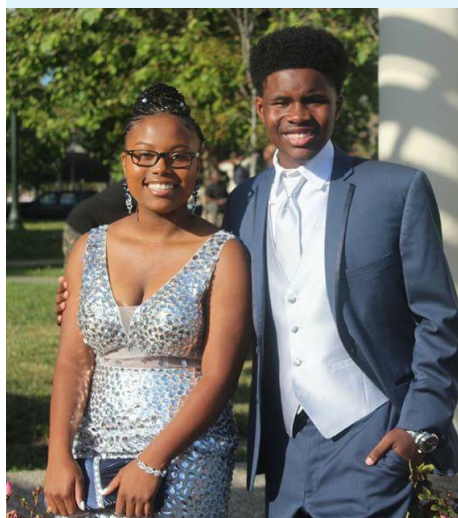
and how earned a third place at the Bay Counties League championship in the 200 meters and 4x400 meter relay team

Alumni Updates

Black and Latino tech leaders...**Galana-fai Windross** (c’14) taught a computer science course ... Over the summer, **Barry Brand** (c’14), graduated from Oakland Technical High School, where he was president of the school’s Red Cross Club, and completed an African American Studies course at Merritt College... **Malik Bossett** (c’15) was promoted at the Academy of Science and had a mentorship with the Planetarium; he was the keynote speaker at the Academy’s “Teen Night” in August, and spoke on interstellar travel...**Folasade Halcomb** (c’17) attends Emeryville High School,

COLLEGIATE ALUMS

Marcus Herron (c’10) a senior at Sonoma State held his first art exhibit, “Prismatic” at Sonoma’s Student Gallery... **Aminah Muhammad** (c’11) transferred from Las Positas College to UC Santa Cruz; she’s majoring in film with minor studies in computer science... **Isis Fuller**, earned dean’s list honors, and interned at UC Berkeley’s SMASH program.... **Maia Morgan** (c’12), a sophomore at Clark-Atlanta University, spent a second year interning with AC Transit



Malik Bossett (c’15) and Nandi Maunder (c’15) attended Malik’s prom at the Bay School in San Francisco.



Maya Jenkins (c’14) became the 5th Ile Omode student to be inducted to the National Honor Society at O’Dowd.



Largest High School Cohort

CLASS **Tierra** | **Adeya** | **Maya** | **Lonnie** | **Khukheper** | **Galanafai**

The Omode's class of 6254 (2014) was its largest graduating class at the time. It was an amazingly close group, and whether by design or luck, nearly everyone applied to, and were admitted to Bishop O'Dowd High School, ensuring their time together would continue.

Tierra Robinson-Jones, Adeya Wyatt, Maya Jenkins, Khukheper Awakoaiye, Galanafai Windross, and Lonnie Turner attended Bishop O'Dowd High School, while their classmates, Barry Brand and Khalid Cross enrolled at Oakland Technical High School.

O'Dowd's 2018 class included 6 of our students, and they comprised the largest single cohort at any high school at that time.

The group's accomplishments in high

school are worth noting; including delivering O'Dowd its first state championship in years in track and field, and first ever in football. Half of the students were inducted into the National Honor Society, and most remained on the school's first honors list for the majority of their time in high school.

Tierra single-handedly delivered 3 state championships in track (see next article), and she was joined by Maya and Khukheper. The trio won 4 league titles among the boys and girls teams, and Maya won the discus league championship as well.

Lonnie and Khukheper competed in football and over their 4 years at O'Dowd, the pair contributed over 42 wins, 3 league championships, and a state title.

Their feats in the classroom however, are even more impressive than their athletic achievements. The college-bound seniors averaged nearly a 3.7 GPA ("A-"), while taking a slate of advanced coursework - particularly Adeya and Khukheper.

The two held GPAs exceeding 4.0, while taking six AP courses each, wholly justifying O'Dowd bestowing them with the school's presidential scholarship when they applied. They were inducted into the National Honor Society in their junior year, and were on hand when Maya joined them in high school's most prestigious academic honor in her senior year.

While O'Dowd has received over 70% of our students attending private school, this class may have proven the finest.

Next Step

- Tierra**, Texas A&M University, Business
- Adeya**, Howard University, Chemical Engineering
- Galanafai**, San Diego State University, Computer Science
- Khukheper**, Howard University, Biology
- Maya**, UC Merced, Biological Sciences
- Barry**, Xavier University, Biology

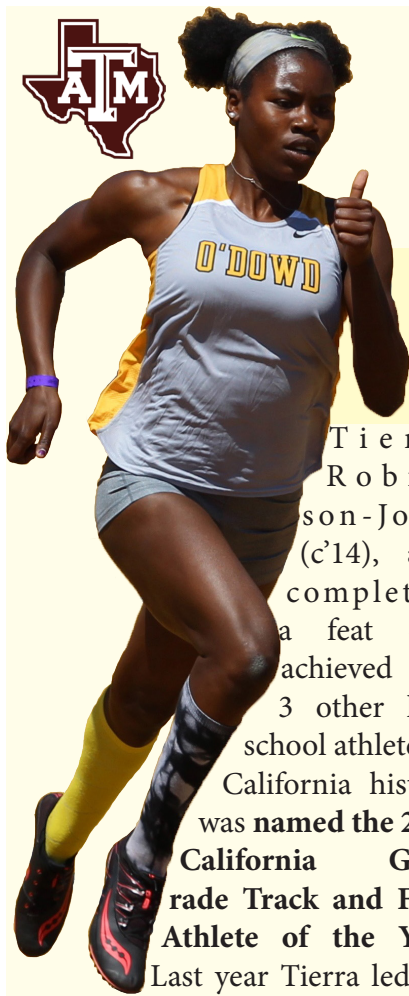


4 State Champions

3 National Honor Society Inductees

2 Presidential Scholars

8 League Titles



Greatest 400m Runner in Northern California History



Tierra Robinson-Jones (c'14), after completing a feat only achieved by 3 other high school athletes in California history, was named the 2018 California Gatorade Track and Field Athlete of the Year.

Last year Tierra led her school to the state championship in the 4x400 meter relay, and this year followed up with a historic double at the California Interscholastic Federation state championship in Clovis, California.

Tierra is a 400 meter specialist, and ran impressively all year. She was undefeated and the clear favorite entering the 400m finals at the state finals; nevertheless nothing is guaranteed. She ran against one of the

strength to shine. As she approached the final five meters, Tierra continued to close, and as she made her final plunge to the finish line, the race's leader tried to match her, and instead, fatigue gave way and she

most impressive fields assembled, and easily beat the field, finishing in 52.39 seconds, which was her fastest time ever, and the third fastest time in the country this year.

While Tierra has made the state finals every year since entering high school; earning 9th as a freshman, 4th in her sophomore year, and 2nd as a junior, she had never ran in the 200 meter final, a race which balances the speed of the short sprints with the strength of the 400 meters.

She was not the event's highest seed, and the event's favorite, the state's leading 200m runner led for 195 meters, but it was the final 5 meters that allowed Tierra's superior

stumbled to the track.

Tierra earned the gold, and in doing so, accomplished the elusive double that no female track athlete in Northern California had ever achieved. It was a fitting conclusion to her high school career, and she leaves Bishop O'Dowd High School, as the greatest 400 meter runner in Northern California history.

She'll take those bragging rights, and the coming challenge to Texas A&M University, where she received a full athletic scholarship. The Ile Omode alum will study business administration, and will join one of the strongest track programs in the country.

Making a Difference for California Students



Zenzile Riddick (c'11) was a founding member of The Coalition for A Better UC (CBUC), which decided to campaign for a change to California's financial aid system.

In January of 2018, the sociology and Black Studies major, campaigned with fellow UC Santa Barbara students at UC and Cal State Universities, to make the statewide grant for low-income students, the Cal Grant, available during the summer.

Research showed that California students needed access to summer classes if they were going to graduate on time. The campaign was

successful, and in March, Assemblyman Marc Levine (10th District, North Bay) authored the bill AB 3153. The bill will extend Cal Grants to summer sessions.

As CBUC's Director of Internal Affairs, she managed the social media campaign, created all campaign graphics, lobbied in Sacramento, and hired/supervised an all Black team of freshman interns who were promoted to assistant directors.

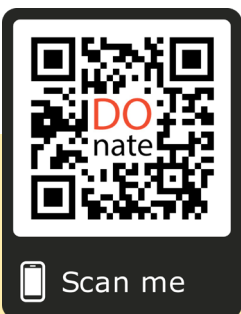
The bill passed in the California Assembly in May, and it has two committees left in the Senate before it reaches the governor's desk.

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“People don’t realize how a person’s whole life can be changed by one book”.

- Malcolm X



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