



## Back-to-School at Guilford ABC

FROM PRESIDENT MARIE BERRY



After a summer filled with family vacations, summer plans and outdoor Post-COVID activities, our returning scholars and new scholar, Andrea Kaluma, a sophomore from Belmont, MA arrived at the ABC House on September 6th. They were welcomed by our Resident Director, Lynn Prendergast, as their families helped them unpack. They are happy to be here and have settled in comfortably for the school year ahead.

Most of our scholars participated in high school summer academic programs and our senior, Arianna Alvarez Pena, went to Barcelona, Spain as part of a high school cultural exchange program with CIEE. They started the school year actively engaged in their academics and also visiting Host families, volunteering at Hole in The Wall and spent a fun-filled afternoon with ABC Madison playing outdoor games and enjoying pizza.

We also welcome back our after-school tutors, Sharon Risse and Heather Bracken. During the school week they provide academic support to our scholars 2:30-4:30pm daily. In addition, we welcome our new cook, Kathy Sharon, who started in October and is looking forward to creating delicious and healthy dinners. She has a culinary background, has operated a bed and breakfast and is excited to spend time getting to know our scholars as she prepares meals for the ABC house and dinner guests.

As we look ahead, we anticipate watching our scholars grow as they pursue their varied interests, manage their rigorous academic schedules, participate in many GHS activities and prepare for the college of their choice. As always, it takes a village, and we want to thank our many sponsors and donors who continue to support our mission to provide an excellent quality high school education to our talented scholars. Donations are always welcome by visiting our website at [www.guilfordabc.org](http://www.guilfordabc.org).

We are excited to welcome back our scholars, staff and volunteers for the 2021-22 school year! ▼



ABC Scholars Andrea Kaluma, Janelle Wilkinson, Arianna Alvarez Pena, Jasmine Laryea, Kilee Simon. Photos by Kerry Schutz Photography.

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## Guilford ABC's "Secret Sauce"

FROM CO-PRESIDENT GEORGIA COSGROVE



For nearly 50 years, Guilford ABC (GABC) and the Hole in the Wall Consignment and Thrift Shop that provides much of the operating support for the program have been vital parts of our community. If you are reading this newsletter, you likely know that the program houses and provides academic support for talented young scholars of color who attend Guilford High School. You are probably aware that GABC is part of the national ABC program comprised of 322 programs located at member schools scattered across the country. What you may not know is that GABC is one of only 20 Community School Programs (CSPs) where students attend highly rated public schools rather than private boarding or day schools. This distinction creates both challenges and opportunities for us.

Historically, one of the greatest challenges has been lack of awareness among incoming ABC scholars and their families that CSPs exist since we are such a small subset of the larger organization. This impacts recruitment of scholars who often don't consider GABC until late in the selection process, particularly when we are in competition with well-known, elite private schools. Fortunately, this is beginning to change as CSP leaders have begun meeting regularly with national ABC staff to share experiences and improve the marketing and visibility of our programs. At GABC, board members have created marketing materials and social media platforms that highlight our unique assets, including extensive advisory support, a family-like living environment, and a beautiful, accessible town.

What we hear from our current scholars affirms the value of these assets. When asked why she chose GABC over private boarding schools that offered her admission, sophomore Andrea Kaluma expressed her attraction to "the homey feel of the house when she first walked in," as well as the system of academic and student life advisors for each girl and easy availability of other academic support resources such as tutors and College Matters advising. GABC is also unique in its offering of financial and advisory support for summer experiences between academic years and college scholarships for alumnae.



With a near perfect track record for successful completion of college among our graduates, it is clear that the GABC program model is indeed a recipe for success. And from the perspective of GHS Principle, Julia Chaffe, the presence of our scholars is a win-win in our community! ▼

# What We Did This Summer...



ABC Scholars Andrea Kaluma, Janelle Wilkinson, Arianna Alvarez Pena, Jasmine Laryea, Kilee Simon. Photos by Kerry Schutz Photography.

## Janelle Wilkinson

My name is Janelle Wilkinson and I am currently a junior at GHS. This summer was the first summer I was able to do programs and I decided to do a two-week medical program in Maine. We got to practice suturing, using IVs, CPR, use of Automated External Defibrillators, simulated births, coming up with diagnoses based on people's symptoms, and so much more. In addition, I got to do some traveling to places such as Atlanta and Los Angeles.

This year is going to be a challenge for me because of the classes I'm taking, but with the support I have and my dedication, I know that my grades will live up to what I expect from myself.

## Kilee Simon

Over the course of two months, I did three summer programs: Working with the Bronx Zoo as a WCS Discovery Guide, Spending a three-day weekend with Princeton's ATW Young Women's Leadership Program, and a week-long Writopia's session in Manhattan. Despite the obvious differences among these programs, they all contributed to this overarching question I gave myself, "What do I like?"

This might seem small, but by spending nine weeks virtually at the Bronx Zoo I realized that I don't like animals as much as I thought I did (as cute as they are). And with Princeton, I discovered the power of potential, and how each of us possess inalienable leadership if only we dare to look for it. It was beautiful to be surrounded by women of color who hold positions

of leadership and leaving it I was inspired to follow their example. Lastly, with the Writopia Lab, I worked on polishing my writing skills and had the ability to make connections with people who love writing as much as I do.

Although I still have a lot to find out myself with creating a college list and finding out what I want to do - this summer played a large part in shortening my distance to get there. In the meantime, for the school year I am taking AP U.S. History, AP Biology, I.B English, Latin 2, and Health. I look forward to being more active in my positions in the Debate Club, Environmental Club, Theatre, and Leadership congress. Outside of school, I hope to take part in Habitat for Humanity, as well as working on my semester long Capstone Project.

## Jasmine Laryea

I am happy to be back at GABC for my second year in the program, now a sophomore at GHS. This summer I participated in a two-week online program in Anatomy and Physiology that was sponsored by Farleigh Dickinson University. I enjoyed learning about systems and structures of the human body and thought this would be a useful step toward my goal to study pre-med in college. Other highlights of my summer included traveling to Florida with my family and working the cash register in my mother's African restaurants in Union and Irvington, New Jersey that serve food from Ghana and Nigeria.

This semester I am particularly enjoying my Computer Science class, which is a new subject for me. My extracurricular activities include Interact Club, Anime Club, Theater, and I am considering joining Best Friends Club.

## Andrea Kaluma

I am excited to be starting my first year at GABC as a sophomore at GHS. I spent my freshman year in Belmont, MA where my family had recently moved from Framingham, MA. I chose GABC over private boarding schools because I liked the homey feeling of the house and strong support system of the program. I've been a little bit homesick, but the other girls and Lynn already feel like family, and my advisors and people at school have helped me to adjust and work things out.

My academic goal is to study law after college, and I plan to work hard to achieve that goal. So far this semester my favorite class is Honors English. I enjoy both the books we are reading and the writing assignments. I am also taking a painting class that is fun and look forward to taking ceramics next semester. Outside of classes I am a manager of the girls' volleyball team, which has helped me to meet people and given me the opportunity to travel to other schools for games.

## Arianna Alvarez Pena

Hello! My name is Arianna Alvarez Pena. The Senior of the house. This past summer, I went to Spain through a cultural exchange program. Along with learning about Spain's unique culture, I visited many interesting places that have broadened my worldwide perspective. I can still remember the art museums with amazing architecture! On that note, I am excited to see what the new school year brings, and get more involved with the community through STEM clubs, and other fun extracurriculars. ▼



*Arianna Alvarez Pena*



*Janelle Wilkinson*



*Andrea Kaluma*



*Jasmine Laryea*



*Kilee Simon*



*Keep up with the girls and other GABC news on our website, [guilfordabc.org](http://guilfordabc.org)*

# Curious about our GABC Host Families?

Host Families are one of the most important community links for our scholars. Currently we have five wonderful families who welcome an ABC student into their home for one weekend a month during the school year (September - May). We appreciate their commitment and support throughout the year!

We are always seeking potential host families for future scholars. Host Families give the girls the opportunity to experience the local community by participating in family activities - from family meals, social functions and sports activities, to just hanging out and watching movies.

Host mother Cindy Frary McNamara explains, "It was fantastic to get to know our ABC scholar and our family benefited greatly by her presence and influence. We have been very lucky to have this amazing young woman in our lives and happy to keep in touch with her as she moves on."

If you are interested in more information about becoming a host family, please contact Kristen Eveland, [kiksta@aol.com](mailto:kiksta@aol.com). ▼



# M.J. Petretto Golf Tournament Supports GABC

MJ Petretto Foundation had their annual golf fundraiser again this year at the Wallingford Country Club in June. A great day was had by all and Guilford ABC was the recipient of \$5,500 generously donated by the foundation. Thank you to all who volunteered for this event. Pictured are MJ Petretto, Jeff Zeitlen from Guilford ABC, and Linda Remington of MJ Petretto Foundation. ▼



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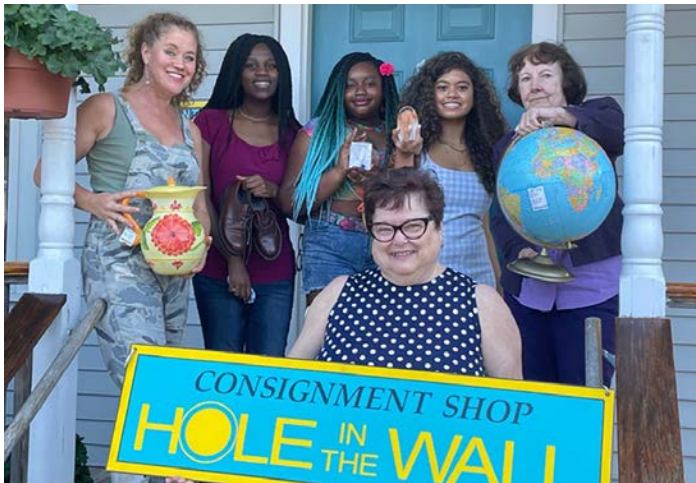
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