



Academics & Activities Engage Six GABC Scholars

A full schedule of challenging classes and spirited extra-curricular activities is captivating the six Guilford ABC scholars as sophomores, juniors, and seniors at Guilford High School.

Sophomore Irene says she's "excited for the International Baccalaureate courses. I signed up for I.B. because I wanted a deeper understanding of the social studies and sciences. I chose I.B. biology because I'm planning for a medical career, and I.B. classes offer the full picture." Her I.B. courses will lead to an I.B. diploma, too. Irene also wants to start her own club and volunteer more, especially with young children.

Katie is in her second year at GABC as a sophomore. "I'm looking to be challenged," she said. "The Guilford High School students are very nice and outgoing, with a lot of energy," she said. Katie loves to sing and has joined the high school choir. She enjoys the concert choir music as well as the Disney songs. Katie plans to try out for the spring musical, too. And even

though she says soccer is a bit "scary," she's going to learn to play!

Jazhira who goes by "Jazzy" has a deep interest in Forensics and studies A.P. physics and three I.B. courses: math, literature, and psychology this junior year. During the summer of 2025, she studied astronomy at Alfred University in New York state for a week. "I loved seeing the stars and constellations through the telescope," she said.

Kyra, a senior, is loving A.P. chemistry because her participation in the Science Olympiad last year "confirmed my interest. I want to learn more to prepare for college." Kyra sings with "Voices," the select vocal ensemble at Guilford High School and is excited to sing in the upcoming fall play, *A Midsummer Night's Dream* and the winter Meals on Wheels concert. "I love the jazz songs in that program!"

Lakeesha joined GABC as a sophomore this year. When she first met the other scholars last spring during a preparatory visit, she said she found them "really nice, welcoming,

and helped me see high school from a student point-of-view." She likes having so many choices at Guilford High School and is interested in fiber arts, Spanish II and geometry. She will be trying tennis as a sport this year.

Tamojah, a senior, studied psychology at the University of Vermont last summer and is continuing at GHS with I.B. psychology and anatomy and a course in statistics. She's building on her interest in the sciences which began in middle school and increased with the A.P. biology course she completed in her junior year. Tamojah enjoys gatherings with the Feminist Alliance Club where important issues are freely discussed.

In addition to their studies, sports, and activities, the girls have regular chores around the house, and they volunteer at the Hole in the Wall consignment and thrift shop that supports the GABC program. Resident Director Lynn Prendergast lives in an apartment within the house and is part of the team that supports the scholars during their high school journey. ▼

Irene



Katie

Jazzy



Kyra

Lakeesha



Tamojah

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NEWSLETTER

Managing Editor: Ellen Creane
Design: Words by Jen

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P.O. Box 140
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www.guilfordabc.org



You are the Heart of the Organization — Thank you!

FROM PRESIDENT NANCY PATTON

As the new school year begins, the Guilford ABC program is back in full swing. We are at capacity with six scholars ready to embark on another exciting chapter of learning, growth and leadership development. Our program staff, board of directors, advisory board, host families and volunteers are here to support them every step of the way.



Guilford ABC offers our scholars an engaging and supportive environment with individualized attention from advisors and host families. This would not be possible without the generosity and support of our incredible donors and community. Your contributions, whether financial or in-kind, help make our mission a reality. A special thank you goes out to some of our in-kind supporters this year:

- **College Matters** for their continued commitment to helping our scholars navigate the college application process.
- **The Estate Artists** for their donations of home furnishings and décor to upgrade our spaces.
- **Kerry Schutz Photography** for capturing our scholars' unique personalities through your stunning photography.
- **Outdoor Design & Living** for enhancing our outdoor spaces.

To all of our donors and volunteers — thank you! You are truly the heart of this organization, and we are deeply grateful for your continued support. Together, we are providing opportunities for these scholars to thrive and develop their leadership skills. ▼

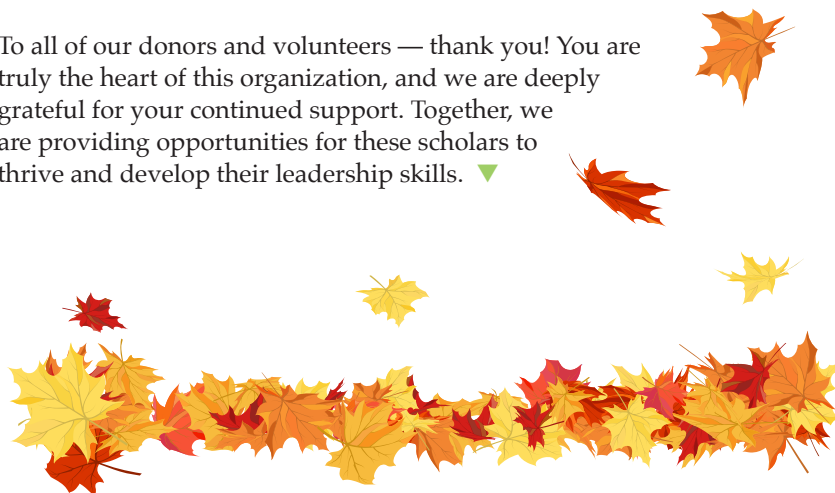


PHOTO CORRECTION

In the Summer GABC newsletter, the names in the photo for Hole in the Wall were reversed. Janet Emanuel is on the right. Gail Sonnichsen Rich is on the left. Thank you to both for your valuable volunteer hours!



Why GABC Needs Your Support More Than Ever

By Georgia Cosgrove, Board Member, Executive Committee

For 51 years now, GABC has enjoyed amazing support from the Guilford community and beyond. This has come in the form of contributions and bequests from individuals, family foundations and community organizations, proceeds from fundraising events, and net revenue from Hole in the Wall thrift store sales. In recent years, Hole in the Wall revenue has covered roughly half of our operating budget, making GABC much less dependent on other fundraising than any of our fellow ABC Community School Programs (CSPs). In 2025-26, however, we are facing some new budget challenges that will likely flip that balance.

For several years we have outsourced bookkeeping and accounting services, graphic design for publications, landscaping, and beginning in 2024, property maintenance management. We have also seen increases in our costs for tutors, wages for house coverage support staff, and providing meals for the scholars. Staffing costs for the Hole in the Wall have grown with minimum wage increases and higher volume of donations, consignments, and sales. We are deeply grateful for the amazing army of volunteers who offset even further challenges to the bottom line!

Perhaps the most significant change is that the 2025-26 budget includes funding for a part-time Program Coordinator to perform many of the administrative functions formerly handled by board members. Societal changes since COVID have made it increasingly difficult to fill the very time-consuming leadership roles on our board as administrative demands on the program for reporting and compliance with National ABC have increased. Several other CSPs have faced similar challenges and added administrative staff to address them. We are fortunate that Judy Wright was able to hit the ground running when she assumed the position on July 1 since she filled several key roles on the board, including Co-President. She will also be the point person for communications with parents, National ABC, vendors, Guilford High School personnel, and anyone else needing to communicate with the organization.

So...we need your help more than ever. We will send out our Annual Appeal mailing in December but you can donate anytime through our website, guilfordabc.org, or send your gift to Guilford A Better Chance, P.O. Box 140, Guilford CT 06437.

Your support honors our scholars' hard work and accomplishments. Every gift is important. Your participation sends a clear message that our community cares about the success of our Guilford ABC Scholars. On behalf of our scholars and their families, THANK YOU! ▼



Guilford ABC is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization. All contributions not exchanged for goods or services are fully tax-deductible.



Gabby Vargas

Kathryn (Gabby) Vargas
GABC Alum 2014
Currently in New York, NY

"I graduated from Wesleyan University with a BA in Psychology and Neuroscience (2018). I'm currently a Master of Social Work student at Fordham University (expected graduation - 2026). I'm interning at Catholic Charities of NY in the immigration division. I'm still in touch with some of my GABC sisters! "

*Compiled by Maria Brown,
Member, GABC Board of
Directors*

Your donations support Guilford A Better Chance. Thank you!

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*Wishing our scholars and
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Shopping at Hole in the Wall Helps Save the Planet and So Much More!

As the temperatures drop outside, there are cool items and frosty deals inside Hole in the Wall! Why do people shop thrift, consign, and secondhand? Patty Sullivan, manager of the Guilford A Better Chance shop has powerful answers.

"While shopping at Hole in the Wall you save money, help the planet and support the community. Each thrifted gem helps keep it out of landfills and recycles and reuses," she affirms.

And there's more! "Items are affordable and unique. Secondhand shopping makes quality, one-of-a-kind items accessible that can't be found in fast fashion. We may have a new Target and TJ Maxx in town, but you can come to Hole in the Wall and find items purchased at those places with the tags still on them for at least half the price."

Shopping at this exciting place has personal benefits, too. "Thrifters love the hunt for the greatest bargain and finding just the exact unique treasure. We often hear shoppers say, 'This is the perfect gift or my friend loves these.' It's a wonderful way to offer someone a I was thinking of you gift without breaking the bank," Patty says.



All Bundled up with deals from Hole in the Wall. L-R Aremy Grajales, Judi Wallace, Harriet Ciani, Patty Sullivan and Christina Babecki.

Patty has some delicious advice: "Bake some cookies or a cake and put them on a plate/platter you buy from our popular Dollar Rack. (Yes... items that are really only a dollar!) No need to have the plate returned, it becomes part of the gift!"

Patty loves her work at this fun place to shop. "Every dollar you spend at Hole in the Wall has the added bonus of supporting the amazing scholars at Guilford A Better Chance. Stop in soon for a new-to-you winter coat or unique holiday gift for someone; **JUST BECAUSE!**" ▼

Hole in the Wall
Consignment and Thrift Shop
31 Boston St, Guilford, CT 06437
(203) 453-2088

www.guilfordabc.org