

# SISTERMENTORS

Promoting Education Among Women and Girls of Color

Fall/Winter 2005 Newsletter

A Newsletter for Donors and Friends of SisterMentors

## Girls Overnight Visit to the University of Virginia

"This visit really broadened my horizon[s] and I need to get my grades up because I really like UVA," said one of the 26 girls who went on SisterMentors' visit to the University of Virginia ("UVA") in Charlottesville this March. Girls in grades seven through eleven from Alexandria, Virginia; Prince George's County, Maryland; and Washington, D.C. spent two remarkable days on the UVA campus. Some of the girls had been on SisterMentors college trips before, including our trips last year to the University of Maryland, College Park and George Mason University in Virginia.

The trip began with a tasty and nutritious breakfast donated by Whole Foods Market of Arlington, Virginia. The girls ate breakfast on the bus and



reviewed their notes from the Social Skills and Etiquette workshop they took in February. During their visit, we wanted girls to put into practice the social skills and etiquette they had acquired during the February workshop.

The girls were hosted by Dean Rick Turner, Director of the Office of African American Affairs and Professor of Sociology. Dean Turner welcomed girls to campus with a buffet lunch and then talked with them

*continued on page 6*

### IN THIS ISSUE

Girls Overnight Visit to the University of Virginia. . . . .	1
SisterMentors Reaches a Milestone with 22 Ph.D.s. . . . .	1
From the Executive Director. . . . .	2
Lack of Diversity Among Ph.D.s, Study Finds . . . . .	3
Social Skills and Etiquette Workshop. . . . .	4
Our Eleventh Graders Return to UVA. . . . .	5
Dr. Shireen Lewis Honored by Douglass College for Distinguished Achievement . . . . .	8
From Girls in Our Program. . . . .	8
Thank You Very Much! . . . . .	9
And a Big Thank You. . . . .	9
Donate to Us through CFC . . . . .	10

## SisterMentors Reaches a Milestone with 22 Ph.D.s.

SisterMentors has reached a milestone with 22 women of color Ph.D.s. Here's a profile of our three recent graduates:

**Shona Jackson** received her doctorate in June 2005, making her the twenty-second woman SisterMentors has helped to receive the doctorate. Shona received her doctorate from the Program in Modern Thought and Literature at Stanford University. She began a tenure track Assistant Professor position at a university this fall. Shona is a member of the Association of Caribbean Women Writers and Scholars, and the Caribbean Studies Association. She is the author of several scholarly articles and co-edits the Caribbean Studies Book Series at Lexington Books. Shona was born in Georgetown, Guyana.

*continued on page 3*

## From the Executive Director

Dear Donors and Friends:

Welcome to our annual fall newsletter. We always look forward to updating you on our activities. Something good happens at SisterMentors every day and we are always happy to share the good news with you. We are celebrating SisterMentors' eighth anniversary this fall and we remain passionate about the work we do with women and girls of color.

Thanks to your generous support, SisterMentors recently reached a milestone with 22 women of color doctorates and we have expanded and improved our program this past school year.

Our three new doctorates are: Shona Jackson, Laura Daughtery and Carolyn Peoples Veiga. With her newly acquired doctorate, Shona Jackson began a tenure track Assistant Professor position this fall and Laura Daughtery began an Assistant Professor position at the university where she received her doctorate. Both women join the ranks of other SisterMentors graduates who went to teach at universities after getting the doctorate, as SisterMentors continues to contribute professors of color as role models and mentors for students of color. All of the women in our program are making good progress on their dissertation and we expect more women to get doctorates in 2005.

This year we expanded our college visit to allow 26 SisterMentors girls to spend more time on campus and get a deeper understanding of college life. Instead of one day, we spent two entire days at the University of Virginia ("UVA") in Charlottesville. This was our first overnight visit since we began our college visits three years ago. As guests of Dean Rick Turner, Director of the Office of African American Affairs and Professor of Sociology, the girls spent several sessions with him dialoguing about UVA and his own experience as a young man of color pursuing an education. The girls spent an exciting afternoon participating in Dean Turner's upper level Sociology class and an entire morning with Dean Valerie Gregory, Assistant Dean of Admissions.

The first group of girls SisterMentors will send off to college returned to UVA in July, at the invitation of Dean Gregory. Six girls came on the trip --- five of them started eleventh grade this fall and one started tenth grade. The girls met with Dean Gregory for one-on-one sessions to discuss their grades and classes as they enter their last few years of high school and prepare for college admissions. For all of the girls except one, UVA is their state university. We are very excited about these girls as we help them stay focused on preparing for college admission.

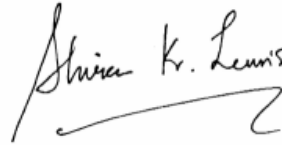
Both visits to UVA were made possible by your generous support. You are an integral part of SisterMentors and I cannot thank you enough for your wonderful support and loyalty. Thank you and please continue to support us.

Thanks to generous support from one of our donors, Christine Boehm, we added a Social Skills and Etiquette workshop for our girls this year. The workshop was in response to behavior by some of our girls who were unaware of appropriate behavior for specific social settings. We received very positive feedback from girls and their parents after the workshop.

We are very excited about our participation in the Combined Federal Campaign ("CFC") fundraising effort. If you have friends who are federal employees in the Washington, D.C. area, please encourage them to donate to us through CFC. We are listed in the CFC catalog under our umbrella nonprofit organization "EduSeed" and our designation number is 7132. Please contact me if you have any questions about our participation in CFC.

As always, I encourage you to contact me for any reason. I would be delighted to hear from you. I can be reached at [director@sistermentors.org](mailto:director@sistermentors.org) or 202-775-6846.

Thanks again for your support of SisterMentors!



Shireen K. Lewis, Ph.D.

*"SisterMentors has been a huge building block in my life since I was in the 8th grade. We have done so many wonderful things as a group, that I would have never been able to experience on my own. I am now in the 11th grade, and because of SisterMentors, I am more prepared for college after I graduate from high school.*

*I have met with many other sisters of color who have also been groomed by SisterMentors and have been able to accomplish their goals. I am blessed to have these sisters as a part of my life and take from them parts of their experiences in hopes that I too will be able to make my dreams a reality."*

*Megan Tuck, 11th Grade*

# SisterMentors Reaches a Milestone with 22 Ph.D.s.

Continued from page 1

**Laura Daughtery** received her doctorate in Social Work in December 2004 from Catholic University and began an Assistant Professor position this fall. She had a former career as a licensed clinical social worker, which included direct services to women and children. Laura was born in 1954, the year the Supreme Court issued Brown v. Board of Education and believes there is a relationship between being born that year and being the first member of her family to complete college.

**Carolyn Peoples Veiga** received her doctorate in November 2004 from the University of Maryland's College of Education, Department of Human Development. Her research focuses on adult development and achievement motivation. She is conducting research on motivation and academic achievement with returning women students of African descent. Carolyn is an active member of her community and serves in many community organizations. She recently became a member of EduSeed's Board of Directors.

*"Through word of mouth, I found out about SisterMentors but could not join for a year. While on the waiting list, I achieved little work on the dissertation. Shortly after joining SisterMentors, however, I began to meet goals set for myself. One of the most valuable aspects of the group is the goal setting, which helped me to see and approach my work in more manageable ways. I also had the amazing opportunity to mentor young girls of color and encourage them to continue seeking success through education.*

*In SisterMentors, I was encouraged by a group of caring women and had the opportunity to encourage others as well. The lessons about perseverance that I learned from SisterMentors women stayed with me and carried me through. These lessons are what I take away from the group and hope to continue to share with other women."*

*Shona Jackson, Ph.D.  
SisterMentors 2005 Graduate*

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## Lack of Diversity Among Ph.D.s, Study Finds

For the past eight years SisterMentors has been working to increase diversity among Ph.D.s. We have helped 22 women of color to complete their dissertation and get their doctorate. Why is our work with doctoral women of color important? In a recently released study, "Diversity and the Ph.D.: A Review of Efforts to Broaden Race and Ethnicity in U.S. Doctoral Education," the Woodrow Wilson National Fellowship Foundation found that "doctoral education's diversity record is poor" and "the situation is getting worse."

The study, which focuses on Hispanics and African Americans, finds that "the rate of Ph.D. attainment [among these two groups] remains below the representation of people of color in the doctoral age population." The study further finds that only seven percent of all doctoral recipients in 2003 were Hispanic and African American. "The fact remains that doctoral programs have made significantly less progress in diversifying than have businesses and government, or for that matter other levels of the educational system," Robert Weisbuch, the foundation's president, writes in the preface of the study. "The next generation of college students will include dramatically more students of color but their teachers will remain overwhelmingly white because a white student is three times more likely as a student of color to get the doctorate," Mr. Weisbuch continues.

At SisterMentors, our work helps provide more doctorates of color so that the girls in our program -- who are part of the next generation of students Mr. Weisbuch mentions -- will have more of an opportunity to be taught and mentored by women of color professors when they get to college. Some of SisterMentors' graduates, including recent graduates, Shona Jackson and Laura Daughtery, became university professors after receiving their doctorate.

The study's recommendation to use mentoring to improve diversity among Ph.D.s is at the heart of the work we do at SisterMentors. We know that mentoring doctoral students works. The success of the SisterMentors graduates who were mentored by their peers and received one-on-one mentoring and coaching from EduSeed's Executive Director, Dr. Shireen Lewis, proves the value of mentoring.

The study also recommends that doctoral education programs form alliances with students in grades K-12 so that young students learn about opportunities for degrees. At SisterMentors, we believe that doctoral students of color and Ph.D.s are excellent role models for young people of color and are a powerful source of inspiration for young students, especially those who will be the first generation in their family to go to college. SisterMentors women of color doctoral students give

continued on page 6

# Social Skills and Etiquette Workshop



*SisterMentors Girls at the Etiquette Workshop*

Thanks to generous support from one of our donors, Christine Boehm, 26 SisterMentors girls were treated in February to a workshop on social skills and etiquette. Because of Ms. Boehm's funding, SisterMentors was able to hire Ms. Fannie Allen, of the prestigious Allen Etiquette Institute, to conduct the workshop which was held at a luxurious hotel in downtown Washington, D.C. Ms. Allen has years of experience teaching social skills and etiquette to children, teenagers, college students and the corporate and diplomatic world.

The workshop was in response to behavior by some of our girls who were unaware of appropriate behavior for specific social settings. The girls took the three hour workshop seriously. They watched closely and listened attentively. After the workshop, girls reported new confidence in dealing with others and a better understanding of how to conduct themselves in social settings.

Before the workshop began, Dr. Shireen Lewis spoke to the girls about the significance of learning social skills and etiquette and how girls may apply what they learn to their daily lives. Dr. Lewis also pointed out to girls, some of whom are immigrants, that the workshop teaches them how to conduct themselves in American society and that this new and different perspective should not be taken as a judgment of their particular social or cultural practices. She told girls that they should continue thinking of their ethnic practices as valid while looking at what they learn in the workshop as a new way of behaving in social settings in their new home.

Ms. Allen started the workshop by giving the girls a booklet entitled, "Always Be the Best You Can Be," which included the do's and don'ts of social skills and etiquette. She began by talking to girls about the importance of respecting themselves and others

and encouraged them to always show style and elegance. She demonstrated greeting others with a confident handshake and suggested using titles to address adults. She mentioned appropriate attire for different social occasions, good and bad body language, and the importance of making eye contact and saying "please," "excuse me" and "thank you" when communicating.

Ms. Allen then described a scenario about receiving an invitation in the mail to the White House and asked the girls to role play their response. She advised girls to avoid saying negative things about people by putting all their negative thoughts into a paper bag and then throwing the bag away. Ms. Allen talked about the importance of being on time for every occasion and gave tips for job interviews. She livened up her workshop by telling stories about people who suffered disastrous consequences because of their lack of social skills and etiquette, including a story about a woman who did not get a job offer because of lack of care with personal hygiene.

The etiquette part of the workshop followed the session on social skills. The girls sat down to a four course meal served by two waiters. Each table had name cards for the girls and all the cutlery, glasses and dishes were laid out to facilitate the lesson. Girls watched closely and listened attentively as Ms. Allen taught the differences between the Continental and American style of dining. Ms. Allen moved from table to table to give one-on-one instructions on the proper use of knives, forks and spoons including how to place cutlery on a plate to signal to the waiter that you are done with your meal. She also talked to girls about the importance of a proper diet which excludes fast food. Ms. Allen ended the workshop by giving feedback to girls on making a toast to an honored guest and presenting a prize or award at a special occasion.

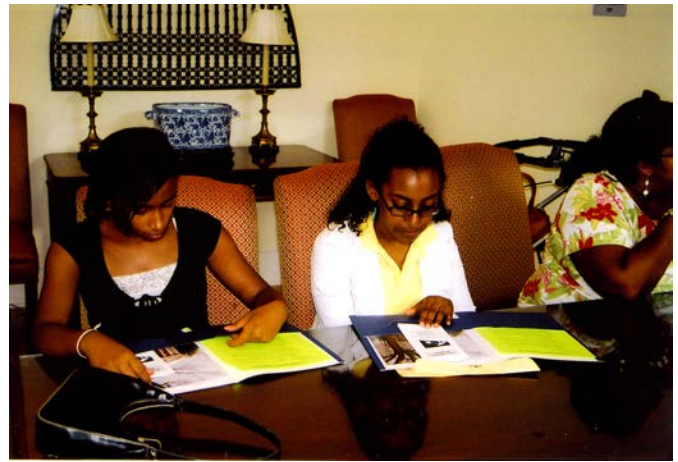
The girls and their parents responded enthusiastically to the workshop. One of the girls went home and taught her family everything she had learned. A mother told us that because of the workshop her family will practice dining etiquette once a month. And another girl went home and asked her father to take her to a restaurant where she practiced the skills she acquired at the workshop.

When they visited the University of Virginia in March, SisterMentors girls had an opportunity to implement the skills they learned at the February workshop. Girls reviewed the booklets they had received from Ms. Allen in preparation for their meetings with the Deans at the university and for eating meals during their visit.

## Our Eleventh Graders Return to the University of Virginia



*SisterMentors Girls with Dean Gregory*



*Eleventh Graders Reviewing UVA Material*

On July 20, 2005, six SisterMentors girls returned to the University of Virginia at the invitation of Dean Valerie Gregory, Assistant Dean of Admissions. Five of the girls are eleventh graders this fall and one is a tenth grader. The current eleventh graders will be the first group of girls SisterMentors will send off to college in 2007.

Dean Gregory invited these girls back during their March campus visit because, she explained, academic performance in eleventh and twelfth grades plays a major role in college admission. The goal was to do an individual evaluation of each girl's academic performance to date and advise on how they can improve their chances of getting into a good college. Two mothers, Nancy Jairrels and Bunny Honduras, accompanied girls on the trip.

Dean Gregory was gracious, warm and straight-forward with girls about their grades and classes. Assisted by one of the admissions counselors, Ryan Hargraves, each girl had a one-on-one meeting for over an hour. After carefully looking at each transcript, list of classes for eleventh grade and extracurricular activities, Dean Gregory started by asking each girl about her future plans. She repeated some of the advice she had given in March --- that girls should take some of the most difficult classes in core areas that their school has to offer, which is usually Advanced Placement ("AP") and Honors classes.

Dean Gregory also talked about the SATs and encouraged girls to take leadership roles in organizations or groups in which they were already involved. She talked to a girl about her average grades and asked why she was not an above average student. She then advised the girl to "step it up" by first talking with her guidance counselor to try to change one of her classes to a Science class. Dean Gregory advised another girl, who is a strong fiction and poetry writer, to

start entering competitions to win awards so that she can include these achievements on her college applications.

Dean Gregory praised one of the girls for her excellent grades in AP and Honors classes. The girl had already started taking challenging classes in Math and Science in tenth grade. When talking about her family background, the girl explained that except for a cousin who recently began college, she will be the first in her immediate and extended family to go to college. She also noted that she lives with her mother and sister. Dean Gregory was very impressed and told the girl that if she were to keep up her excellent academic performance in eleventh and twelfth grades then she should certainly apply to Harvard University.

At the end of the visit, the girls thanked Dean Gregory for helping them to better prepare for college. We ended our day at UVA with a birthday cake to celebrate one of the girls who had joyously turned sixteen that day.

*"I think what SisterMentors does with these girls is amazing. They are smart, poised and motivated. I believe it is because of the support SisterMentors gives to girls by inspiring them with mentors who are successful and who look like them; it becomes a mirror for what they could look like in the future. It has given me great pleasure to work with SisterMentors girls advising them about the admission process. It is just a small part we can contribute to a big dream for each of these girls."*

*Valerie Gregory  
Assistant Dean of Admissions  
The University of Virginia*

## Lack of Diversity Among Ph.D.s, Study Finds

*Continued from page 3*

back by mentoring middle and high school girls, encouraging them to stay in school, do well and go on to college. Women talk to girls about their own educational experiences including their pursuit of the doctorate. Almost all the girls in our program had never heard of a doctorate before meeting our women.

But it is not just about letting the girls know about opportunities for degrees. It is also about talking to girls about perseverance. Girls are awed and inspired by our women's stories about persevering in school despite the obstacles, as they, too, begin to believe that they can achieve educational success.

The study focuses on shrinking financial support for doctoral students of color because of fear of legal challenges and cites several programs that have changed their focus from funding exclusively doctoral students of color to opening up funding to all students. At SisterMentors we know that financial support for doctoral students is important because it frees up time to make substantial progress on the dissertation. Without financial support, doctoral students must work full time jobs to support themselves and their families. This makes the pursuit of the doctorate more difficult as full time work leaves very little time to work on the dissertation and contributes to the high drop out rate, as many studies have shown.

The majority of the women in SisterMentors do not receive institutional financial support. Almost all of them work full time. However, SisterMentors is proving that mentoring alone, even without institutional funding, can be enough to help doctoral students complete their dissertations and get their doctorate. We have helped 22 women of color to get doctorates since our inception in September 1997 and expect many more SisterMentors women to get doctorates in the coming years. We are privileged to have the opportunity to help women of color fulfill their dreams.



*SisterMentors Women*

## Girls Overnight Visit to UVA

*Continued from page 1*

about UVA's commitment to students of color including its high retention rate of African American students. He also talked about the peer advisor program where first year students are advised and supported by second and third year students. Girls asked Dean Turner questions about his life and college experience. He shared with them some of his life experiences and advised them to read a lot in their middle and high school years so that they would not have to take remedial classes in college.

### Class Participation



*SisterMentors Girls Participating in a UVA Class*

"The best part about this visit is that we got to go to a college class," one of the girls said. This year, the girls' highest rating went to their participation in a class discussion. Girls were invited to attend an upper level class called "Sociology of the African American Community," attended by about 30 UVA undergraduate juniors and seniors that day. Dean Turner distributed an editorial on the Michael Jackson child molestation case, which was being heard in court at that time, and on other aspects of Jackson's life. He told the class that they had five minutes to read the article and then he would call on them for their opinion. Girls immediately focused on the article and began reading intensely.

Dean Turner started the class discussion by calling on the girls. "So what do you think about Michael Jackson?" he asked. Girls jumped in and enthusiastically expressed their opinions ranging from child molestation is wrong to citing Jackson's lack of a childhood as the cause of him changing his physical appearance. One girl said that Jackson had "some serious soul searching to do" and then went on to say that she thinks he is "mentally incapacitated." Some of the girls posed rhetorical questions in response. "If [parents] know that he's a molester, then why do they continue to send their kids over there?" a girl asked. "And what happens when they find out that he has no money?" another girl interjected. It was obvious from the girls' responses and enthusiasm that they had been following the Jackson case closely and cared about the outcome.

### Meeting with the Assistant Dean of Admissions

"I learned a lot about what I want to major in. Dean Gregory majored in the same field [that] I want to [major in]," said one of the girls. Another highlight of the visit was the morning girls spent with Dean Valerie Gregory, Assistant Dean of Admissions.

Dean Gregory asked girls to introduce themselves and to include their favorite classes. She praised the girls for their interest in Math and Science. She started her remarks by warning girls that gaining admission into college is quite competitive and advised them to start preparing now for admission. Dean Gregory emphasized that the type of classes the girls select in high school, especially in their junior and senior years, will determine whether or not they get admitted to a good college. She advised them to take Advanced Placement ("AP") and Honors classes in subjects such as English, Geometry, Algebra II, Trigonometry and Biology or Chemistry. She explained that colleges prefer applicants with a B or C grade in an AP class rather than an A in an ordinary class.

When one of the girls asked about the SATs, Dean Gregory responded that she has seen students with perfect SAT scores jeopardize their chance of admission to college by taking the lowest level of English, Math and Science at their high school. She added that if girls do not score well on the SATs then they must have good grades in AP or Honors classes. She advised girls to start taking the SATs beginning in ninth grade and to repeat the exam a few more times in their junior and senior year because colleges take the applicant's highest score.

Another girl asked about the required grade point average ("GPA") to get into UVA and Dean Gregory advised aiming for an overall 3.5 GPA or higher at the end of tenth grade so that when they start taking AP and Honors classes in eleventh grade their GPA would remain strong even if their grades slip somewhat. Like Dean Turner, Dean Gregory talked about the importance of reading and writing for success in college. She advised girls to start keeping a journal and to write in it every day because this will help them improve their writing and better express themselves on their college admission essays.

The girls asked a lot of questions after Dean Gregory's presentation including what makes UVA special, the total number of students who apply for admission to the university and the actual number admitted, and whether there are Latino professors and sororities at UVA. One of the girls astutely asked Dean Gregory: "If you were to work at another college, where would that be?" Dean Gregory responded that she would work at any university that promoted diversity.

Girls got a real taste of college life when they had lunch at one of the university's largest dining halls. They were very excited about the variety of choices and spent some time exploring all their options before they made their selection and sat down to lunch.

### Meeting with Financial Aid Officer

Girls had a session with a financial aid officer about UVA's financial aid program, "Access UVA," which consists of grants to incoming students who show strong academic achievement but whose families do not have the financial means to pay for college. The financial aid officer explained that grants, unlike loans, are free money that students do not have to pay back. She further explained that UVA wants students to focus on learning instead of worrying about money to pay for college. She added that if students do not qualify for "Access UVA" they are offered loans. A girl asked if UVA offers scholarships, another asked about in-state and out-of-state tuition and another inquired about the total amount of money available to students from "Access UVA." Girls expressed a great deal of surprise at the cost of attending college.

### Dialogue with Women of Color Undergraduates

Girls also spent an evening talking with women of color undergraduates who described their experiences at UVA. Most of the women talked about the community of students of color that they discovered at UVA and the support they receive from that community. A woman from Argentina expressed her delight at encountering diversity among students and said that she never would have thought that she would be friends with people who were so very different from her. Another woman talked about the lack of African American students at her high school and said that, as an African American, she was happy to meet so many African American students at UVA. The women encouraged girls to take their studies seriously and to go to a college where they would be exposed to a diverse student population.

"I want to go to college and be somebody," one of the girls said at the end of the visit. And that's the point of our college visits --- to help girls see the connection between going to college and a successful future. One of SisterMentors' goals is to help demystify college so girls will get excited and begin to envision themselves on college campuses.

*"SisterMentors came into our lives when my daughter Megan was in middle school, a time when for most teenagers life seems a little confusing and sort of frustrating. SisterMentors was right on time!! Megan was introduced to SisterMentors through an after school program called Project StepOut directed by Ms. Myra Stafford.*

*Dr. Lewis and all who work with her have been more than inspiring and supportive in Megan's education. It has been a pleasure and reassurance knowing that SisterMentors has Megan's best interest at heart. SisterMentors has given us a lot of hope and has opened up more doors of opportunity for Megan to achieve an education beyond high school. We thank you SisterMentors for your care, concern and support!"*

*Gail Tuck  
Mother of SisterMentors Girl*

## Dr. Shireen Lewis Honored by Douglass College for Distinguished Achievement



*Dr. Shireen Lewis with SisterMentors Girls*

Our Executive Director, Dr. Shireen Lewis, was honored by Douglass College on April 13, 2005, for her outstanding contribution to the education of women and girls of color. Douglass College is a premier college for women at Rutgers University. Dr. Lewis was inducted into the Douglass Society, the highest honor Douglass College gives to its most distinguished graduates. In honoring Dr. Lewis, the Dean of Douglass College, Carmen Twillie Ambar, and the Board of Directors of the Associate Alumnae of Douglass College identified her as a role model for future generations of women.

As an undergraduate at Douglass, Dr. Lewis graduated with high honors in Spanish and French and was Phi Beta Kappa in her junior year. After Douglass, Dr. Lewis obtained a law degree from the University of Virginia and practiced law with a New York City law firm. She later earned her Ph.D. in French Literature from Duke University and taught at several universities.

“Dr. Lewis’ vision, service and leadership in the community has been tremendous. The results of her unfailing dedication and commitment to women and girls’ education is evident in SisterMentors’ success,” remarked Montina Cole, Chair of EduSeed’s Board of Directors, in a May 2005 press release.

*“I have always felt that there is a direct correlation between images and possibilities. All of us need images that help us to believe that what we hope to achieve is actually possible. These images help us reimagine not only who we are, but who we can be. SisterMentors is about being one of those images that helps a young woman reinvent her possibilities. There is no greater gift than supporting an organization that has such transformative ability.”*

*Carmen Twillie Ambar  
Dean, Douglass College  
Rutgers University*

## From Girls in Our Program

*SisterMentors helps us to stay focused on everything. For us, SisterMentors’ goal is to help us, girls of color, become proud of who we are. While we are worrying and focusing on our future, SisterMentors is taking care of us. We have been with SisterMentors since middle school and we can honestly say that at first we weren’t as serious about SisterMentors as we should have been. Maybe it was our lack of knowledge but it didn’t really concern us then. That was then, this is now. I guess you can say our maturity level grew because now we understand the importance of SisterMentors and how many doors it has opened for us.*

*We think that it’s truly one of the greatest programs in the Metropolitan, D.C. area. We’re so grateful that we have a chance to be a part of it. SisterMentors has opened our eyes so much in the years we’ve spent with them. Dr. Lewis and the other SisterMentors women have had such a positive impact on our lives and on our view of the future. Hopefully they will continue with their great efforts so that there will be many other lucky girls like us who will see a bright future ahead of them, thanks to this program.*

*We thank SisterMentors and everybody else who donate their money and volunteer their time to help our various college trips to places such as the University of Virginia, George Mason University, the University of Maryland College Park, and many more coming our way. Everyone in SisterMentors including mentors, chaperons, students and donors all add different components to help us be successful.*

*Being a part of SisterMentors has had a big impact on our lives. And we are so grateful to have such a tremendous experience. So thank you, SisterMentors. Thank you, Dr. Lewis. Thanks to everyone. For caring.*

Arsema Ghirmai, 11<sup>th</sup> Grade  
Sara Estefanos, 11<sup>th</sup> Grade



*Mentoring Girls*



## Thank You Very Much!

Thank you to outgoing EduSeed board member, Diana Zentay. Thank you, Diana, for all of your tireless work on behalf of EduSeed and SisterMentors and for your very generous spirit. We will miss you!!!

We would like to thank volunteers Mary Helen Coleman, Felicia Johnson, Bianca Ennix, Rachel Nee and Albert Dwumahene for all their help. Thanks to Sherry Quirk, Norma Scogin and Keelin Quirk for their support and generosity toward SisterMentors.

Special thanks to Mike Sherman, Sarah Posner, Lisa Webster, Anjanette Milladge, Robbie Ross Tisch, Nancy Bryant, Tracy Gary, Jean Beard, Mandara, Reverend Sylvia Sumter of Unity of Washington, D.C., Reverend Lee Earl of Shiloh Baptist Church in Alexandria, Virginia, and Reverend A. Knighton Stanley of Peoples Congregational United Church of Christ in Washington, D.C.

And very special thanks to the girls in our program who enthusiastically help with fundraising and otherwise donate their time to SisterMentors, Rediet Abate, Cindy Ayala, Sara Estefanos, Kedest Firdaweke, Arsema Ghirmai, Roxie Jairrels and Ruhama Yared. And thanks to all the SisterMentors women who help fundraise, especially Koritha Mitchell and Losang Rabgey.

## And a BIG thank you...

Thank you to Whole Foods Market for its strong continuing support of SisterMentors. For the past two years, it has provided breakfast for the girls' college visits. This year, Whole Foods Market on P Street in Washington, D.C. selected us for five percent of all their proceeds on June 29 and we received \$5,750!!! Thanks to Zachary Stein for all his hard work. Thanks also to Noel Quinn of Whole Foods Market in Arlington, Virginia for his generosity with breakfast for our girls on our UVA trip in March. Thank you!!!



*SisterMentors at Whole Foods Market on P Street*

## ✂️ ===== PLEASE SUPPORT OUR WORK =====

Please support SisterMentors by sending a donation to help with our continued mentoring of women and girls of color. SisterMentors' goal is to raise \$30,000 by December 15, 2005.

- SisterMentors Angel: \$500
- SisterMentors Superstar: \$250
- SisterMentors Star: \$150
- SisterMentors Supporter: \$100
- SisterMentors Sustainer: \$50
- Other: \_\_\_\_\_
- Yes, my employer/company has a matching gift program and I have asked them to match my donation to SisterMentors.



Please use the enclosed addressed envelope and make your check payable to EduSeed/SisterMentors and mail to:

**EduSeed/SisterMentors  
1666 K Street N.W., Suite 700  
Washington, D.C. 20006**

*Please remember your donation is tax deductible.*

## Who We Are

SisterMentors is a project of EduSeed, a nonprofit organization located in Washington, D.C. EduSeed's mission is to promote education among traditionally disadvantaged groups such as women and people of color. SisterMentors helps women of color to complete their dissertation and get the doctorate. The women in turn, while they are in our program, give back to their community by mentoring girls of color in middle and high schools. The women and girls are African American, Latina, Asian American and women and girls who are immigrants.

Our goal is to help stop the high drop-out rate among girls of color in middle and high school and also increase the number of women of color doctorates.

We believe that doctoral candidates and Ph.D.s of color are excellent role models — and a powerful yet untapped source of knowledge, motivation and inspiration — for children of color at risk of dropping out of school.

We exist because statistics show that more than 50 percent of doctoral candidates drop out of their programs. In 2003, out of 50.6 percent of women doctorates only 10.6 percent went to women of color (African American, Latina, Asian American and Native American combined). We also exist because girls of color are dropping out of school at an early age. Our message to girls is to stay in school, do well and go to college.

We have helped 22 women of color to complete their dissertations and get their doctorates since September 1997. We mentor two groups of girls in schools in the Washington, D.C. metropolitan area.

## EduSeed's Board of Directors

EduSeed's current board members are the following:

- Timothy Boller
- Claudia Cantarella
- Montina M. Cole
- Shireen K. Lewis
- Michael Sherman
- Carolyn Peoples Veiga
- Michael Tajchman

For more information on the Board of Directors please visit [www.eduseed.org](http://www.eduseed.org).

## Donate to Us through CFC



Our umbrella nonprofit organization, EduSeed, was selected to participate in the Combined Federal Campaign ("CFC") this year.

If you have friends who are federal employees in the Washington, D.C. area, please ask them to donate to us through CFC. We are listed in the CFC catalog under "EduSeed," and our designation number is 7132. Thanks for your support of our work!!!

### **EDUSEED/SISTERMENTORS**

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Promoting Education Among Women and Girls of Color

*Fall/Winter 2005 Newsletter*