



Jasmine Arrington '07

CATC Scholarship Dinner Keynote Speaker

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My name is Jasmine Arrington and I am an alumna of Frances Xavier Warde, Class of 2007.

In the fifth grade, I transferred to FXW because I wasn't being challenged. Little did I know, I would be greatly shaped by the quality of education as well as opportunities to explore my interests and faith. FXW nurtured and encouraged my intellectual curiosity, which poised me for high school at the Latin School of Chicago. I graduated from Vanderbilt University with honors and am currently a first-year medical student at the University of Illinois at Chicago, where I am pursuing my Medical Doctorate and Master of Public Health.

As I reflected on my time at FXW, I had the realization that FXW changed my life. I was born and raised on the South Side of Chicago and going to school at FXW gave me an entirely different experience that I know many do not have. I became friends with people of different races, religions, socioeconomic statuses, and cultures – I learned so much! As much as I learned from others, my peers were able to learn from me and my differences in faith and background as well.

One of the pillars of my educational experience at FXW was religion class as a "Shooting Star". While the "Moonbeams" prepared for confirmation, FXW created an ideal environment for me to grow in my faith as a non-denominational Christian. It was as a "Shooting Star" that I not only studied Christianity, but I learned about Judaism, Islam, and other religions that my peers and people in the world at large follow. This broad religious education taught me to understand others that hold different beliefs than me while fostering a community that values respect, compassion, and love.

Another pillar of my FXW experience was the learning environment. Through small class sizes and hands on learning, I felt seen, acknowledged, and challenged. The incredible teachers at FXW gave me a strong foundation in how to study, think critically, research, and ask questions.



From the Invention Convention, to building a Skate Park for physics, or learning how to knit in Exploratory, FXW made it possible for me to engage in scholarship in exciting and interactive ways.

I have many fond memories of FXW, but one I will never forget is being the first recipient of the Father Bob McLaughlin Scholarship in eighth grade. The day I received the award, I was told that I needed to stay after school for a meeting. Now in my mind, that could only mean one thing – I was in trouble. And I was the well behaved, rule-following type, so I had no idea what I could have possibly done. I mean my heart was pounding on my way to this “meeting” and I never suspected that I would be met by cake, balloons, and people that I loved. My parents, teachers, and administrators, like Ms. Cashman, were all there. For me, the McLaughlin Scholarship symbolized the faith that FXW had in me and affirmed that I was a valued member of the community worth investing in.

Many years ago, at a Children at the Crossroads Scholarship Dinner much like this, people decided to invest in students like me. I had the academic achievement and desire for rigor, but the key was opportunity through financial support. I am the eldest of four children. With three younger brothers that my parents had to consider financially, paying full tuition was not possible for my family. Scholarship from Children at the Crossroads made it possible for my parents to send me to FXW by making their financial contribution reasonable for my family.

Tonight, your donations to Children at the Crossroads are more than a number. Your donations are an investment in a student’s spiritual and intellectual development, a vehicle for diversity, a means to alleviate financial burden, and a message that says “someone believes in you.”

I am eternally grateful for the financial support that I received. FXW put me on the path to reach my greatest potential. Now I am living my dream of going to medical school to become a physician researcher. When I finish my training I aspire to address health inequities in underserved black and Latino communities where I will engage in social justice as a health care provider, advocate and public health leader. It would be remiss of me if I did not thank my parents, Kiesha and Darryl Arrington, who raised me well and taught me to value education,



leadership and service from a young age. It's their parenting that made me the person FXW wanted to invest in.

Alas, I am only one alumna, with one story. There are so many more to be told...and even more to be written.

Thank you so much for being here today and listening to my story! Your generous investment in Children at the Crossroads is going to change a FXW student's life, and one day, the world.

Thank you.