

JUNIOR STUDENT SPOTLIGHT



Shantal Richards joined Minds Matter of Boston as a sophomore. During her first year, she applied to and attended the summer program at Phillips Exeter Academy, one of the nation's top college preparatory schools. Mike Farrell, Shantal's mentor, commented about the impact this summer experience had on her.

"It was incredible to see the confidence that Shantal developed between her first and second year in the program."

During her junior year with Minds Matter, Shantal targeted out-of-state, college-level summer programs. After a year of hard work researching and completing applications with the support of her mentors, Shantal was accepted to summer programs at Brown University, Columbia University, and Cornell University. She ultimately elected to pursue her interest in science by attending Brown's Techniques in DNA-Based Biotechnology course. The work was rigorous and challenging, but Shantal received a positive and uplifting letter from the instructor.

"Shantal's writing is exceptional. Her willingness to work and re-work projects and assignments results in the production of near perfect work. She is a model student and shows great promise as a student in any discipline, including research science."

In addition to providing Shantal the opportunity to challenge herself academically, the Brown program introduced her to college life and helped frame her senior year college search. Shantal observed,

"Being at Brown provided me with the opportunity to see what a college has to offer and understand what to look for in other schools that I am applying to."

Shantal is busy this year with varsity soccer, track, science club, and piano lessons, but she is focused on her goal of attending a top-notch university. Farrell added,

"Shantal's long-term potential is truly limitless. This year, she is applying to some of the best schools in the country. I always

tell her that if any school doesn't accept her then they will be making a huge mistake. I truly mean this because I know that she is going to succeed at whatever she decides to do in life."

Minds Matter has helped Shantal participate in two outstanding summer programs and, more importantly, provided her with mentorship and guidance that gave her the confidence to pursue her goals. Jim Tomczyk and Seth Palmer, current co-presidents of Minds Matter of Boston said,

"Shantal is an amazing young woman—smart, funny, hardworking, and a joy to be around. The resources and support provided by Minds Matter combined with Shantal's commitment and hard work have produced tremendous results that speak to the power of the program."