



First Generation St. Petersburg High School (FL) Student Receives Full Scholarship to Caltech

College planning program guides first generation and under resourced students into top colleges and full scholarships.

ST. PETERSBURG, FL, USA, May 18, 2024 /[EINPresswire.com/](https://www.einpresswire.com/) -- College Planning Program Guides St. Petersburg High School Student into Caltech and a Full Scholarship

At today's St. Petersburg High School (St. Petersburg, FL) commencement exercises, one student has known since December, 2023 that her next step after high school will be on a full scholarship valued at over \$90,000 per year to Caltech in Pasadena, CA. Tuyen Nguyen, a first generation Vietnamese immigrant in the St. Petersburg High School IB Program, by happenstance, attended a meeting as a high school junior that placed her on the pathway into a previously unimaginable future. Tuyen attended a lunchtime meeting of the College Cohort Club, sponsored by the [Foundation for Ensuring Access and Equity](#)¹, a community-based organization in Marietta, Georgia. The campus-based extension of the foundation's [College Planning Cohort Program](#)² was founded in 2022 by high school sophomores Jocelyne Lioe, Anna Nguyen, and Chelsea Brown, all of whom were long-time participants in the college planning program. Jocelyne and Anna, now high school juniors, joined the program as middle school students.

Tuyen notes, "Although I grew up with my parents telling me to put academics first, there was no guidance regarding college or anything beyond

completing high school. However, participating in the College Planning Cohort Program changed my mindset. I learned how to dream big, strategically plan, and take action. Since my first meeting with Mr. and Mrs. Wynn, via Zoom, they have become a second set of parents. Without their guidance, kindness, time, and energy spent on me throughout the entire college planning process, I would not have this amazing opportunity."

My involvement in the college cohort program has been life changing. I have been selected as a QuestBridge College Prep Scholar and will be attending fully funded summer programs at top colleges."

— Josiah W., Boca Ciega High School

Through the program's books, materials, online curriculum, and personalized guidance, Tuyen joins a long list of students from marginalized and under resourced backgrounds the program has guided into full scholarships at some of America's most selective colleges and universities. The program also boasts a Rhodes Scholar, Elon University Odyssey Scholar, Elks Scholar, Ron Brown Scholar, and multiple Gates Millennium Scholars, Jack Kent Cooke College Scholars, QuestBridge College Prep and College Match Scholars, Meyerhoff Scholars, Posse Foundation Scholars, University of Chicago Odyssey Scholars, Northeastern University Torch Scholars, and North Carolina A&T Dowdy and Cheatham-White Scholars.

[Dr. Lewis Brinson, the Pinellas County Schools Minority Achievement Officer](#) notes, "In 2018, when I first met Mychal and Nina Wynn, the college planning couple who operates the Foundation for Ensuring Access and Equity's nationally recognized 'College Planning Cohort™ Program.' I knew that what they had created is what our students needed. Getting into a school like Caltech, which has a 4% admissions rate and receiving a scholarship that pays tuition, room and board, books, fees, health insurance, transportation, and a summer transition program is an opportunity that most of our students would never know existed without this program. Just ask Tuyen! Or ask Sydney, another one of our students who got into The University of Chicago through this program 4 years ago and is graduating debt-free with a BS in Neuroscience on June 1."

Charles "Chase" Williamson, another first generation student and varsity basketball player attending high school over 450 miles away will be joining Tuyen at Caltech. Chase, whose is graduating from Union Grove High School in McDonough, Georgia heard about the Wynn's work from a friend who the Wynns guided into a full scholarship at North Carolina A&T State University. Mychal Wynn notes, "While we did not begin working with Chase and his family until the summer prior to his senior year of high school, we had enough time to provide guidance in telling his story through his Common Application essay and the many Caltech writing



Tuyen Nguyen - Caltech Bound

supplements. Recruited athletes at Caltech are held to the same high academic standards as other admitted students, so we worked with Chase to ensure that he was taking the most rigorous senior-year course schedule, which included AP Calculus AB.”

Since 2013, the foundation has continually expanded its work providing yearlong college planning support for students in grades 9 - 12; a leadership program for middle school students; study skills and learning strategies support for students in grades 6 - 11; will be introducing ACT Prep and Learning Strategies to students in grades 6 - 12; and will be introducing "HBCU Bound," a comprehensive guide to scholarship opportunities at HBCUs.

Nina Wynn affirms, “We have made a difference in the lives of hundreds of students who are attending college debt-free in preparation for pursuing careers that will lift their families out of poverty. Our students have received full need-based scholarships to such schools as Amherst, Bowdoin, Caltech, Carlton, Claremont McKenna, Duke, Elon, Johns Hopkins, Northwestern, Northeastern, Swarthmore, University of Chicago, Vassar, Vanderbilt, Wesleyan, and Williams. Our students have received full merit scholarships to such HBCUs as Benedict College, Claflin University, North Carolina A&T State, North Carolina Central, Tennessee State, Tuskegee, and Xavier University of Louisiana. These are schools that are first generation friendly, have welcoming environments, and offer varying levels of support for our students.”

More information: <https://www.accessandequity.org/>

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¹ **<https://www.accessandequity.org/>**

² **<https://www.accessandequity.org/programs/college-planning-cohorts/>**

³ **<https://www.pcsb.org/site/default.aspx?PageType=3&ViewID=7b97f7ed-8e5e-4120-848f-a8b4987d588f&FlexDataID=58794&PageID=660>**

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