


FINER

THE FINER ALLIANCE, INC.



MEDIA
KIT
2024-2025



Contact:

media@thefinerallianceinc.org

Visit:

www.finerallianceinc.org





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MESSAGE FROM THE BOARD CHAIR

PROMOTING THE PURSUIT OF LIFELONG LEARNING



Welcome to The Finer Alliance Foundation! As the Board Chair, I am honored to extend a heartfelt welcome to all our scholars, donors, supporters, and partners. Our foundation is committed to empowering and uplifting African American students through education and opportunity.

We believe in the power of education to change lives and create a brighter future for our community. As we embark on this journey together, let us strive for excellence, resilience, and unity. Together, we can break barriers, shatter stereotypes, and build a legacy of success.

I encourage you to embrace your potential, pursue your dreams, and never underestimate the impact you can make. Thank you for being a part of our family and for believing in the power of education to transform lives.

Let's work together to create a future where every African American student has the opportunity to thrive and succeed. Welcome to The Finer Alliance Foundation where dreams take flight and possibilities are endless.

Dr. Tiffany Johnson-Craddock
Board Chair



COMPANY INTRODUCTION



MISSION

The Finer Alliance, Inc. 501(c)(3) is on a mission to elevate scholarship in the African American community through the procurement of post-secondary educational and financial resources that promote the pursuit of academic excellence.

VISION

Our vision is to create the next generation of African American change agents.

VALUES

The Finer Alliance, Inc. values a community that recognizes the importance of educational attainment and assures positive educational outcomes are accessible to all in the African American community regardless of economic circumstance.

PRINCIPLES

- **Partnership & Collaboration** - We seek collaboration and involvement in our work. We desire engagement with members and organizations within the community that share our vision.
- **Integrity** - We value honesty and integrity in our relationships.
- **Impact** - We are driven to make a positive difference in our society.
- **Success** - We evaluate our success based on how many lives we are able to touch.
- **Advocacy** - Connecting people with the right resources to advocate for themselves.
- **Lifelong Learning** - Ongoing voluntary and self-motivated pursuit of knowledge. It enhances social inclusion, self-sustainability, active citizenship, personal development, competitiveness and employability.



BOARD OF DIRECTORS



Dr. Tiffany Johnson-Craddock
Board Chair



Judi Bradley
Board Secretary



Nakia Moore
Board Treasurer



Jeannie Alexander
Director of Scholarships & Programs



Kerilyn Merritt
Director of Marketing & Communications

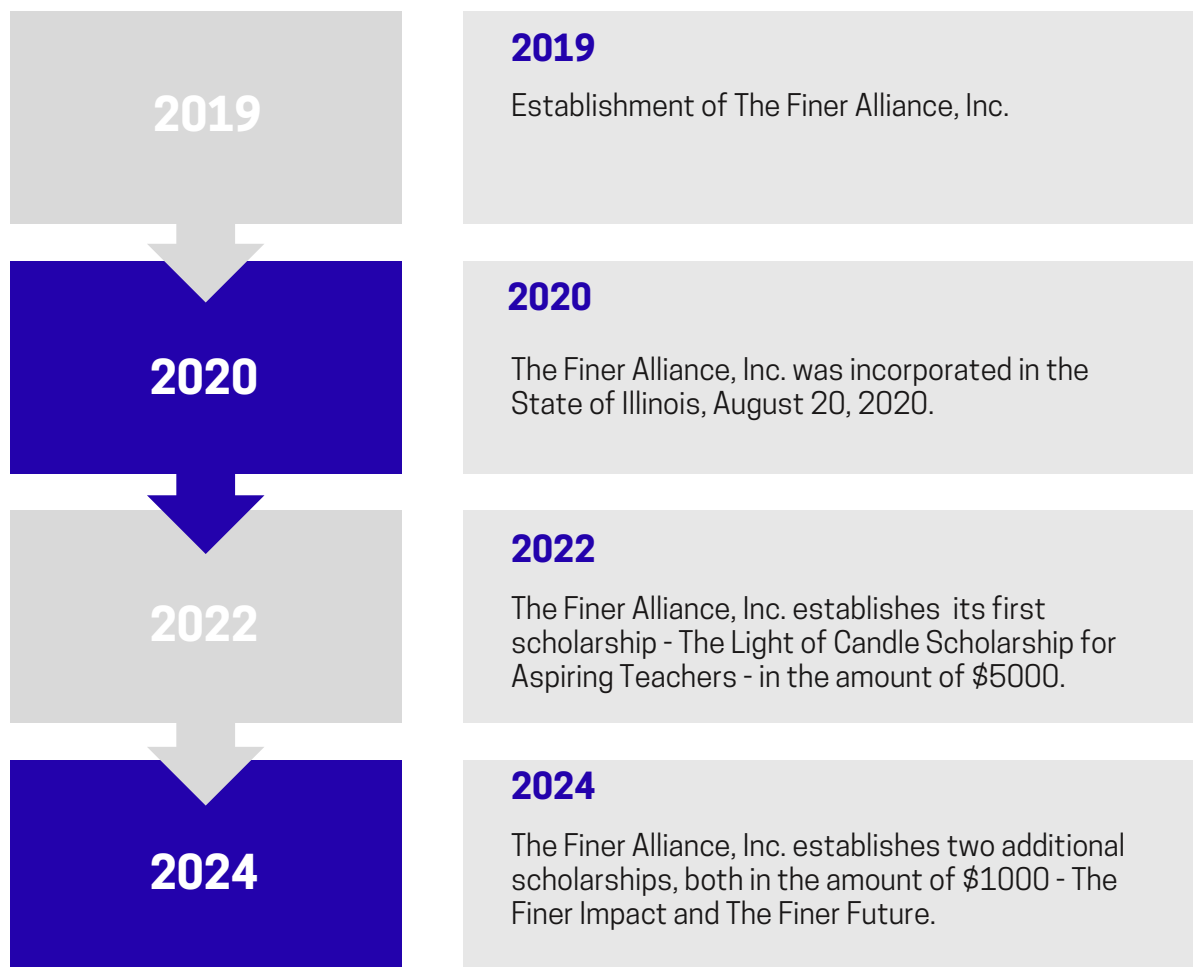


Renée Spruill-Walker
Immediate Past Board Chair

COMPANY BACKGROUND

The Finer Alliance, Inc. was incorporated in the State of Illinois on August 20, 2020. The purpose of this foundation includes encouragement and promotion of education and scholarship, educational research and community service and educational programs. The specific objectives and purposes of The Finer Alliance shall be to solicit, collect and otherwise raise money for charitable purposes including scholarship: to expand, contribute, disburse, and otherwise handle and dispose of the same for such purposes relating to the aims and goals of The Finer Alliance, Inc. and Zeta Phi Beta Sorority, Incorporated – Tau Xi Zeta Chapter. The Finer Alliance, Inc. received recognition from the Internal Revenue Service as a public charity that is exempt under the Internal Revenue Code Section 501(c) (3). The Finer Alliance, Inc. is governed by its own Articles of Incorporation and Bylaws.

OUR HISTORY



ILLINOIS DATA REPORT

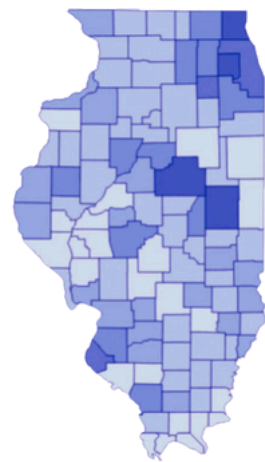
“Post-secondary education is key to ensuring individuals, families, and communities across Illinois can thrive. Individuals who hold a postsecondary credential have higher earnings, greater social mobility, improved health, and other positive life outcomes than their peers with less education.

Ten years ago, Illinois adopted the 60 by 25 goal: that 60% of adults would have a postsecondary degree or credential by the year 2025 to meet projected workforce needs. Today, the percentage of jobs requiring postsecondary education is even higher. In 2009, approximately 38% of adults in Illinois had an associate’s degree or higher. In 2019, over 43% do. As the map shows, postsecondary attainment varies widely across the state, from a low of 21% of adults to a high of 57% of adults having an associate’s degree or higher.

While this data only reflects degree attainment, credentials are also considered in the 60% target. According to the Lumina Foundation, Illinois’ attainment is at 55% when certificates and short-term credentials are included.”

Source: Illinois Board of Higher Education (ibhe.org)

2019 ASSOCIATE’S DEGREES OR HIGHER



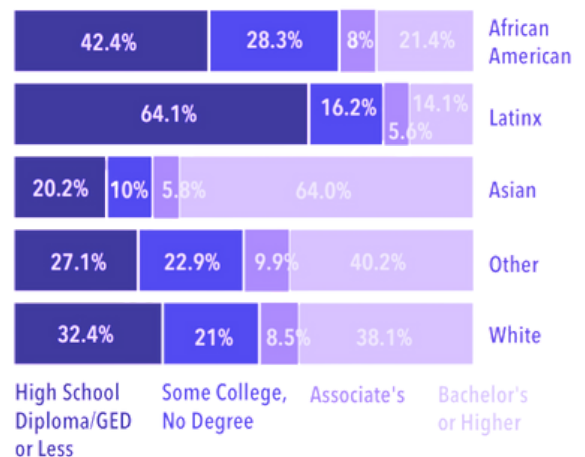
State Average: 43%
State Count: 3,710,558
Total State Population 25+: 8,686,299



Source: 2019 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

“The disparities in attainment outcomes are stark when we disaggregate by race/ethnicity. While 47% of white adults have a post-secondary degree, only 29% of African Americans and 20% of Latinx adults do. For bachelor’s degrees, Illinois has the 11th largest gap of any state in attainment between African American and white adults and the 7th largest gap between Latinx and whites.”

EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT IN ILLINOIS (AGE 25+) BY RACE/ETHNICITY



MARKETING DEVELOPMENT



Strengthening Our Impact

Recognizing the transformative impact of post-secondary education, The Finer Alliance, Inc. is dedicated to facilitating access and success in higher education for our community members. By equipping them with the necessary tools and resources, we aim to unlock their potential for higher earnings, improved health, and broader social mobility.

At The Finer Alliance, Inc., we employ comprehensive strategies to enhance our community reach, digital presence, brand recognition, and collaborative efforts.

01. Community Engagement and Outreach

The Finer Alliance, Inc. prioritizes community engagement through targeted outreach programs, workshops, and events designed to foster educational growth and community involvement. By partnering with local organizations and leaders, we aim to create a supportive network that enhances educational opportunities for all.

03. Brand Awareness and Recognition

Through consistent branding and strategic marketing efforts, The Finer Alliance, Inc. has established itself as a trusted leader in educational empowerment and community support. We focus on building strong brand recognition to amplify our message and attract support from diverse stakeholders.

02. Digital Presence and Social Media Strategy

Our robust digital presence leverages social media platforms and online resources to connect with a broader audience and share valuable educational content. This strategy allows us to engage with the community in real-time, promoting our initiatives and encouraging active participation.

04. Partnerships and Collaboration

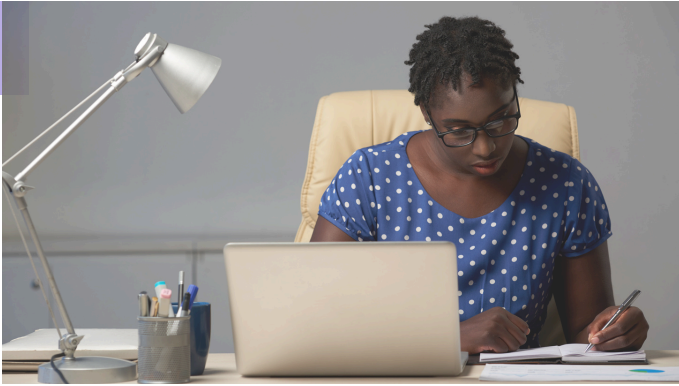
The Finer Alliance, Inc. actively seeks partnerships with educational institutions, businesses, and nonprofit organizations to expand our reach and impact. These collaborations enable us to pool resources, share expertise, and develop innovative solutions to address educational disparities and community needs.



RESOURCES & PROGRAMS

PATHWAYS TO SUCCESS

Through our comprehensive programs and resources, we aim to equip individuals with the tools they need to navigate the complexities of educational advancement and career development, ensuring access to opportunities that foster personal growth and community enrichment.



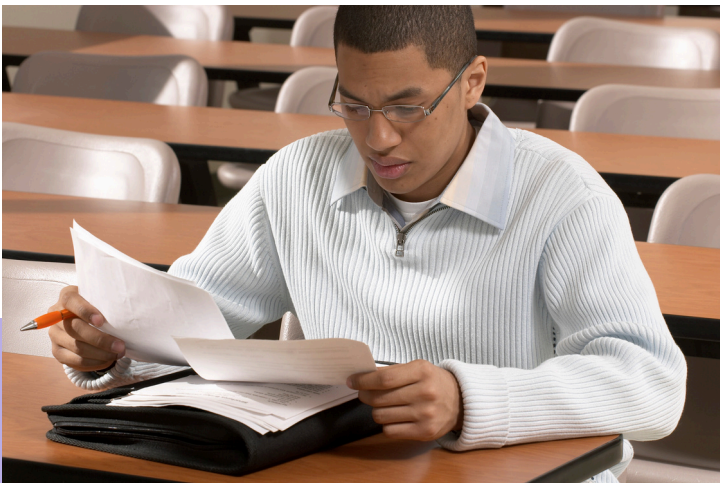
The DOVE Zone

This program is designed to ensure that our students are well-prepared to complete scholarship applications. We provide detailed guidance on navigating the application process, crafting compelling essays, and meeting deadlines, thereby enhancing their chances of securing essential financial support for their educational pursuits.



The PEARL Project

This five-module program is designed to prepare first-generation college students for the financial aid and college application process. It offers step-by-step assistance, from understanding different types of financial aid available to mastering the intricacies of college applications, ensuring students are well-informed and confident as they transition into higher education.



THE FINER ALLIANCE, INC. PRESENTS:

THE LIGHT OF CANDLE MEMORIAL SCHOLARSHIP

FOR ASPIRING TEACHERS




APPLICATION DEADLINE:
JUNE 30, 2024

\$5000 SCHOLARSHIP

APPLY:
[HTTPS://FINERALLIANCEINC.ORG/](https://finerallianceinc.org/)

ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA:

- MUST BE A CURRENT STUDENT ENROLLED OR ACCEPTED IN A 4-YEAR COLLEGE OR UNIVERSITY
- MUST HAVE A 3.5 CUMULATIVE GPA
- MUST COMPLETE ONLINE APPLICATION & ESSAY
- SEMI-FINALISTS MUST SUBMIT A VIDEO PRESENTATION

Memorial Scholarship

The Light of Candle Memorial Scholarship was established in memory of Candle Hudson-Oden. In memoriam, The Finer Alliance, Inc. pledges to annually award a \$5000 scholarship to promising future educators who demonstrate academic excellence.

SCHOLARSHIP OPPORTUNITIES

THE PURSUIT OF ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE

With our scholarships, we seek to foster a culture of inclusivity, diversity, and empowerment. By providing financial assistance and resources, we help scholars overcome barriers and achieve their educational goals.

THE FINER ALLIANCE, INC. PRESENTS:

THE FINER IMPACT SCHOLARSHIP - 2024

FOR COLLEGE-BOUND HIGH SCHOOL SENIORS

APPLICATION DEADLINE:
JUNE 30, 2024

\$1000 SCHOLARSHIP

REQUIREMENTS**

- ✓ MUST BE A GRADUATING HIGH SCHOOL SENIOR OR PRESENTLY ENROLLED AT AN ACCREDITED COLLEGE, UNIVERSITY OR VOCATIONAL/TECHNICAL INSTITUTION FOR THE COMING FALL ACADEMIC TERM.
- ✓ RESIDENT OF THE CHICAGOLAND AREA.

****SEE THE SCHOLARSHIP APPLICATION ONLINE FOR FULL ELIGIBILITY DETAILS...**

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APPLY: [HTTPS://FINERALLIANCEINC.ORG/](https://finerallianceinc.org/)

College-bound High School Seniors

The Finer Impact and The Finer Future Scholarships award funds to college-bound high school seniors and students currently enrolled at an accredited college, university, or vocational/technical institution.

THE FINER ALLIANCE, INC. PRESENTS:

THE FINER FUTURE SCHOLARSHIP - 2024

FOR FEMALE COLLEGE-BOUND HIGH SCHOOL SENIORS

APPLICATION DEADLINE:
JUNE 30, 2024

\$1000 SCHOLARSHIP

REQUIREMENTS**

- ✓ MUST BE A FEMALE, GRADUATING HIGH SCHOOL SENIOR OR PRESENTLY ENROLLED AT AN ACCREDITED COLLEGE, UNIVERSITY OR VOCATIONAL/TECHNICAL INSTITUTION FOR THE COMING FALL ACADEMIC TERM.
- ✓ RESIDENT OF THE CHICAGOLAND AREA.

****SEE THE SCHOLARSHIP APPLICATION ONLINE FOR FULL ELIGIBILITY DETAILS...**

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APPLY: [HTTPS://FINERALLIANCEINC.ORG/](https://finerallianceinc.org/)



SUCCESSFUL IMPACT

CREATING THE NEXT GENERATION OF AFRICAN-AMERICAN CHANGE AGENTS

Khadijah Bilal, the inaugural winner of the 2022 Light of Candle Memorial Scholarship For Aspiring Teachers, has graduated with a Bachelor of Arts degree from Dominican University in May 2024.

Khadijah Bilal, Inaugural Light Of Candle Memorial Recipient

Khadijah, who graduated Cum Laude and earned an endorsement in English as a Second Language, has shown exceptional dedication and academic excellence throughout her journey.



The Finer Alliance, Inc. 2022 Board Members issuing a \$5000 Scholarship Award to its inaugural recipient, Khadijah Bilal, at the Scholarship Award Brunch held on September 24, 2022.

THE FINER ALLIANCE, INC.
PRESENTS:

THE LIGHT OF CANDLE MEMORIAL SCHOLARSHIP

FOR ASPIRING TEACHERS




DEADLINE JULY 31, 2022

15 AUGUST 15, 2022
\$5000 SCHOLARSHIP
RECIPIENT WILL BE NOTIFIED

APPLY:
WWW.FINERALLIANCEINC.ORG

ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA:

- MUST BE A CURRENT STUDENT ENROLLED OR ACCEPTED IN A 4-YEAR COLLEGE OR UNIVERSITY
- MUST HAVE A 3.5 CUMULATIVE GPA
- MUST COMPLETE ONLINE APPLICATION & ESSAY

Commitment to #LifelongLearning

With a cumulative GPA of 3.6, she exemplifies the values of scholarship and leadership that The Finer Alliance, Inc. proudly supports. Since receiving our scholarship, Khadijah has been committed to her goal of becoming a teacher within Chicago Public Schools!

Khadijah's journey is a testament to the impact of our scholarship program and the bright future she is building.

PARTNERSHIP & COLLABORATION

SHARING VISION

By actively seeking partnerships, we create synergistic relationships that enhance our capabilities and extend our reach, driving forward our shared vision for transformative change.



United In Purpose

The Finer Alliance, Inc. warmly invites organizations and individuals who share our vision of educational empowerment and community development to join us as collaborators. By partnering with us, you can help expand the reach and impact of our initiatives, creating lasting benefits for communities we serve together.



DIAMOND LEVEL DONOR

Tau Xi Zeta Chapter
Zeta Phi Beta Sorority, Incorporated

The Finer Alliance, Inc. is a proud chapter partner of [Tau Xi Zeta Chapter of Zeta Phi Beta Sorority, Incorporated](#), working together to raise funds and provide scholarships that support our aligned charitable and educational missions.



DONATE

Dear Supporter,

As we reflect on the incredible journey we've undertaken together since 2020, we recognize your unwavering support and generosity have played a pivotal role in The Finer Alliance, Inc.'s mission to create the next generation of African American change agents. Because of your dedication, we've accomplished issuing our first scholarship ever – The Light of Candle Memorial Scholarship for aspiring teachers. However, our journey is far from over.

Looking ahead to 2024, we're looking forward to expanding our scholarship offerings, and are excited to launch our pilot programs supporting academic excellence. Your ongoing support is vital as we tackle challenges. Whether through donations, volunteer hours, or advocacy, your contributions have been instrumental in our progress.

Every donation, regardless of size, significantly impacts our commitment to being a financial resource for students pursuing higher education. Please consider contributing to our cause, directly influencing the collective impact we create.

Your donation to The Finer Alliance, Inc. enables equitable access to top-notch college preparatory education, vital leadership training, and academic support for our Scholars.

Thank you for standing with us on this transformative journey. Together, we've already made a difference, and together, we'll continue fostering positive change.

- The Finer Alliance, Inc.



DONATE SECURELY

<https://finerallianceinc.org/index.php/donate-3/>



Office Address

**P.O. Box 7055
Grayslake, IL 60030**





**Promoting the
pursuit of
lifelong learning.**

*#TheFinerAlliance
#Scholarship
#LifelongLearning*

CONTACT US

For more information or to get in touch with us, please reach out via email, visit our website, or send correspondence to our PO Box.



Email

General Information

info@thefinerallianceinc.org

Media Inquiries Only

media@thefinerallianceinc.org



Website

www.finerallianceinc.org



Office Address

**P.O. Box 7055
Grayslake, IL 60030**



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<https://www.linkedin.com/company/the-finer-alliance-inc>

APPENDIX



MEDIA CONTACT: Kerilyn Merritt
secretary@thefinerallianceinc.org
847-497-5374

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
February 26, 2023

The Finer Alliance, Inc. and Zeta Phi Beta Sorority, Incorporated – Tau Xi Zeta Chapter to Host “Extraordinarily FINER” Scholarship Fundraising Brunch on March 25, 2023

Politicians, local dignitaries, and community leaders will be honored and recognized for their impact in Chicago, Illinois’ Westside, and its surrounding areas.

CHICAGO – February 2023, The Finer Alliance, Inc. a non-profit 501(c)(3) organization aimed at promoting scholarship and academic excellence in the African American community, will partner with Zeta Phi Beta Sorority, Inc. – Tau Xi Zeta Chapter to host the “Extraordinarily FINER” Scholarship Fundraising Brunch at Abbington Distinctive Banquets of Glen Ellyn, IL on March 25, 2023. Funds will be raised to support the groups’ collective goal of awarding two \$5000 scholarships to promising future educators who demonstrate academic excellence. Honored guests include: IL-State Representative LaShawn K. Ford (D); Bernadette Ballenger - Site Director at By The Hand Club For Kids – Austin; and Anthony Clark - Teacher, Oak Park River Forest High School.

The event includes a full brunch menu, a silent auction, a 50/50 raffle, live music by DJ Skibo and a comedic performance by Host Charise Bennett of Komikal1 Entertainment. For event tickets, sponsorship opportunities or to bid on raffle items, visit <https://go.rallyup.com/finerscholarship>.

Past honorees for their community-focused efforts are Alderman Jason C. Ervin of Chicago, Illinois’ 28th Ward and Debra Vines - CEO of The Answer, Incorporated, a 501(C)(3) not-for-profit organization dedicated to the advocacy for families challenged with supporting family members with Autism & Developmental Disorders.

The Finer Alliance, Inc. awarded its inaugural winner of its first \$5000 Light of Candle scholarship in 2022. The Light of Candle Memorial Scholarship was established in memory of Candle Hudson-Oden of Zeta Phi Beta Sorority, Incorporated. As a graduate of Bennett College of Greensboro, North Carolina, Candle Hudson-Oden was passionate about the importance of scholastic achievement. She continued her pursuit of higher education by earning her Masters

in Middle School Mathematics from DePaul University, of which she ultimately applied toward her teaching career with Chicago Public Schools.

About The Finer Alliance, Inc.

The Finer Alliance, Inc. was organized in 2020 by members of Zeta Phi Beta Sorority, Incorporated – Tau Xi Zeta chapter with the mission to elevate scholarship in the African American community through the procurement of post-secondary educational and financial resources that promote the pursuit of academic excellence.

The Finer Alliance, Inc. values a community that recognizes the importance of educational attainment and assures positive educational outcomes are accessible to all in the African American community regardless of economic circumstance.

Our vision is to create the next generation of African American change agents. For more information visit <https://finerallianceinc.org/>

About Zeta Phi Beta Sorority, Incorporated - Tau Xi Zeta Chapter

Since its inception in 2004, the Tau Xi Zeta chapter has responded to Chicago's increasing needs by empowering communities on the city's west side through service and innovative programs. The Tau Xi Zeta Chapter takes pride in engaging members in a way that enriches them personally and professionally and is ever eager to find partnership opportunities with agencies in its service area. For more information visit www.tauxizeta.org

About Zeta Phi Beta Sorority, Incorporated

Zeta Phi Beta Sorority, Incorporated was founded in 1920 by five co-ed students at Howard University who envisioned a sorority that would promote the highest standard of scholastic achievement and Finer Womanhood. Headquartered in Washington, D.C., Zeta Phi Beta Sorority, Incorporated has a diverse membership of more than 120,000 college-educated women with more than 800 chapters in North America, Europe, Asia, the Caribbean, Africa, and the Middle East. The sorority celebrated its international, centennial anniversary throughout the year of 2020. For more information, please visit www.zphib1920.org.



ZETA PHI BETA SORORITY, INCORPORATED
TAU XI ZETA CHAPTER & THE FINER ALLIANCE, INC.

EXTRAORDINARILY FINER

Fundraising Brunch

March 25, 2023
Abbington Distinctive Banquets

3S002 Route 53
(Corner of Route 53 and Butterfield Rd)
Glen Ellyn, Illinois 60137
11:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m.



Host: Charise Bennett

FOR TICKETS VISIT:



<https://go.rallyup.com/finerscholarship>



FinerForestPark



FinerForestPark



tauxizeta.org



finerallianceinc.org

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MEDIA CONTACT: Kerilyn Merritt
secretary@thefinerallianceinc.org

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
September 26, 2022

2022 Inaugural Light of Candle Scholarship Winner Announced

CHICAGO – September 2022, The Finer Alliance, Inc. is pleased to announce that Khadijah Bilal of Dominican University is its inaugural winner of the 2022 Light of Candle Memorial Scholarship Award for aspiring teachers in the amount of \$5000.

Khadija Bilal is an outstanding student academically and a responsible and contributing citizen of society. Upon several years of volunteering at a local homework center, she uncovered her desire to become an educator.

“Through trial and error from current and former students themselves, I’ve learned that my teaching philosophy is using the strength of building connections and relationships with my students to create a positive learning environment,” said **Bilal**.

Maintaining a 3.6 GPA, she consistently demonstrates tremendous servant-driven leadership through her involvements within the community. In 2020-2021, she served as President of the Black Student Union at Harold Washington College of Chicago, IL. “Khadijah was instrumental at initiating a virtual platform in which Black students could connect and establish a sense of community during a time where remote learning made it challenging for students to build relationships with their peers,” said Harold Washington College Director of Student Activities, **Aja Humphreys**.

“Ms. Bilal has shared that she wanted to ‘light the torch of learning and growth in the lives of as many youths as possible’ and we are certain that she will,” said **Tiffany Johnson, Ed.D., MBA** – Director of Scholarships & Programs, The Finer Alliance, Inc.

The Light of Candle Memorial Scholarship was established in memory of Candle Hudson-Oden of Zeta Phi Beta Sorority, Incorporated. As a graduate of Bennett College of Greensboro, North Carolina, Candle Hudson-Oden was passionate about the importance of scholastic achievement. She continued her pursuit of higher education by earning her Masters in Middle School

Mathematics from DePaul University, of which she ultimately applied toward her teaching career with Chicago Public Schools.

As a faithful and proud member of Zeta Phi Beta Sorority, Incorporated, Candle Hudson-Oden was devoted to the sorority's founding principles of Scholarship, Service, Sisterhood and Finer Womanhood. She joined the Tau Xi Zeta Chapter of Zeta Phi Beta Sorority, Incorporated in 2015 and she proudly served as the Chapter's Financial Secretary from 2017 until 2021. In memoriam, The Finer Alliance, Inc. pledges to annually award a \$5000 scholarship to promising future educators who demonstrate academic excellence.

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The Finer Alliance, Inc. Board Members issuing a \$5000 Scholarship Award to its inaugural recipient, Khadijah Bilal at the Scholarship Award Brunch held on September 24, 2022. Pictured L to R: Board President Renée Spruill Walker, Board Treasurer Nakia Moore, Khadijah Bilal, Board Secretary Kerilyn Merritt, Director of Scholarships & Programs Tiffany Johnson, Ed. D, MBA

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