



Sending *hope* your way

FALL 2017

**dreaming**  
through  
uncertainty

**YOUR GIFTS  
MADE COLLEGE  
A REALITY FOR  
BRYONY**



**Nicole Lynn Lewis**  
Founder & CEO

# GIVING THANKS

THANK YOU FOR BELIEVING IN YOUNG PARENTS

At a recent conference, I was reminded of one of my favorite quotes by Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., *“True compassion is more than just flinging a coin to a beggar; it understands that an edifice which produces beggars needs restructuring.”*

We are in the midst of the fall semester for our Scholars – 101 teen mothers and fathers who are defying the odds and “restructuring the edifice” by earning their college degrees. We are providing them with tuition assistance, one-on-one mentoring, and crisis support to ensure that they have everything that they need to make it to graduation.

We have so much to be thankful for. For serving more young families than ever before. For the ability to watch our Scholars overcome incredible obstacles as they work toward their goals. For the one-of-a-kind programs and services that we are able to run each and every day.

And we are thankful for you. The people who ensure that we are able to carry out this life-changing work through your gifts and generosity. With your support, we can help young parents completely transform their futures – and their children’s futures – through higher education.

As we prepare for the holidays, I want to thank you in advance for adopting our Scholars and their children for the season, making year-end gifts that are so crucial to our programming in the coming months, and for simply believing in our young people. We could not do this work without you.

Happiest of holidays to you and yours, and I look forward to the great work ahead!

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– Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

## PEP RALLY UNDER THE STARS *Gala*

**MVP AWARDEE**

**CATHY HUGHES**

Radio One Founder and Chairperson

**EMCEE**

**JAMES MACGREGOR**

Market President and Publisher of the *Washington Business Journal*

**FRIDAY, JUNE 1, 2018**

6:30 PM — 11:00 PM | THE WASHINGTON HILTON

[www.supportgenerationhope.org/gala](http://www.supportgenerationhope.org/gala)

# EVAN AND LINDA SMITH

## WHY WE GIVE

*in our own words*

### ABOUT

### EVAN & LINDA

Evan and Linda Smith have been Generation Hope donors since 2015. Both retired, they have been active volunteers and donors to a number of organizations, several of which focus on children and education. They live in Northwest DC.



### Why did you decide to support Generation Hope?

Friends of ours hosted a get-together at their home, where we met Nicole Lynn Lewis, the founder and CEO of Generation Hope. Hearing Nicole's story and learning about the mission and programs of Generation Hope, we realized that it fit very well with other nonprofits that we have devoted our time and resources to throughout our lives.

### What do you look for in choosing organizations to support?

We're interested in supporting organizations where you can see the results and know where your contributions are going. When you give to a large organization with many programs you're never quite sure how the money is being used. We want to invest in things that work.

### And what do you get out of giving financially to nonprofits?

Satisfaction. It's knowing that the resources we spent our lives building are being used well.

### What does Generation Hope mean to you?

It's saying to someone who seems to be in a hopeless situation – a teen parent in poverty – that there is hope for a better life for you and for your child if you have the determination to get an education, to go to college, which no one in the teen's experience may have ever done. Generation Hope forms a new family for that teen – a family that knows the challenges of college and parenting.

### We refer to Generation Hope as a "two-generation solution to poverty." What does that mean to you?

A mother or a father, who is learning, reading, taking education seriously, is a role model for the child no matter how young. Education for the parent will open a wider world for the child and give him or her the confidence that's needed to succeed in school.

Generation Hope is a place where legacies of academic achievement are created.

### The centerpiece of Generation Hope's model is matching each Scholar with a Sponsor, or mentor. Did you have mentors that made a difference in your lives?

*Linda:* My high school English teacher. I did not get much help from my family, but I knew I wanted to go to college. My teacher supported that and encouraged me to apply to a better college than I would have otherwise.

*Evan:* Two college professors served as mentors. At that point in life, you need someone who thinks that college is not just important but transformative.

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### Why do you believe that attending college and getting a degree are important?

College exposes the student to new ideas – but also to a process of examining and solving problems. The student learns – but also learns *how to learn* and the desire to spend the rest of his or her life learning.

*Evan:* When I was elected to the local school board I attended an orientation. Something was said there that has always stuck with me: "The demands on society's resources are many, whether they be for national defense, health, the elderly or infrastructure. But nothing is more important than the education of our children. They are our future. If we fail them, all else is in vain."

Written by PAT CORNELL



## **dreaming** through uncertainty

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*Bryony and her daughter, Myra*

**“When we came here, I didn’t play any sports, I didn’t take any special classes, and **we didn’t know the system** or how to get scholarships.”**

While Bryony Njala’s high school friends were writing essays and submitting college applications, she could not see the point in even applying. “I didn’t apply because there was no money to pay for it,” she recalls. **“I couldn’t afford out-of-state tuition on the \$8.50 minimum wage I was making.”**

Bryony had dreams of attending a four-year college and earning a Bachelor’s degree, but they seemed far fetched. Bryony had moved to the United States from South Africa in 2006, at age 15, after her mother accepted a promotion at The World Bank and was

transferred to the Washington, D.C., office. Bryony, her mom, and older brother lived in McLean, VA. Being a full-time student was a condition of Bryony’s G-4 Visa.

Bryony’s mother made it very clear, “there is no money for college. Find scholarships.”

That was easier said than done. “When we came here, I didn’t play any sports, I didn’t take any special classes, and we didn’t know the system or how to get scholarships,” says Bryony, who graduated from George C. Marshall High School in Falls Church, VA. “My Visa status, at the time, barred me from applying for any federal loans.”

After graduation, Bryony lost sight of her college goals, risking deportation. **“It just seemed like an obstacle that I couldn’t overcome**, which is when I just started working at Cold Stone, making minimum wage,” she says. “Eventually, I lost my Visa because I wasn’t a full-time student. I was in limbo and became undocumented.”

At 18, Bryony left home to build a life with her boyfriend, and months later, she was expecting. They got married shortly after their daughter, Myra, was born, but the marriage did not last. What started as verbal abuse became physical and more frequent. When Bryony finally found the strength, she scooped up her baby girl, grabbed a few things, and left.

She eventually found stable housing through a 16-month program sponsored by Assisting Young Mothers (AYM). Then, she enrolled in community college, but she could not afford to continue, and things got even worse. While leaving court after a child custody hearing, Bryony was handcuffed by Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) agents and detained for a month. Bryony fought her way to independence with the support of an organization operating under the Violence Against Women Act (VAWA). Fortunately, she had already started the process of applying for a Green Card before her marriage to Myra's father turned violent.

It was at a wedding reception that Bryony learned about Generation Hope. She was sitting across from a Generation Hope volunteer, Megan.

"She was asking me what I do for a living and I told her, and she told me what she does, and I said, 'Wow, I wish I knew about this opportunity.' She asked, 'How old are you?' I told her, and she said 'You can totally apply!'"

Bryony wondered if she could apply since she had not gotten her Green Card yet. "But Megan said, 'we accept people with deferred action as well,' which was awesome. **I had never heard of an organization that does that. So this was so great. It opened up a new door for me. It's just been a blessing.**"

Included in that blessing is Bryony's Generation Hope Sponsor (i.e. mentor), Lori Sabet - one of Bryony's biggest supporters.

**"Bree is beautiful inside and out,"** says Lori. "She knows there is so much out there in the world, and she isn't afraid to set stretch goals for herself. She is realistic about the timeframe to accomplish her goals. I love this about her. I am there for the long haul with Bree. She is such a terrific young



lady, and I am just so fortunate she has come into my life!"

Bryony is currently enrolled at Northern Virginia Community College, and with Generation Hope's help, she is on track to earn an Associate's degree in business administration. While there is still much road to travel to reach her dream of a four-year degree, Bryony knows that she has come a long way.

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Written by VICTORIA VICKERS

# Made With Love



Meaghan and her sister Caitlin, owners of Capital City Cheesecake in Takoma Park, MD

HOW THIS BUSINESSWOMAN'S PASSION FOR GIVING BACK HAS TOUCHED LIVES

**“EVERY BUSINESS SHOULD INVEST IN THE COMMUNITY THEY CALL HOME.”**

## ABOUT MEAGHAN

Meaghan Murphy was born and raised in the Northeast side of Washington D.C. At fourteen, she became pregnant and gave birth to her son, Marcus Murphy, on June 16, 1999. Despite the challenges of being a teen parent, Meaghan graduated from Good Counsel High School as a National Honors Society student in 2002. She then went on to pursue her Bachelor's degree in Business Management from Trinity University in 2007. In 2010, Meaghan and her sister Caitlin opened Capital City Cheesecake in Takoma Park, MD to hang out together, create unforgettable food, and be a cornerstone of the community. Thanks to Meaghan, Capital City Cheesecake provides food donations to Generation Hope monthly, and Meaghan also sponsors a Generation Hope Scholar, Andrea, who attends Montgomery College.



Meaghan and her Scholar's daughter, Kaylee

**Why do you believe in Generation Hope?**

Last year, Caroline Griswold Short, the Director of

Programming, contacted Capital City Cheesecake to the “Hope Stroll” Family Day & Benefit Walk. As a teen mom myself, I knew a college degree would be the best way to secure a future for myself and my son. However, that’s easier said than done. Balancing college with being a mom presents several challenges, especially if you’re a teen. But with programs like Generation Hope, the college experience becomes more of a reality than a dream. Generation Hope provides the support teen parents need and gives them the tools necessary for them to become college graduates and professionals.

### **What do you look for in the nonprofits that Capital City Cheesecake partners with?**

When partnering with nonprofits, we try to stay true to organizations that align with our personal values and goals. As a teen mom, I’ve always wanted to be available for teen parents as a resource. Generation Hope gives me that opportunity.

### **Why is it important to help teen parents achieve higher education?**

A couple reasons. First, teen parents will be providing for a family, and they need to actively pursue opportunities, like college, that will set them up for financial success. Earning a college degree can start

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a person off with a higher pay and make them a great candidate for a promotion. Second, college is an amazing networking center. Students will interact with experts in many different fields and can gain invaluable insight and knowledge from teachers, administrators, college advisors, and fellow classmates. The relationships they form can last a lifetime.

### **How does Capital City Cheesecake provide support to Generation Hope?**

We sponsor a monthly “sweet and treat” package to be delivered to donors and volunteers as a thank you for their contributions, donate our restaurant space to host events, and give discounts on products for catering and programming.



**Meaghan with her son on the day of his high school graduation in 2017**

### **What is your favorite thing about being involved with Generation Hope?**

I love that Generation Hope gives me the opportunity to connect with teen parents and help them in achieving their dreams to be college graduates.

### **Why should other businesses provide support to Generation Hope?**

Capital City Cheesecake believes every business should invest in the community they call home. By helping to provide educational access and attainment for teen parents, businesses are taking a proactive approach in creating solutions to important issues, such as poverty. By empowering teen parents to earn a college degree, businesses can be part of supporting today’s generation as well as the future generation to come.

### **How do you know Generation Hope's work is truly making an impact?**

In addition to Capital City Cheesecake supporting Generation Hope, I became a Sponsor over a year ago. I see that Generation Hope is making an impact in my interactions with my mentee, Andrea. I get to hear directly from her how much easier college is because of the support she receives from Generation Hope.

### **What is the magic ingredient for your amazing cheesecake?**

Family secret!

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*Written by* **YESENIA MATIAS CHAVEZ**

# ADOPT A SCHOLAR FAMILY

*This holiday Season*

Help us provide more than **500 gifts** to our Scholars and their children this holiday season by adopting a Scholar Family for the holidays. We are asking for 5 gifts per family, including gifts for both children and parents.

To sign up or for questions, please email Michelle Avelino at [michelle@supportgenerationhope.org](mailto:michelle@supportgenerationhope.org). All gifts must be shipped or dropped off to our office at 415 Michigan Avenue, NE, Suite 250, Washington, D.C. 20017 by **DECEMBER 8TH**.



## WHY MAKE A GIFT THIS HOLIDAY SEASON?

"IT IS ALL TOO EASY TO FEEL JUDGED. GENERATION HOPE PROVIDES A TIME TO SOCIALIZE WITH PEERS WHO HAVE HAD SIMILAR EXPERIENCES AND STRUGGLES AS YOURSELF. THIS IS SO INVALUABLE AND ALLOWS YOU TO FEEL SUPPORTED."

— **Scholar Alumna AnnKatherine Tobar** who graduated from the University of Maryland, College Park in 2016 with the help of Generation Hope. AnnKatherine is now an elementary school teacher with Frederick County Public Schools and is raising her children, Sophia and Mateo, with her husband Nelson.

## LIVES YOU HAVE TOUCHED

SINCE 2010

Tuition provided to teen parents	<b>\$412,000</b>
Teen parents supported in college	<b>148</b>
College degrees earned by teen parents	<b>30</b>
Percentage of Scholars with a GPA of 2.5 or higher	<b>70%</b>

### STAY CONNECTED



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