

## Meijer Team Member Offered +\$1 Million in College Scholarships

When LaKeisha Bridges started considering where to go to college, she had her pick from some impressive institutions. Working part-time at our Orland Park, Ill. store while finishing high school, LaKeisha graduated with an incredible 5.1636 GPA. As if that wasn't enough, she drove herself to fill out as many scholarship applications as she could.

When she was done, she was offered nearly \$1 million dollars in scholarships from 14 colleges, along with a \$5,000 Fred & Lena Meijer Scholarship award.

How did she pull this off? LaKeisha credits working at Meijer for improving her efficiency.

"Meijer helped me with time management, especially with balancing work and school, and working with people," she said. "Balancing everything was hard because I procrastinate a lot, but I just seem to work well under pressure."

At Thornwood High School in South Holland, Illinois, LaKeisha played on the basketball, volleyball, tennis, track and field teams, along with participating in her high school's Mathletes and journalism programs. She also was part of the TRIO Program, National Honor Society, and was a full international baccalaureate program (IB) student.

LaKeisha says she loves to constantly learn. She plans to study computer science, economics and languages. She's already planning on graduate school and wants to become a software engineer and a real estate agent.

"I want to become a software engineer because I like coding. I'm in a program called Girls Who Code," she said. "I'm also always online looking at homes, and I would like to get into real estate."

LaKeisha started at Meijer in June 2020 as a utility worker gathering carts in the store's parking lot. When the opportunity to work in Curbside Shopping came along, she was excited to step into that position which she'll hold until she leaves for school this fall.

"We are so proud of Keisha. She has worked so hard on all her achievements," said Store Director Kathy Dillow.

During the school year, LaKeisha worked eight to 16 hours a week at Meijer, mostly on the weekend. This summer, she was able to increase her hours.

Her decision to apply to Meijer was influenced by her mother, Lynette Bridges, who began working at Meijer nearly a year earlier.

"After seeing her work there, I thought, this is a place where I should apply," LaKeisha said.

Proud of all her daughter has accomplished, Lynette often gave updates on her to Kathy and her former supervisor, Service Lead Paula Selvey, who are among LaKeisha's many cheerleaders. When LaKeisha received the Fred & Lena Meijer Scholarship, Kathy presented her the award.

LaKeisha said she appreciates how much everyone at the store, especially Kathy, has taken an interest in her success.

"My mom is always telling Kathy about my accomplishments," LaKeisha said. "Kathy presented me with the scholarship at the store. It was really nice."

Where is LaKeisha headed next? She ultimately decided the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, where she received scholarships and grants totaling \$60,000, was the right fit.

We're proud to be able to support LaKeisha on her journey.

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Additional assets available online: [\*\*Photos\*\*](#) <sup>(1)</sup>

