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Resident Spotlight: CHA Scholarship Helps Bronzeville Mom Achieve Academic Success

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Lakina Mabins, a mother of five from Bronzeville and a CHA resident, recently celebrated a major milestone—graduating as the Valedictorian of Kennedy King College. Her journey back to school wasn't easy. After putting her education on hold, she received a life-changing opportunity: the **CHA Partners in Education Scholarship**.

"I read it so many times, I screamed, shouted and cried. I was in disbelief," she said. With renewed determination, she returned to school in January 2024, took five classes each semester, and even added summer courses to stay on track.

The scholarship not only made college possible, it gave Lakina the support and motivation she needed to succeed. Inspired by her daughter—who is attending Illinois State University on a full-ride scholarship studying Child Psychology—Lakina has become a role model herself. "I am working hard and my grades showed it. I feel validated. My children are super excited and they are proud of me and the challenges I faced," Lakina said.

Since 2005 more than 3,000 students have participated in the Partners in Education program. Lakina is one of 56 students graduating this year.

[Watch Lakina's story on NBC-5.](#)