



MERIT

HEALTH LEADERSHIP ACADEMY

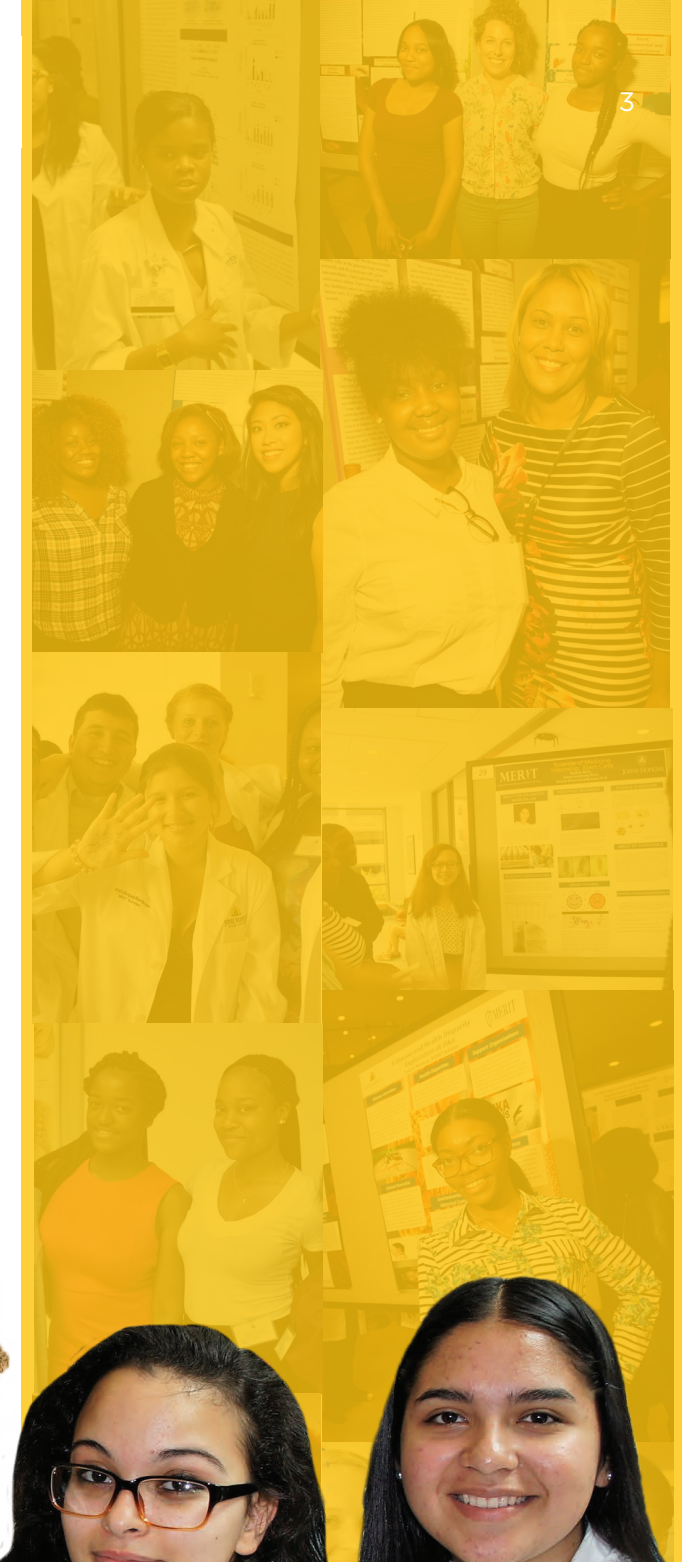
Annual Report 2016 - 2017





MERIT

MERIT is a nonprofit health career pipeline program dedicated to empowering the next generation of health care professionals. Our mission is to eliminate health care disparities by transforming Baltimore City high school students into health care leaders.



MERIT 2016-2017



A Letter from our Executive Director

MERIT was founded on the belief that there is incredible talent and potential among Baltimore high school students. Time and time again, our scholars pushed us to reimagine what is possible as they continued to reach the highest levels of success. Over the past year, we challenged our scholars with a more rigorous program than ever before.

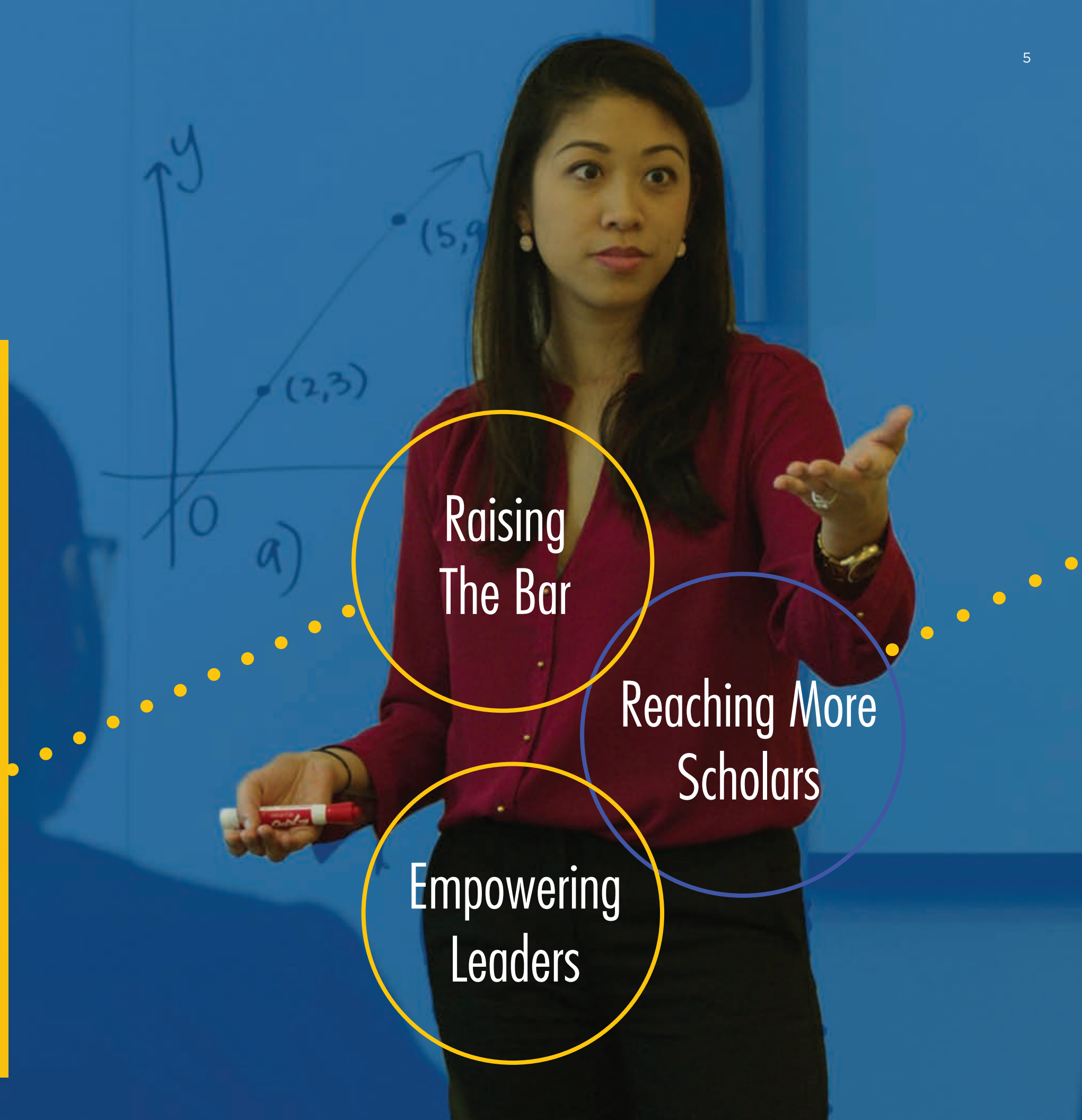
During the school year, our scholars took two new college-level science courses, including Foundations of Biomedical Research, designed to prepare them for real-world lab and hospital experiences. Over the summer, we paired in-person shadowing of health care professionals with advanced science instruction to give our scholars the thorough background they will need to master science classes in college. With remarkable determination, they spent long nights reading dense scientific texts well beyond the level expected of most high school students.

MERIT scholars met and exceeded every challenge we put in front of them. In rising to these high expectations, they show they have more than mere passion fueling them. They are also prepared to tackle the academic rigor and professional expectations of being pre-medical students in the 21st century.

This year, we watched our graduating seniors shatter every “ceiling” they could find. The bright-eyed scholars I first met as sophomores two years ago left their legacy on our program by achieving astounding success with college admissions and earning record-breaking scholarships. You can find their stories throughout this report. At a time of increasing uncertainty and division, our scholars give us hope in a better Baltimore and a better world. Given the right resources and opportunities, we know there is no limit to what they can achieve. Join us for a front-row seat to watch them succeed!

Onward and upward,

Stephanie Landicho,
Executive Director



Raising
The Bar

Reaching More
Scholars

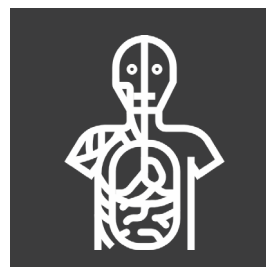
Empowering
Leaders



Academic Success

MERIT is raising the bar, pushing its Scholars to the highest levels of achievement. Through college-level science coursework, independent research projects, and paid summer internships, MERIT Scholars are prepared to tackle the academic rigor and professional expectations of being pre-medical students in college.

This year MERIT introduced two new college-level science courses:



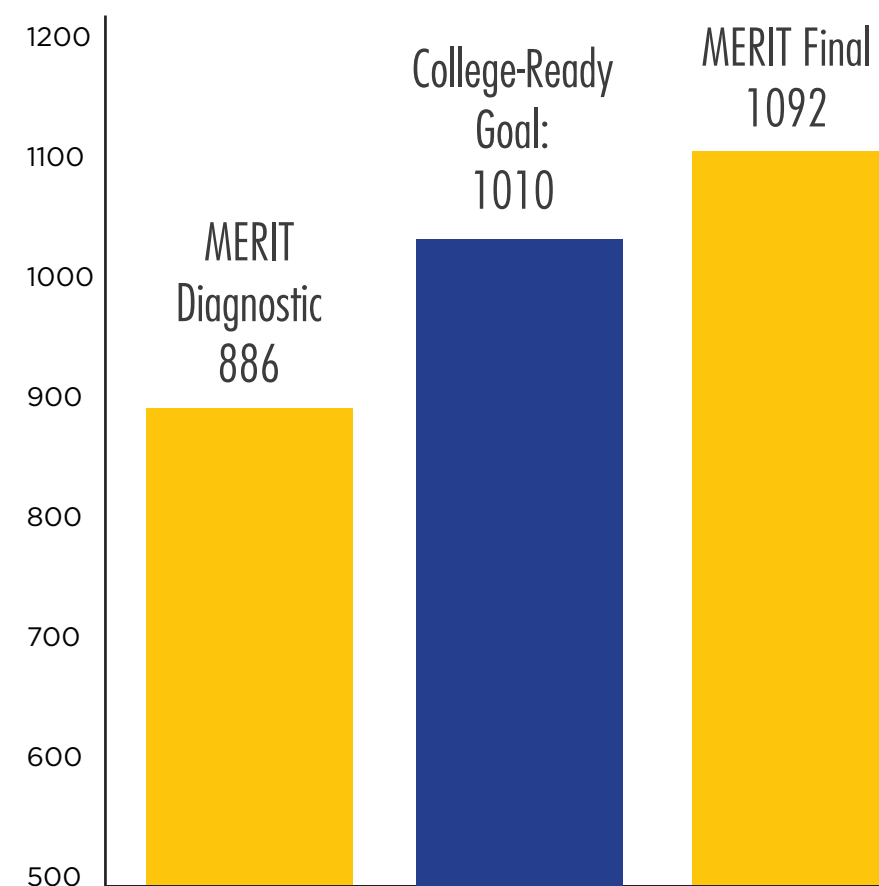
Anatomy and Physiology

In Anatomy and Physiology, scholars learn the clinical science of common disease conditions, providing a solid foundation for advanced coursework. Scholars participate in classroom instruction led by medical students and other healthcare professionals as well as hands-on, simulated clinical activities.



Foundations of Biomedical Research

The new Research Lab Skills course is designed to build proficiency with hands-on lab technique and to prepare scholars for their summer research internships. By learning tangible skills, scholars are building a toolkit for future work opportunities.



MERIT Class of 2017: SAT Growth

Through hard work and with MERIT's support, our scholars have demonstrated impressive growth on the SAT. This year, senior scholars have increased their scores by an average of 206 points between diagnostic and official tests. When this class took their SAT diagnostic test last year as 11th graders, their average score was 886 points out of 1600, more than 100 points below the "college-ready" benchmark according to the CollegeBoard. After the official test in October, they averaged a score of 1092, which is above the "college-ready" benchmark for 12th graders. This impressive growth helped contribute to our seniors' resounding success with college applications.



Scholar Spotlight: Julius

Raised his SAT by 360 points.

- From 1010, which is barely "college ready," to 1380, which placed him in the 95th percentile nationally

Through MERIT:

- Earned 88 hours of independent research in a neuroscience lab
- Co-founded a synthetic biology research team that won bronze at an international bioengineering competition
- Presented at 4 research symposiums
- Won a scholarship based on his research

Earned a full-ride scholarship to Brown University

- **Goal:** Study neuroscience and become a physician.



Hands-On Science

Brain Anatomy Lab

Junior scholars had the exciting and rare opportunity to examine human brains during an anatomy lab with the neurosurgery student interest group at the Johns Hopkins School of Medicine. Medical students graciously donated their time to work with MERIT scholars in small groups, which provided a personal and engaging environment.



Respiratory Workshop

A team from the Pulmonary Department at Children's National Medical Center led sophomore scholars through a hands-on respiratory simulation to learn more about asthma. Scholars analyzed the genetic and environmental causes of asthma before taking part in a simulated treatment of an asthma attack.



Surgery Simulation

At MERIT's Surgery Simulation Day, scholars spent time in the Minimally Invasive Surgical Training and Innovation Center (MISTIC), where they were able to learn and practice various surgical techniques and procedures. With the help of the Department of Surgery and Department of GYN/OB staff, the students were guided through pelvic surgery simulation, a suturing tutorial, laparoscopic simulators, a bronchoscopy lung box with a scope, and the DaVinci SI Robotic Simulator. The day also featured guest speakers Dr. Robert Higgins, Dr. Tola Fashokun, Dr. Maggie Arnold, Dr. Errol Bush, and Dr. Seth Goldstein, who shared about their journey to surgery and imparted advice to the students on how to continue pursuing their passions.



5

scholars won scholarships based on the quality of their summer research



Summer Internships

Experiencing Health Care in the Real World

AMI:
Art of Medicine Internship

Rising Junior Scholars

Goal: Diverse career exposure

Clinical Internship: Observe health professionals treating patients in the real world.

Role Models: Shadow up to 20 different health care professionals in a variety of fields

SMI:
Science of Medicine Internship

Rising Senior Scholars

Goal: Improve STEM & research skills

Research Internship: Participate in lab or public health research

Mentoring: Work closely with 1 research mentor, who supports scholar through their project

99%
Overall Attendance in AMI (Rising Juniors)

95%
Overall Attendance in SMI (Rising Seniors)

After this summer in MERIT...



92%

“I have a better understanding of careers in health care.”

95%

“I am more committed to working in an underserved community”

92%

“I am confident in my ability to succeed in college-level science.”

97%

“I understand the professional skills necessary for a career in health care.”

98%

“MERIT has helped me be more successful in school.”

Spotlight: Amaya Simpson: Future Science Researcher



This summer, Amaya Simpson (left) conducted cancer research at the Sidney Kimmel Comprehensive Cancer Center in the lab of Dr. Ben Ho Park at the Johns Hopkins School of Medicine. Under the mentorship of graduate student Ian Waters, Amaya created a dual plasmid system for labeling and killing cells in co-culture. During this experience, Amaya fell in love with hands-on biological research and now aims to one day attain a PhD. This year, she was one of two high school students chosen to present her research to the medical physicians community at the November 2017 Medical Grand Rounds at the Johns Hopkins Hospital.

College Access Support



In the spring, junior scholars completed a week-long college tour over spring break, travelling to Atlanta and back. MERIT scholars toured a wide variety of schools, including large universities such as Duke and UNC Chapel Hill, liberal arts colleges like University of Richmond, and historically black colleges such as Morehouse and Howard. All together, they visited **13 colleges and universities.**

39% of scholars had never taken a college tour previously

95% of scholars felt confident in deciding on a college that is right for them



MERIT scholars gained exposure to diverse college settings, helping them determine their ideal learning environment. Through group discussions and journaling, scholars thought deeply about the factors that are most important to them. The trip also included a variety of enrichment opportunities, including visits to the CDC and the National Museum of African American History and Culture. For the MERIT scholars, the tour was an eye-opening opportunity, a great bonding experience, and a trip they will remember.

Scholar Spotlight: Martin

Inspired by both his clinical and research summer internships with MERIT, Martin aspires to one day attain his MD/PhD. This year, he was accepted to 100% of the colleges to which he applied, and was awarded over \$150,000 in merit-based scholarships. He is now attending the University of Maryland Baltimore County as a biology major and a member of the prestigious and renowned Meyerhoff Scholars Program - a program for high-achieving students pursuing careers as research scientists and engineers. He finished off his first semester in college with a 3.75 GPA.



100%

of MERIT Seniors Accepted to 4-year universities

\$3.2
MILLION

total academic scholarships earned

100%

of scholars had financial need met



Scholar Leaders

At MERIT's 7th Annual Research Symposium, scholars presented their summer research to a crowd of friends, family members, community members, and health professionals. The event featured inspiring speeches from scholars including Claudia, who declared her unwavering determination to become a doctor despite her status as an undocumented immigrant, and Amaya, who described how MERIT helped overcome her insecurities and discover her confidence. Guest speakers included Dr. Erica Johnson, assistant professor of medicine at Johns Hopkins Bayview and a graduate of Western High School, and State Senator Bill Ferguson, a former teacher and an advocate for education.



This year, our scholars participated in several scholar-led community service projects. In the fall, scholars identified and planned an event to volunteer with their mentors at the Baltimore Walk to Defeat ALS. The MERIT scholars selected the event, submitted a budget for all activities, coordinated logistics, and organized carpools. During our holiday party, Kayla (left) and the other scholars made lunches for a homeless shelter.

MERIT "Bio Crew" Wins Award

The MERIT Synthetic Biology team, also known as the "Bio Crew," won bronze at the International Genetically Engineered Machine (iGEM) competition in Boston. The scholars, who received an all-expenses-paid trip, developed an innovative proposal to use bacteria to break down plastic bottles in the Inner Harbor and reduce pollution. Their work landed them in The Baltimore Sun, where they were featured as the front-page story!



Spotlight: Mercedes, Environmental Health Pioneer

Mercedes is the co-founder of "Baltimore Beyond Plastic", a youth-led organization dedicated to decreasing the effects of plastic waste pollution in Baltimore. Mercedes has led students across in the city in legislative advocacy efforts, peer-to-peer outreach, and educational campaigns about the dangers of plastic pollution. This year, she also led the 1st Youth Leadership Summit on Environmental Justice and had over 100 students in attendance. She was named the Chesapeake Bay Trust Student of the Year, and was one of six students across North America who received the Brower Youth Award for her leadership in environmental sustainability efforts.



MERIT Family



Key Institutional Partners

- Baltimore City Public Schools
- Baltimore City Public Schools - Office of College and Career Readiness
- Baltimore City Health Department
- Baltimore Underground Science Space (BUGSS)
- CUPID Summer Translational Oncology Program
- Institute of Marine and Environmental Technology (IMET)
- Johns Hopkins Brancati Center for Community Care
- Johns Hopkins Bayview Medical Center
- Johns Hopkins Center for Social Concern
- Johns Hopkins Community Physicians
- Johns Hopkins Department of Surgery
- Johns Hopkins Hospital
- Johns Hopkins Lifeline
- Johns Hopkins School of Medicine
- Johns Hopkins School of Nursing
- Johns Hopkins School of Public Health
- Johns Hopkins Student Outreach Resource Center (SOURCE)
- Johns Hopkins University
- Maryland Out Of School Time Network
- Maryland State Department of Education
- MarylandCAN
- Mayor's Office of Employment Development - City of Baltimore
- Medicine for The Greater Good
- National Association of Health Service Executives
- Teach for America
- University of Maryland Incentive Awards Program
- University of Maryland Medical Center

Spotlight: Yarnee and Coty, Best Friends

Coty and Yarnee have been best friends in the MERIT program since they started as sophomores. They experienced their clinical and research internships together, and have gotten to spend ample time together at MERIT events, professional symposiums, and trips to different schools across the country. This year, they are both entering freshman at the Notre Dame University of Maryland where they are both pursuing Bachelors of Science in Nursing degrees. They both aim to work in Baltimore as NICU nurses one day.



Our Team

LEADERSHIP TEAM

Stephanie Landicho
Executive Director

Jake Weinfeld
Director of Operations and Partnerships

Justin Lee
Operations and Partnerships Fellow

Alex Batson
Manager of Data, Grants, and Communications

Erika Sulecki
Program Manager

Jasmine Walker
Scholar Support Manager

Jessica Libowitz
Middle School Program Coordinator

Tina Kanonuhwa
Program Coordinator

Pioneering Partners:

**BALTIMORE CITY
PUBLIC SCHOOLS**



BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Chair
Dr. Tyler Mains
MERIT Co-Founder
Resident, UCSF

Vice Chair
Dr. Krista Ratliff
Vice President of Business Development and Operations, ZOT Inc.

MERIT Faculty Advisor
Dr. Scott Wright
Director of the Division of General Internal Medicine, Johns Hopkins Bayview Medical Center

Stephanie Cooper Greenberg
Co-Director of the Erwin & Stephanie Greenberg Foundation

Chitamawe Daka Mulwanda
Manager, Student Empowerment and Equity Programs - District of Columbia Public Schools (DCPS)

Shyam Gadwal
MERIT Co-Founder,
Chief of Staff, Teach for America

Geoffrey Genth
Principal Attorney, Kramon and Graham

Dr. W. Daniel Hale
Special Advisor to the President of Johns Hopkins Bayview Medical Center

Dr. David Hellmann
Director of the Department of Medicine at the Johns Hopkins Bayview Medical Center

Dr. John Kontor
Executive Vice President of Clinovations

Jacqueline Lee
Director of the Maryland Incentive Awards Program at the University of Maryland, College Park

Brian McDonald
Audit Partner KPMG (Joined in 2017)

Acknowledgments

Jared Abay
Melinda Abernethy
Joycelyne Absolu
Peyton Adair
Ifunanya Agbim
Chidi Agha
Saddiq Ali
Jawara Allen
Brandon Allport
Chase Alston
Timothy Amukele
Mark Anderson
Stanley Andrisse
Janessa Aneke
Cynthia Argani
Gene Arnold
Maggie Arnold
Karissa Avignon
Jake Awtry
Haley Axelrod
Carolyn Bacal
Madeleine Barab
Eric Bass
Kristine Bater
Jessica Beattie
Emile Bendit
Meg Bernstein
Angelique Besold
Joseph Betthausen
Molly Bloom
Joann Bodurtha
Luke Bonham
Alka Bora
Mostafa Borahay
Carla Bossano
Christina Bowles
Jacqueline Bran
Shawn Brast
Alexis Breathwaite
Roy Brower
Amanda Brown
Megan Brown
Darren Brownlee
Fred Bunst
Megan Buresh
Hannah Burstein
Madeline Buster
Jean Lud Cadet
Andrea Calderon
Edgar Calderon
Emily Calderone
Virginia Campbell
Jackie Campbell
Suzanne Campion
Noemi Cardier
Nicolas Carmona
Marlena Casey
Emilie Casselle
Shukti Chakravarti
Alexander Chang
Curtisha Charles
Grace Chen
Tracy Chen
Anna Chien
Christine Choi
John Choi
Colleen Christmas
Abby Christy
Julian Chun
Andrea Cimino
Zeke Cohen
Gerri Cole
Joshua Cole

Alejandro Contreras
Chelsea (Paige) Corson
Suzanne Crawford
Avis Crayton
David Crowley
Valeria Culotta
Afkeria Daniel
Patricia Davis
Ashley Deemer
Sabianca Delva
Susan Dempsey
Amar Deshwar
Kelly Dettmann
Lindsay Dickerson
Edith Dietz
Jessica DiLeo
Caitlin DiMaina
Sarah DiNapoli
Adam Dodson
Krystal Donaldson
Cara Doolley
Daniela Drummond-Barbosa
Karen Dunlap
Aura Elias
Len Elmore
Collin English
Zsanai Epps
Roxanne Escandar
Daniel Escobar
Ekpa Eyoma
Ekene Ezenwa
Tola Fashokun
Kasey Faulkner
Bill Ferguson
Siddeeqah Fichman
Derek Fine
Michael Fingerhood
Tom Finucane
Lily Fischer
Susan Flora
Anthony Fojo
David Friedman
Kelly Fuchs
Angel Gabriel
Erin Gager
Panagis Galiatsatos
Maria Garcia Diaz
Donald Garland
Marquita Genies
Kirsten Gerke
Sashini Godage
Sherita Golden
Vickie Golobic
Allison Greene
William Greenough
Raquel Greer
Nick Greer
Annie Grossberg
Jonathan Guiyab
Tania Haag
Mitra Haeri
Erika Hall
Michael Hammelburger
J. Marie Hardwick
Batsheva Hauer
Howard Hauptman
Diana Heffner
Gail Hefter
David Hellmann
Amanda Henderson
Maxwell Henderson
Patricia Hessab Alvarenga
Caitlin Hicks

Robert Higgins
Jason Hirshberg
Joyze Hoebing
Rhonda Holbrook
Charvonne Holliday
Hanna Hong
Bernice Horton-Gee
Sarah Hoyt
Angela Hu
Mitch Huang
Clare Huang
Christina Hughes
Doug Hughes
Saqib Huq
Paula Hurley
Jason Huska
Kemi Ibikunle
Rodica Istoan
Isatu Isuk
Charles Jackson
Marcelo Jacobs-Lorena
Henry Jampel
Ambullar John
Joe John
Clark Johnson
Erica Johnson
Tamara Jolly
Christian Jones
Michelle Juarez
Albert Jun
Sushant Kachhap
Chava Kahn
Henry Kahn
Marcy Kane
Tina Kanonuhwa
Violet Kanonuhwa
Jill Kearney
Faradia Kernizan
Maryam Keshtkar-Jahromi
Eileen Kim
Yoo Kim
Seyoun Kim
Alexandra Kirsch
David Klimpl
Daphne Knicely
Khadijat Koletowo
Courtney Kraus
Steven Kravet
David Kurland
Sharon Kuta
Heather Lamb
Joseph Landavaso
Julian Lane
Bryan Larin
Sarah Laun
Adi Lazary-Dagan
Anna Le
Kathy Le
Anne Le
Rachel Lee
Gretchen LeGrand
David Lenore
Zoe Lim
Rui Han Liu
Rafael Llinas
Christian Lopez
Manisha Loss
Tamara Lotan
Anita Louie
Bao Chau Ly
Kristin Lyman
Tianlu Ma
Nora Mahlberg

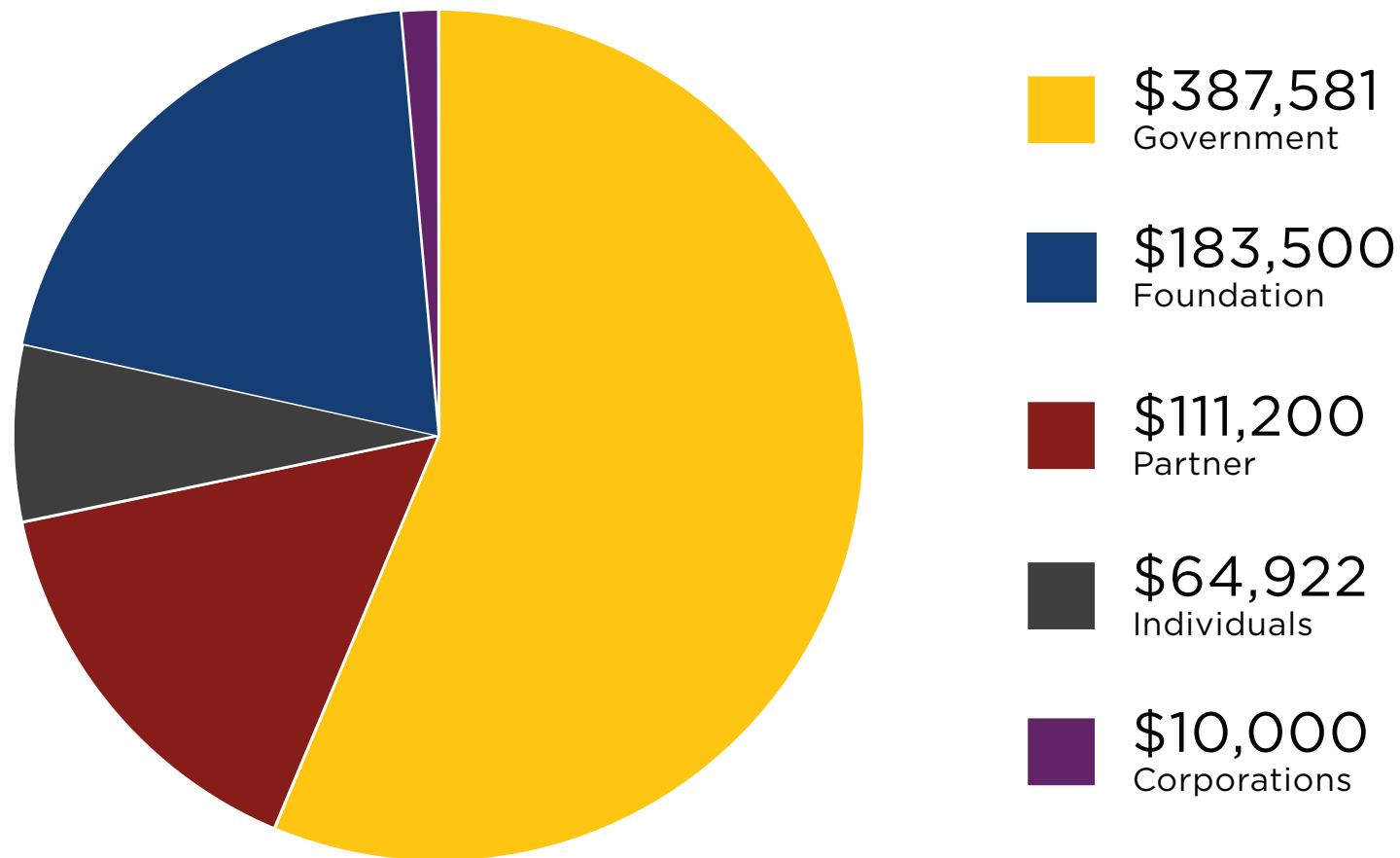
James Mains
George Maiti
Laneisha Maldonado
Reza Manesh
Melissa Manni
Elisabeth Marsh
Johanna Martino
Julia Martorama
Amanda Mattison
Michael Matunis
Regina McCartan
Brian McDonald
Ashlyn McRae
Robert Meyerhoff
Catherine Meyerle
Michelle Miles
Ellie Mitchell
Michael Myers
Damien Myers
Rene Najera
Gayathri Natarajan
Seema Nayak
Chad Nazworth
Chiadi Ndumele
Abby Neyenhouse
Huong Nguyen
Tammy Noethren
Maya Oaks
Hana Odeh
Chigoziem Oguh
Cameron Okeke
Ginette Okoye
Tiffany Onyejiaka
Onumara Opara
Paul O'Rourke
Oluwadamilola Oshewa
Kayla Otto
Anna Pacheco Young
Chloe Pacyna
Christina Paluskievicz
Vinciya Pandian
Eleana Parajon
SoEun Park
Ben Park
Silka Patel
Michele Patten
David Pearce
Brooke Petruzzeli
Sherna Phillips
Kenneth Pienta
Alex Platero
Ileana Ponor/Athar
Nikhil Prasad
Christina Prescott
Mark Procopio
Qaren Quartey
Harry Quigley
Munirih Quinlan
Rafa Rahman
Pradeep Ramulu
Vibha Rao
Sashank Reddy
Katherine Reedy
Jon Resar
Julia Retzky
Chelsea Reynolds
Brian Reznick
Benjamin Roberts
Jenny Robinson
Toshunia Robinson
Josie Rock
Reese Rosato
Noah Saad

Bushra Sabri
Joseph Sakran
Charles Scheeler
Lisa Scheifele
Adrienne Scott
Cynthia Sears
Rachel Seay
Jodi Segal
Carol and Harvey Segur
Jacquelyn Seth
Cheikh Seye
George Sgouros
Roma Shah
Barbara Shapiro
Josh Sharfstein
Jana Sharp
Jeanne Sheffield
Sara Shelley
Cindy Shephard
Nakiya Showell
Shweta Shukla
Ian Siegel
Caroline Silver
Shreya Singh
Megan Siverling
Rachelle Smith-Maine
Joanne Snell
Susan Snell
Barry Solomon
Sharon Solomon
Ayodeji Sotimedin
Elizabeth Spradley
William Stiers
Reagan Stradtman-Carvalho
Melissa Strohl
Dechen Surkhang
Oreen Taylor
Blossom Tewelde
Nitish Thakor
Sumeska Thavarajah
Nathan Thompson
Rachel Thornton
Tina Tran
Vanessa Valero
Megan VanName
David Verrier
Francisco Villa
Cyrus Washington
Ian Waters
Kevin Wilcox
Mark Wilcox
Calvin Wise
James Withey
Teresa Wojtasiewicz
Jhade Woodall
Fasika Woreta
Scott Wright
Shaoguang Wu
Sheng Wu
Vivien Xie
Eric Xu
Irene Xue
Anna Yang
Mingyu Yang
Brandy Yeater
David Yeater
Rebecca Yee
Ashley Yoo
Eileen Yu
Daniela Zapata
Meredith Zoltick

Financials

MERIT's growth over the past seven years would not be possible without the generosity of our passionate and dedicated donor community. Most notably, the Johns Hopkins Medical Institutions have been a pioneering partner and supporter since MERIT's founding in 2010. MERIT's growth in recent years has happened in large part to the Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) 21st Century Community Learning Centers grant program. To all of our supporters, thank you for believing in our scholars' dreams and their potential to change the face of health care.

2016-2017 Revenue: \$ 757,203.44



FY17 Expenses: \$452,042

FY18 Budget: \$751,502

*Note that due to the timing of some grants across two fiscal years, our fundraising total varies slightly from the total reported in our audited financial statements and Form 990 for FY17.

Donors

\$100,000 and Above

Maryland State Department of Education -
21st Century Community Learning Centers

\$25,000 - \$99,999

Family League of Baltimore
Johns Hopkins Brancati Center
Johns Hopkins Bayview Medical Center
Johns Hopkins School of Medicine
Knott Foundation
Robert Meyerhoff & Rheda Becker
Straus Foundation
Weinberg Foundation

\$10,000 - \$24,999

Henry & Ruth Blaustein Rosenberg Foundation
Egenton and Roberts Foundation
France-Merrick Foundation
Irving Foundation
Johns Hopkins Center for Innovative Medicine
Johns Hopkins Department of Medicine Diversity Council

\$1,000 - \$9,999

Barbara Shapiro
Brian Reznick
Chris & Dave Wallace
David Hellmann
Emile Bendit
Erwin and Stephanie Greenberg Foundation
Israel and Mollie Myers Foundation
James Withey
John Kontor
Johns Hopkins University Alumni Grant
Kramon & Graham, PA
Krista Ratliff
Mark Anderson
Mr. & Mrs. Michael Myers
Susan Snell & Edwin Batson
Susan and Gerald Goodman
The Associated: Jewish Community Federation of Baltimore
Thomas Smith & Joann Bodurtha
Wells Fargo
Winfred Van Wingerden & Sheila Batson

\$1 - \$999

Allison Green
Addie Farrar
Adrienne Scott
Alexis Suskin-Sperry
Amy Klein
Amy Klein
Andrew Martin
Angenette Leake
Ann Marie Harvey
Anonymous
Anonymous
Beth Resnick
Chester Kay
Daniel Hale
Dara Murray
David Verrier
David Friedman

Derek Fine
Ekpa Eyoma
Ellen and James Mains
Erica Johnson
Erika Hall
Errol Robinson
Garrett Jones
Gary and Lynn Withey
Gralia Beretta
Haywood Carmichael
Henry Jampel
Henry Kahn
Howard Hauptman
Jacob Weinfeld
Jacqueline Wheeler Lee
Jana Sharp
Jekira Jackson
John Andrew
John Burton
Jonae Thompson
Joy Kwesiga
Julian Chun
Katherine Carmichael
Katie Andrew
Katrina Daris
Keishia Bowser
Krystal Donaldson
LaDawn Black
Lawrence Griffith
Len Elmore
Lillie Edwards
Lisa Hawthorne
Lynne Dickerson
Maria Merritt
Mark Procopio
Mark Wilcox
Mary Kate Fitzsimmons
Michael Fingerhood
Miss Kay Kelly Wilson
Mitra Haeri
Monica DeLong
Natalie Spicyn
Patrice Johnson
Raven Calloway
Rich Dickerson
Rich Weinfeld
Rodica Istoan
Rose Hull
Roxanne Simon
Sandra Whalen
Sara Shelley
Scott Wright
Shyam Gadwal
Steve & Lisa Libowitz
Tyler Mains
Vanessa Bowen
Vanessa Scott
Vickie Golobic
William C. Hawthorne
William Greenough
Zenaida Manaloto



MERIT

HEALTH LEADERSHIP ACADEMY



Thank you to all those who dedicated their time, energy, and resources to support our MERIT Scholars.

Together, we are changing the face of health care.

