

## FIRST EMAIL

**From:** Reffkin, Robert  
**Sent:** Thursday, May 07, 2009 4:37 PM  
**Subject:** Davonica C.

Friends,

Davonica C. (personal statement below) was accepted by NYU but doesn't have money for the \$1k deposit and can't find a co-signer for the required annual private loan amount of \$13k. Since she is a 4.0 student, who at a time faced homelessness and is now in foster care, I'm talking with an NYU board member to see if NYU can increase her aid, however, it is unlikely that they will be able to fill the gap. Please let me know if you would be willing to co-sign / back-stop a portion of the loan along with me.

Robert

To Whom It May Concern:

My name is DaVonica Chavies. I am a 17 year old senior at Trenton Central High School. I have a 4.0 GPA, received an 1800 on my SAT (a 28 on my ACT), and am taking my AP exams in the next couple of days. Realizing my potential, I applied to several colleges, including Spelman College, The College of New Jersey (TCNJ), and New York University (NYU). Tears of disbelief streamed down my face when I received acceptance letters from the colleges. However, it was a battle between whether I should attend NYU or TCNJ. I chose NYU because not only is it the school I have dreamed of attending since I was in elementary school, but it will also, with its location and prestige, open doors of opportunities unavailable to me if I were to attend TCNJ. My jubilation, however, is tempered by the bitter reality that I can not afford NYU's ticket price of \$56,400.

Acting as a beam of sunlight on a gloomy day, my financial aid package often cheers me up. I received \$43K (\$29K are in scholarships and grants, in which I maxed out on Pell grants, \$4K are in work study, and the remainder is \$10K worth of federal loans. If I accept their package, not only would I take out NYU's suggested amount of loans that are included in my package, but I would also take out an additional \$13K to cover my amount of unmet need. That totals \$23K in student loans per academic year, \$92K over the course of four years). Regardless of how stellar my financial aid package is, when compared to the average financial aid package granted by NYU, it is still insufficient. To help narrow the gap, I am applying to a great number of scholarships, seeking co-signers for loans and diligently searching for employment. In addition to the cost of the gap, I have a \$300 housing deposit due by May 8, 2009 and another \$1,000 deposit due by June 1, 2009.

I am asking for your support concerning not only my housing deposits, but also my need for co-signers for the loans I need to take out. I empathize with the potential co-signer who feels apprehensive about the commitment, given that if I do not pay the loan back, they will have to. I can assure you that not only will I diligently work to promptly pay the loans during the school year, but I am also going to utilize my time wisely at NYU, network, and ensure you of my success subsequent to graduation..

Many others noticed this as well and have tried to discourage me from attending the school. My foster-mom complains that she does not know why I want to attend NYU because, in the long run, I will be a statistic, rather than someone that will achieve greatness: another African-American female who has

suffered from an identity crisis, sought validation in a life of drugs, sex and violence, and whose life, ever since, has been on a downward spiral. She told me I would be a reflection of my biological mother. Many of the teachers at my school tell me I should just settle for TCNJ because my chances of succeeding at NYU are slim given I will have to constantly think about money. The director of the Princeton University Prep. Program I participate in discouraged me from attending NYU because he 'knows, without the shadow of a doubt, that I will be unhappy for the rest of my life if I take out those loans'. The Associate Director for Diversity Initiatives at NYU blatantly told me if I can not pay a simple \$300 deposit, then NYU is not the place for me.

I have been met with opposition and discouraging words on all levels. However, I can remember a time when I was faced with the prospect of becoming homeless and did not know how I would be able to front my half of the rent. My pastor's words still ring in my ear today: "Do not be discouraged. Where there is a will, there is a way!" Those very words were reaffirmed by Mr. Reffkin. Regardless of what they say I am determined to not only attend, but be successful at NYU. I understand that, upon matriculation, I will have accumulated \$90K+ in student loan debt. I am willing to work 20hrs-60hrs a week to support my education. I am willing to write any amount of essays for any scholarships I may potentially win. I am willing to search hi and low for co-signers. I have a fervent desire to attend NYU and I am asking for your financial support. Any amount donated will be a stepping stone closer to my attending this great school. Be assured that your contributions will be utilized to their maximum potential.

Thank you,

DaVonica C.

### SECOND EMAIL

**From:** Reffkin, Robert  
**Sent:** Friday, May 08, 2009 3:56 PM  
**Subject:** RE: Davonica C.

Friends - Great news! After talking with several NYU Board Members, the Goldman contact at NYU, and the University President's Chief of Staff, NYU has graciously offered to grant an additional \$10k a year. Moreover, with the help of many of you, we are going to pay her \$1.3k housing deposit. This leaves \$10k a year in federal loans and \$3k (down from \$13k) a year in private loans which I will co-sign for and several of you have offered to help backstop. This leaves \$12k in private loans over 4 years. I'm trying to find 11 people who will backstop \$1k each if she defaults and who are also willing to agree to the below loan forgiveness program to further encourage success. Please keep in mind that the cash flow impact to you wouldn't come until 2013 and that you would not be asked to sign anything (just informal agreement with me).