

INFINITE SCHOLAR TESTIMONIAL

By Theda Oliver

On February 25, 2006, the Infinite Scholar Program came to St. Louis, and it was a day our family will not soon forget. There were hundreds of colleges from near and far with college banners, pamphlets and brochures everywhere. The Airport Hilton was buzzing with students and parents, and rumors were circulating that scholarships were being given out on the spot. My husband had been laid off in 2005 and my hours had been cut that year. Having completed the FAFSA application just a few days before this event, we were still reeling from shock after learning our family did not qualify for any financial assistance towards college tuition from the federal government. We went from booth to booth wide-eyed with anticipation not because we simply wanted a scholarship . . . our daughter needed a scholarship.

As we stood in the lobby with bags of college literature and our hopes deflated preparing to leave the event, Andreae was casually speaking to one of her classmates about her academic achievements. One of the Infinite Scholar' workers overheard her conversation and asked her how many scholarships she had received with an ACT score of 26 and a G.P.A. of 3.4. We all answered a resounding "NONE"! She looked at us in disbelief and asked us not to leave, as she hurriedly made her way through the mass of people in the ballroom. She returned a few minutes later with Mr. T. Ousley, the sponsor of the Infinite Scholar Program. We explained our situation to Mr. Ousley who confidently rattled off the names of several universities that would give our daughter a full-ride scholarship that day if we would take the time to complete the applications.

As swiftly as her pen could write, Andreae completed applications and submitted her transcript and ACT score. About an hour later we were leaving the fair with more than a promise, but commitments from three universities offering our daughter, Andreae, full tuition, room and board and books. On a scale from 1 – 10, we were all 10+. My husband who is relatively reserved, was excited, Andreae was happy, and I was so ecstatic I was on the brink of crying with joy. Each commitment we received from the universities at the fair proved to be genuine. In a few short weeks, Andreae received via mail three full-ride scholarship offers from Claflin University in Orangeburg, SC; Alcorn State University in Mississippi, and Alabama A & M University in Huntsville, AL.

We had spent countless hours on the internet, completing school applications and applying for a myriad of scholarships. Nothing we had done prior to attending this event had been nearly as promising or fulfilling. The search for financial aid and scholarships can be very tiresome and intimidating. I would venture to say the Infinite Scholar Program is a one-stop extravaganza, and the answer to the prayers of many parents and students.

Words can't express our gratitude to Mr. Ousley and the Infinite Scholar Program. We know, without a doubt, what you don't know can definitely hurt you. Without the Infinite Scholar Program, our daughter may have missed the opportunity of a lifetime - to go to college on a full academic scholarship. We are still in awe as our daughter, Andreae, prepares to move to Huntsville, Alabama, to attend Alabama A & M for the upcoming fall semester.

The television series "Touched By An Angel" may no longer be airing on the local television stations; but an angel is still touching lives each year in St. Louis via the Infinite Scholar Program and his name happens to be T. Ousley.

Thank you, Mr. Ousley; you were the answer to our prayers. We couldn't have done it without you!