

A Decade of Achievement



GROWING UP IN INNER-CITY BALTIMORE, Darian Scott-Carter '08 always knew he wanted to go to Maryland. He was less sure of how he'd handle college life: managing the course load and cost and being away from his family.

Once here, however, he found a group of people through the **Incentive Awards Program**, or IAP, who were determined to help him not just succeed, but lead. "All along the way, they support you, so I didn't feel alone," Scott-Carter says.

He's one of many Maryland alumni who thrived on campus, thanks to the program, which is celebrating its 10th anniversary. Created by former president C. D. Mote, Jr., IAP relies on donor contributions to annually provide four years of full financial support to nine seniors from Baltimore and eight from Prince George's County high schools who've demonstrated academic promise despite extreme hardship.

Led by Director Jacqueline Lee, the program surrounds students with fellow scholars, IAP staff and mentors who connect them to campus resources, provide listening ears and offer guidance. In return, each student is expected to reach back and encourage those in their neighborhoods to attend college.

I present to them the harsh reality of what life looks like without a college degree.—JACQUELINE LEE

Alumni have gone on to graduate school and careers as lawyers, teachers, researchers, financial analysts and more.

Scott-Carter, who majored in criminology and criminal justice, is now a counselor with the CollegeBound Foundation, a nonprofit providing guidance services at city high schools. He talks with students at his alma mater, Paul Dunbar High School, about what's possible, something he learned at Maryland.

The self-proclaimed "silent leader" built his confidence as a drum major and president of UMD's chapter of Kappa Kappa Psi, the national honorary band fraternity. He says Lee forces IAP students to look beyond their circumstances.

"I try to get them to focus on why they pursued the award in the first place, to relive the excitement of getting it," she says. "Then I present to them the harsh reality of what life looks like without a college degree."

Scott-Carter, who just completed a master's in homeland security management at Towson University, says not going to college wasn't an option; he'd received acceptances from other schools.

"But here it really is the support. There's nothing else like it." —MAB

Around: IAP scholars, inset: Darian Scott-Carter '08