



Florida P.R.I.D.E.
Parental Rights in Deciding Education

Children First of
FLORIDA

THE CARRIE MEEK
Foundation

4,000

NEW SCHOLARSHIPS
AVAILABLE!
TELL A FRIEND!

For more information:
www.floridaprde.org, or
www.childrenfirstflorida.org.

IMPORTANT UPDATES ON SCHOOL CHOICE IN FLORIDA

STUDENT SPOTLIGHT



Micah and Justice Chiusanao
New Jerusalem Christian Academy
Miami, FL

When Marquita Forsett relocated from California to South Florida seven years ago with her twin boys, Micah and Justice Chiusanao, she had high hopes for a new start for her family. Unfortunately, when her sons began to attend the local public school, the academic environment proved not to be a good fit. Learning became a hurdle for both Micah and Justice and their teachers were unable to offer them the individualized attention they needed to overcome their difficulties.

As they continued to attend the public school, Micah and Justice became more overwhelmed and withdrawn in school and could not keep up with their classes because their academic needs were not being met. Each day that Marquita dropped her

sons off at school, she worried about their wellbeing and was overwhelmed with guilt. She knew she had to find a solution, but as a low-income, single parent, she had few options. After applying for and receiving scholarships for her sons, Marquita enrolled them in New Jerusalem Christian Academy in Miami.

Micah and Justice Chiusanao are now fifth graders at New Jerusalem Christian Academy where they have excelled socially and academically. New Jerusalem Christian offers Micah and Justice a positive environment and they have even received honors for their academic work and awards for their good conduct. The school has instilled in them a great sense of accountability and respect for themselves and others.

Want to nominate your student for our Student Spotlight?
Visit www.stepupforstudents.com/parents.htm to send us your story.
Or contact Jillian Metz at jmetz@feff.org or call (866) 590-5364.

HIGH MARKS



THE OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER



OF STEP UP FOR STUDENTS

STEP UP FOR STUDENTS WELCOMES THE CARRIE MEEK FOUNDATION

It is with great pleasure that Step Up For Students welcomes the Carrie Meek Foundation to the scholarship team. Mrs. Meek has tirelessly fought for quality education and equal opportunities for low-income families throughout her career in the Florida legislature and U.S. Congress. In August, Mrs. Meek announced that The Carrie Meek Foundation will now be awarding Step Up For Students Scholarships to low-income families in Miami-Dade.

Mrs. Meek was the first African-American elected to Congress from Florida since Reconstruction and has had successful careers as a public servant, college administrator and educator. Mrs. Meek spent 30 impassioned years as a teacher and remains dedicated to the education of Florida's children. Through her devotion, Mrs. Meek recognizes that education is a critical ingredient for transforming impoverished urban neighborhoods.

Since her retirement from the United States Congress, Rep. Meek has dedicated her time and service to the Carrie Meek Foundation, a not-for-profit organization founded by the congresswoman. The foundation's mission statement speaks to "encouraging investment and partnerships in the diverse urban inner-city neighborhoods of Miami-Dade County, improving the overall quality of life, and building a stronger community."

The Carrie Meek Scholarship follows the same qualifying guidelines as the Step Up For Students Scholarship and the scholarship amount remains \$3,750. In addition, families unfortunately cannot benefit from both scholarships.

If you are interested in more information, please visit www.carriemeekscholarship.org or call (305) 953-0525.



Former Congresswoman Carrie Meek's Foundation continues to fight for Florida's children by distributing the Step Up For Students Scholarship to low-income families in Miami-Dade.



MEET THE SCHOLARSHIP STAFF



Allison Arthur,
Donor Relations Coordinator

Meet Allison Arthur who works tirelessly to recruit donors who fund the scholarships that benefit the lives of thousands of Florida's children. Allison has been working at Step Up For Students for two years. Prior to joining SUFS, Allison worked as the public relations coordinator for Volunteer Florida Foundation. Allison loves working for SUFS because it gives her the opportunity to contribute to a program that is making a significant difference in the lives of thousands of children. Allison lives in Texas and enjoys spending time with family and friends, working out at the gym and traveling.

SCHOLARSHIP PARENT TO DO LIST

Welcome back! We hope everyone had a wonderful and restful summer. To those of you are new to the program; we welcome you to our family! Here are a few reminders as you enter a great school year on the Step Up For Students Scholarship. Please take the time to read the list below. Failure to abide by any of the items in the list could result in loss of the scholarship.



To Do List:

- ✓ Notify your public school district that your child will be in the CTC scholarship program.
- ✓ Sign scholarship checks over to school within five working days of notification.
- ✓ Make sure your child is in attendance 90 percent of the school year.
- ✓ Make payments on time for fees/services not covered by scholarship.
- ✓ Make sure your child takes the national norm reference test provided by the school each year.
- ✓ Notify your scholarship funding organization (Children First Florida, Florida P.R.I.D.E., Meek Foundation) of changes in address, phone number or email as soon as the change occurs.
- ✓ Be prepared to submit a complete application package for renewing your child's scholarship in March of 2008.



WELLSTUDENT

Top 5 Tips for Dealing with Picky Eaters

It is really common for kids to be picky about what they eat and to turn their nose up at healthy foods. These top five tips will help even the pickiest eater enjoy healthy meal-times.



- 1 Get them excited about healthy food:** Let them smell, touch, taste, ask questions and try fruits, veggies, yogurts and other healthy foods in the kitchen. Ask them what they think of the foods and let them know their opinions count.
- 2 Get them involved in the kitchen:** Let them help you with small, kid-safe jobs in the kitchen such as mixing ingredients. Be sure to thank them for their help.
- 3 Give them a say in what they eat:** Help your kids make the right food and drink choices from an early age. If they have a say in decisions they will be more excited about what they eat. It's a great way to get them to take charge of their health.
- 4 Take them grocery shopping with you:** Get your kids involved in shopping decisions. It may take a little more time in the supermarket but it is likely to lead to less tantrums at meals.
- 5 Keep the junk food out of the house:** Your kids can't eat unhealthy snacks if you don't buy them. Kids will moan at first but soon they will get hungry and reach for the apple instead of the chips.

Does your child have health care coverage? If not, your child may be eligible for KidCare at little or no cost to you. Visit www.healthykids.org and apply today.

Florida KidCare

Mail: **Post Office Box 980, Tallahassee, Florida 32302-0980**

Fax (Toll Free): **1-866-867-0054**

Web: **www.healthykids.org**

To have an application mailed to you or if you need additional information, call toll-free 1-888-540-5437

DONOR CORNER:



The GEO Group, a leader in privatized development and management of correctional facilities, has been a proud partner of Step Up For Students since 2004. The company's partnership with Step Up For Students has opened the doors for thousands of economically disadvantaged children in Florida.

Founded in 1984 as Wackenhut Corrections Corporation, The GEO Group has established itself as a leader within the privatized correctional and residential treatment markets in the United States, United Kingdom, Australia and South Africa.

A Florida-based company, The GEO Group is committed to giving back to the community. Believing that proper educational opportunities can help children succeed and accomplish their goals, the company has partnered with Step Up For Students for the past two years by granting funds for the distribution of Step Up For Students Scholarships. The grants totaling \$20,000 have leveraged \$1.7 million in scholarship dollars to 777 students.

"Step Up For Students Scholarships have a profound impact on the lives of children across the state of Florida and go a long way in ensuring that they enjoy a bright and prosperous future," George C. Zoley, Chairman, CEO and Founder of The GEO Group, said. "We are proud to be a statewide partner of Step Up For Students."

The GEO Group has also partnered with other organizations, such as Take Stock in Children, to ensure even more children receive educational opportunities. We commend The GEO Group for their outstanding commitment to education and thank the company for its support of Step Up For Students. The GEO Group is providing opportunities for our children and community.

Join The GEO Group in supporting Step Up For Students. One hundred percent of the CTC funds must be used for scholarships and administrative funds must be raised through monetary donations and grants from individuals, foundations and other organizations, which are vital to the scholarship program.

A donation of only \$25 will provide \$3,750 scholarship to a low-income child due to the matching program by the Walton Family Foundation. For more information, call 1 (866) 344-9553 or visit www.stepup-forstudents.com/donors.htm.

