Karimah Mohammed Awarded Aspire2STEAM Scholarship

Computer Science Major Sees Education as Restoration

DAVENPORT, IA, UNITED STATES, October 14, 2024 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Aspire2STEAM.org, which provides educational scholarships, recognition, and mentoring to young women and girls who are working towards careers that require education in science, tech, engineering, the arts, or math (STEAM), has awarded Karimah Mohammed a LEGACY scholarship.

Karimah, a rising junior at Howard University's College of Engineering and Architecture, received several responsibilities when her family moved to America. When Karimah's father sadly passed away, her mother decided to immigrate from Nigeria. The Computer Science major cited that a "fresh start" was necessary for the family to move on, and consequently assumed a new role for her four younger siblings.

"I think that 'tough' would be an understatement," noted Karimah. "Grief is an endless process, although I don't think of my dad's loss as burdensome. Life throws things at you. Sometimes you catch whatever that something is, other times you dodge it, other times you get hit. Maybe it stings, maybe it leaves a bruise. Yet you keep trying to catch the opportunities and dodge challenges. You keep going."

Karimah Mohammed, a Howard University junior, is breaking barriers in tech and education, striving to make technology more inclusive and accessible for all.

To help her family manage their finances, Karimah pitches in for her mother. She has worked as a cashier at her local grocery store and as a tutor at Kumon Math and Reading Center, where she first found her calling as an educator. "Tutoring started as a way to earn extra money, here and there. We've got a lot of mouths to feed and only one salary. Soon though, I realized just how much I was impacting these kids. You don't see it immediately. Then a week or two goes by, and

they're suddenly more enthusiastic. They show me their latest quiz, smiling, with an 'A+' stamped on it."

Because of her experience at Kumon, Karimah aspires to be a software engineer who will someday improve information technology and its accessibility. "I saw myself in many of these kids. A lot of them struggle due to obstacles at home. Things that make them feel demotivated and powerless. Education can restore that power, but too much technology is locked behind paywalls."

The term "paywalls" refers to an arrangement where websites restrict access to users who have paid a fee. Time magazine recently reported that such paywalls even obscure cures for cancer. Scientific research, journals, and other educational means are typically bound to monopolies that function through ludicrous subscriptions. "Knowledge should be free," Karimah added. "Most people want to learn, yet face financial strain — and that should not be a factor that interferes with education to willing students."

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Fortunately for Karimah, two well-known tech companies have helped empower her education over the years. She has participated in various summer tech programs, including Google's Computer Science Summer Institute initiative, and currently interns at Amazon's Seattle headquarters as a software developer. She also held a similar internship position at Amazon last year and was awarded the Amazon Future Engineer Scholarship.

Moving across the Atlantic and between states has not proven easy. Karimah moved from Tennessee to Washington for the aforementioned internship, and to Washington, D.C. for college. "Despite the challenges of being a Black woman in STEM and having to reacclimate myself to that environment again and again, I maintained a 3.9 GPA during my freshman year. Keeping my mental health in check and making new friends is intimidating. I remind myself to be grateful." It is unfortunately known that a lot of Black women are ostracized for being in the technology field, but Karimah believes that surrendering to prejudice would only validate bigotry.

Looking towards the future, Karimah sees herself founding a start-up that will demonetize,

demasculinize, and deracialize the boundaries blocking underprivileged access to information technology. "The key to the kingdom is knowledge," said Karimah, a sentiment that is not only shared at Aspire2STEAM, but the very reason for its existence.

"People tend to protect their boundaries because they fear change, but oftentimes these boundaries hinder our progress," said Cheryl O'Donoghue, Founder of Aspire2STEAM. "We enthusiastically applaud Karimah's work to remove unnecessary boundaries that, once removed, help lift all of humanity. We're excited to support her now, and in the years to come."

Aspire2STEAM.org

About Aspire2STEAM

Help us fund more scholarships for students just like Karimah! Donate now.

Established in 2018, Aspire2STEAM.org is a charitable 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization, which has earned Guidestar's Gold Seal for accountability, integrity, and transparency. Over the years, it has become known for its scholarship and recognition program to support young women and girls who are working hard — aspiring — to achieve careers that require education in science, tech, engineering, the arts, or math. Aspire2STEAM is committed to helping women and girls break the incredible barriers of scholarship award inequity, rising education costs and student debt, and the real, ever-present opportunity barriers that keep them out of most male-dominated industries.

Scholarship Applications Accepted Year-Round! Share this online application today.

Please donate. Your kindness is a catalyst for change and empowerment for the young women and girls we serve.

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