

Angela —

Special Populations

Angela was the mother of an active seven-month old when she was referred to New Heights by her social worker. Living in foster care, Angela was traveling nearly an hour every morning to drop off her daughter at daycare on the other side of town, only to turn around to attend the charter school down the street from her group home. She was often either late for her first class or missed it entirely.

Additionally, she couldn't stay after school to meet with teachers for tutoring because she needed to pick up her daughter. Within two weeks of meeting with the Special Populations New Heights coordinator, Angela found daycare closer to her home and school. She also started earning Baby Bonus Bucks incentive points she could redeem for much-needed baby items. Angela now has time to go to school early or stay late to receive academic assistance and focus on her schoolwork. She plans to graduate in 2014.

Her part-time job helps her support herself and her daughter.

Latasha —

Roosevelt High School

When Latasha was 16 years old she found out she was pregnant. She was very uncertain about her life and her future, but she was determined to have her baby. Over a period of time, she developed a trusting relationship with the school's New Heights coordinator, who provided her with support and resources when she faced the inevitable challenges of balancing life as a teen mom and a student. Making matters more complicated, Latasha battled postpartum depression during the months following her baby's birth. With the support and guidance of New Heights staff and other supporters, she was able to work through this difficult time. In June 2013, Latasha became the first person in her immediate family to graduate from high school.

Jewel -- Dunbar High School

Jewel became a victim of human trafficking at age 14. After a night of abuse by her pimp, she made a daring escape knowing that if caught, she would be killed. She got away with the help of a metro bus driver who allowed her on the bus without paying. Jewel then reported her story to the police and helped prosecute and convict her pimp. Fearing for her safety, Jewel was sent away to live with relatives in another country. In that country, she faced more abuse and ridicule as word spread that she was "sexually active." She was taken advantage of by men she was supposed to trust. **J**ewel returned home to complete her senior year of high school. She became pregnant and promptly joined the New Heights program. At New

Heights, she gained support, friends, and information that helped build her confidence.

She was connected to various community-based organizations and received more intensive support through their programs. Jewel graduated from high school in June and will begin at the University of the District of Columbia in January 2014.

Nick and Nora, — Cardozo High School

Nora found out she was pregnant prior to her junior year. When she and the child's father, Nick, returned to school in September, they enrolled in New Heights. During the lunch hour parenting workshops, Nick, the only guy in the room, would tune everyone out. Eventually, he started to pay attention; he learned how to be a good parent and how to raise a baby in a good, safe

environment. From then on they attended the New Heights lunch hour every single day. When Nora was out of school on maternity leave, Nick brought home her schoolwork and told her what was discussed in New Heights that day. Being a father, he says, gave him a new sense of focus. When Nora returned to school, both she and Nick continued in the program and have been described as the New Heights "stars." In June, Nick was able to keep his promise to his father as he and Nora graduated from Cardozo and will be attending UDC in the fall.

Portia — Next Step Charter School

Portia came to the U.S. when she was only 9 years old. She recalls that at the time she was very shy and unable to speak English. She quickly learned the English language and became a very talented writer and a good student. However, things began to change as she entered her teens. Faced with multiple challenges and some poor

decisions, Portia dropped out of school in the 9th grade. When she found out she was pregnant at 17, she decided to enroll in Next Step so that she could finish school in a more flexible setting. At Next Step, she learned about the New Heights program. The New Heights coordinator remembers thinking there was something different and special about Portia--the perfect balance of a positive, light-hearted attitude with fierce determination and discipline. Once in the New Heights program, she started working hard and getting good grades again. By October 2012, Portia, now a young mother, completed her GED. This spring she received a \$6,400 New Futures Scholarship to study nursing at UDC in the fall. In addition to becoming an accomplished student and dedicated mother, Portia has become an activist. She encourages other immigrant students to complete their education.

Tina — Anacostia High School

Tina, a 16 year-old high school junior, found out she was expecting in April 2013. Her guidance counselor suggested she join the New Heights program to help her continue her education and graduate on time. Soon after, Tina was encouraged by the New Heights coordinator to participate in an all-day conference for expecting and parenting teens. The conference was offered by one of the many community-based organizations that provide resources and services to New Heights teen parents. The next day, Tina sent her New Heights coordinator an email in which she shared that the conference had changed her life.

Anita — Wilson High School

Anita joined New Heights in the beginning of 2013. Previously, she struggled in school and her grade point average was well under a 2.0. Her relationship with the

father of her child was very complicated and she was also experiencing rocky relationships at home with her mother and sisters. Anita started attending New Heights' workshops and got to know other students participating in the program. Soon, Anita's grades began to improve; she started thinking seriously about her class work, and asked for help to advocate for herself with teachers. After awhile, she was able to show her teachers that she was making an effort to change. Anita's grades have improved and she now plans to attend UDC in the fall. Anita was especially grateful to New Heights when she was able to "purchase" baby items and equipment with the Baby Bonus Bucks she earned through the program.