



Dear Friends of Vincent Gray,

We have much to be thankful for here at Vincent Gray Academy this holiday season. Christmas is the season of hope. It is my hope and prayer that you realize how truly blessed we are to have you as a friend. Without your generosity we simply would not be able to offer hope to the young men and women who come to our school looking to improve their lives.

Since 1980, more than 400 young people who were deemed uneducable have graduated from our school. Vincent Gray Academy gives reason to hope and persevere, while at the same time trying to convince students that they are important in this society. It is our priority to teach them to believe in themselves.

I hope that you will be able to continue supporting Vincent Gray Academy in 2013. Please consider a gift at this time to help us continue providing our students hope. Again, thank you for your past support of Vincent Gray Academy. The students are well aware of your generosity, and we will continue to remember your needs in our daily thoughts and prayers.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Lillian Grinston".

Lillian Grinston
Executive Director



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A Testimony from Joshua Starks



Joshua Starks came to Vincent Gray Academy in the fall of 2011. From the beginning it was apparent to his teachers that he was an intelligent and dedicated student.



Vincent Gray Academy is a family tradition for me. My mother, Uveida Woolens (class of 1989); brother, Tydon Woolens (2008); and older sister, Keach-A Starks (2008), are proud graduates of Vincent Gray Academy.

My mother and siblings all had different experiences but they all loved it. When I went to VGA I was "doing my own thing." I was not on the right path, but the longer I stayed there the more I changed. I actually grew up at Vincent Gray, because they did not hold my hand and tell me I had to do everything. They gave me responsibility and treated me like a man. I had to get 13 credits in that year. It was one of the best years of my life.

Vincent Gray also helped me understand the simple concept that if you want something you have to take it. You have to work hard and never give up on your dreams. I played football for East St. Louis High School while I was attending Vincent Gray. I was not a starter or anything special, but I worked hard and I never gave up. It all has paid off because after I graduated, I continued to work hard and went to Southwestern Illinois College.

I recently received a football scholarship to Missouri Baptist University. However it was not just because of my athletic skills,

it was also because of my grades. I now have a 3.0 Southwestern Illinois College. It was all because of what VGA taught me. I will continue to strive for the best.

A Testimony from Crystal Donald

My name is Crystal Donald and I graduated from Vincent Gray Academy in 2004.

Being a single teen mother while in high school was a major struggle until I started to attend Vincent Gray. This school was a great motivation for me. The time that I spent there was never wasted.



The teachers helped me to focus more and to gain knowledge that will help me to fulfill my goals in life.

All the teachers and staff really made it possible for me to get my high school diploma. They instilled

the importance of getting a high school education. They even encouraged me to take the next step, which was to complete college. I'm currently the Assistant General Manager at a Drury Inn Hotel. I am also working toward becoming a General Manager. Without completing my education at Vincent Gray, I would not be where I am today.



New Teacher at Vincent Gray



With the start of the new school year, Vincent Gray Academy welcomed one new teacher, Ms. Phyllis Johnson.

Ms. Johnson now teaches English. She joined the staff because she likes the pedagogy of the school, and believes that it matches with her own. The one-on-one interaction and small classes resonate with her.

When Johnson first became an educator, she defined teaching as imparting knowledge to students. But, as she soon found out, it was much more. She says, “a lot of students are like oranges. One must pull-off the outer layer and open it to find the seeds. Those seeds then must to be cultivated in order to blossom and grow.”

This is Johnson’s first experience educating high school students. However, she finds that some of the same principles apply to young adults as children—she has to cultivate their seed in order for them to become what they are meant to be. She says that here at Vincent Gray Academy, it brings her a great deal of joy to carry out this mission. In the short period that she has been here, she realizes that she has not only been teaching but mentoring as well. “Everyday I leave Vincent Gray, I do so with a smile on my face knowing that this is where I am intended to be. I feel that this truly is a calling I have answered.”

Johnson appreciates the opportunity to be part of the staff at Vincent Gray and looks forward to growing more and more.



A Walk Down Memory Lane



FOUNDERS:

VGA began in 1980 under the leadership of two Marianist Brothers, John Laudenbach and Larry McBride, and a School Sister of Notre Dame, Carolyn Sur.

SCHOOL'S NAMESAKE:



The school bears the name of an outstanding African-American high school teacher who inspired many students while ministering in St. Louis some years ago. Vincent Gray was born near Detroit in 1930. In 1949 he joined a religious order called the Marianists. Brother Vincent earned college degrees from St. Mary's University in San Antonio and from DePaul University in Chicago. His productive career as a secondary school teacher serves as an inspiration to the staff and students at Vincent Gray Academy.

Class of 1980-2013

Graduation Year	Graduate Students	Graduation Year	Graduate Students
1980	0	1997	6
1981	1	1998	9
1982	11	1999	11
1983	6	2000	13
1984	10	2001	17
1985	10	2001	17
1986	10	2003	15
1987	12	2004	21

1988	10	2005	20
1989	10	2006	17
1990	12	2007	17
1991	9	2008	16
1992	12	2009	18
1993	10	2010	19
1994	9	2011	13
1995	8	2012	15
1996	5	2013	10