



Alexis Creamer—Changing Her Community and Redefining Her Circumstances.

“Thanks to Wyman, I have more perseverance and endurance to achieve my dreams than I ever thought I would.”

WHEN ALEXIS JOINED Wyman’s Teen Leadership Program (TLP) nearly six years ago, she couldn’t envision a life beyond her situation. She wasn’t sure she would graduate high school, much less attend college.

Growing up with a single mother who is deaf, Alexis held part-time jobs to contribute to her family’s income. Alexis recalls that often she thought she should drop out to work full-time, “to provide a life that her mother would never be able to give her and her sister.”

WYMAN’S SUPPORT

With support from Wyman, Alexis graduated high school, and identified a college and career path that will enable her to help other teens facing similar circumstances, along with financial aid to pursue that path. Alexis also participated in community service activities that further gave her confidence in her power to make a difference, as well as career exploration programming, industry interviews and tours with some of St. Louis’ most influential and inspiring businesses leaders. When coupled with the deep relationships she developed with Wyman staff, Alexis became empowered to influence change on a broader scale. Now, she’s working to create more equitable circumstances for high school students

across the nation, as well as for incoming students on her college campus.

ALEXIS’ SUCCESS

In 2014, Alexis graduated from high school with honors. She secured a full scholarship to Missouri State University, where she’s working toward a degree in marketing and technical writing.

“Attending a four-year university has been the hardest chapter of my life,” said Alexis. “When I was 12-years-old and starting TLP, I couldn’t see myself in college. No one else in my family had ever been here—I had no idea how to make it a reality. I was overwhelmed by the process. But today, I have created a vision for myself, and thanks to Wyman, I have the skills and knowledge to bring it to life.”

At Missouri State, Alexis is creating more equitable circumstances for her peers of color. Alexis is a member of the Diversity Recruitment Council, where she uses her voice to advocate for others. And, as a University Ambassador, she gives prospective students of color a view of the campus that they can relate to, and answers questions they may have. She also serves as a mentor for

younger Wyman teens entering their first years at Missouri State.

“I understand the challenges that many young people face, and the factors that encumber them from fully developing, including generational poverty, lack of role models and a lack of supportive adults. Programs like Wyman’s Teen Leadership Program gave me those things. **My coaches are the reason that I will become a college graduate.** I want to ensure all of us have access to that essential support,” added Alexis.

LEADERSHIP WITH AMERICA’S PROMISE ALLIANCE

In 2017, America’s Promise Alliance (APA), the nation’s largest network dedicated to improving the lives of children and youth, elected Alexis to serve as a trustee to help guide the alliance in its crusade to end the dropout crisis. The APA is led by former U.S. Secretary of State and Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Colin Powell. In her role, Alexis is utilizing her skills, background and experience to make a difference in the lives of others.

“To be selected to serve in this role **helps me understand that I have a distinct part in combating the country’s high school dropout crisis,** and that I can inspire others, just like me, to attend and persist through college. I know I

Alexis Creamer, continued

wouldn't be here today if it weren't for Wyman helping me realize that I can use my struggles and perspective to help others."

Prior to her trustee appointment, Alexis co-founded an organization called FLY Girls, which empowered young girls to gain confidence through artistic expression. She continues making an impact by holding empowerment workshops on campus and in the surrounding region. After she graduates, she aspires to pursue a career in the nonprofit industry to continue empowering young people to succeed.

Like Alexis, teens in Wyman programs are gaining a sense of belonging, and the skills and confidence necessary to graduate high school, apply to college, and enter four-year universities—all at rates far beyond their peers.

ABOUT THE TEEN LEADERSHIP PROGRAM

TLP boosts teens' college tenacity through a six-year course of leadership experiences, and college access and persistence programming that begins the summer after eighth grade. Wyman coaches help teens identify their values, talents and interests, and explore aligned career paths. Teens participate in college tours, more than 40 hours of community service annually, and work with coaches to apply for college and secure financial aid that reduces the financial burden after graduation. TLP coaches also provide on-campus college mentoring.

IMPACT

Wyman serves 3,000 teens across the St. Louis region: one-hundred percent of teens in Wyman's Teen Leadership Program graduated successfully in 2017, despite the only 89 percent of teens who graduated in the state of Missouri in 2016.

ABOUT WYMAN

Wyman has been dedicated to serving youth from disadvantaged circumstances for more than a century. Wyman empowers teens, equips adults and strengthens systems. Wyman's engaging, empowering and experiential programs and services help teens build skills, develop a sense of self and connections to their world. As a result, teens achieve educational success, develop healthy behaviors and relationships, and exhibit life and leadership skills. From thousands of teens in St. Louis—to tens of thousands nationally—Wyman programs and

services make a difference in the lives of today's teens and tomorrow's leaders.

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