



## Millikan Senior Wins Scholarship To Kalamazoo College

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While many of her peers are waiting for their acceptance letters, Brittany King-Pleas, a senior at Millikan High School, already knows where she will be attending college next year.

King-Pleas recently won a scholarship from the Posse Foundation — a youth leadership development and college access program — to cover her undergraduate tuition at Kalamazoo College in Michigan.

The dancer and student body president attributes her award to Operation Jump Start (OJS), a community-based mentoring organization she began working with her freshman year.

“They gave me the opportunity,” King-Pleas said. “I’ve never heard of Posse before. They make sure you are doing everything you need to do for high school classes. It’s really helped me make sure I’m on track.”

Since OJS paired King-Pleas with mentor Jasmine Dawson, the duo has spent much time developing their friendship by visiting museums, attending theater performances and sports games, volunteering and more.

King-Pleas said she respects Dawson for her success and priorities. (Dawson graduated from the University of Southern California with a business degree in 2003 and works as a procurement agent for Boeing.) Dawson, whose mentorship with King-Pleas was her first since joining OJS, said enjoyed working with the dedicated and talented student.

“I think she is a special girl,” said Dawson, a Long Beach resident and Jordan High School alumna. “She has great talents and I foresee her doing a lot of great things in the future.”

King-Pleas said she plans to study psychology or sociology in college because she is a good listener and likes helping people work through their problems.

“It’s always been my mom’s dream,” King-Pleas said. “She has always pushed for me to have a good education.”

King-Pleas’ mother, Margaret King, attended California State University, Long Beach, but never graduated, and her father, Le-Bone Pleas, took some college courses but didn’t obtain a degree.

If she graduates, King-Pleas will be the first person in her family to receive a bachelor’s degree.

“This is a wonderful opportunity for Brittany,” said OJS Director Dara Cerwonka. “It really embodies the goals of the program in that we want disadvantaged students to gain access to top-rated colleges and universities on merit-based scholarships.”

For more information about the organization or to find out how to help (OJS currently needs more mentors), call 988-2131 or visit [www.operationjumpstart.org](http://www.operationjumpstart.org).