

Wednesday 9/19/2018

It's not 100% anymore. Here's why.



If you've been around New City Kids for very long at all, you know that helping teens go to college is a big deal for us. In fact, for eight years, 100% of our teens went straight to college after they graduated high school. But in 2017, that streak was broken. One teen took a different path, and instead of going to college, he... well, **here's his story**, as told by our Vroom St. Church location Site Director, Alex Goldsmith:

"Khalil was an incredibly bright young man who entered into our program as a high school junior. He rose to a position of leadership and was a model in academics. When senior year came, Khalil spent lots of hours submitting college applications, filling out scholarships and financial aid forms. We even made last minute trips to schools for final looks at campuses.

When it came time to decide where to go, Khalil had made up his mind that the army was his next step. Khalil had been a part of JROTC in high school and saw a value in learning discipline through the military. I feared that Khalil was choosing

the military just because **he felt like he wasn't college material.**

I started to wonder if I had let him down. Maybe if I had given Khalil more of my time and attention he would have chosen to go to college instead. After insisting several times that he was in fact college material, he made a promise: "I am going to go to college, but I need to go do this for now."

Khalil turned down his college offers and shipped out for basic training in the army reserves last October. I didn't hear from Khalil while he was away. I spoke with his mom and found out that her letters weren't getting to him and she didn't know much about his new life either.

One night around Christmas, Khalil showed up at my door dressed in his military uniform. He had come home from training for Christmas and his bus was leaving in two hours (and the station was an hour away). I was honored to see him and also worried he would miss his bus so we caught up quickly on the way to the train station. At home for Christmas, Khalil reapplied for the schools that he had previously turned down. Khalil was now off to Mississippi for the next several months to learn carpentry and masonry.

This past week was Khalil's first week enrolled at Kean University as a graphic design major. He received several grants and scholarships as well as the support of the G.I. bill, which is helping him cover his expenses. **Khalil's decision to wait to go to school ended up opening financial doors.** God had a bigger plan than me. What felt like a loss in not seeing this teenager go on to college has been used to bless him and his family. He ultimately ended up at the same school that he had planned to attend before but now in a better financial position and with new skills and experiences under his belt. I don't know what all the future holds for Khalil, but this last year has served as an example of God's faithfulness to him and to me."

We're at 99% and we couldn't be prouder of it.

Yours,

Trevor Rubingh
President & Co-founder
New City Kids