



# Associated Colleges of Illinois

**Denzel Johnson**  
**Monmouth College**  
**ACI General Scholarship**



Denzel Johnson went to [Monmouth College](#), Monmouth, Illinois, to learn and to fulfill a dream of becoming a television news anchor. Along the way, he experienced more than he imagined, and this year, graduated with a bachelor's degree in communication studies.

Johnson grew up on the south side of Chicago and attended Muchin College Prep. At Monmouth, Johnson worked at the college radio station, WPFS, where he had a show called "Inside Scoop," became head anchor at Monmouth College Television, wrote for the Monmouth Courier, the student newspaper, and the Monmouth Review Atlas, the city newspaper. He also published poetry in Coil, the literature and arts magazine of Monmouth College. Among many other things.

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If there's something Monmouth College has to offer, I have done it," said Johnson. For example, he gave up spring break for service opportunities. Those experiences included a trip to Nogales, Mexico, to learn about immigration, an interreligious learning experience in Chicago and a third spring break experience visiting Hill Correctional Center in Galesburg, Illinois, to learn about social justice reform. Plus, Johnson held leadership positions, including president, in UMOJA, the Black Student Union at Monmouth, and worked with inner-city youth for Project Morry, a camp internship opportunity in Westchester County, New York.

"My dream is still to anchor and go into journalistic writing, but also I have passions in other areas," Johnson says. They include working with inner-city youth in Chicago or possibly working in sales and marketing. "I've been talking with my mom and family members about my next step, so I really have quite a few opportunities and options," he says.

Helping to facilitate his college experience were two scholarships through ACI. The first was a UPS Scholarship, made available through a grant from the Council of Independent Colleges/UPS Endowment. The second was an ACI General Scholarship. He says the scholarships have helped him and his mother, Sarah, a retired college librarian, to meet tuition costs. Plus, he learned a lot by attending ACI's first Career and Internship Fair in 2018.

"From day one, me and my mom have been doing this together back-to-back as a duo. She's been helping me with a payment plan. I've also been trying to continue to reach out and apply for scholarships," Johnson says.

Johnson is grateful to Monmouth faculty and staff for their support while he was a student. He also is grateful for donors who made the scholarships possible. "It's one thing to help fund something but when you help students fulfill their dreams and become the best person that they can be, I don't think there's any better feeling than that. That's what I would tell a donor," Johnson adds.