



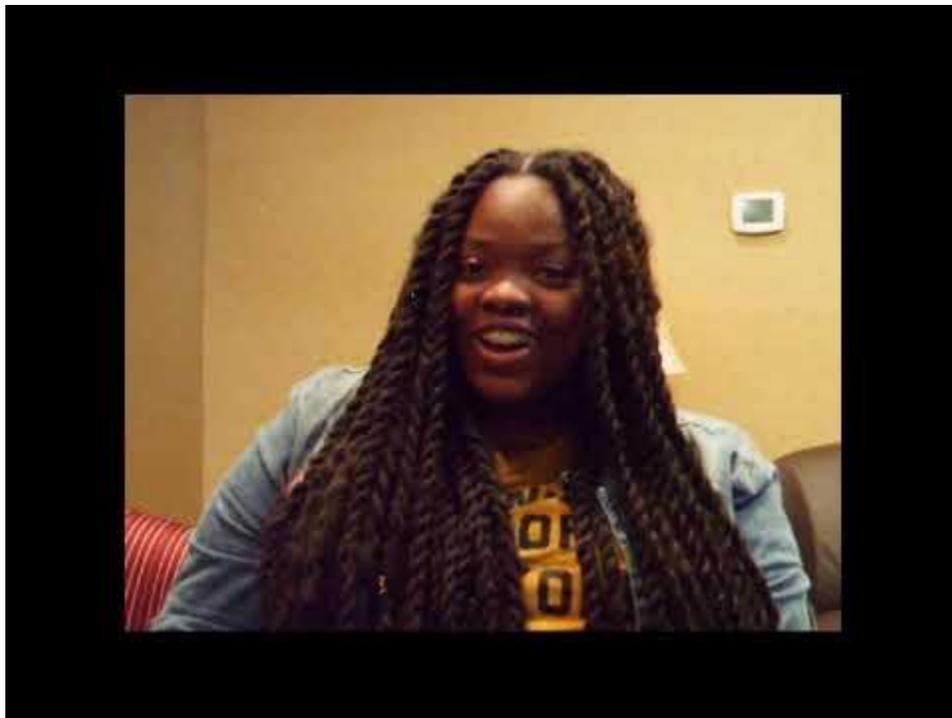
Associated Colleges of Illinois

Michaela Young
Eureka College
Michele and Peter S. Wilmott Minority Student
Leadership Award



Michaela Young first learned about [Eureka College](#) through a college admissions counselor. At the time, she was a high school sophomore in Chicago. She saw the same counselor at college fairs through her senior year, who encouraged her to think about attending Eureka. As she considered other schools, Eureka College offered her scholarship funds. When things didn't work out at historically black universities in Mississippi and Tennessee, Young worked with a mentor to determine Eureka's offer was best. "So, the following week was move-in day," she recalls. "I never stepped foot on the Eureka College campus until my move-in day. I didn't know anyone at all."

[Click to see the video!](#)



Eventually, Young began to meet people and participate in activities. Four years later, she recalls getting over early stage fright through singing. "I knew my music. Singing

was what I wanted to do," she says. "I've learned so much these last two years that I didn't learn before." Young cited Dr. Adriana Martinez, Dr. Joe Henry and Pamela Bates for helping her learn through singing. Along the way, she taught herself guitar and is learning piano.

Being a student at Eureka has given Young a chance to sing jazz and opera. Opera, she says, is not a music type she believed she could sing well. But after her junior recital, audience members and professors told her she had a great operatic voice. "That made me believe in myself," she says. She has also sung in talent shows, at conferences, on stage in Chicago, and for six years, with HHW School for the Performing Arts in Chicago. Young also picked up a theater minor last year and directed her first play.

Helping to make her singing career possible is the Michele and Peter S. Wilmott Minority Student Leadership Award through ACI. Earning the scholarship was "like a breath of fresh air," Young says. "It humbled me a lot because people around my campus are noticing that I'm actually trying to put a step forward," she says. "The scholarship took a load off of me. It's a huge load off of what I had to do last year." In that year, Young had multiple on-campus jobs to help meet tuition costs. She used the Wilmott scholarship to pay for tuition.

This year, Young is president of the Multicultural Student Union at Eureka and is president of the campus activities board as well.

After graduation, Young plans to travel the world and sing where she can, and eventually attend graduate school. Recalling her experience attending a Chicago Public Schools Advanced Arts Program at Gallery 37 Center for the Arts in the city, Young also wants to open an arts-inspired school in Chicago for inner-city youth.