



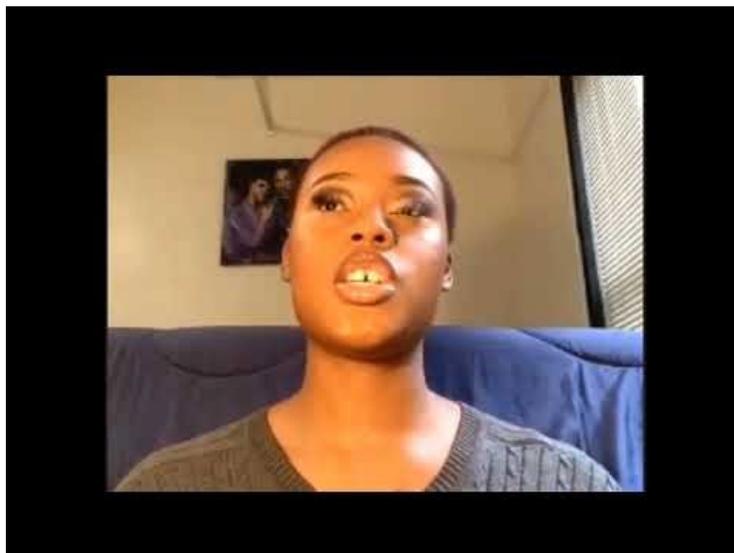
Vanessa Jackson
Knox College
CIC/UPS Scholarship



Vanessa Jackson remembers how she was greeted when she visited [Knox College](#) in Galesburg, Illinois, for the first time last year. "They paid for my train ticket," she says. "It was last minute. They got me connected with a host here. The community here is so great. There were people to help me the whole day that I was here. They made sure I had everything I needed and more. They made sure I got back home just as safely as I got here. That is really what led me to Knox."

Jackson is a first-generation college student from Chicago. Now a sophomore majoring political science, with minors in Africana Studies and English, Jackson recalls the encouragement to study political science and government she got from a teacher in high school, and the help she gets each day from the Knox community. "Since being here I have struggled a bit just trying to transition from high school to college," Jackson says. "But I have had people to help me along the way the entire time. I have the dean, I have librarians. I have people who work as staff in the cafeteria that just come to me on a regular basis and just make sure that I'm doing good." The constant encouragement, she says, motivates her.

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Jackson, who hopes to attend law school, says education is important in her family. Her parents didn't get the educational opportunities she has had. Moving in at Knox was a great and memorable day, she says. "My mom and my stepdad helped me move in, and afterward, my mom just sat there and she cried because she couldn't even think about how it would be for her if she went to college, but she was so proud that I was able to go to college." The oldest of four children, Jackson hopes to pave the way for her siblings to attend college, if they choose.

At Knox, Jackson is a member of the college's Pre-Law Club, and has visited law schools, met law professors and elected officials, and attended college fairs, looking for law school opportunities. She participates in ABLE, Allied Blacks for Liberty and Equality, which promotes cultural awareness and raises issues that affect students of African descent. Jackson participates in the TRIO Achievement Program for first-generation students and Sisters of Excellence, which empowers women of color.

Jackson finances her college education. She worked often last school year, but the pandemic changed that, leaving her short of money for tuition. She appealed to her advisor, financial aid staff and professors for help. "It's very important that I not only finish my education, but that I do it at Knox," Jackson says. With their help, she qualified for the CIC/UPS Scholarship through ACI.

"I am so appreciative for the scholarship and for everybody's help," Jackson says. She also appreciates the donors who help, too. "We appreciate so much their willingness to give when they don't even know us. It's really hard trying to get through college especially with the weight of the costs over your head. It's the reason why a lot my friends couldn't go to college or finish college because of the financial burden they had on them. It's very motivational to students like me, to know that somebody out there is willing to help."