



CHASING A DREAM: *Domanique's Story*

Despite Domanique's love of learning, she struggled for years to get a quality education. The poor performing schools in her neighborhood were just one of the hindrances to her academic success. Family troubles, including drug abuse, mental illness, and incarceration, deprived Domanique of the mentors she so desperately needed to guide her to her dreams.

Frustrated and dispirited, Domanique dropped out of school when she was 13 years old. It took her four years to make up her mind to reach for a better life. Newly determined, she earned her GED online and got accepted into college at the age of 18. Things seemed to be moving in the right direction.

"Through education, there were other opportunities."

But life is unpredictable. Just 7 months after getting into college, Domanique's father was incarcerated and she lost her financial aid. With no means to pay for college, she worked as a bookkeeper for 5 years to support herself. At the age of 23, Domanique was finally eligible for financial aid on her own. She applied and was accepted to Baruch College.

"As proud as I was of myself, I was disappointed to be this 23 year old grown woman starting over."

Domanique excelled academically, but was uncomfortable in college. Older than the other students and ashamed of her background, she felt different, disconnected, and alone. At the end of her freshman year, a school counselor encouraged her to apply to America Needs You (ANY). It was at ANY that Domanique finally found her support network.



Make a gift today at www.americanneedsyou.org.



"Mentors hold your dream for you until you believe it for yourself."

In the company of other first-generation college students, and under the guidance of her ANY Mentor Coach, Domanique found the confidence to dream big. She landed prestigious internships with Bluewolf, Compass, and Goldman Sachs. In May 2016, Domanique will graduate with a Bachelor of Business Administration in Finance, and with a job as a Business Analyst with Goldman Sachs.

"It's a little late, but it's right on time for me."

Domanique understands that success is not always achievable on your own. Without the support of ANY and her Mentor Coach, she knows that life would look very different. That's why she is adamant about mentoring her younger brother and giving him the support she wishes she had growing up.

"If no one else believed I could get a college degree, if no one else believed I could end up working at Goldman Sachs, I wouldn't have made it."