



## SCHOLAR PROFILES

### YIZHUO CHEN



For every Higher Achievement graduate, there is a story of academic resilience, persistence and attainment. Yizhuo Chen came to the Higher Achievement Program in 6th grade when he was getting beaten up after school for his unwavering pursuit of academics. At the time he was working 30 hours a week washing dishes in Chinatown; where both his parents worked. They agreed his time would be better spent at Higher Achievement, despite their desperate need for the income. His family of six subsists today on \$27,000 income annually. The chances are very good that his life would have remained in Chinatown were it not for the education and opportunity he received from Higher Achievement. He never missed a day. After three years, we enrolled him at Gonzaga Jesuit School on a full scholarship. He is now a junior at Gonzaga, a member of the "Its Academic" team and holds a 3.88 Grade point average (report card available upon request) while taking a full roster of honors and advanced placement classes. He is looking to go to Stanford in 2006.

### JASMIN COOK



Nervous about the neighborhood, violence, and gangs, Higher Achievement is the one activity Jasmin Cook's grandmother allows. Jasmin's mother is institutionalized, her father is gone, so Jasmin lives with her retired grandparents, who support her and three other children. Jasmin is responsible, hardworking, and receives straight "A's" yet had never been challenged and she scored average standardized test scores and struggled with abstract thinking. After four years in Higher Achievement, she has vaulted to a top scholar with advanced test scores. She enters every contest. She graduated 8<sup>th</sup> grade this year and submitted 3 applications for top schools. She was accepted at every school. She writes in her 2005 graduation speech: "My grandmother entered me into this program in 5<sup>th</sup> grade when I was ten. I was short and shy. I didn't really speak out. I was better at writing. Now, I can look back and see how I have changed. I speak out, I am confident, and HAP has made me really like school. I am open to new ideas and I have learned to think beyond the obvious." She will attend Benjamin Banneker Academic High School in the fall.

