A Wise Choice

He didn’t like the sport —at first. But when six-foot-five, 240-pound David Nwaogwugwu began to learn the plays and bond with teammates during his freshman year in high school, he became football’s number one fan and Dewitt Clinton High School’s star player. Now, David is on his way to Temple University on a full scholarship to play Division 1 football as defensive end on the Temple Owls team.

“This is just a blessing,” David said. “My mom and dad have been talking about this day since I get the offer from Temple. This is the happiest I’ve ever seen my dad. It just makes me so happy to see my parents proud of me. That’s all you ever want,” he added with an illuminating grin.

It wasn’t until Mr. Robinson invited several students, including Emmanuel, to audition for a role in a new Netflix show called ‘She’s Gotta Have It’ created by his friend, acclaimed director Spike Lee.

“In my head, I was thinking I’m getting it. There was no doubt in my mind. It took me one or two take and they sent it to Spike,” he said. And he was correct! He landed the role with his classmate and they shared a scene where they played the classic game of wit called the dozens.

Although acting is Emmanuel’s top goal right now, our program will help solidify his dreams of becoming a nurse while leaving all options open for a career in professional football. David also plans to visit his SSC family and pay-it-forward to help other students succeed.

A Step Forward

Entering the workforce is an exciting rite of passage, but it can also be a challenge for youth with little experience in an office environment. In order to help our participants get their feet wet while layering in the additional supports that are critical to their success at work, we are offering internships to address their experience gap.

In March, our 7th Avenue office in Manhattan welcomed a cohort of interns as a part of the Mentored Internship Program, a Pinkerton funded initiative that provides supportive work experience for youth in foster care.

Interns were matched with staff who served as mentor-supervisors in the areas of Government and Community Resources, The Executive Office, Information Technology, Facilities, Grants and Contracts, External Relations, and Health Services.

For 22 year-old college student Destiny Thompkins, interning with The Executive Office in an administrative role helped solidify her dreams of managing operations for a nonprofit or corporation. “I was hoping to better my clerical skills, my communications skills, and networking skills,” Destiny said before crediting her mentor-supervisor, Raven Marshall, with helping her hone those skills as well as learn the importance of advocating for yourself.

As Destiny works toward an Associates Degree in Business Administration, she is also preparing for the most important role of her life — motherhood. At six-months pregnant, Destiny is filled with the natural anxiety any first-time mother would experience. However, she’s ready. “The changes and the growth that will come from motherhood is a blessing because sometimes you need something to push you forward and help you grow,” she said.

For Destiny and her cohort colleagues, the hands-on experience will serve as a strong foundation for future employment. With an encouraging retention rate of 90%, a higher than expected rate for a program of this kind, we were approved to carry on this initiative for an additional 10 months.