



September 10, 2025

Dear Scholarship Selection Committee:

It is with great enthusiasm that I nominate Kalila (Nikki) Wilson for the Dr. Charles Mitchell, Jr. Leadership Scholarship from the National Alliance of Black School Educators (NABSE). I have known Ms. Wilson since 2019 when she was an assistant principal at West Ashley High School. Since that time, Nikki has enrolled in our inaugural Doctor of Education cohort at the College of Charleston. Nikki's determination and dedication to the field of education are laudable and she is deserving of this scholarship award.

Ms. Wilson has a breadth and depth of professional experience that is noteworthy. As an alumna of the College of Charleston, she earned a Master's of Education in Teaching, Learning, and Advocacy where she completed a capstone study on her teaching and leadership experiences in the secondary grades. Nikki's educational journey includes earning a second master's degree in Secondary Administration at The Citadel. Her commitment to pursuing additional educational paths and credentials is a testament to her understanding of the need for educators to be ever evolving and growing in the field.

As a middle and secondary administrative leader for nearly a decade, Ms. Wilson has provided extensive support to students and their families across many different socioeconomic, racial, and ability backgrounds. Her programming experience is widespread, offering dynamic initiatives such as the Minority Girls High Achievers Program, the New Tech Network & AP Academy, and the Laing Leaders of Tomorrow. These leadership experiences underscore Ms. Wilson's ability to coalesce students, colleagues, and families around the needs of the larger learning community. When Nikki encounters a challenge, she carefully and methodically gathers information to find a solution. She understands the need for a deft approach to problem solving. She exemplifies a calm and steady demeanor under pressure.

Ms. Wilson's involvement within the National Alliance of Black School Educators and local affiliate branch is extensive. She has served as a member on the NASBE National Conference Planning Committee. She has also been an active member of the South Carolina Alliance of Black School Educators. As the President of SCABSE @ Lowcountry and a member of the Executive Board, Nikki's goals are to illuminate the challenges of Black teachers and administrators and find areas of collaboration across constituent groups.

In 2025, Nikki joined our Doctor of Education program, which focuses on learning and inquiry in practice. This program is designed to support workforce development in our region and the state. Graduates of our program will collaborate and communicate effectively with others and improve the efficiency of their current work environment. In a short time, Nikki has made a considerable impact in our program. She is an active member of our cohort, always interrogating systems of power, privilege, and access. She is well poised to grow and mature as a leader and action researcher while in this program. These are the types of skills and dispositions a recipient of the Dr. Charles Mitchell, Jr. Leadership Scholarship should embody.

Please let me know if there is any other information I can provide in support of Kalila (Nikki) Wilson's scholarship application. Her impact in the field of both middle grades and secondary education has been significant and she is deserving of funding support to continue her doctoral studies in the service of others.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Keonya Booker".

Keonya Booker, Ph.D.  
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