

Hello all--

Here's a report of my conversations with Tai Humphrey's supporter. I was especially impressed with Tai's strong commitment to mentoring younger black girls at her school, and her creative use of social media to educate her community with the "Black Girl Magic" podcasts. I would recommend her for a certificate.

Tai Humphrey was recommended by Kendra Grinnage, her former teacher at Germantown Academy. GA is a private school located in Fort Washington that enrolls students from K to 12. Students of color make up 28% of the student body, and GA's website indicates that it has been working on efforts to expand diversity and inclusion. Although GA appears to be a relatively supportive environment for students of color, there have been recent instances of GA students using racial slurs on social media, as well as more subtle forms of racism and exclusion. In this context, Tai has exercised her leadership in several sophisticated ways to improve race relations at the school.

Tai has been a member of the Black Student Association since her freshman year, and she currently serves as the organization's president. Tai was inspired to become more active after attending a Diversity Leadership Conference in her sophomore year. Tai and two other students led a series of lunchtime talks on race, gender, and sexuality. The open format was initially quite successful, with as many as 75 students and faculty attending, but the students gradually came to feel that the sessions would be more effective if they continued as conversations for students only. After this, the students began to look for ways to expand their discussions, which led to the Black Girl Magic podcasts. In these podcasts, Tai and other students covered topics that would educate the GA community about the experience of black girls. As Tai puts it, the podcasts give the entire school the "chance to hear our voice" and "It is a space where we can laugh or cry." The podcasts attracted a wider audience than the lunch talks, with as many as 250 listeners for an episode and were also re-posted on social media. The podcasts' engaging content, such as "Black Hair," "I'm Gonna Wakanda Until I Can't," and "This is Not About the Prom") sparked discussions both in and outside of classes.

Through her participation in GA's African American Girls Affinity Lunches, Tai has become a significant mentor o younger girls in the GA community (in one specific instance, she bridged the isolation felt by a girl who was the only black girl in the second grade at GA).

Tai is highly respected by her peers and faculty, and she is seen as leader throughout the school. Tai is working to mentor younger girls at GA to take on similar leadership roles within the BSA and to continue the podcasts when she leaves for college next year. Kendra noted that, unlike some students who attend only to their own achievements and successes, Tai has focused her actions on others, with the goal of leaving GA a better place.