

# #MyHistoryMyFuture

*Elevating Student Voices in Honor of Black History Month*



The New York State Education Department and The Education Trust—New York teamed up in February 2018 to create a powerful social media campaign for Black History Month. The campaign highlighted the **New York State My Brother's Keeper (MBK)** initiative and featured quotes from students participating in the state's many wonderful MBK programs.

Today's students will write the next chapter of Black history, so we asked them what they want the future to look like. Our social media campaign, **#MyHistoryMyFuture**, featured inspiring quotes from 47 students. All of the quotes are included in this document.



# #MyHistoryMyFuture

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"I see myself as a 'New Age' Martin Luther King, Jr. Not in the form of giving powerful speeches or sparking protests, but by **breaking the mold** and **doing what others said couldn't be done**. No one thought Martin Luther King, Jr. would accomplish what he did, but he didn't let those obstacles stop him. **Neither will I let my obstacles stop me.**"

*- Elementary school student in the Boys Academy at Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. School 9 , Rochester*



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"I am excited for a future with **opportunities**  
for **anyone** and **everyone.**"

- Student at North Park Middle Academy, Buffalo



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"I want to show people the **power** they possess in their brain, and the **impact** they can make on society. I will **encourage** all people, letting them know, 'You can do **anything** you put your mind to. **So always dream big and the sky's the limit.**'"

*- Elementary school student in the Boys Academy at Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. School 9 , Rochester*



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"I see myself living in a **much better world**. I think people and ideas are going to **change**. Sometimes we are judged by how we dress, but people will soon see that we should be **judging people by their actions**. The future looks **bright**. If we continue to look up to others who fight for our rights, **we can live in a better place.**"

*- Elementary school student in the Boys Academy at Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. School 9 , Rochester*



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"In my future, I see myself working as a veterinarian or a lawyer of corporate businesses. As a man of color, I think I will have to stand up for my people."

*- Middle school student at Enrico Fermi School, Yonkers*



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"My future is to be a **voice for students and parents** discouraged by our education system because of inequities and opportunity gaps."

- 2nd year student in SUNY Cortland's C.U.R.E. Program



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"I see a future where everyone has a tunnel vision for their **dreams and aspirations**. The setbacks will not define you — your **future success** will. I dream of a time when black boys and girls will **not be discouraged** to pursue a certain career path because of their race or economic status."

- 12th grader at Clara Barton High School, Brooklyn



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"My future looks like a successful Spanish teacher,  
fighting for the education of the next generation."

*- High school student at the University of Rochester Educational Partnership at East*



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"I want my city to be **unified**. I want neglect and ignorance to become **education and resolution**. The lack of knowledge can no longer be an option or an excuse to the **progress and process** of **building a better community**."

- 18-year-old member of the Breaking Barriers Youth Leadership Council, Buffalo



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Racial Equity Roundtable

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"I want to live in a place where I can **prove everyone wrong** that doubted me in the beginning. I want to be able to **show others** that you shouldn't take negative comments to heart and to just flip it and make it positive. **Remember to make your haters your motivators.**"

- 9th grader at Pathways in Technology Early College High School, Brooklyn



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"My **dream** for Buffalo, NY is for all of the people in and outside of the community to **come together**. Together we are **powerful** and at this point of time we should not divide. Our goal should be to motivate those with a dream and **help anyway possible**."

- Member of the Breaking Barriers Youth Leadership Council, Buffalo



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"I play Pop Warner football for the Northeast Bulldogs. This experience has allowed me to see that there are **better things in life**. I noticed how clean streets were & how nice homes looked in other places. Then I realized how much **better my community could be**. Where I live, so many people are jobless and homeless. So I plan to live a life with one major goal in mind – **to make a difference in my community.**"

*- Middle school student in the Boys Academy at Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. School 9, Rochester*



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“MBK has afforded me the **opportunity** to be exposed to **different people** and **forms of information** through field trips and workshops. My future is very **promising** academically and athletically.”

- 11th grader at Riverside High School, Yonkers



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"Every hoop I have been through has **made me the man I am**. In my future, I will **guide & support** my students, as **my teachers did for me**."

*- 3rd year student in SUNY Cortland's C.U.R.E. Program*



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"Since slavery, colorism has been a way to divide blacks, along with ageism and sexism. These things only serve to hinder the progression of African-Americans and keep us at the bottom of the totem pole. However, I see a future where **we stand together in unity**. In solidarity we have the **power to level the playing field.**"

- 12th grader at Clara Barton High School, Brooklyn



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"The way I see the future is a **vision of peace**. Where people are not labeled for who or what they are. To have an **opportunity for equality and equity**. My vision is for young women and young men to see themselves as **vital to the community and world.**"

- Student at St. Joseph's Collegiate Institute, Buffalo



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"I want to become **something meaningful**. I want to **make a difference** and **leave my mark** in the world. I would like to be remembered by showing people that **success is possible no matter where you are from**. I would like to show people that struggles and roadblocks are never permanent, **there is always a way to overcome them.**"

*- 9th grader at Pathways in Technology Early College High School, Brooklyn*



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"I have received acceptance letters from many colleges, great schools, yet I do not know where to go. I do plan to study Business Law... Though I don't know what my future will hold, I will **do my best going forward** with a progressive state of mind and **grow as a human being.**"

*- 12th grader at Roosevelt High School Early College Studies, Yonkers*



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"Making sure my students know that they have someone who **understands them** and **believes in them** is my goal."

*- 1st year student in SUNY Cortland's C.U.R.E. Program*



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"The future is **what we make it**. I will spend my future **making a difference!**"

*- Elementary school student in the Boys Academy at Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. School 9, Rochester*



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"A primary factor of why this world is not progressing socially and culturally is the segregation of groups of people who appear to be different than the others. In actuality, **we are all more alike** than we think - starting with the fact that **we are all human**. I want to see the world **united under one umbrella**, hand in hand, regardless of one's race, economic status, political stance, gender, or sexual orientation.

**Together we achieve more."**

*- 12th grader at Clara Barton High School, Brooklyn*



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"I look for a future where there's **no more racism and injustice**. And I want to make the lives of every race **better for the world and environment.**"

- 15-year-old member of the Breaking Barriers Youth Leadership Council, Buffalo



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"My future is to become an urban PE teacher and wrestling coach, to **help children live healthier lives** while having fun."

*- 1st year student in SUNY Cortland's Urban Recruitment of Educators Program*



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"I honestly know that my **future is bright**, because **there is a will**; and when there is a will, there is a way. It is one of my greatest desires to learn of the **FULL extent** of my history in **all its glory**."

- 10th grader at Pathways in Technology Early College High School, Brooklyn



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"My ancestor passed down the **family values** I hold today. 100 years later, TOC II is giving me the **opportunity to teach my future students** the same family values."

*- 1st year student in the Sarah Lawrence College Graduate Art of Teaching Program*



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"What I hope to do in the future is  
**make a career helping people.**"

*- 12th grader participating in the NYS Mentoring Program at Lyons Central School District*



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"**My Brother's Keeper** is showing young African American and Hispanic boys how to become **responsible, respectful leaders** in our school, community, and society."

*- Student at Woodlands Middle/High School, Greenburgh*



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"I don't know my future but I know I'm in charge of it."

- Student at North Park Middle Academy, Buffalo



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"My Brother's Keeper has helped me to see the **importance of helping others**. It has also helped me to **never quit** and **believe in myself**."

*- Student at Woodlands Middle/High School, Greenburgh*



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"#MyHistoryMyFuture will be about trying to help us  
**get to new places in the universe."**

*- Student in the Bronx, New York City*



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"I can see myself as a **future leader** in Black history. The legacy that I would like to leave is **building a stronger economic community** in Buffalo and **helping those who are in need of assistance.**"

- 19-year-old member of the Breaking Barriers Youth Leadership Council, Buffalo



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**BREAKING BARRIERS**  
MBK A BOYS AND YOUNG MEN OF COLOR INITIATIVE

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"In the **future** I will be a pediatrician."

- High school student at the University of Rochester Educational Partnership at East



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"I will be **successful and happy**. I will have achieved **greatness** and **led a life that I can be proud of**. My success will **inspire others** to achieve anything and reach their dreams. I will make my family proud and I will **create a legacy that lives much longer than I will.**"

- 9th grader at Pathways in Technology Early College High School, Brooklyn



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"#MyHistoryMyFuture has been **inspired**. I **can do anything** as a girl of color."

*- Student in the Bronx, New York City*



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"I **won't stop** chasing my dreams!!!"

- Student at North Park Middle Academy, Buffalo



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"When I think about my future, I see myself as a **business owner**. I want to **provide for my family** and my **community** as a whole. I want to **make my mama proud.**"

- 9th grader at Pathways in Technology Early College High School, Brooklyn



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"In the future, I want to be a **social activist**. MBK has shown me the importance of **using my voice** to make **real change**."

- 11th grader at Yonkers Middle High School, Yonkers



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"I'm going to make my whole family and whole city  
**proud of me.**"

- Student at North Park Middle Academy, Buffalo



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"My future is dedicated to **carving the minds** of the next generation and **empowering them** to be the best individuals they can be!"

*- Freshman Adolescence Education major in SUNY Oswego's TOC II program*



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"I see myself with my **dream job** working as a nurse or doctor. Or **something that I love** because I'm in the motions of **growing and learning** new things. So wherever life takes me."

*- High school student at the University of Rochester Educational Partnership at East*



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"MBK has taught me how to **help others selflessly**. As a result, in the future I will **develop a youth group** that focuses on **community services**."

- 12th grader at Yonkers Middle High School, Yonkers



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"I'm making **excellence a habit.**"

- Student at North Park Middle Academy, Buffalo



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"My future is **urban education**. My future is educating the next generation as they **prepare to build and create** their own futures. My future is **social justice** and **education for all.**"

*- Senior Teaching English Speakers Another Language (TESOL) major in SUNY Oswego's TOC II program*



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"Many youth, especially those with high needs, need **guidance** and **someone to look up to**. I'd like to strive **to be a mentor for them.**"

- Student in Clarkson University's TOC II Program



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"MBK has shown me my **future is bright**. In the future, I wish to **make an impact** on my local community and the broader world. MBK has given me the insight and the know-how to **make connections** and **make a difference**. I also want to explore different cultures to get a better sense of my environment and the people in the globe."

- 12th grader at Yonkers Middle High School, Yonkers



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"My future looks like **raising up** a generation of students who **know their worth** and their **capabilities.**"

- Junior Teaching English Speakers Another Language (TESOL) major in SUNY Oswego's TOC II program



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"My future will be all about me trying to **find my place in life** and then trying to **find my place in history**: whether it's becoming the president, a musical genius, a scientist leading new and exciting discoveries, or becoming an astronaut and uncovering the secrets of the sky. **I will reach the unreachable, attain the unattainable and show future kids that they can be anything** that they want to be and that they, too, can **make a change.**"

- 9th grader at Pathways in Technology Early College High School, Brooklyn



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