



**THE HOWLEY
FOUNDATION**

The Howley Foundation Alumni Spotlight: Howley Scholars for Life

LEGACY:

Howley Scholar Alums **Tiana Ellington** and **Ryan Hooper** demonstrate a deep appreciation for the opportunities they received and currently work with the Howley Scholars program as part of their careers.

TRADITION:

Since granting the first Howley scholarship in 2005, Nick and Lori Howley have made it their goal to personally connect with every one of the recipients—no small feat with the number of Howley Scholars totaling over 2,000. This personal touch increases the value of the Howley Scholars program exponentially.

Tiana remembers the pride she felt in interacting with the Howleys while in high school. “The scholarship was incredible on its own, but having the Howleys take an interest in me made me feel special, made me feel seen.”

Ryan agrees. He says, “Becoming a Howley Scholar went beyond the significant financial support. It meant a lot knowing somebody believed in me enough to invest in my education.”

EXPANSION AND CHANGE:

The Howley Scholars program has evolved to support students from more schools and additional grade levels over the last 20+ years. Tiana and Ryan have seen the program’s impact first-hand and how it differs from when they were in school.

“Now that I’m working with Howley Scholars at Saint Martin de Porres, I’m seeing things from the other side,” says Tiana. “The process has become more competitive. Last year, we had 54 incoming freshmen apply for 11 Howley spots. Students also seem to be facing more complex challenges these days, so the fact that scholarships are available through college now is great. I asked about that when I was in high school when things got hard, but it wasn’t part of the program then.”

As a middle school teacher, Ryan gets to work with Howley Scholars earlier in their academic careers. “The Howleys sponsor five sixth-graders at Gesu School in hopes of them attending St. Joseph Prep High School. If accepted, those students will continue benefiting as High School Howley Scholars.”

Although the program has grown significantly since its inception, Tiana and Ryan wholeheartedly agree that the Howley Scholars program remains a game-changer, giving students greater access to quality educational opportunities and opening doors for life.

ABOUT TIANA ELLINGTON:

- Works as Manager of Donor Relations at Cleveland’s Saint Martin de Porres High School, her alma mater.
- Attended The Ohio State University before transferring to Cleveland State University where she earned a B.A. in psychology and criminology.
- Graduated from the Weatherhead School of Management at Case Western Reserve University (CWRU) with a master’s degree in organizational management.
- Worked in development and alumni relations at CWRU before reconnecting with The Howley Foundation in managing the scholarship program at St. Martin de Porres.

ABOUT RYAN HOOPER:

- Teaches 7th grade and coaches basketball at Gesu Catholic School in North Philadelphia.
- Graduated from Cleveland’s Villa Angela-St. Joseph High School.
- Served in the Army for 3 years before earning a B.A. in history from Marquette University and an M.S. in education from Johns Hopkins University.
- After serving Teach for America and working in the Baltimore Public Schools, he reached out to Meg Howley, who connected him with Gesu School.

FUN FACT ABOUT TIANA:

Tiana met her closest friend (and eventual best man in her wedding) at a Howley Scholars luncheon. They went to different middle schools, connected through The Howley Foundation, and still talk every day.

FUN FACT ABOUT RYAN:

Ryan’s strong belief in the power of education to transform lives led him to the conclusion that he wanted to teach at a Catholic school in an urban setting. In circling back to Meg at The Howley Foundation upon deciding to move to Philadelphia, he knew she would help him find the perfect fit.