

Timmy Lee Bio

Timmy Lee is 15 years old. He has faced many challenges, including spending time in foster care due to a house fire that almost destroyed his family home. Even though the environment Timmy found himself in was at times difficult, he did not allow it to define who he was as a person. Timmy has experienced challenges that combined with self-will, he has become a hardworking, inspiring and empowering young man. Today, Timmy is the leader of the “Improve Lacoochee Trilby” group that meets annually to discuss what can be done to progress the community he calls home. Despite all the obstacles in his way, he has managed to overcome them and serve as a youth advocate working alongside community leaders making a positive difference in his hometown.

Hazel Montoya

Hazel Montoya is 17 years old and already a leader on the campus of Pace Center for Girls in Orange County. She comes to Pace every day with a smile on her face, ready to tackle new equations, projects and stories. Before Pace, she says she was stuck in a bad environment, surrounded by the wrong crowd and struggling to find her light at the end of the tunnel. Since joining Pace Center for Girls, Orange five months ago, she has found her footing. First quiet and reserved, she now uses her voice to help others by serving on the Girls Leadership Council and always being willing to lend a hand in the classroom. Last Spring, she was given the opportunity to travel to the Florida Capitol to share her story and how Pace changed her life. Hazel’s favorite subject is math and when she grows up, she wants to be a pediatrician. Her future is bright!

Javonta Brown

Javonta is no stranger to overcoming barriers, throughout his childhood he had several interactions with the foster care system and came into to care for the final time at 16. In just two years he had 8 placements from Tallahassee to Jacksonville and he was four years behind in school. He often challenged the system and was reluctant to trust the many promises made to him about his future. Javonta is an incredibly empathetic and kind young man, often taking on the challenges of all the people around him. In fact, among the extended foster care family he is known as the “harborer” because runaways have a way of finding respite with him. He has never met a stranger and his warmth and genuine interest is obvious from the first time you meet him.

Above all though Javonta is resilient and when he aged out of care, he worked hard to obtain his GED and begin classes at TCC. The last three years have thrown many challenges at him that have sometimes taken him off course but Javonta has a renewed sense of direction this year and is again enrolled in classes at TCC. He has hopes of becoming a lawyer and sharing his background and expertise with those confronting many of the issues he faced as a kid. His dream job is to be a Supreme Court justice. He has many years and challenges ahead of him but rest assured, you will want to remember the name Javonta Brown, you will likely see it in print one day.