

# BNY MELLON | HOWARD UNIVERSITY HELPING TO MAKE COLLEGE DREAMS A REALITY

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**Branton Barnes**, Howard University GRACE Grant Recipient  
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**FREDERICK:** The young people who are coming today, you could have the next president of the United States. So giving them an opportunity is important. Every day we have tens of thousands of alum who are making our society a better society. And that takes place without any headlines. But certainly they're impacting people's lives.

**FREDERICK:** In 2012, I was the provost Chief Academic Officer, I oversaw enrollment management. And one of the things that I was observing was that our four-year graduation rate was not as good as I would've liked it to be. They were stepping out because they had too much debt or they could not afford the expenses. Then I came up with this GRACE Grant.

Our GRACE Grant stands for graduation, retention and access to continuing education. And then that led us to a conversation with BNY Mellon.

**PIERCE:** The BOLD<sup>SM</sup> Shares make a 10% contribution of their net revenue to fund the GRACE Grant program. So the BOLD<sup>SM</sup> Shares stands for Black Opportunity for Learning and Development, and BOLD<sup>SM</sup> Shares are offered exclusively through BNY Mellon on our largest flagship Dreyfus Government Cash Management Fund. This is an over \$100 billion dollar fund. It's been around for many, many years and has an excellent yield and liquidity. And so the client is directly investing in all the benefits of that fund.

**FREDERICK:** The results were amazing. Retention went up through the roof. And the graduation rate was up some 30-something percent.

**BARNES:** The GRACE Grant has definitely allowed me to just be more focused on school and stop having to worry about all the outside noise. Once I found out I got it for sure, it definitely put a huge bubble of relief in my mind. I was just so grateful.

**PIERCE:** We saw through the funding of the initial pool of \$500 million from some leading corporate Titan companies in this country that what we were doing absolutely resonated. Today, we have seen those assets more than quadruple in just about eight months' time. So we are thrilled to see the level of growth in the product.

**FREDERICK:** Our students who qualify for the GRACE Grant represent students who are aspiring to become physicians and lawyers, scientists. And this GRACE Grant in particular takes away one burden of barrier from them achieving that goal and ultimately fulfilling their dreams. I certainly have a lot of kudos and praise for BNY Mellon for being so innovative in terms of coming up with this type of a structure to fund the education for these students.

**BARNES:** Something I would say to GRACE Grant recipients is that there are people out there that want to help you. Just stay the course, continue to work hard and don't give up. Don't ever give up.

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