



Monique is a ninth grade student. She is shy, quiet and mostly keeps to herself. She lives with her 72 -year -old grandmother, who, in addition to raising Monique, cares for three great-grandchildren. Their father is in jail and their mother is unstable.

Monique helps her grandma with the babies, a 2-year old girl and 4-year-old twin boys. They are a handful. But the most difficult thing is that Monique shares a bedroom with the 2-year-old, who is often sick and wakes up throughout the night, keeping Monique awake.

Money is tight, so there is rarely any left over for Monique to buy clothes or fun things that other young girls take for granted. Grandma is getting older and is not in good health, and Monique worries about her. What will happen if Grandma goes to the hospital? Who will take care of the babies? What would happen to Monique? She would suddenly be in foster care like some of her friends from school. From what she hears, it could be worse than being out on the street.

She shrugs off her fears, and starts doing her homework. Monique is a good student and works hard. She has no computer at home, so she has to go to the library to do some of her homework, which is often impossible because Grandma counts on her to help with the twins; she often has to come right home after school.

In school the teachers talk about how she should go to college. Monique would like to go to college. "It's a nice goal," her grandma says, "But, you gotta take care of business NOW - not waste time on dreamin'."

**Monique is a representation of many students' circumstances*

Dear Friends,

*Prior to working with **The Detroit College Promise**, it never occurred to me that kids who live in a crisis situation are forced to live in the moment. Imagine what that's like. There is little room for dreams, or thinking about the future, and if you do dare to dream, reality quickly wakes you up. Parents and guardians are focused on providing for basic needs. They have no time or energy to deal with anything that is not in the NOW. Each day is a challenge to get through, and tomorrow is too far away to worry about.*

Most young people like Monique have never seen what life is like in a non-crisis situation. They have no one except their teachers telling them that the key to success is education. In fact, most probably don't know anyone who has gone to college, graduated and found work as a professional.

How can we expect a young person like Monique to embrace that goal without VISION?

Without a vision of the future and a goal of college, why graduate from high school at all? Students like Monique need to clearly see what going to college can give them. They need someone to tell them how college affected their life today. They need to have someone believing in them, so that they can believe in themselves.

Won't you write a student like Monique a letter of encouragement? Won't you believe?

*Ulana Kushner
Development Coordinator*

The Detroit College Promise
You've got to believe 

*Please send letters to **The Detroit College Promise**
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48025, by email to detroitcollegepromise@gmail.com
or by fax to 248 646-3119. For more information see
www.detroitcollegepromise.org or call 248 646-3269.*