



“Meet Drayton Jackson”

When Drayton Jackson decided to go back to college as an adult with grown children, he was afraid his peers would not be able to relate to him. To his surprise, they elected him Student Body President. Reporter Adwoa Gyimah-Brempong chronicles how he drew on his life experiences to identify and remedy on-campus gaps in services impacting student parents, and those experiencing homelessness like he himself once had.

Drayton sat on the Washington Governor Jay Inslee’s [Poverty Reduction Work Group](#).

Pamela Kirkland:

Welcome to 1 in 5, which takes its name from the one in five college students in the United States who are also parents.

In this documentary series, we meet student parents from across the country who are balancing school, work, and full lives --- while creating a better future for themselves and their families.

I’m Pamela Kirkland, a reporter and audio producer, and narrator of 1 in 5.

In this episode we meet Drayton Jackson.

Drayton is a bit of an accidental educational policy expert - he’s on the school board for his sons’ district, and was student body president at his college. But his path back to the classroom was not linear. It came after eight kids, a move from New York City to Washington state, and a crossroads that required a leap of faith.

Reporter Adwoa Gyimah-Brempong has Drayton’s story.

Jackson:

How was your tofu turkey?

Adwoa Gyimah-Brempong:

That’s Drayton Jackson.

Jackson:

You’re a vegetarian. How old?

Xavier:

I’m six.

Gyimah-Brempong:

He's chatting with his son: plant-based eater Xavier.

Jackson:

And you became a vegetarian, when?

Xavier:

May 16th.

Jackson:

May 16th? Wow! You remember that? Real talk?

You was thinking about it? That's what it is, you was thinking about it? Alright, alright. So - how was your vegetarian turkey? As a child, how was your vegetarian turkey?

Xavier:

Good!

Jackson:

That's what I said...

Gyimah-Brempong:

This is all happening at the dinner table, in the aftermath of Thanksgiving 2020. Drayton spent the holiday with just his wife and two sons. But his extended family's pretty big.

Jackson:

My first marriage, I was in New York and I have six beautiful daughters out of that. Everybody's older now. So, Te'Kaiya, Kimani, Najah, Jannah, Egypt, and Jamilah and ages 26 all the way down to 18. Yeah. Jamila will be 18 next month. Then I got two sons, with my wife, Nijhia now and out of Washington State. And De'Nadre is 10 going on 30. Xavier is seven - actually, Xavier's birthday's in two weeks. So he's eight, he'll be eight. And going on 50, actually, he has an older soul. So eight children altogether, and divorced once.

Gyimah-Brempong:

Drayton lives in Bremerton now, in Kitsap County. It's about an hour long ferry ride from downtown Seattle. His daughters are in New York and Atlanta, and he says it was tough on everyone when he moved away. But the whole family's pretty tight now. You can hear in his voice that Drayton's close to his young sons - and they've only gotten closer, literally and figuratively, during the pandemic.

He and his wife Nijhia have split education duties: he teaches one son, and she teaches the other. Both of them are on unemployment. And in fall 2020, they were also juggling his school. Drayton is studying Organized Leadership at Olympic College. He's spent most of his career managing bars and restaurants at sports stadiums - and his journey back to school began in 2013 when the Seattle Mariners' season ended.

Jackson:

Once the baseball season's over, it goes from April all the way to October, if they make the playoffs - the Mariners have never made the playoffs since I've been here - and it stops right, right in September or the first week of October. And because I, and a lot of us in that hospitality, sports/ hospitality field, we don't make enough hours. So we don't qualify for unemployment.

Gyimah-Brempong:

It was his first full year in Seattle .Eventually, Drayton would start juggling seasons, bouncing from baseball to football, college to professional sports. But that first year, they were stuck.

Jackson:

And my, my wife was like, look, you need to go down to the DSHS and let's get some money, which I didn't want to do, cause of pride.

Gyimah-Brempong:

Financially though, pride was not going to pay the bills. So the family went down to the Department of Social and Health Services, or DSHS.

Jackson:

Our appointment was for 9:15. We didn't get seen until 12. So it was a day wasted, basically.

Gyimah-Brempong:

And when he says "our appointment"? He means literally everyone.

Jackson:

Everybody has to be there, you can't just come on your own.

Gyimah-Brempong:

So the whole family is sitting in the waiting for a good three hours - surrounded by everyone else's whole families doing the exact same thing.

Jackson:

Once we got seen that took about, uh, about a 45 minute process of him talking to both of us and everything. And then we had to sit outside until he made a suggestion. And then when we came back in, he gave some suggestions of what he thinks we should do in order to receive TANF.

Gyimah-Brempong:

The whole system requires people to put their lives on hold while they try to access our fragmented social safety net. But this time, something different happened.

Jackson:

And a question was asked that I've never been asked. And the guy said, 'what do you want to do? What are you, you know, what, what is your goals?'

Gyimah-Brempong:

It was a rough time, financially - but in a way, that helped Drayton make up his mind. He told the guy the truth.

Jackson:

I would love to just finish school and, you know, work in the career that I'm in, in hospitality and sports and entertainment field.

Gyimah-Brempong:

The DSHS officer sitting across the table looked at him and said:

Jackson:

'You need to be back in school.'

Gyimah-Brempong:

Drayton never saw him again, but that caseworker changed the course of his life. While he'd completed some courses at [John Jay College](#) in New York back in the mid-nineties, Drayton ultimately left when parenting six kids on top of work and school got to be too much. When he tried again, he hit a roadblock during the application process.

Jackson:

I didn't know where to start. I went in to do the application and then, you know, I totally forgot that you have to fill out financial aid and all of that. So, that process was daunting to an older person like me coming back into, uh, higher education. So I didn't know where to start. I didn't know what to do. And I just ran.

Gyimah-Brempong:

[One in five college students](#) in America are student parents. But only [25% of community colleges](#) survey their students to identify those with dependent children. That means parents - who face disproportionate barriers to education, from the application process to course scheduling - aren't being tracked through the system. And you can't support students that you can't see. The DSHS worker recommended a program that helped Drayton navigate the financial aid process and get back into the classroom.

Jackson:

I had been so removed from school. You're talking about over, oh man, over 15 years. Since going to John Jay, and then entering back. So computer programming, Blackboard, all of these new things I didn't know about. And this program did that, it walked me through it and put me back in. And I was, I was a, I made the Dean's list. And it just, it blew my mind because I didn't realize how much I wanted to learn again.

Gyimah-Brempong:

When he got back into school, Drayton had been worried that he'd be the oldest person in the room and nobody would care about his experience. At times, he'd walk into class and his classmates would assume he was the professor. So it was a surprise to him when some of the younger students mounted a campaign for him to become student body president. He was even more surprised when he won.

Jackson:

I was arguing points of racism that I saw going on in the school and not knowing that the student body was paying attention to me.

Gyimah-Brempong:

In addition to issues of racism, there were changes he fought for that might not have occurred to a student body president who was younger, or who didn't have a family.

Jackson:

We didn't have night class when I was there. We didn't have classes that went past three o'clock and those are some of the things that I fought for because, being a working parent to try to get, to get done, it took me five years to get a two year degree and I'm still trying to finish it up. But it's one of those things where in New York City, we knew we had night classes because so many people in New York City work. But when I came here, having a five o'clock class wasn't even thought about.

Gyimah-Brempong:

He wanted all students to feel like they had a voice and could reach their elected representatives. There was a space for student government officials to work, but if they were going to make it a central location for their classmates, it needed structure.

Jackson:

And that's where I came up with, hey, if we're going to do this, we gotta run it like an office.

Gyimah-Brempong:

Some of the other student government officials weren't convinced. But when students started coming in to speak with them early in the morning and well into the evening, the team realized they needed a plan after all.

Jackson:

So we set hours and that set up a beautiful harmony amongst us as cabinet members. And what we did is from 8:00am in the morning to one, we would open it. Then we close to have our time, whatever discussions we had. And then we opened back up and ran, you know, another five to six hours. But in that transition, a lot of us are going to school, but the goal was to have somebody in the office all the time to represent the students.

Gyimah-Brempong:

And a lot of times, that person was Drayton. He'd pull up with his kids and settle in.

Jackson:

Honestly, when the Mariners was not there, I don't think I left that campus. Because I had the privilege. So the boys would just come in the office. I'd have De'Nadre/Xavier sit in the office, do some writing and stuff like that - because I had an office. So, and it was just like probably, I'll probably get there at seven, right, and leave around seven.

Gyimah-Brempong:

He got to know a lot of the students who regularly came by the office. And one of them seemed to spend even more time there than he did.

Jackson:

She would always come by the office, like she was always there before we open the door; I think seven, she was there from seven because I started getting to a routine and working out. So I would work out at six, after I dropped my son off, work out at six and then, you know, go to the office and try to get some time before we open the doors and she would always be out in the front.

Gyimah-Brempong:

She'd show up every day, and fall asleep.

Jackson:

It didn't dawn on me until one day we had to close the office early to deal with something and then she went back to her car and it just bugged me out like, oh. And then when I passed the car, I saw all of this stuff in the back and I was like, 'oh, okay.' And you know, and it's hard to ask a student.

Gyimah-Brempong:

But when he did ask, he found out that this student was not the only one on campus in her situation.

Jackson:

The conversation just led to, uh, introducing me to two other students. And that just being an advocate for the homeless just blew my mind.

What I saw on campus was, we had students on our own campus that were living out of their cars with their families and going to school. And when I met with, Dr. Mitchell, who was the president of the school at the time, I said, I need data on how many homeless students we had. And we didn't have it. We didn't have it.

Gyimah-Brempong:

Drayton told the administration that in his experience, no one wants to tell people they're homeless if they can avoid it. So the school put out a blind survey asking students what their needs were, including housing support.

Jackson:

The way we worded it was very important, "Do you need help finding housing?" Because that could be anybody, you know? So that can be somebody that just, 'Hey, I'm looking for

a better apartment.' And that number was, was huge. It was more than what I think the administration thought it would be.

That question changed how we receive data. And what we found in our school that Olympic college was almost 15-16% of our students were homeless. And that was whether they were living and doubling up with a family member, living on a couch, or actually living out of their car.

Gyimah-Brempong:

There was a reason that student felt comfortable opening up to Drayton, even though she might have hesitated to share that experience with someone else.

Jackson:

I went through a divorce with my wife of over 15 years and, you know, I just was struggling a lot with child support. When I got child support put on me, living in New York was already expensive. And with child support, it took almost 50% of the income away from me with having six daughters. And it just became something hard. And I wound up becoming homeless, uh, for a long time. Because of not being able to afford an apartment, or even a room in New York City for that matter.

Gyimah-Brempong:

So Drayton couchsurfed for a while, with friends, or family members. But after years of that, he realized he needed to make a change.

Jackson:

I kept having this feeling about Washington, but you know, in my head it was always DC because I could never see myself moving anywhere else outside of New York City.

And I just kept having this feeling that, you know, there's something else for me. And that, that journey just started to take a hold of, "Hey, I'm getting ready to move to DC." And I walked into a Penn Station, uh, no, Grand Central Station, and it was this huge display of Seattle, Washington. And it just spoke to me.

Gyimah-Brempong:

But he wasn't making those decisions on his own. He and his second wife, Nijhia, had just had their first son.

Jackson:

And I was already leaving my daughters. And I basically begged her like, yo, look, if you can just take this chance with me.

Gyimah-Brempong:

Nijhia said yes.

Jackson:

I came out here first and had set everything up, I had a job set up for me here.

Gyimah-Brempong:

He'd been working in baseball stadiums in New York, and a regional manager who'd moved to Seattle, offered him a job with the Mariners. But then...

Jackson:

Just as everything was starting to go, the lady that had me for the job got fired. So we were, we were stuck.

Gyimah-Brempong:

Drayton didn't tell Nijhia he'd lost the job. He was afraid of losing her too. So she came out as planned, and he looked for a way to buy some time.

Jackson:

We stayed in the hotel for a while, cause I had enough money. And then all of a sudden we wound up homeless on the streets.

Gyimah-Brempong:

Drayton, Nijhia, and their son De'Nadre went through five months of homelessness. They were sleeping in tents. And that's when Drayton had a breakdown.

Jackson: I tried to commit suicide. I was done. You know, like it was, it was just too much.

Gyimah-Brempong:

He'd left New York in search of a new start: stability, and a place that the family could call their own. Slipping back into homelessness on the streets of Seattle - this time with a young child - was the last straw.

Jackson:

I wound up getting, um, put into a, uh, uh, a review for mental, mental illness. So they, they had the emergency room and a doctor came in and he just said to me, 'you know, you need help.'

Gyimah-Brempong:

That help came when they got into Sally's Camp, an indoor tent city run by The Bremerton Salvation Army. A week after their placement, Drayton got a call. It was the guy at the Mariner's stadium who'd taken over for the woman who'd been fired. Did he, by any chance, still want that job with the team? Drayton said yes, and started working again. Then the family made it into temporary housing through the local community center.

Not long after they moved in, Drayton and Nijhia's second son Xavier was born. As the boys grew old enough for school, De'Nadre went through [HeadStart](#), and then entered the Central Kitsap School District. Eventually, after his experience as student body president, Drayton's educational advocacy shifted a bit closer to home.

Jackson:

Initially I wanted to run for the school board to, to debate. I wanted to debate against, uh, racial issues that were going on in the Central Kitsap School District.

Gyimah-Brempong:

His son De'Nadre had called one of his teachers racist. She didn't take it well.

Jackson:

Her conversation with me was, well, I'm not racist. And I go to Africa every year and help poor children in Africa. And that was like, wow, that's your definition of it?

Gyimah-Brempong:

Kitsap County is overwhelmingly white, with Black residents making up less than three percent of the population. Drayton realized that there were some basic conversations around race, and racism, that just weren't happening in the district, and he wanted to change that.

Jackson:

I wanted to debate, and I didn't run against anybody. I wound up getting on the board and getting elected with 11,000 votes. And it really shocked me because when, once again, you know, you live in poverty, you don't realize that you belong somewhere. And I'm looking and I'm like, dude, do I belong here?

I had a lady that knew that I lived, I was, you know, living in poverty or surviving poverty. And she said to me, you know, 'why would you run for the school board and you're poor.' And it's done. I started crying because I was just like, wow. Like, why not? Like who represents you? Who represents us? And it was the first time that it shifted in my emotions to say, this is where I'm supposed to be.

Gyimah-Brempong:

If you ask him to describe himself, Drayton will tell you he's a helper. But after working on the school board and serving as student body president, he also began to see himself as an advocate.

Jackson:

I sat on the governor Jay Inslee's [Poverty Reduction Work Group](#). And by sitting on that, it was the first time that a space was given to people with lived experiences in dealing with services was able to speak with those people's head of the departments and telling them what the issues were.

Gyimah-Brempong:

The Poverty Reduction Work Group was formed in 2017 to develop strategies to reduce poverty in Washington. They aimed to make needed progress in housing, healthcare, employment and education. Drayton was co-chair of the Workgroup's Steering Committee, which was composed of folks living in poverty with personal insight into the programs that were on the table.

Jackson:

It put us in a position of power, of saying, 'Hey, not only do we want our voices heard, but we want to be a part of building this.'

Gyimah-Brempong:

And sometimes that was a lot for their liaisons from the bigger group to handle.

Jackson:

They had to sit and deal with us as an energy. And when you're living in poverty and you're struggling, you want to be heard. So everybody has a story, right? So, they had to sit in the room with 22 people that had stories all the time and emotions and feelings that, you know, sometimes I felt that they thought we'd be yelling at them. which we wasn't, it was the system. But they took it, and they did such a wonderful job on collecting our feelings.

Gyimah-Brempong:

Those feelings and insights that the steering committee brought to the table, poked serious holes in [the data that the governor's team](#) was using.

Jackson:

And you start to see the biases. You start to see that it's not really sustainable for success. You start to see that the drop-off numbers are not real numbers. They are numbers that are made and never followed up. So, Oh, uh, uh, food stamp roles dropped by 13%. Where did they go?

Gyimah-Brempong:

Drayton and the other members of the steering committee were able to use their experience to highlight the gaps, hold officials accountable, and offer solutions. Towards the end of the process, the broader group of policy experts and bureaucrats came together with the steering committee for a dinner - as equals.

Jackson:

It was powerful because we were sitting at a table and that was the first time that my side, which was the steering committee, we heard that we are their colleagues. And that touched a lot of them, because we're not degreed up. We're not, you know, in positions, we're not, you know, "scholars." But we're scholars in our lived experiences and what we have. And I watched the tears fall from a lot of them, that their voice has never been heard - even in their own house - that when somebody that's sitting across, that's the head of a department that we depend on that says, "Hey, you're my colleague in this, in this fight."

Gyimah-Brempong:

Through his work on the steering committee, Drayton was asked to participate in a panel on student parents organized by [Ascend at the Aspen Institute](#). Later, he was invited to become a part of the student parent advisor group for [The Aspen Postsecondary Success for Parents Initiative](#). He brought his knowledge of campus policy to the table, and thought

about what would have made his own life easier as a student parent. With childcare, for example, [Washington's Temporary Assistance for Needy Families program](#), or TANF, helps with childcare expenses while you're job hunting. But that support isn't available to older parents who are in school - even though they're also working towards greater stability and a better life for their families.

The student parent advisor group [helps design a grant that will fund nonprofit, community-based organizations](#) working to support postsecondary students who are raising children. Pre-pandemic, they also gave presentations and speaking engagements. And that's when Drayton started to see himself differently.

Jackson:

And I had never thought about myself as a student parent or vice versa. I'd never, like, it never dawned on me that, hey, this goes together. I looked at it separately. I just was so taken back on the experiences that my other colleagues had that I was going through and that my wife was going through. It's like, you went through that too?? Oh my goodness. So you start to realize how much this wasn't happening in an avenue and a space in higher education.

Gyimah-Brempong:

[Student parents are more likely to be students of color](#) than they are to be white. They're usually older than nonparents, and [their average GPA is actually higher](#) than other students. But it's a struggle to carve out time to stay on top of kids, work, and school. And that's further complicated when you're living in poverty. When Drayton went back to school he was working at the University of Washington's Husky Stadium during football season. Then when baseball season started, he'd head for the Mariners' ballpark.

Jackson:

We're an hour away from where I worked. So I had to take the boat over to Seattle. And that became something that became a struggle for us as a couple that were both going to school.

Gyimah-Brempong:

Nijhia ended up having to put her own studies on hold while Drayton worked to finish his degree.

Jackson:

You know, we had to pick and choose because, you know - one, being on services, when you were receiving food stamps, both of us couldn't go to school. So one of us had to stay home; that was mandatory at that time.

And I don't think what people look at when you're going through this is, we don't have study time between work. I mean, working all day and being exhausted with there, if it wasn't for my hour ferry ride, that's where I got most of my study time in.

And I'll tell you this, what COVID definitely showed me was how much I love being in the library, because those, those spaces helped energize me to study.

Gyimah-Brempong:

On top of the lack of space and time, parents aren't immune to the emotional ups and downs that all students face.

Jackson:

You know, I, I down myself a lot when I fail a test and I go through the same thing that any young kid would go through is like, you know, I'm stupid. I don't get this, and that frustration - which leads to depression, you know? So it has been hard.

Gyimah-Brempong:

Right now, Drayton is one class away from graduating. It's math - his nemesis. The pandemic means he no longer has a commute or a quiet place to study, which hurt his grades quarter. So for now, he's withdrawn from math class to focus on helping his kids through school.

But even though he's stuck in a holding pattern on his degree, Drayton's studies are having a ripple effect on his family, and I wanted to know more about that. So I asked if he and his wife Nijhia would sit down together and talk about some of the challenges. Their sons are in an athletics program run by the Kitsap Admirals basketball team, and the gym there offered a COVID-safe place to record their conversation. They talked about how the roles changed when he went back to school.

Drayton is a self-professed "house husband," and his return to school meant that Nijhia had to shoulder all the family responsibilities on top of her own job. She remembered that he would come home from work and immediately study, eat, and go to sleep. When Drayton cracked a joke about not having offered any support, Nijhia was very quick to agree. But as tough as it was for her, she says she also found it inspiring.

NijhiaL

When the boys got older, I started thinking about going back to school myself/ Seeing you doing it, and not really complaining about it, but, just the fact that, even though you would complain, you still, like, you did it. So, that kind of pushed me through wanting to go back to school.

Gyimah-Brempong:

Financial insecurity has a huge effect on their educational aspirations, especially when it comes to housing. The family is on section eight right now.

Jackson:

It's two-fold, right. It's a gift. And it's a curse. My fear is, are we ready to be independent of services?

Gyimah-Brempong:

He's not sure, especially if it means they might slide back into homelessness. Drayton told me it took two years for him to buy a couch for their new home. When a friend came over and teased him about it, he realized he'd been making a calculation: if they ended up on the streets again, where were they going to put a couch?

[Seventeen percent of college students](#) are experiencing homelessness - that's about one in six, which is consistent with what Drayton says they found at Olympic College. And while there's not great data on how many students living in homelessness are also parents, [families with children represent one third of all people](#) who are homeless. The financial cost of supporting a family puts pressure on the living situations of many student parents. But even with stable housing, Drayton is making a constant set of tradeoffs.

Jackson:

When I became student body president, the first thing that I said to myself was 'I'm not taking more than two classes,' because being the student president was the class. And that led to time being stretched out where my counterparts would take five or six classes. You know, they didn't have a family or anything like that. I think that people don't understand how hard that is when you do have a family, and try to navigate that, because anytime that the boys were sick or anything, if my wife - because at the time she, you know, she started working - I was done with school, I couldn't go, because I had to stay with them. Cause I didn't want her to miss a paycheck, you know? And God forbid one of us got sick, you know, it, it turned everything upside down. You have to be resilient and you have to put yourself up for the challenges. And those challenges is real.

Gyimah-Brempong:

Those are challenges that can break a family, especially if they cascade into financial or housing insecurity. That possibility had been on Drayton's mind since they first moved to Washington, and he asked Nijhia what had made the difference for her.

Jackson:

I do want to ask this question. I do. Uh, What made you not go back to New York when we went through homelessness? When that time that we was in Bellevue and we were going to sleep in the park. Remember, when we couldn't find no shelter. What, like, what made you stay? That's - I'll say it that way, but what made you stay through all of the homelessness?

NIJHIA:

What made me stay was, that I didn't see a weak man. Just that I didn't see a weak man. You're still here, on earth. Still standing. With everything that's been, trying to push you down, knock you down, you're still here.

Gyimah-Brempong:

Back at Thanksgiving, Drayton asks his older son De'Nadre what he'd like to see change in the new year.

De'Nadre :

Human beings being destructive. Like always destroying things, like cutting down trees. like, I get that they're trying to live, but like plants are trying to live too.

Jackson:

Everything, or you just talking about trees?

De'Nadre :

Trees and plants!

Jackson:

Your brother's a vegetarian. All he eats is plants!

De'Nadre:

But trees make air.

Jackson:

Trees make air. Okay, I didn't realize it. Wow. I am proud of y'all. I can't lie. I'm proud of y'all.

Gyimah-Brempong:

Drayton says that being involved in his kids' school life - and for them to see him as a student as well - is really important to him.

Jackson:

One of the greatest times I ever had being a student parent was when my son was accepted into the daycare center that was on school grounds. And I was able to go, you know, in the midst of changing class and go wave at him and talk to him through the fence and see how his day was doing. So I think that space is allowing for a two generational approach, a parent and student to be in the same space in higher education.

Gyimah-Brempong:

He says that shouldn't be frowned on, but celebrated.

Jackson:

What I got a joy out of is, you know, the school would take them out and put them in these carts. And every now and then I would be blessed to see my son in the cart and to see how happy he was, with me carrying my books and going to class. And, you know, he, he had just started learning how to speak and he would say 'Going to class?' And I'll wave 'Yup!' That joy was so important to me. So when you talk about that space, that's what that is to me, is allowing for our children to be in that same educational space and for us to be that example for them. And for them to see it.

Gyimah-Brempong:

Drayton will make his final stand against math once he's able to study and work outside the house again. Post-pandemic, Nijhia wants to go back and finish her high school diploma. Drayton wants to use his degree to work on both the policy and the stigma that

define poverty and homelessness. That's what led him to create the [Foundation for Homeless and Poverty Management](#).

He told me he's learned that being a leader is more than just being in charge: it's also learning how to listen, empathize, and trust. And on the other side of math, he wants to use those skills to make Washington state a better place for both generations of family learners.

Jackson:

I think people look at it in a bad way when it comes time for people like, 'Hey, well, you shouldn't have had children.' Yeah, okay. A hundred percent understand that.

I know what I should have done. Yeah. But. However: I'm here.

Gyimah-Brempong:

Drayton isn't a person who sees a problem and waits for someone else to fix it. Like he said: he's here. And what drives his work as an advocate is a simple question: how do we make it better?

Kirkland:

Adwoa Gyimah-Brempong reported this story.

Drayton Jackson is also the founder of the [Family Day Foundation](#), which takes a two generation approach to provide families with low incomes, or that are experiencing homelessness, an opportunity to attend family oriented events that they otherwise couldn't afford. You can connect with them on facebook.

Thank you for listening. 1 in 5 is produced by Lantigua Williams & Co. and presented by Ascend at the Aspen Institute, the national hub for breakthrough ideas and collaborations that move children and their parents toward educational success and economic security.

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Virginia Lora and Jen Chien edited this episode. Sound design and mixing by Michael Aquino. Alexis Williams is the Ascend producer on the show. Cedric Wilson is our lead producer. Our theme song is "Ascenders" by Kojin Tashiro, who also contributed to mixing. Sarah McClure, Ryan Katz, and Erica Hellerstein fact checked the series. I'm Pamela Kirkland. Subscribe to 1 in 5 on Apple Podcasts, Spotify, Amazon Music, or wherever you listen to your favorite podcasts.

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