

Engaged Education



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January 1, 2023

To Whom It May Concern:

My mother was brilliant, with an eye for art and a love of history and literature. She consumed books like candy; she simply could not learn enough to quench her appetite to know. My mother was also an abandoned child, raised in an orphanage, and she bore the scars of her upbringing throughout her life. She was fortunate enough to have caring professionals around her, but as an adult her psychological wounds were in constant competition with her abilities, and she was never able to allow herself the freedom to fully express her gifts and feel fulfilled as a person-- a tragic loss of individual potential and human capital.

This is the reason why I am so excited by Yvette Robinson's vision for Xavier House. There are hundreds, thousands, of children like my mother, who are capable of advanced learning, creative expression, and innovative thinking who fall between the cracks or who fail to encounter caring adults who can recognize, let alone address, the simultaneous presence of traumatic social circumstances and advanced ability or learn. It is not an exaggeration to say that we may be failing to support the very future problem solvers who could tackle the problems of a technologically and socially complex world because they are lost in the social system, poorly understood by the foster care system, unlikely to experience a comprehensive advanced education, and out of sync socially with other advanced students.

As President-elect of the National Association for Gifted Children, I can say with confidence that ventures such as Xavier House are of national importance, and that this venture can and should become a model that is replicated from coast to coast. Yvette Robinson is proposing a visionary service that could create a much-needed sea change in our understanding and programming for culturally, linguistically, or economically diverse (CLED) students. Nothing is more important to our field than creating bridges between paradigms such as the one Ms. Robinson proposes between social service and gifted education, and she has my passionate personal endorsement. I cannot wait to see the first, second, and 100<sup>th</sup> Xavier House take shape.

Warm regards,

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