

# Key to Succeed

## Scholarship makes the difference

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SPECIAL TO THE DEMOCRAT-GAZETTE

**W**hen my wife and I decided to adopt our youngest son almost five years ago, we knew there would be significant challenges. A history of drug use by his birth mother before birth, and significant neglect for the first year after his birth, contributed to very late speech development and a multitude of cognitive delays.

Despite that understanding, the extent of the difficulties in a mainstream, public school academic setting, as well as the number and types of therapies that would be needed to address his developmental delays, were more than we could have imagined.

The Succeed Scholarship has enabled us to overcome many of those difficulties by placing Korey in Access Academy and being able to afford speech, occupational, and behavioral therapies that continue to make a dramatic difference in his life.

While Korey spent his first year with us in an adaptive program, he met the minimum acceptable scores to progress to a public school K-5 class at the end of the year. The extent of his cognitive challenges became much more evident in that environment, and were exacerbated even more as he moved into the first grade.

Despite valiant efforts by his first-grade teacher and the therapists that

**OPINION**

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### Guest writer

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frustration, which led to regular behavioral problems in class.

We knew we needed a change to give Korey the opportunity to grow.

We were fortunate to find Access Academy and be admitted the following fall. Since beginning at Access, Korey's frustration level with both primary schoolwork and homework has decreased dramatically. While he still has reading and comprehension challenges, the Access approach to education mitigates them as much as we could hope for. His teachers are understanding but firm, and Korey is learning to adapt and overcome his challenges.

Receiving the Succeed Scholarship makes it possible for our family to pay both the remaining tuition costs at Access, as well as the cost for multiple therapies.

As parents, we would pay any cost to provide Korey with the treatments he needs. Receiving the Succeed Scholarship makes those treatments more affordable and provides a path for Korey's continued development.

We're exceedingly grateful for the Succeed Scholarship and hope that this benefit can be extended to every family who needs it.



were available, Korey's reading and processing difficulties caused great

*Steve Davis lives in Little Rock.*