

**INSPIRE**

# Children's Book Author and STEM Nonprofit Founder Supported by UNCF Scholarship



TORI JARRETT IS A JUNIOR AT SPELMAN COLLEGE, A UNCF-MEMBER INSTITUTION, THE FOUNDER OF A STEM NONPROFIT THAT INTRODUCES YOUNG GIRLS TO SCIENCE AND ENGINEERING AND A PUBLISHED CHILDREN'S BOOK AUTHOR. SHE RECENTLY RECEIVED THE GANTT-MCCOLL SCHOLARSHIP FROM UNCF.

**T**ori Jarrett is a junior at Spelman College, a UNCF-member institution, the founder of a STEM nonprofit that introduces young girls to science and engineering and a published children’s book author.

She is a chemistry major also pursuing a minor in Spanish and a minor in management organization.

“I’ve really gained something from UNCF that’s changed the course of my career trajectory and who I am as a person,” shared Jarrett, a Gantt-McColl Scholarship recipient.

## **A Family of UNCF Scholars**

The Gantt-McColl Scholarship is offered to high school seniors projected to graduate from eligible public high schools in Mecklenburg County, North Carolina with at least a 2.5 grade point average (GPA). The scholarship may be renewed for up to four years.

“Getting the Gantt-McColl Scholarship took a lot of pressure off of me,” she said. “Being a private college, there’s not a lot of scholarships available. This was a lifeline for me. Now I get paid to go here and get a book voucher every semester to pay for my books, so it doesn’t have to come out of pocket.”

“Being a UNCF scholar is in my family,” Jarrett explained. Her dad also received a UNCF scholarship, while he attended Johnson C. Smith University, also a UNCF-member institution. The scholarship from UNCF “was how he was able to pay for school, coming from a one-income household.” Jarrett’s uncle also attended an HBCU, Cheyney University of Pennsylvania.

As a scholarship recipient, Jarrett was invited to attend this year’s Mayor’s Masked Ball in Charlotte. She recounts it as one of her favorite experiences being a Gantt-McColl scholar. “Being able to stand up there on that stage and express my gratitude was something I enjoyed,” she said. “Being able to show the impact of donating to UNCF and for them to hear those stories.”

## **Journey to Spelman**

Originally, Jarrett wasn’t interested in attending Spelman. “I didn’t want to go to Spelman at all, but my parents were like ‘just apply,’” she said.

She attended Spelman’s scholar weekend in 2023 and remembers being disappointed that the school didn’t have an engineering program. “But our student speaker was a chemistry major, and she talked about her internship at

Estée Lauder,” she shared. “After that, I thought ‘Spelman is my place, this is where I want to be.’”

Now, she is entering her final year at Spelman and serves as the president of Spelman Sisters of STEM.

She has interned with Stryker, which makes medical devices, and conducted undergraduate research at Louisiana State University (LSU). “I really loved it, but it taught me I don’t want to be in a lab for eight hours straight,” she said. “I love talking to people and being active in my community.”

While participating in research at LSU, Jarrett discovered that she enjoyed spending days with the project manager. “I’m a generalist, not a specialist,” she explained. “I don’t want to settle on one thing. He got to know marketing, sales, every aspect of the business. For me, I loved being in the lab, but [also] hearing different sides, being able to understand the story from the envisioning of the product.”

### **Sharing Her Passion for STEM**

In 2023, Jarrett founded Beauty & Brains, a nonprofit organization that introduces girls ages 7-12 to science and engineering. Through Beauty & Brains, she holds cosmetic chemistry workshops to foster the next generation of women in STEM. She estimates that she’s worked with 85 girls so far.

She got the idea for the nonprofit while working on her senior impact project. She received a scholarship from the Young Black Leadership Alliance (YBLA) for teaching young girls how to make bath bombs, perfumes and other cosmetic chemistry.

“That’s how it started, it was a project for a scholarship,” she said. “I won the scholarship, but it was something I didn’t want to stop doing. I was able to expand in Los Angeles when I had an internship there. Now I’m growing it throughout Charlotte, NC.”

## Introducing Kids to Recycling through Her Children’s Book



TORI JARRETT, A UNCF SCHOLARSHIP RECIPIENT, IS A PUBLISHED CHILDREN’S BOOK AUTHOR. HER BOOK, “THE RECYCLING RHYTHM OF ROSIE AND RON,” SPARKS CONVERSATIONS AROUND ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE WITH YOUNG LEARNERS AND HELPS TO BRIDGE THE LITERACY DIVIDE.

Jarrett is also a published children’s book author. Her book, “The Recycling Rhythm of Rosie and Ron,” sparks conversations around environmental justice with young learners and helps to bridge the literacy divide.

“Creative writing has always been a vessel for how I could express myself,” she shared. “If I couldn’t sleep at night as a child, I’d just write. My mom said ‘why don’t you publish something’, and I thought ‘I’ll try.’”

Jarrett wrote the book during the winter break of her freshman year. She chose to write about recycling because “it’s something I’ve been doing my whole life,” she explained. “When my family moved, I didn’t want to throw the moving boxes away. I made a mansion out of cardboard boxes, decorated Christmas trees with cans.”

She wanted to inspire children to get creative with cardboard boxes, plastics and other recyclable materials. “Children haven’t had that inspiration,” she said. “They’re not reading as much, reading doesn’t seem fun anymore. I love [Dr. Seuss] ‘The Lorax’, I wanted to put that love back into reading.”

Jarrett found a publisher who believed in her and her story. In February, she had her first book signing 30 minutes away from Spelman. “It was held in partnership with the National Pan-Hellenic Council, and they all came out,” she said. “I was able to sell out of all the books I brought—I didn’t even think I’d sell 10. People are joining Read Across America and reading my book through that.”



TORI JARRETT WON THE NATIONAL AMERICAN MISS NORTH CAROLINA TITLE IN JUNE 2025. SHE REPRESENTED THE STATE AT THE NATIONAL AMERICAN MISS COMPETITION IN ORLANDO, FL, IN NOVEMBER 2025.

Her book sold out of the first printing, so get your copy today.

## **A Multitalented Young Professional**

Jarrett also won the National American Miss North Carolina title in June, according to an [article in \*The Charlotte Post\*](#).

Next, she will represent the state at the National American Miss national competition in Orlando, FL, in November.

She is an aspiring research and development scientist interested in finding a position in chemical engineering after graduation. “There’s nothing more rewarding for me than taking on different challenges to try and solve problems, especially the medical device industry,” Jarrett shared. “Personally, I love the business side of engineering. I want to lean more into the product management side.”