It wasn’t her classes or her friends that made the biggest impression on Kayla Blanfort during middle school; it was her mother. My mom started school when I was in 6th grade. It made me so proud of her; I didn’t realize how important college was until I saw her do it.” She was determined to make her parents feel that same pride in her.

UNC-Charlotte was Kayla’s top choice. “When I toured the school, I thought it was really beautiful, and I really felt like I could see myself walking the campus every day.” After graduation from Western Guilford, she joined the freshman class in fall 2016.

Kayla was thrilled when the school awarded her a number of grants, “but there were some inconsistencies on my FAFA, and so I had to repay that money; the bill was about $20,000,” she remembers. She had applied for scholarships but admits “I wish I had done more and taken it more seriously.”

Dad helped her get back on track, and Kayla got serious about scholarships. That’s when Kayla started to understand the value of Say Yes Guilford. “That last dollar amount, for the rest of my college career I always had some leftover money on my bill that we had to come out of pocket with, and Say Yes was there.” Say Yes Guilford provides last dollar tuition scholarships for qualifying Guilford County Schools graduates.

Blanfort graduated from UNCC last spring with a degree in communications and completing an internship with Child Care Services Association in Raleigh. She starts a new job in Charlotte in a few weeks, one step toward her dream. “I want to work with non-profits to get their message out to the public.”

Since its inception in 2015, Say Yes Guilford has awarded over 10.3 million to GCS graduates, and our partnership with more than 100 private colleges and universities provided another $18.2 million for a total impact of over $28.5 million. Say Yes Guilford registration for rising GCS seniors opens on October 1, 2020.

***Say Yes Guilford is committed to providing access to support services and scholarships designed to prepare Guilford County Schools’ students for success in college, career and life.***