

## Camping for a financial future

High school students learn about personal finance in and out of the classroom

Philippe H. Buteau Miami Times Contributor [Jun 19, 2019](#) Updated [Jun 19, 2019](#)



Future Bankers Camp participants, comprised of students selected from Academy of Finance high school programs within Miami-Dade County Public Schools, gathered recently with camp instructors and representatives from the Center for Financial Training- Southeastern at the Federal Reserve Bank in Miami.

Photo courtesy of Federal Reserve Bank

Omarion King started his paid internship at the beginning of June.

Monday began the second part of a month-long financial internship in which more than 100 high school students are enrolled to improve their math, communication and financial literacy.

The annual Future Bankers Camp, now in its 12th year, is a paid internship with two parts. The first is a two-week class at the Wolfson Campus of Miami Dade College working on a project about their assigned location - whether a financial institution or law firm. During the first two weeks, the students learn banking basics, communication, dealing effectively with coworkers, essentials of workplace conduct, ethical issues, online communication, verbal and written communication and teller basics. The information the students learned goes with the project. The second part is another two weeks at the

financial institution or attorney's office. The students receive a total of \$1,300 and the payments are either installments throughout the month, or at the end, depending on the funding source. The students are provided with a Metro pass for the month. When done with teller training, they receive American Bankers Association Bank Tellers Certificates.



"That's very helpful," said Omarion, a Dr. Michael M. Krop Senior High School student.

Omarion's unsure of what to do for a long-term career, yet has an open mind to banking and is thinking about his interests, too. His teacher told him to sign up for the banking camp.

"If I don't figure out what I want to do I would do banking part-time to see how it is, if I like it. If I do, I would try to get full time." Omarion said.

"I like technology and I like business so I'm debating on those two."

His first two weeks behind him, Omarion will spend the remaining two weeks with Albert E. Acuña P.A. Omarion is the only one placed with an attorney's office. Acuña is a personal attorney in Miami who mostly practices in criminal defense, has dealt with condos and homeowners associations, business or real estate lawsuits and corporate law.

"I want to have experience in different things," Omarion said. Omarion is on his summer break from school. "I think I'll get a lot," Omarion said. At 17, Omarion is the eldest of six children. He lives in an apartment in Miami Gardens with his parents who take him to school. He began attending Krop at the start of the 2018-19 academic year. Prior to Krop, King attended William H. Turner Technical Arts High School. Krop has an Academy of Finance, the equivalent of a university's college of business. The

other 11 schools participating in the Future Bankers Camp also have finance academies. At Krop, Omarion took an accounting course and has plans to take courses in entrepreneurship and financial literacy.

The Future Bankers Camp has placed 104 students in banks, credit unions, other similar businesses throughout Miami-Dade County and a law firm. The camp has eight students from Dr. Michael M. Krop Senior High School.

Connie Laguna is president and CEO of the Center for Financial Training-Southeastern, a national non-profit organization that provides financial services training for entry-level positions up to senior management. The Center for Financial Training-Southeastern, the local arm of the American Bankers Association, partnered with Miami Dade College and is housed on the Wolfson Campus.

“There’s role playing where one student is the banker and the other is the customer,” said Laguna. “We offer very practical hands-on training whether pre-career or current bankers to attain knowledge they need to maintain a career in banking, financial services. [We] help inner-city, low-income students that have an interest in banking or financial services to explore what those careers are like.”

The Futures Bankers Camp is currently only available to students enrolled in academies of finance at the Miami-Dade County Public School at which they attend. Laguna said it is because Academy of Finance students already have a base in financial services and have shown an interest in exploring banking and financial services. However, it does work outside academies of finance for students who need some consideration like those in the Chapman Partnership: Miami Homeless Shelters & Services. Laguna said the Center for Financial Training hopes to expand locally and is doing so nationally.

“Other counties in Florida are in the works,” Laguna said. “We’re looking to set up a program like the one in Miami-Dade in Camden, New Jersey.” The organization would like to become available to students in information technology next year.

The program is supposed to help young adults become more financially literate while in high school.

According to [youth.gov](http://youth.gov), financial education helps young people avoid or know how to manage debt.

“Unfortunately, many youth have not received either formal or informal guidance on financial matters,” it reads on [youth.gov](http://youth.gov).

In 2014 a survey of 15-year-olds in the United States by the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development found that 18% of respondents were not taught financial basics that are often applied in situations, such as for a budget, comparison shopping and creating and reading an invoice.

Omarion said he maintains a budget.

“I try to limit my spending based on how much money I have,” he said.

He’s also a member of his school’s Investment Club. He worked babysitting family friends, for his cousin’s business setting up security cameras, monitors and doorbells. He learned to sell some of his possessions on Ebay. The most amount of money he saved was \$500.

“I felt accomplished, like I could do more,” Omarion said. “I know people sell new shoes. I would do that on the side.”

A little over two weeks after the video game “NBA 2K17” released Omarion said he purchased it himself with money he made working.

“I felt more responsible, older, that I can buy my own stuff,” Omarion said. He made his first dollar working for his grandfather’s lawn service making \$40 per day. Omarion’s grandfather, Casco Shine, said financial education is good for young people.

“It would help them out in the long run,” said Shine, 66. “They’ll learn how to save, won’t overspend and end up in debt.”