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## **Tailgate-Themed Gala Oct 20 for ABC in Darien Scholarship Program**

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**Categories :** [Charity Events and Opportunities](#), [Community Organizations](#)

**Tagged as :** [A Better Chance in Darien 2018](#), [ABC in Darien College Tailgate Gala 2018](#)

**Date :** October 10, 2018

The eight scholars of A Better Chance in Darien may not yet know what college colors they will be wearing in the years to come, but on Oct. 20, a college tailgate party will be held in their honor to help get them there.

— *an announcement from* [ABC in Darien](#)

This is the second annual ABC in Darien Tailgate Gala, the first held in 2015 with rave reviews of the event and the night. Wee Burn Country Club will again be the setting to raise awareness and funding for the scholars' educations while living in Darien and attending Darien High School.

*If You're Going ...*

- The event starts at 7 p.m. on Saturday, Oct. 20 at Wee Burn Country Club.
- Tickets can be purchased from [ABCDarien.org](http://ABCDarien.org).
- Donations are tax deductible; ABC in Darien is a 501(c)(3) not-for-profit public charity.

Dana Tyler, WCBS-TV anchor, is the master of ceremonies, and she will introduce ABC in Darien and our current scholars as well as three amazing speakers:

- **Merlyn Tejada**, a former ABC scholar who is attending Columbia University,
  - **Alexa Avilas**, a past ABC scholar who is currently the Program Director for The Sherman Foundation, and
  - **Nadine Arbubakrr**, a parent of past ABC Scholar, Niya Wright DHS Class 2013 and current scholar Hassana Arbubakrr, DHS Class 2020.
- The Darien ABC program changed the course of my life by giving me access to a top-notch educational system, facilities and supports that every child needs to succeed. It gave me the opportunity to dream big and made me realize my potential and resilience. I am deeply grateful to fearless and talented ABC girls, my sisters, who have filled my life with immeasurable richness.

— *Alexa Avilas*

The speakers will be followed by a live auction conducted by Ron Hammer, a past ABC in Darien Co-President. A paddle raise in honor of ABC in Darien will be conducted by Jane and Scott Pelley who are longtime supporters of ABC in Darien. Scott Pelley is currently a correspondent for CBS News Magazine 60 Minutes.

The night will end with dancing to the tunes of The Big Deal Band. One of the highlights of the evening is when the eight scholars take to the floor to dance with many of the supporters of ABC in Darien.

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In choosing the tailgate theme, organizers will be highlighting the colleges and universities past scholars have attended such as Columbia, Cornell, George Washington, Syracuse and MIT.

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Ring's End is the anchor sponsor of this amazing event with many other local Darien businesses joining to support the Gala, including Baywater Properties, Blue Wave Orthodontics, BMW of Darien, Brown Thayer Shedd Insurance Agency, Darien Center for Dentistry, First County Bank, Laurel Road Bank, Rucci Law Group, and Zotos International, Inc.

Since it's founding in 1981, the Mission of ABC has been to provide talented young women of color from inner cities with a top notch high school education in preparation for college.

For 37 years, there have been 47 scholars who have graduated from Darien High School and have gone on to selective four year degree programs at competitive colleges, changing the course of their lives, the lives of their families, and future generations.