

For Iowa. Forever More. Impact Stories

MonTayla Holder, Department of Intercollegiate Athletics

When MonTayla Holder arrived at the University of Iowa in 2012, she wasn't sure she belonged.

"I didn't think I could compete in the Big Ten Conference," says Holder. "No one cared about a two-time 400-meter state champion from Indianapolis. In the Big Ten, everyone is a state champion. But I was given an opportunity because my coaches saw potential in me, and I didn't want to let them down."

While Holder has reached new heights on the track—three-year captain, two-time Big Ten champion, two-time All-American, and qualifier for the 2016 U.S. Olympic Team Trials—she also received multiple opportunities off the track to have her voice heard. While at Iowa, Holder has been involved with the Iowa Student-Athlete Advisory Committee, the Presidential Committee on Athletics Well-Being Committee, and the Minority Focus Group Advisory Board. It's been an unforgettable journey for Holder, who received her sport and recreation management degree in 2016.

"Donors have made my journey possible," says Holder. "As someone who couldn't afford to go to college, donors have made it happen for someone like me to excel on and off the track."

While Holder received philanthropic support through endowed scholarships, she also benefitted from donors who supported the I-Club's Iowa Scholarship Fund and Hawkeye Fund during the *For Iowa. Forever More.* campaign. Support from donors helped Holder, who plans on continuing to run professionally and attend graduate school, graduate debt free.

"Donor support is one of the biggest blessings I've had in my life," says Holder. "I'm now able to begin the next chapter of my life without any worries or doubts. I can't thank Iowa and its donors enough."