Dear Incoming McDonough Scholars,

Congratulations! You are about to begin a new chapter in your educational career: college. As this exciting time turns closer to a reality, you may be wondering what all this new chapter may entail. Unfortunately, I cannot give you the answer; however, I can assure you that you will be able to answer this question for yourself one day. Every student has his/her own definition filled with personal experiences and adventures. Your journey through college is filled with unique opportunities to not only define what this time of your life means, but also to define YOU.

The EXCEL Workshop will be your very first step and first college experience. The lessons and team-building activities incorporated into the workshop extend beyond the five days. They last as fundamental building blocks for understanding others and engaging in new challenges. Through the EXCEL Workshop, you will have the opportunity to meet and form long lasting friendships with other members of your cohort, interact with 26 McDonough upperclassmen, and connect with an outstanding team of devoted faculty and staff. Within this experience, you will be immersed into a supportive environment that will help guide you along every step of your journey.

Looking back at my own EXCEL experience, I can remember feeling a bit nervous, a tad anxious, but most of all excited to see what my next journey encompassed. I wanted to know who my friends might be or what studying for multiple courses might be like, but all of these thoughts were answered with time. I am grateful for the EXCEL Workshop as the beginning of my college career. Come August, you will be able to enjoy similar experiences! You may hear the upperclassmen remark each cohort as part of the “McDonough Family,” for it is just that. A family continuously supports and encourages. I hope you too will find the same feeling within your McDonough Family.

“Great leadership usually starts with a willing heart, a positive attitude, and a desire to make a difference,” (Mac Anderson). With this quote in mind, the EXCEL Workshop will provide you with the resources and skills necessary to begin your studies in leadership, as well as a solid foundation for your undergraduate education. Jenna Skoglund ’15, the Assistant EXCEL Workshop Coordinator, and I are eager to meet you and give back the gift by providing an impactful, unforgettable experience as your first step into college. We look forward to meeting you and the rest of Cohort 27. Welcome to the McDonough Family!

All the best,

Emily Lorek ‘14
2013 EXCEL Workshop Coordinator