



Scholarship America

2024 IMPACT REPORT



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Scholarship America's 2024 was a year of transition, enablement and investment. Thanks to our generous supporters, sponsors and partners, we are building toward an ambitious goal of doubling our impact on students facing financial need, and 2024 saw a number of important milestones in that effort.

It all starts with fulfilling our mission to eliminate barriers to educational success—which we did for more than 110,000 students, distributing \$315 million in scholarships over the course of the year.

Among the accomplishments I am most proud of:

- Despite the challenges facing higher ed due to the delayed FAFSA rollout, Scholarship America sent more scholarship checks earlier in the year than ever before—in part because we saw the FAFSA storm coming and took critical advance steps to mitigate any impact on our students.
- We provided scholarships to more than 20,000 first-generation college students, allowing them to continue along an educational journey that will have a truly generational impact.
- We launched innovative, vital campaigns to raise funds, build awareness and amplify the impact of emergency aid: small investments at critical times to help students—especially parents and caregivers—stay on track in the face of financial setbacks.

I believe the mark of any healthy nonprofit is the ability to serve the stakeholders of the present while building for an ever-more-impactful future, and I am proud and thankful for Scholarship America's team, our partners, our sponsors and our supporters.

As you'll see throughout this report, while there is much work to be done, there is also much to celebrate. Thank you for joining Scholarship America on this vital journey.

Best,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Mike Nylund". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long, sweeping underline that extends to the right.

Mike Nylund, President & CEO

Scholarship America



In 2024, Scholarship America
provided financial support
to more than 111,000 students
around the world.

BY THE NUMBERS:

\$315,828,859

in scholarships awarded in 2024

\$803,426

Distributed in emergency grants to help students facing financial crisis

22,160

Students received scholarships from more than 400 Dollars for Scholars chapters

20,000+

First-generation students received scholarships in 2024

95%

of program sponsors remain with Scholarship America year-over-year



Sponsored scholarships were administered on behalf of nearly **1,000 unique sponsors**—and **85%** of our sponsored programs are open to students at two-year, trade and technical schools

See our 2024 financial audit and Form 990 at scholarshipamerica.org/about/documentation-and-financial-information for full financial details.

Five

Things to Know About Emergency Aid

Nearly $\frac{3}{4}$ of college students balance their education with part-time or full-time work—but all too often, that’s not enough to make ends meet. Three million students leave college because of unmet financial needs each year. That means three million dreams deferred; three million degrees unearned; three million steps toward a better career not taken.

Fortunately, we can act right now to start reversing that trend. As we have seen over the last two decades, a small investment at the right time can make all the difference for students facing financial struggles. And that means the difference between pursuing their educational and career goals, or getting stuck.

In partnership with Ascendium Education Philanthropy, Scholarship America launched a [nationwide campaign](#) to tell the stories of students who benefited from emergency aid scholarships that helped them stay enrolled in school and on track to complete their degrees.

1 The crises that force students to drop out can often be resolved with **\$1,000 or less.**

Unexpected costs between \$150 and \$1,000 can easily derail the educational journeys of students facing financial shortfalls.

According to the 2023 National Postsecondary Student Aid Study, 22.6% of undergrads are food insecure, and 8% experience homelessness.

Even students who’ve paid tuition still struggle—especially those with children, caregiving responsibilities, or long commutes.

2 Emergency aid scholarships have a proven effect.

It doesn't always take a large investment to keep students in school, as long as aid comes at the right time.

During COVID-19, 82% of students said emergency aid directly improved their chances of graduating.

At Compton College, students who received just \$250 in aid were twice as likely to complete their program within a year compared to those who didn't.

3 Emergency aid is especially important for non-traditional and two-year students.

Financial setbacks hit hardest for community college, first-gen, and parenting students—the very groups who benefit most from earning a degree.

Emergency aid has a measurable impact for these students, helping reduce unmet needs and keep them on track. Supporting emergency aid means supporting single parents, adult learners, and underserved communities working toward a better future.



4 When disasters strike, emergency aid is vital.

Disasters like wildfires, floods, and pandemics can quickly derail a student's education—especially for those already on the edge.

Emergency aid provides fast, flexible support when it's needed most.

Scholarship America has helped students facing job loss, housing damage, and more, ensuring timely aid through strong community partnerships and rapid response systems.

5 Private-sector scholarship funds are uniquely suited to provide the right funds, right now.

Speed matters—programs that disburse aid in under 48 hours see higher retention and better mental health outcomes.

As a national leader, Scholarship America delivers emergency aid through proven best practices:

- Simple, mobile-friendly applications
- Aid for urgent living expenses, not tuition
- Fast turnaround and efficient delivery
- Recognition that even \$500 can prevent dropout

Partnering with us means making a real, immediate difference—for under \$1,000, a student can stay on the path to a brighter future.



Emergency Aid Scholarships for Parents

Support Student Parents. Strengthen Families. Build the Future.

In the United States, more than one in five college students—over 3.8 million individuals — are raising children while pursuing their education. These student parents are among the most determined, high-performing, and overlooked students on campus.

Despite earning higher GPAs than their non-parenting peers, student parents face unique barriers: time poverty, unaffordable childcare, isolation, and a lack of institutional support. Most are low-income, first-generation students. Nearly 3 in 4 are women, and more than half are students of color.

That's why Scholarship America has partnered with ECMC Foundation, Trellis Foundation, Ascendium Education Philanthropy, Crimsonbridge Foundation, and others, to build awareness of the need for emergency aid for student parents.



“When my son offered me his own money to buy food, I was ready to drop out and get a job. After my financial aid advisor brought Emergency Aid to my attention, I was able to get enough funding to go grocery shopping. My world got better in that moment.”

Will

Nursing Student, Nicolet College, Wisconsin
Father



“A week before finals, I found out I was pregnant. With the \$700 Emergency Aid I received, I was able to secure family housing for me and my son. Even in the darkness we see day by day, there’s a light at the end of the tunnel.”

Maria

Clinical Psychology Major, University of Texas Rio Grande Valley
Single Mom



A Lifeline When It's Needed Most

Emergency aid provides fast, flexible financial support to student parents who are on the brink of dropping out due to unexpected expenses—a car repair, a medical bill, a missed childcare payment. The goal: keep them enrolled, on track, and moving toward a degree that will change the trajectory of their family’s life.

As we strive to keep parenting students on track toward their educational goals, we’re inviting donors, institutions, and advocates to join us in elevating and supporting student parents in real, tangible ways.



Why It Matters

Student parents are resilient. Many juggle full course loads while raising young children, working jobs, and navigating financial insecurity—all while earning grades on par with or better than their peers.

They are a vital part of the student population. Nearly 20% of undergraduates are parents—yet most institutions aren’t collecting data or designing programs with them in mind.

The ROI is enormous. A single mother who completes her degree is projected to earn \$625,000 more over her lifetime and contribute over \$220,000 more in taxes.



You Can Help

We’re looking for:

- Matching donors and corporate sponsors
- Champions willing to share their stories or author testimonials
- Everyday donors who want to make a meaningful difference—any gift, any size matters

Join us to ensure that no parent has to choose between feeding their child and finishing their degree.

Your support changes students' lives.

As a nonprofit organization, Scholarship America relies on the generosity of our scholarship sponsors, our grant funders, and supporters like you. Every gift, of every size, helps us do more for students in need.

Every day, students are forced to make hard choices—between paying for books or housing, between childcare and tuition, between giving up and pushing on. Your support of Scholarship America helps remove those impossible decisions so students can stay on track toward a brighter future.

You've helped us deliver:



Scholarships in all **50 states and 86 countries**



Emergency aid that has allowed **95% of recipients** to complete their current term



Critical support for **veterans, first-generation college students, student parents** and more.

Scholarship America strives to make the most of every dollar. We have been rated as a Charity Navigator Four-Star nonprofit, and we are proud to have earned Candid's Platinum Seal for transparency and fiscal responsibility.

Supporters like you make our work happen. If you want to contribute right now to giving a student a brighter future, just visit scholarshipamerica.org or fill out the included mail-in form. **Thank you for all you do.**

Profiles in Philanthropy: Scholarship America x Greater Indy Habitat for Humanity



When Greater Indy Habitat for Humanity in Indianapolis conducted a study about empowering families to achieve strength, stability, and independence, they discovered that supporting a scholarship program could make a huge impact.

Specifically, their research revealed that 79% of those who became homeowners also planned to start, continue or finish furthering their education after getting settled. Parents also observed improved study habits, increased academic achievement and more consistent school attendance among new homeowners, and the organization decided to encourage those efforts and reduce barriers through an annual scholarship program.

Greater Indy Habitat for Humanity reached out to Scholarship America to provide expert administrative support—and their program has impacted students for nearly a decade.

Jennifer Brammer, Vice President of Homeownership & Mortgage Services, spotlighted several of their 2024 scholarship recipients:

Two recipients in 2024 were hardworking homeowners and parents balancing full-time jobs, school, and family life. One is pursuing a degree in accounting, while the other is studying social work and plans to begin an accelerated master's program after graduating this May.

The scholarship has also supported the children of Habitat homeowners in pursuing their dreams. Kali, for example, is now working toward her second bachelor's degree in nursing after earning her first in psychology and human development. [And] Bugashane, a two-time recipient, is passionate about computer graphic technology and UX design. With the help of the Habitat scholarship, he expanded his studies to include a major in game development and animation, along with minors in business and French. The scholarship also supported him in securing campus housing.

The Inaugural Irving Innovation Awards

On Tuesday, November 12, 2024 Scholarship America celebrated innovation in student support as part of its annual gala, hosted at the Army & Navy Club in Washington, D.C.

The Irving Innovation Awards were established to reflect the vision of organization founder Dr. Irving Fradkin, whose pioneering work in establishing community-based scholarships has grown into a nationwide movement. The awards spotlight organizations that have reimagined what it means to support students—ensuring their initiatives not only provide financial aid but also create holistic opportunities for personal and professional growth.





Dollars for Scholars Fradkin Legacy Awards

Dollars for Scholars, our grassroots, volunteer-driven program, carries on Dr. Fradkin’s legacy directly. We are proud to award outstanding Dollars for Scholars chapters with funds that allow them to provide more impactful scholarships, renewable awards and additional student support.

\$2,500

Impactful Scholarship Award

Temecula Dollars for Scholars in Temecula, CA, and Worcester Latino Dollars for Scholars in Worcester, MA

\$10,000

Renewable Scholarship Award

South Dearborn Dollars for Scholars in Aurora, IN

\$15,000

Student Support Award

Coalition of Dollars for Scholars chapters in Putnam County, Indiana: Cloverdale Community Dollars for Scholars, Greencastle Alumni Dollars for Scholars, North Putnam Alumni Association Dollars for Scholars, and South Putnam Dollars for Scholars

Thank you

from all of us at Scholarship America, on behalf of the students we serve.

You have not just given me money. You have given me peace, freedom, and hope. I am now able to dream of study abroad, of finish my degree, of waking up in the morning less worried about tuition and more of my education.

Thank you for the chance to dream big. I hope that my actions to come will prove that the right decision.

Thank you for your faith; I will prove you right.

Sincerely,
Katelyn Tijerina

Connie Borchert Dietrich
Competitive Award Committee

Thank you so much for awarding me with this scholarship! This is a life-changing opportunity and I am so grateful to be a recipient.

Thank you again,
Olivia Anderson

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