



Making Students'  
Dreams Possible



# “What are we doing for students?”

That is the first question I was asked by the late Dr. Irving Fradkin every time we talked. Scholarship America's founder never lost sight of our mission of making students' dreams possible.

Our goal is to continually increase student success. In 2017 Scholarship America approved a new strategic direction, focused squarely on ensuring ALL students have the opportunity to succeed in their pursuit of higher education. We're the go-to source, providing financial, cultural and social support along their academic journey. That means scholarships, but also emergency aid, mentoring and coaching, financial literacy, and more.

Why is this so important? Today's students are very different from the students of 1958, when Scholarship America was founded. Some are low-income, first generation students or parents. Almost half are age 25 or older. Many hold full-time jobs while enrolled in classes. These students face a wide variety of challenges that could easily derail their higher education paths. They are counting on us.

We can help. Scholarship America and our partners have built programs that have distributed over \$4 billion and helped more than 2.4 million students since 1958. We continue to adapt to meet students' changing needs because we want to create an America where every student's dream can come true.



Thank you for joining with us in saying “yes” to the future of young people.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "RC Ballard". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first letters of the first and last names being capitalized.

Robert C. Ballard  
President and CEO

# Our Impact in 2017

## \$4 BILLION TO STUDENTS

\$4 billion distributed to  
2.4 million students

## \$225 MILLION ANNUALLY

\$225 million distributed to  
over 96,000 students annually

## SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAMS

### DREAM AWARD

28 new & renewing recipients  
received \$291,000



### FAMILIES OF FREEDOM

829 awards totaling \$12,254,532



### PARTNER PROGRAMS

74,401 awards, totaling \$190,230,887  
through 1,393 programs



## EMERGENCY AID



### DREAMKEEPERS

4,672 awards to students,  
totaling \$2,968,152  
Average award: \$635

## COMMUNITY BASED SCHOLARSHIPS

### DOLLARS FOR SCHOLARS

18,635 students awarded \$20,200,365\*  
across 30 states

Average award: \$1,084

\*Unaudited



## REDUCING STUDENT DEBT

### COLLEGIATE PARTNERS

313 college and university partners





# Why My Dream Matters

Yessenia Cantero-Hernandez is a 2017 Dream Award recipient and nursing student at Northern Kentucky University.

Here is her story.

“My college journey began at Northern Kentucky University (NKU). I am a recipient of Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals, also known as DACA. I came to the United States when I was just eight years old.



Going to NKU was not going to happen without a fight. I was denied a scholarship because I am not a U.S. citizen. This was devastating. Paying \$15,000 for school was not even a consideration. \$15,000 is more than what my parents make in an entire year.

I began working as a babysitter, interpreter and an in-home nursing assistant and continued pushing forward. A few months after I began classes, I met Luis Loza, a former recipient of the Dream Award. After sharing my financial concerns, he encouraged me to apply. Today he has become my mentor and close friend. Without his help and the Dream Award, I might not have been able to pursue my academic goals.

I have a passion for patient education and advocacy. My parents both struggle with significant health issues. I want to prevent situations like my parents faced by being there to guide families through problems.

Specifically, I want to pursue pediatrics because I watched the frustrations of the parents of a 13-year-old cancer patient. They did not know what was being done to their child, or how to express their confusion and concerns to medical staff. I want Latino families to be able to relate to their health providers and not go through these difficulties.

And that is why my dream matters.”

*Yessenia*

# 2017 Dream Award Students

The Dream Award is Scholarship America's renewable scholarship for students who have overcome barriers, have a financial need and have successfully completed their first year of college.

Read their stories [here](#)



"Thank you Scholarship America, for helping me go to college."

- Umesh Bhandari



"I always wanted to go to college, so giving up was not really an option."

- Mikayla Bridgewater



"Because of you, I'm living my dream to become a nurse."

- Yessenia Cantero Hernandez



"I would not be able to continue my education if it wasn't for Scholarship America, so I just want to say thank you so much."

- April Lewis



"I'm really grateful to receive this award. This scholarship means a lot, not just to me but also my family."

- Shun Lin



"The email read 'congratulations.' My face lit up and I was crying because I was so happy."

- April Martinez



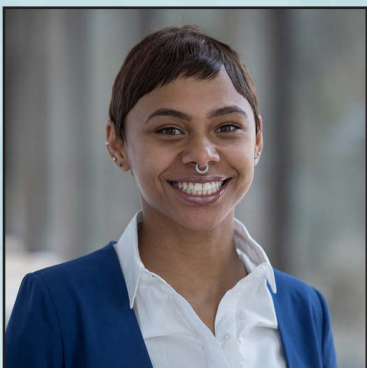
"I want to lift other people up. They need to know that there are options."

- Jorge Morales



"We do have the choice to change the future of ourselves and the people around us."

- Ezekiel Ogden



"I just want to thank everyone for putting their time and effort into someone with a story like mine."

- Tiara Wills



"I was scared about transferring; now I don't have to worry. That made my mom really happy."

- Shanell Yenchik



# 2017 Highlights

## Showing Gratitude

A grieving nation quickly came together to establish the Families of Freedom Scholarship Fund after the 9/11 terrorist attacks to provide scholarships for the children of those killed or permanently disabled as a result of the attacks and rescue activities. To date, the Fund has provided over \$148 million to 3,337 students. In 2017 alone, 829 awards totaling \$12,254,532 were presented.

For a second year, a Never Forget Tribute college basketball challenge was held in December at the Prudential Center in New Jersey, raising awareness and dollars for Families of Freedom. Over 8,000 attended, including 103 Families of Freedom family members. The scholarship support means a great deal to recipients and their families, as witnessed by this heartwarming letter from a first responder.

*"I can't tell you how grateful my family is....it's difficult to articulate how I felt when people gave us a standing ovation at the Never Forget Tribute...it was overwhelming."*

— Captain Gerard Somerville, FDNY (Retired)



## Helping Students Affected By Hurricanes



Students struggling to pay for college risk dropping out entirely when a natural disaster strikes. Scholarship America's National Disaster Relief Fund stepped up after Hurricane Harvey, distributing \$180,000 to 15 schools in affected areas in Texas and Louisiana. Funds were disbursed to 391 students experiencing financial hardship to assist with tuition, fees, books and supplies, room and board or other education-related expenses so that those students could stay in school.

## Providing Student Success & Scholarship Training

Scholarship America partnered with the National Scholarship Providers Association (NSPA) in July to host a regional conference in Minneapolis. Participants learned about evaluating students for scholarships, trends in higher education financial aid federal policy, college advising, mentoring and coaching. Clients found the event valuable, and as a result Scholarship America added a Partner Summit to its 2018 Dreams to Success activities.



## Making Dreams of Midwest Students Possible



Thanks to an anonymous \$2 million donation, a Midwest Scholars Dream Award was created for students who have completed their first year of college, have overcome barriers and have a financial need. This award will be given to students in 12 states in the Midwest. Ten awards of up to \$15,000 will be given annually for the next four years.

*Vincent Fedorko, a speech communications major at Webster University and recipient of the Midwest Scholars Dream Award*

## Telling DACA Student Stories

29% of Dream Award scholarship recipients are Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) students. Scholarship America highlighted their stories to raise awareness of the challenges undocumented students face and advocate for a legislative solution to help them complete their degrees, find employment and begin to give back.

We support our DACA students.

*Kimberly Schwarz, a DACA student and 2015 Dream Award recipient, who interned with Facebook and Apple and currently mentors at-risk high school students*



## Offering Coaching with Scholarships



Scholarship America added its first wrap-around offering, in conjunction with a new nonprofit partner, EduGuide. This allows Scholarship America to offer online coaching as an added component to scholarship programs, providing support to help students succeed.



## Impacting Students Through Dollars for Scholars



In 2017, over 18,800 students in 30 states received Dollars for Scholars scholarships totaling \$20.5 million. Most are merit-based, but a third of the awards take financial need into account in determining scholarship recipients. Close to 900 students received renewable awards.

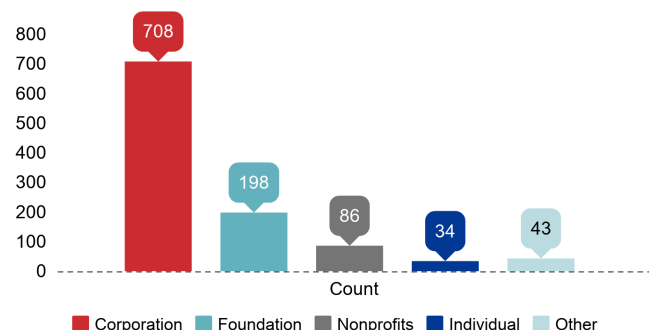
These community -based volunteer-run organizations, supported by Scholarship America, dedicate their hearts and souls to support students in their local communities. Excel Beyond 211 Dollars for Scholars in Palatine, Illinois, is a shining example. They received the inaugural Dollars for Scholars Innovation Award for providing scholarships and a robust mentoring program for low income and first generation students. One of their volunteer leaders, Donna Epton, received the Ralph “Cy” Seifert Volunteer of the Year recognition. The Willington Scholarship Foundation Dollars for Scholars was recognized as the 2017 Irving A. Fradkin Chapter of the Year.

*Wyatt Tauber, recipient of Scholarship America’s 2017 National Student Volunteer of the Year Award*

## Investing in Students

Private and public sector client partners choose Scholarship America, the premier field leader in student-centric solutions, to help them design and deliver their scholarship programs. Last year, Scholarship America and its nearly 1,400 client partners awarded \$190,230,887 in scholarships and support to over 74,400 students. We support corporations who provide scholarships to employees and their dependents as well as community groups and public sector scholarships.

Scholarships range from supporting students pursuing STEM or other specific majors to awarding cancer survivors. Some support students pursuing masters’ degrees and others target students interested in culinary arts, HVAC, cyber innovation and more. Thank you, partners, for encouraging and supporting diverse students and their many interests!





# Celebrating at Dreams to Success

The 2017 Dreams to Success Dinner and Awards Celebration raised a record-setting \$594,000 while celebrating Scholarship America Dream Award students and honoring the legacy of Dr. Irving Fradkin, Scholarship America's founder.

Mike Rowe and the mikeroweWORKS Foundation, the Wells Fargo Veteran Scholarship and Emergency Grant programs and the Houston Livestock Show and Rodeo were showcased as outstanding student success programs.

Watch Dreams to Success videos [here](#)



Senator Bob Dole & Scholarship America Board Chair Barry Griswell



Rod Martin, Braeden Mayrisch and Angela Harrell, Voya Financial



Master of Ceremonies Wes Moore; Jim Winne, Sarah Brubaker and Rashard Harris, Houston Livestock Show and Rodeo



Amare Lovely, Jerry Quinn & Catherine Gonzalez, Wells Fargo



Mike Rowe, mikeroweWORKS Foundation, Wes Moore, Michelle Ahola and Eric Kovacevich



# Focusing on Veterans

Scholarship America and Wells Fargo highlighted educational benefits for veterans as part of a three-part September, 2017 Designing Spaces Military Makeover program on the Lifetime Channel, seen by an estimated 900,000 viewers. The makeover featured the Florida home of Marine Corps veteran Sergeant Ed Tague and his wife, Mandi. Sgt. Tague served three tours in Iraq and is pursuing a Master's degree in social work at Florida State University. Wells Fargo presented Sgt. Tague with \$10,000 to help with his graduate study. Wells Fargo and Scholarship America award scholarships and emergency grants to support education and vocational training for veterans and spouses of disabled veterans.



Bob Ballard, Scholarship America; Ed and Mandi Tague, and Jerry Quinn, Wells Fargo

Watch Military Makeover segment [here](#)

# Raising Dollars, Changing Lives

Gifts to Scholarship America's Dream Award, contributions raised through Giving Tuesday and the annual fund, and donations to the Families of Freedom Scholarship Fund, raised \$8,317,152 in 2017.

Thank you, generous [donors](#). You are changing students' lives!

Your support helps Scholarship America transition the dream of higher education into a reality for young scholars facing seemingly insurmountable challenges. Your investment in their lives and educations is the key to change impossible to possible. Be the beginning of something great. Possible starts with you.

Make your gift today at <https://donations.scholarshipamerica.org/>



# Scholarship AMERICA®

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*Founded in 1958 by Dr. Irving Fradkin*