INSPIRED BY YOU

GIVING BACK

750,000 GRADUATES BY 2025

THE POSSIBILITIES

MY GRANDMOTHER

A DREAM
Best Path to Financial Stability

Scholarship America® was founded more than fifty years ago to help assure that young people could achieve the American Dream through higher education. Today, that dream is at risk: the spiraling cost of higher education is an ever-growing hurdle that has the potential to cripple our nation’s economic future by stopping too many students in their tracks.

Unfortunately, both the costs and the current economic realities are making many people doubt the value of education beyond high school. Far too often, I’ve seen headlines asking in bold letters: Is College Still Worth It?

And – while it’s true that the cost of college has increased by 50 percent over the past 30 years, the average college graduate owes more than $26,600 in student loans, and unemployment for recent grads is right around 9 percent – college is still the best path to long-term financial stability for individuals and our nation. Consider:

- The unemployment rate among young people with only a high school diploma tops 30 percent.
- A young college grad earns about $12,000 more per year than his or her counterpart with only a high school diploma. Those with associate degrees earn $9,000 more annually than high-school grads. And over their entire careers, college graduates earn 75 percent more than high-school grads.
- Education is the surest route out of poverty and into the middle class, effectively changing the cycle for future generations.

WHAT INSPIRES ME

My work at Scholarship America is inspired by knowing that when we are successful – when an individual succeeds in completing an education beyond high school – we have helped save a family from a future of poverty.

What drives me is Scholarship America’s strategic goal to help 750,000 students complete their degrees by 2025. Through the 106,000 scholarship and education assistance awards we distributed this past year, we are that much closer to making this goal a reality.

An education beyond high school should be possible for every student with the will and motivation to succeed. Thank you for the important role you play in helping these students achieve their dreams.

YOU inspire me.

Sincerely,

Lauren A. Segal, President & CEO
Jeremiah Rotich knew no one when he arrived in the United States from Kenya in 2001 to start a new life, but was expecting a ride from the airport arranged through an acquaintance.

Jeremiah’s ride never showed up.

Not one to dwell on a setback, Jeremiah hopped in a cab and asked the driver to take him to a cheap hotel – where he began looking for a job and a place to live.

**A NEW LIFE**

Soon, Jeremiah’s wife and two small children (ages 6 and 9) joined him in the United States. “I had a vision for myself and my family,” says Jeremiah. “I wanted the best for all of us. To me, that meant access to a quality education.”

Going to school and learning were big challenges in Kenya. The elementary school Jeremiah attended as a boy was several miles away from his home, and the facilities were inadequate. Students had to share the few books available, having a meal during the day in school was unheard of. Despite these hardships, Jeremiah persevered because he believed that education was his chance for a better life.

When Jeremiah found himself suddenly unemployed in 2009, he quickly enrolled in Minneapolis Community and Technical College (MCTC). During his final semester, however, Jeremiah’s dream to earn a degree was nearly dashed: the family’s sole car – which transported both him and his children to school and his wife to work – broke down one evening. The family had to make a quick decision: pay rent, or cover the car repair costs. Fortunately, Jeremiah was eligible to apply for an emergency grant through Scholarship America’s Dreamkeepers program at MCTC.

**A DREAM REALIZED**

Jeremiah graduated from his program at MCTC in May, 2012. “I am grateful for the opportunity to have received the funding, as it meant a lot to me and my family. If I had not received it, we would not have been able to cover our expenses and that would have meant some uncertainty in keeping the dreams alive,” he says.

He is now pursuing a bachelor’s degree, and plans to work toward a master’s degree in public and nonprofit administration. “My education has given me confidence and the ability and motivation to help others, as I have been helped,” Jeremiah says.

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When Marisa Montoya-Monier’s grandmother saw an advertisement for a scholarship in the Sacramento Bee, she immediately thought of her granddaughter’s goal of attending the University of California, Berkeley. Marisa spent years starting, stopping and restarting her education in early childhood development at Sacramento City College. Now 27, she was determined to complete a peace and conflict studies degree at Berkeley – one of only two schools in the country that offers this degree to undergrads – and to become the first college graduate in her immediate family.

But, as Marisa says, “Berkeley is expensive.”

Enter the Bright Minds Scholarship Program, sponsored by Pacific Gas and Electric Company (PG&E) and administered by Scholarship America. PG&E advertised across its northern and central California service area for applicants for this new program – including in the Bee, which Marisa’s grandmother saw.

“PG&E’s charitable community investment program is focused on supporting and strengthening the communities we serve,” says Ezra Garrett, PG&E’s Vice President of Community Relations. “Education has been a traditional vehicle for us to support our communities, typically through nonprofit organizations or school efforts. The Bright Minds program helps us give funding directly to the students and their parents.”

Through the Bright Minds Scholarship Program, PG&E awarded 100 scholarships this past year – 90 one-time awards worth $2,500 and 10 renewable scholarships of up to $30,000 a year toward the completion of the students’ certificate, associates or bachelor’s degree.

“When we agree that academic success should be the key consideration for scholarship assistance, we don’t think it should be the only criteria,” says Ezra. “Our Bright Minds Scholars also demonstrate a personal commitment to giving back to the community, have succeeded in the face of overwhelming obstacles, and show financial need. And we didn’t want to limit the program to high school seniors.” The top 10 Bright Minds Scholars range in age from 18 to 45 years old.
MEETING A NEED

More than 8,000 students applied for the 100 scholarships. “We were blown away by the response, and encouraged that we were really meeting a need,” says Ezra. “It was very emotional for our employees to feel that they were part of something so impactful. They were inspired by the stories these students told, and the challenges they’ve overcome.”

Stories like Marisa’s, whose childhood was turbulent. After her parents divorced when she was very young, her mother did her best to take care of Marisa and her two brothers. “But sometimes, you know, there just wasn’t enough money. As a child, I never knew whether we would have hot water, or the lights would be on… we’d have to go to my grandparents to shower. The lights would be off for a day or two, or the phone, until the bill could be paid,” says Marisa.

Marisa expects to finish her bachelor’s degree in spring 2014 debt-free and plans to join the Peace Corps before starting work on a master’s degree in restorative justice. She eventually would like to work for a nonprofit organization and give back to the community throughout her career “I come from this place where you wonder if you really have a fighting chance,” she adds. “But here I am!”

SINCE 1958, more than $2.9 billion in scholarships and educational assistance has been distributed to 1.9 million students through Scholarship America programs.

FACTS AND FIGURES FY2012

TOTAL AWARDS: 106,500 | TOTAL DISTRIBUTION: $203,163,000

DOLLARS FOR SCHOLARS®
Nearly 1,000 locally based, volunteer-driven programs help hometown students achieve educational success by raising scholarship funds, establishing endowments, providing assistance with college readiness and the financial aid process, and distributing scholarships.

By the numbers:
• 38,525 students received $41 million in scholarships
• $1,065 was the average scholarship award
• $73.2 million was raised by local programs
• 2,850 communities are served in 38 states and the District of Columbia
• 24,831 volunteers support 992 local programs

COLLEGIATE PARTNERS®
These postsecondary institutions stretch the scholarship dollars distributed by Scholarship America programs, by assuring that they are used to fill unmet student need or reduce the self-help portion (loan, work study, etc.) of the student’s financial aid package.

By the numbers:
• 446 Collegiate Partners
• 36,885 Scholarship America scholarship recipients brought $63.9 million in scholarship funds to Collegiate Partner institutions in FY12

DREAMKEEPERS®
Dreamkeepers is designed to help students avoid dropping out of college when faced with an unforeseen financial difficulty. 95% of students who received Dreamkeepers funding in 2011-12 completed their current term.

By the numbers:
• 43 colleges in the Dreamkeepers network
• $414 average student grant
• More than $2.9 million in financial assistance has been provided to 5,500 students since 2004

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During the fiscal year ending June 30, 2012, Scholarship America’s national office raised $160 million and distributed $149 million for scholarships. The total distribution of $203 million, noted elsewhere in this report, includes $41 million distributed to students by our independent chapters, as well as deferred awards. Scholarship America maintains a strong financial position with net assets of $135 million and cash and investments totaling $180 million.

“College was an experience I have never taken for granted. Given that it comes at such a pivotal time in a young adult’s life, the impact can be great and the opportunities endless. Giving to Scholarship America is an easy choice – it is incredibly rewarding to know you have affected another individual by providing the chance to realize a dream.”

Our mission: To mobilize America through scholarships and educational support to make postsecondary success possible for all students.
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*Deceased

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INSPIRED TO GIVE

STEVEN AND TERESA KINGSLEY
VIENNA, VA

DONORS SINCE: 2001

“Scholarship America’s unique focus on mobilizing communities in support of education impressed us as we looked for a way to help others gain access to the education opportunities we and our children have had.”
HELPING OTHERS
A COACH
MY COMMUNITY
NON-TRADITIONAL STUDENTS
UNLIMITED POTENTIAL
A LOVE OF LEARNING
MY GENERATION
THE FUTURE
EQUALITY

INSPIRED TO GIVE

DONALD ELG
COMFREY, MN
DONOR SINCE: 2001

“Although neither my sister nor I were able to attend college, we realize how important an education is for success in today’s world. We hope that whoever gets a scholarship will consider giving something back once they get established.”

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