



Bridging the Gap

SCHOLARSHIPS ARE A CRITICAL BRIDGE FOR STUDENTS WHO WANT TO STAY IN SCHOOL

STORY: DEBBIE BLACK | PHOTO: YOSEF KALINKO

For many families with students pursuing a college education today, a gap between the high cost of tuition and available resources can shatter dreams. At Seattle University, the majority of students and families are unable to fully fund the cost of attendance. While 87 percent of Seattle U undergrads receive financial aid, the ability to finance any remaining differential can impact a student's educational opportunity.

New student recruitment and student retention are both directly impacted by the affordability gap. Data shows there to be a significant disparity in the retention of Seattle U students with high unmet need versus the overall class retention rate. This is especially so in the crucial transition between the first and second year.

Student scholarships play a critical role in helping to bridge the financial chasm that stands between many students and their dream of a college education. Seattle U offers both merit scholarships and need-based aid to assist students in bridging the gap, but students are also expected to do their part. For some, their part is only covered by loans and working one or more jobs while in school.

"To me the issue isn't just about funding—it's about getting students to a place where they can do their best academically because they aren't constantly worried about their financial situation," says Jeff Scofield, director of Student Financial Services. "We can change a student's entire academic experience if we can resolve some of their financial issues.

SEATTLE UNIVERSITY

Bridge Scholarships, such as the Seattle University Opportunity Grant, can go a long way toward helping deserving students complete their education here. Marika Yaplee, '17, is a case in point.

Because Marika's family had limited financial resources to contribute toward her education, it was up to her. She earned a competitive Champion Merit Scholarship, took out loans and worked several jobs. Her freshman year was a success as she ranked at the top of her class with a science-heavy course load. However, when the time came to return for her sophomore year, Marika faced a \$6,000 affordability gap that she was unable to pay. She planned to drop out and continue her education at a public institution.

Fortunately, Seattle U was able to step in with a bridge scholarship that enabled Marika to stay in school. She still had to work more than one job to do her part, but she had the determination to succeed and maintained a high GPA while working toward her goal of becoming a pediatric occupational therapist.

Seattle U annually awards upward of \$2 million in private scholarships to undergraduates, but unmet need continues to surpass available scholarship dollars.

The Campaign for Seattle University aspires to raise \$75 million for student scholarships. These new funds will provide supplemental means to help mitigate students' remaining unmet need and support new and existing scholarships that provide access to education, celebrate academic success and help with recruitment.

Student scholarships truly do change lives. More than funding a student today, our donors are funding the education that will empower our next generation of leaders.



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POSITIVE, LASTING CHANGE.**

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