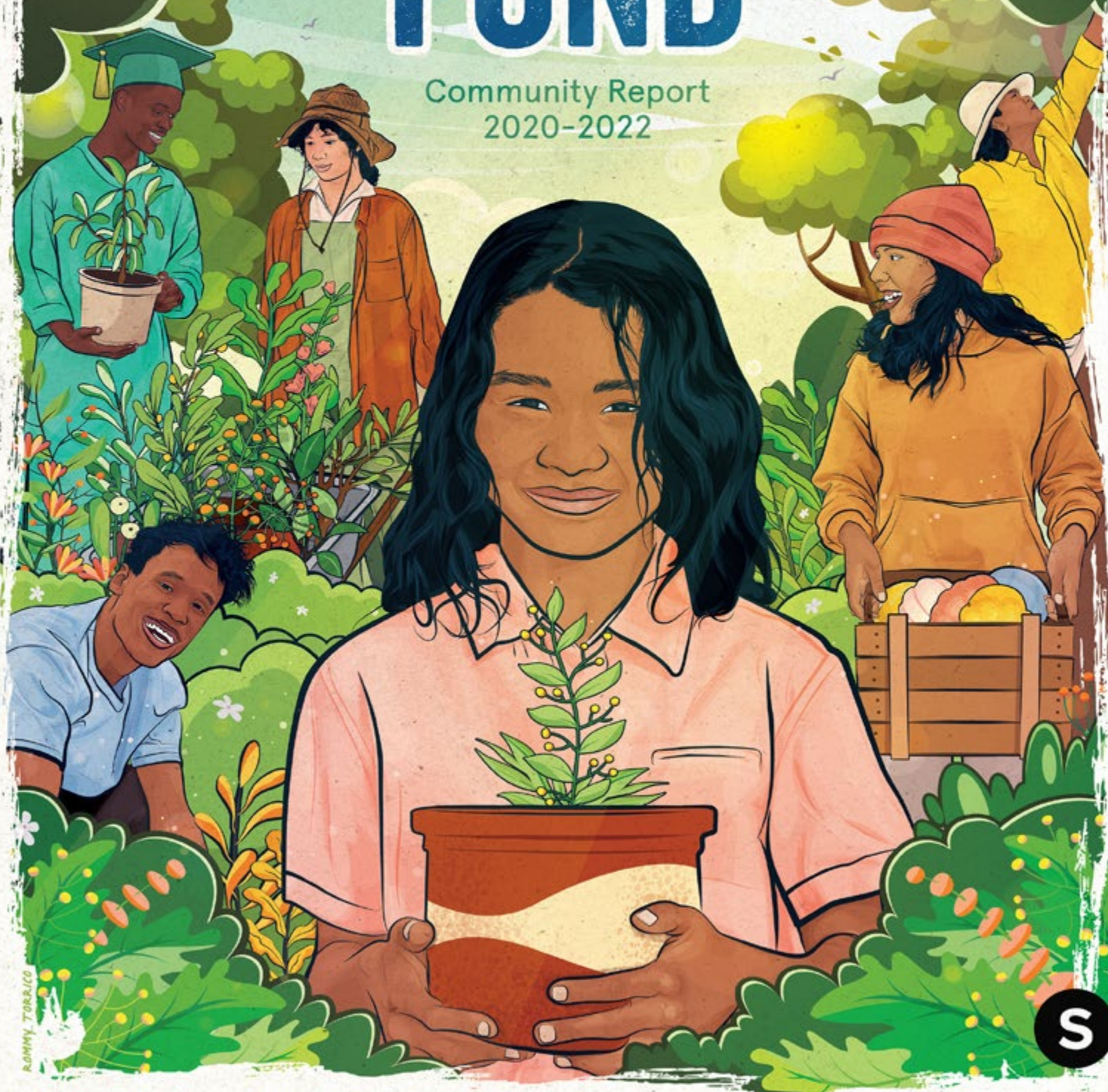


SCHOLAR FUND

Community Report
2020-2022





SCHOLAR FUND CONNECTS COMMUNITY NEEDS TO OPPORTUNITIES AND RESOURCES.

A Note From Our Founder & Leader

DAVID COVEN

2020 to 2022 were monumental years for Scholar Fund. As we reckoned in new ways with inequitable systems, it became clear that our communities had the power to mobilize against injustices in our city, county, state, and even beyond — we just needed more connections to opportunities and resources. This report shares our story, from our origins a decade ago to our turning point in 2020 to the work we have been scaling since.

Throughout my journey — growing up in the Central District of Seattle, experiencing homelessness, dreaming of more, being the first in my family to go to college — I've met so many incredible people who I am now blessed to be able to work with to serve our communities. When I think about all we've accomplished these past few years, I am so grateful to be here. Scholar Fund has grown with community: responding to grassroots leaders, refining our technical playbooks, and shaping models of care that always center humanity.

The tagline of Scholar Fund is: connecting community needs to opportunities and resources. To us, this looks like listening, supporting, understanding, and elevating the work

people are already doing. We facilitate the needs that people have been prioritizing for years with the resources that we build, curate, and co-create. At Scholar Fund, we have our three C's: community, cash, and college. Throughout this report, you will learn how we use our capacities in technology, engineering, community engagement, communications, support, education, operations, and programming to leverage resources in these three areas.

When I think about the future, I see being able to empower the expertise and the brilliance we have on the team to take ideas to much larger stages. That looks like higher education access at a state level; it looks like post-secondary support across the nation. It looks like a billion dollars a year in benefit programs, whether that's rental assistance, childcare programs, or cash assistance. And it looks like taking our best practices and the ability to elevate the voices within communities to partner with organizations and coalitions, advocating and empowering wherever change-making is possible.

Scholar Fund did not become what it is today, because we knew what tomorrow looks like. It started because a few people had some really, really wild ideas about what the future could look like. We proved that community love and fierce advocacy can make the impossible happen.

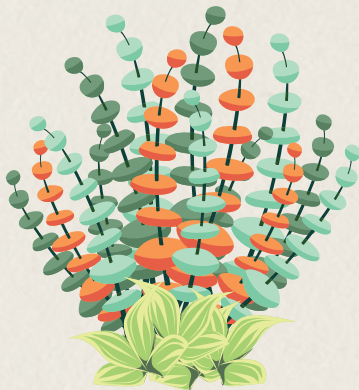
With hope and solidarity,
DAVID COVEN





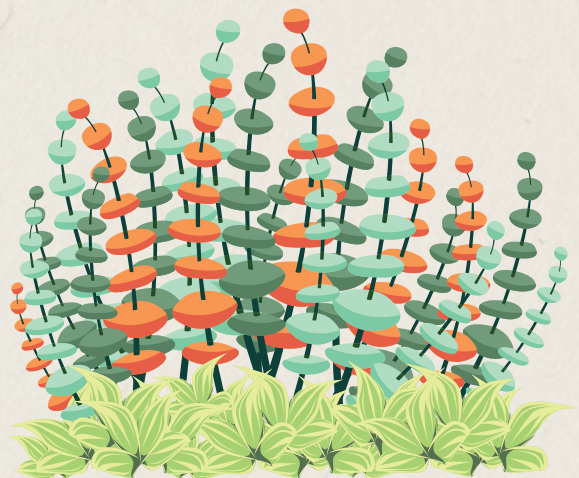
2020

5 TEAM MEMBERS



2021

29 TEAM MEMBERS



2022

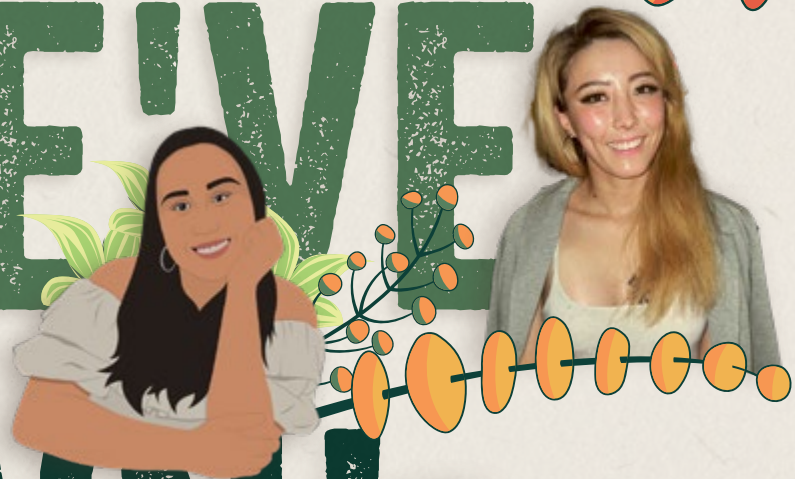
40 TEAM MEMBERS

...and growing!

OH, HOW

WE'VE

GROWN!





CASH

Scholar Fund supports direct cash relief work in many ways—administering, assembling tech tools, building support teams, advocating for policy, and more. We believe that delivering benefit programs that empower and trust our communities is a vital way to water the seeds of equity and justice.

COLLEGE

Scholar Fund's education access work started it all. From the beginning, we knew that removing barriers between opportunities and youth is just like removing barriers between sunlight and saplings. It takes glow to grow. Every seed has radiant potential, and our goal is to help everyone flourish.

COMMUNITY

Scholar Fund's community development work recognizes the importance of a strong and deep root system. We support grassroots growth and climate care through our work like fiscal sponsorships, mutual aid support, cultural fellowships, policy advocacy, and more. A tree is only as strong as the forest that surrounds it.

COLLEGE

We help students access a quality, debt-free education so they can pursue their dreams.

Scholarship Junkies was founded by Sam Lim in 2008 as a resource blog to help students navigate scholarship applications. In time, many University of Washington students like David Coven, Malachi Williams, and Brent Schroeter joined the team and in 2013, they took it on full force. Turning down lucrative job offers in engineering and tech, the fledgling team put everything into Scholarship Junkies to build an organization that could impact thousands of people. For many years, Scholarship Junkies made a massive impact with a minimal budget. Those who joined the team did so because they believed in community and connection. Since then, **Scholarship Junkies has bloomed into SCHOLAR FUND and our mission has grown.** But we stay watering our roots: keeping education programs going, remaining committed to connecting people with resources, and knowing that our communities deserve abundance.

\$1,000,000+
in scholarships won

4800+
college acceptances

61.3%
accepted into their
TOP 3 COLLEGES

3000+
students supported

911x
multiple on
investment

1000+
job/internship
applications

\$18k+
in free resume
support

\$1M+ in free
essay
support

▲ Malachi Williams, director of operations, at a college & career event representing Scholarship Junkies.



CASH

We have raised and deployed \$382 million in cash assistance and are working on the next billion.

How We Became Scholar Fund

In March 2020, when the COVID-19 pandemic hit our state, the **Washington Dream Coalition (WDC)**, a grassroots group of undocumented and formerly undocumented immigrants started to see their parents and family members lose hours at work, being laid off, put into dangerous situations, and having their livelihoods torn away suddenly. It became clear to the WDC leaders—Guillermo Mogollan, Daniela Murguía, Alejandra Pérez, Larissa Reza, and Paúl Quiñonez Figueroa—that undocumented communities were some of the most deeply impacted and the least protected. They mobilized quickly and in late March of 2020, they created the COVID-19 Relief Fund for Undocumented Individuals in Washington State. They turned to someone in the community who they knew would have the technological, financial, and organizational expertise to help them deploy this money quickly and securely: David Coven and Scholarship Junkies.

Scholarship Junkies provided technical administrative infrastructure that made a huge difference. But most importantly, WDC knew they could trust them as a team that had long proven they were committed to taking action for equity and justice. Within weeks, over 19,000 undocumented people in the state applied for the one-time fund, requesting a total of over \$16.6 million in aid. Alongside SJ and the support of the larger community, WDC raised more than \$7.1 million in 6 months from over 3,400 donors—to date, it's still the largest grassroots-led, undocumented-specific fund in the United States.

Later that year, modeled after the WDC's grassroots relief fund, there was a push from over 400 community organizations to create a state-funded program. Throughout the fund distribution and advocacy process, David and the team realized the gap that they had filled. They had responded because there was community need, hiring community members representing those they served to support the fund applications and building capacity in tech and community engagement, and they found that they had become an expanded organization. **Scholar Fund's** story of growth is not about enterprise and profit, but about being what the community needs us to be.

Throughout 2021, Scholar Fund and WDC built on their successes through a community research and storytelling process—speaking to undocumented people across the state, gathering their stories, and putting together narrative and advocacy tools. They developed a report that drove new policy recommendations, particularly advocating for unemployment insurance and healthcare insurance for undocumented individuals in Washington state, to create long-term systemic centered change based on the needs of the undocumented community in Washington state.



READ THE REPORT:

[www.washingtondreamcoalition.org/
community-provides](http://www.washingtondreamcoalition.org/community-provides)

WDC Relief Fund

\$7,100,000

6,200

19,500

Recipients

Applicants

Seattle Disaster Relief Fund

\$8,000,000

3,705

34,000

Recipients

Applicants

WIRF 1

\$62,500,000

59,203

94,412

Recipients

Applicants

WIRF 2

\$65,000,000

61,750

66,000

Recipients

Applicants

Seattle Relief Fund

\$25,000,000

12,300

63,672

Recipients

Applicants

King County Relief Fund

\$25,000,000

8,000

19,754

Recipients

Applicants

King County Immigration Fee Program

\$25,000,000

1,359

2,200

Recipients

Applicants

We know that direct cash assistance is the most effective way to change outcomes for people.

Scholar Fund is on a mission to connect community needs to opportunity and resources. We leverage our experience in serving nearly 200,000 recipients to build equitable systems of support. Each of our programs is focused on serving those in greatest need. We believe there is an abundance of expertise and awareness in communities of need and that our role is to support an institutional infusion of access, support, and empowerment to support equitable outcomes. Below are examples of cash delivery programs we have administered in the past and their impacts.

SEATTLE RELIEF FUND

The Seattle Relief Fund was \$25 million of funding for direct cash assistance to Seattle's most vulnerable low-income residents and their households who were impacted by the COVID-19 crisis.

THE SEATTLE RELIEF FUND WAS A GIFT THAT HELPED ME TO CONTINUE TO CLEAN UP MY LIFE AND TO KEEP MYSELF FOCUSED ON MY DREAMS!

I am really so grateful for your program and allowing me to participate! Organizations like yours that come across as something different and more directly personal, are so attractive and creative. All of my interactions with Scholar Fund have been positive!"

-Daniel, Seattle Relief Fund recipient



SMALL BUSINESS STABILIZATION FUND

The **Seattle Office of Economic Development** put forth \$2.5 million in direct cash assistance to small businesses with a focus on restaurants and bars. This helped the hospitality industry workers and small businesses who were affected by COVID-19's restrictions. The goal was to help keep business from closing and more workers from losing their jobs. **This fund helped 655 businesses across Seattle.**

VACCINE VERIFICATION FUND

The vaccine verification fund had a total of 400 grants available for small businesses. The primary objective of the fund was for expenses related to the required implementations of public health during the COVID-19 pandemic. **A total of \$800 thousand dollars were distributed to small businesses.**

WA FAMILY RELIEF FUND

The WA Family Relief Fund was \$5 million in direct support to Washington's most vulnerable low income families with children. This fund had no citizenship and immigration requirements. Families would be eligible for up to \$250 per child in their household. **The goal is to support 20,000 children.**

KING COUNTY RELIEF FUND

The Adult Services Division (ASD) of King County awarded **\$10 million to provide direct financial assistance** to persons who have experienced adverse economic impact caused by COVID-19 and were not eligible for federal COVID-19 related assistance due to their immigration status.

KING COUNTY IMMIGRANT FEE SUPPORT PROGRAM

The King County Immigrant Fee Support program was **\$5 million of help** for King County immigrant residents to apply for documented status and citizenship. Financial support was given for fees associated with the immigration relief process, including filing fees with the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) and Executive Office for Immigration Review (EOIR).

VICTIM COMPENSATION FUND

The goal of the Victim Compensation Fund was to decrease the harm of the criminal legal system. This provides restitution to victims in cases where harm to defendants can be decreased. The prioritization of the fund's focus was on cases from the Seattle Municipal Court, cases where defendants are eligible for Community Court or diversion, and offenses where restitution was not available through other programs. **The \$100,000 fund provided restitution to individuals, small businesses, and small nonprofits.**



We focus on bridging the inequitable gaps in our system by providing financial support so that our communities' needs can be addressed.



Best Starts for Kids Child Care Subsidy

Best Starts for Kids is a King County voter-approved initiative to support every baby born or raised in King County to reach adulthood happy, healthy, safe, and thriving. This represents a historic investment in King County, with about \$24 million each year for five years through 2027. The BSK Child Care Subsidy is focused on supporting approximately 2,000 children per year by expanding equitable access to child care for King County families ineligible for, or not well served by, existing public subsidy programs.

LEARN MORE:

www.bskchildcare.org

“Scholar Fund is a critical partner as we build and grow a regional child care subsidy system for King County families. The collaborative process to identify the gaps that families experience, to prioritize equitable access, and to develop strategies to better reach and serve families has been dynamic, flexible, and centered in a commitment to valuing each applicant's experience. In fewer than six months, this program has already had a real impact:

MORE THAN 1,000 KIDS AND THEIR FAMILIES HAVE RECEIVED CHILD CARE SUPPORT TOTALING ABOUT \$3.4 MILLION.

Scholar Fund is designing a system where families can access resources in their preferred language and get help completing their application in real time, whether they have straightforward questions or need in-depth case management support. To best support families, the subsidy program is a collaboration between King County and five other organizations including Scholar Fund. Working with and facilitating a network of partners can be complex, but

SCHOLAR FUND'S DEDICATION TO THE APPROACH WILL ULTIMATELY ENSURE FAMILIES CAN ACCESS THE SUBSIDY PROGRAM IN THE WAY THAT BEST MEETS THEIR NEEDS.”

KATIE KAISER

King County Best Starts for Kids

Scholar Fund's **engineering team** gives us the capacity to put our values into practice. We draw on experience from across the software industry to weave accessibility and equity into the digital fabric of every program we're a part of. In the past three years, our team has reviewed hundreds of thousands of relief funding applications and stopped over \$9 million worth of fraudulent activity (including 5,000+ fraudulent applications worth \$8 million for the Seattle Relief Fund and close to \$1.4 million for the King County funds). We integrate custom anti-fraud features at every level of Scholar Fund's tech infrastructure, meaning more money where it belongs: in the hands of the individuals and communities we serve. In addition, we are now partnering with expert vendors like Plaid in combination with our proprietary capabilities to stay ahead of sophisticated fraud threats in an ever-evolving landscape.



COMMUNITY

We connect communities with what is needed to live and thrive.

FISCAL SPONSORSHIP

Scholar Fund's fiscal sponsorship program—through which we provide legal and tax-exempt nonprofit status to grassroots groups, community projects, or emerging nonprofits—is a tool for communities to build power and redistribute resources. We've refined our lessons in technology and administration to create playbooks for other nonprofits and projects to scale. We particularly sponsor organizations and projects that are: led by Black and other people of color, explicitly address racial and social justice, and demonstrate a systemic lens. Scholar Fund has supported 5 fiscal sponsees:

- **Washington Dream Coalition.**
The first and largest undocumented immigrant-led grassroots organization in Washington State.
- **Community Fund for Black Bar Applicants.**
A project on a mission to provide at least \$500 to 100 Black bar exam applicants across the nation.
- **Southwest WA LULAC Council 47013.**
SWWA LULAC works hard to deliver the mission of advancing the economic condition, educational attainment, political influence, housing, health and civil rights of the Latin American population in the SW region.
- **Clark County Latino Youth Leadership Conference.**
Their mission is to motivate youth to pursue a higher education or technical careers, seek opportunities, and engage in positive behaviors.
- **Vancouver NAACP Branch 1139-B.**
Their mission is to fight disparate policing, health care disparities, employment discrimination, unfair housing practices, education inequalities, and racialized vigilantism.

COMMUNITY CASH CLUB

The Scholar Fund team recognizes the vital and liberatory work that mutual aid and grassroots groups do for our communities. We believe in the power of donating directly to on-the-ground work—and we know that systems are stacked against the funding of this work. Through our Community Cash Club, we partner with grassroots groups every month to spotlight their work and serve as a cash conduit so donations towards them can be tax-deductible and eligible for workplace matching funds.

JOIN THE CLUB:

www.scholarfundwa.org/community-cash-club

CULTURAL LEADERSHIP FELLOWSHIP

Scholar Fund's annual Cultural Leadership Fellowship supports undocumented leaders with Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) to travel abroad through advance parole, in addition to a domestic travel program for those without DACA. Through this culturally-sustaining education program, fellows engage in experiential leadership opportunities, learn from community experiences rooted in cultural justice, and contribute to a more equitable future.

LEARN MORE:

www.culturalleadershipfellowship.org





A STORY FROM

OCTAVIA L. CARSON, ESQ.

founder of the Community Fund for Black Bar Applicants

“

Having Scholar Fund as our fiscal sponsor has been an amazing opportunity from the beginning. It truly helped the Community Fund for Black Bar Applicants capitalize on the influx of support we were receiving from donors by providing us with the administrative infrastructure that we did not have as a newly established organization.

I remember the weekend that I started the Black Bar Applicant Fund. The week before, I was sharing stories of applicants in need during the pandemic and the history of the racist impact of the bar exam over Twitter. People reached out wanting to help financially and at first I was turning them away because I didn't have a vehicle to receive funds and give them to applicants. That's when I decided to create the Black Bar Applicant Fund. Immediately we received hundreds of applications and thousands of donations. I started looking for a fiscal sponsor to help us manage the Fund and David from Scholar Fund reached out to me. It's been history since then.

Once, an applicant reached out to us when they were coming up against a payment deadline for their bar exam application. They had just had a baby and were trying everything in their power to obtain funds to take the exam but they continued to miss the deadline and accrued late fees. Scholar Fund helped us to ensure that the student's fees were covered so that they could go forward with taking the bar exam. This was an opportunity that I'm sure impacted not only that applicant directly but future generations of their family.

I have received feedback from lawyers and law students that the Black Bar Applicant Fund has been a much-needed organization in the legal field to bridge the gap for Black bar applicants who have less resources but are equally deserving of passing the bar exam to obtain their license. So far we have helped more than 200 applicants in the first two years!



“The Communities of Opportunity partnership with Scholar Fund and Washington Dream Coalition was seamless. The Scholar Fund communicated regularly, and managed funds in a way that made them available to WDC, while at the same time stewarding public funds responsibly. This partnership allowed WDC to work to elevate the voices of the undocumented community in a way that was built in trust and security. After conducting fiscal monitoring,

IT BECAME CLEAR THAT SCHOLAR FUND COULD BE A GREAT RESOURCE TO OTHER COMMUNITY GROUPS WHO WERE WORKING WITH OR AS FISCAL SPONSORS.

As a result, COO worked with David and Alejandra to put together a learning opportunity through Communities of Opportunities Learning Community work. This event was much needed as it was well attended and appreciated by many. 34 organizations registered to attend and the video of the event has been viewed 124 times since being hosted on the COO Learning Community site. The session is still referenced regularly when working with groups who may need fiscal sponsorship, or who are sponsors themselves. Scholar Fund has proven to be a leader in the area of fiscal sponsorship and continues to be a partner we look to for investment in community groups who need support.”

ROBIN HAGUEWOOD

Communities of Opportunity

We drive community change by leveraging the voices of the people who live it.

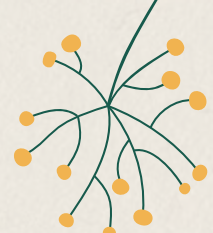
Because we know that the communities that we serve are often left out of structures of power, we connect everything we do to systems-level change. Community is at the core of Scholar Fund and we continuously engage in local and state efforts that advocate for real change in the state of Washington and beyond. We partner with organizations at the root of the cause and advocate for policies and change that uplift our communities.

With an incredible coalition of partners, Scholar Fund contributed to the efforts for the **Washington COVID-19 Immigrant Relief Fund** by advocating for the \$340 million fund, as well as leading program design, implementation of security, and management across teams and partners. Meanwhile, we are also part of a coalition with the Washington Immigrant Solidarity Network that works on advocacy and policy change, including an ongoing campaign for **Unemployment Insurance and Health Equity for Excluded Immigrants.**

Join the Scholar Fund mailing list to stay engaged with announcements on our projects, funds, fellowships, and partnerships!

SIGN UP:
bit.ly/scholarfundnews





OUR JOURNEY CONTINUES ONWARD

OUR ACCOMPLISHMENTS

have led us to continue evolving and growing into an organization that centers the wellness of people in our community.

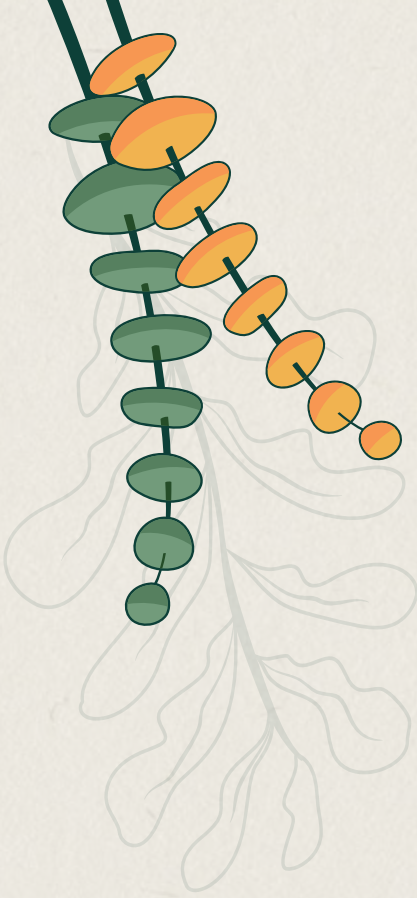
OUR COMMITMENTS

are to let others lead and we follow by leveraging the voices of those most impacted.

OUR DREAMS

for the future are to expand across the nation. We want to connect more people to resources and opportunities.





THANK YOU

SCHOLAR FUND BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Princess Shareef, Board Chair
Eileen Robinson, Secretary
Ana Mari Cauce, Member

SCHOLAR FUND ADVISORY BOARD

Darrell Powell
Nate Miles
George Zeno
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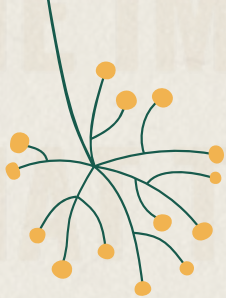
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SPECIAL THANKS TO

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Often programs attempting to offer service to those in need offer an emotional void and bureaucratic wall.

**THE IMPACT OF OUR WORK IS THAT THE
VOICE, CONCERNS, AND COMPASSION OF EACH
COMMUNITY IS CENTERED."**

-ADAM BURDEN

"I came from an environment where they would say we were "family," but it never felt that way.

**WITH SCHOLAR FUND, I FEEL THE
SENSE OF SOMEONE HAVING MY BACK.**

Someone is always there to lift me up
and keep the team on track."

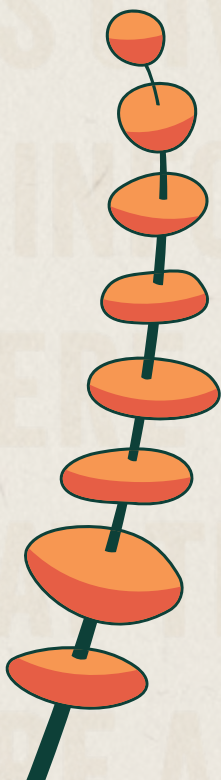
-STEVEN MORALES



"The government has focused too long on upholding white supremacy in this country and under-representing minorities.

**SCHOLAR FUND HAS GIVEN ME THE OPPORTUNITY TO
INFORM MY COMMUNITY THAT THERE IS HELP OUT THERE
AND THAT THERE ARE PEOPLE WHO CARE ABOUT THEM."**

-ANA HERNANDEZ





www.scholarfundwa.org

[@scholarfundwa](https://www.instagram.com/scholarfundwa)



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