

## Scholarship America celebrates 60 years of making students' dreams possible

MINNEAPOLIS (Nov. 14, 2018) -- 2018 marks 60 years of [Scholarship America](http://ScholarshipAmerica.org) making the dream of college possible for students. [Since 1958](http://ScholarshipAmerica.org), Scholarship America, the nation's largest non-profit, private-sector scholarship organization, has touched the lives of over 2.4 million students by distributing more than \$4 billion in scholarships and other assistance.

"We are invested in student success," said Robert C. Ballard, president and CEO. "We've witnessed firsthand the remarkable potential of students, and believe investing in their educational success is the single greatest action we can take to help them achieve their full promise."

Scholarship America began with a simple but profound idea—community-supported scholarships. By asking everyone to contribute a dollar, Dr. Irving Fradkin raised over \$4,000, enough to give four-year renewable scholarships to 24 graduating seniors in 1958. His idea has grown to nearly 500 volunteer-run Dollars for Scholars chapters under the Scholarship America umbrella today.

By the mid-seventies, companies began asking Scholarship America to work with them in managing their scholarship programs. A Minneapolis-based corporation, The Toro Compa [Grab your reader's attention with a great quote from the document or use this space to emphasize a key point. To place this text box anywhere on the page, just drag it.]

ny, was Scholarship America's first corporate partner. Scholarship America now works with nearly 1,400 corporate, foundation and individual partners, including over 100 Fortune 500 companies. Together with those partners and Dollars for Scholars affiliates, some \$225 million is distributed to over 96,000 students annually.

"The variety of scholarships is amazing," said Ballard. "There are scholarships for everyone from childhood cancer survivors and students with disabilities, to veterans, children of military families, teachers, aspiring chefs and realtors, and those interested in golf management. I've barely scratched the surface of what's available for today's very diverse students.

"But Scholarship America's support doesn't stop at scholarships," Ballard continued. "We help students who are at risk of dropping out of college due to financial struggles with emergency aid. We help those who lost loved ones on 9/11 and those who've lost homes in natural disasters. And we offer coaching and mentoring for students who are struggling. We know many students need additional help and we are solidly focused on helping them succeed."

### The Dream Award

Journalist Katie Couric donated the proceeds from the sale of her book, *The Best Advice I Ever Got: Lessons from Extraordinary Lives* to Scholarship America, launching the [Dream Award](http://ScholarshipAmerica.org) in 2014 -- a renewable scholarship program for students with financial need. These remarkable students have overcome significant barriers to successfully start their education, but need ongoing scholarship support



***Robert C. Ballard, president and CEO for Scholarship America, reflects on 60 years of making the dream of college possible for students. Photo Credit: Kim Jackson.***

to achieve their degrees. To date, 64 students have received over \$1 million in Dream Awards averaging \$10,000 to help them stay in school and complete their education.

Scholarship America celebrates Dream Award recipients at its annual [Dreams to Success](#) dinner in May. The event brings together passionate supporters of education from across the country. “A Meeting of Great Minds,” Scholarship America’s Partner Summit, takes place during the day, with scholarship and education partners sharing best practices, learning from one another and networking.

### **Terrorist attacks and natural disasters call for unique responses**

Within days of the September 11, 2001 terrorist attacks, Scholarship America helped establish the Families of Freedom Scholarship Fund to provide education assistance to family members of those killed or permanently disabled. To date, Families of Freedom has distributed over \$151 million to 3,500 students, with another 2,500 students to be served before the fund sunsets in 2030.

Natural disasters can also be devastating. In 2005, Scholarship America responded to Hurricane Katrina by establishing a National Disaster Relief Fund to help students whose lives were turned upside down stay in school and continue their education. The Fund continues today, most recently helping students impacted by Hurricane Harvey.

### **Committed to student success**

Students have changed significantly over the past six decades. Nearly half of today’s diverse college students are 25 years of age or older. Some are attending college for the first time while others may be returning to advance their career or re-train for a new opportunity. Many students hold full-time jobs and a substantial proportion are parents. Others are the first in their families to pursue higher education.

“A high school degree used to be sufficient for many careers,” Ballard noted. “No longer – the majority of jobs today require some sort of additional training, certificate or degree beyond high school. Scholarship America has been helping students achieve their dreams for sixty years, and we are committed to doing so for many more years to come.”