

SCHOLARSHIP

A COLLEGE STUDENT
SUPPORT PROGRAM **PLUS**

Letter of Inquiry for the Achelis and Bodman Foundation January, 2020

I. Executive Summary: 100% college graduation for low-income, first-generation students

For first-generation college students from racial-ethnic minorities and low-income families, college brings complex personal and academic challenges. Research shows that underserved students succeed with key supports: social-emotional and behavioral tools; adults who believe in them; and targeted programs that teach skills for the transition to and through college. Scholarship Plus provides 360-degree support programs and tuition scholarship, to help these students succeed. Our approach equalizes access so that our scholars have the same opportunities as their more-affluent peers. Through 1:1 relationships, teaching social tools, and career support *alongside* a direct contribution to tuition, Plus scholars access the hidden resources they need to succeed. **With this proposal, we seek \$25,000 to expand services and to double the number of students we serve.**

II. Program Overview: College Success and Completion

A successor to the New York Times College Program, Scholarship Plus was founded in 2010 to help underserved students thrive in post secondary education and beyond. We equalize talented students' access to college with a focus on the invisible barriers they face. Our program targets the hidden costs of college: not just tuition, but access to meaningful internships to build a resume and experience; funds for hidden needs such as eyeglasses, laptop repair, and books; mentoring and advocacy to help a student with chronic illness move closer to campus, and to help a student on Medicaid to be released from campus health services fees. Scholarship Plus enlists each student in wraparound career-readiness advising, a guaranteed summer internship, and cohort activities to build the peer support so essential to success for low-income students moving into elite institutions. The PLUS is the heart of the program, and the expansion for which we seek your support.

With an average family income of \$21,342, Scholarship Plus students live far below the poverty line. Our 90 current students and alumni hail from all five NYC boroughs. Over 95% of Scholarship Plus students identify as African-American, Latino, Asian-American, or multi-racial; 92% are the first in their family to graduate from college.

Scholarship Plus empowers scholars to excel and graduate on time, through wraparound supports and modest tuition support. As a summer, after school, expanded-learning cohort, our program begins its impact on students their senior year, and follows them through young adulthood. To date, 100% of SPlus scholars have completed 4-year college or university in four years. In addition, 70% of alumni are enrolled in or applying to prestigious graduate programs, nearly *double* the national average for low-income students.

The "Plus" in Scholarship Plus *is the crucial, differentiating component for these bright, underserved post-secondary students.* Well-aligned with key Achelis and Bodman Foundation goals, our 100% successful and uniquely-targeted approach gives them the self-sufficiency to thrive through, and beyond, college.

Over the last decade, our cohort has doubled in size, and we will double again by 2022. To meet an ever-increasing demand to serve more students, we seek \$25,000 from the Achelis and Bodman Foundation to fund expanded advocacy, mentoring, internship, and summer programs.

III. Needs, Goals, and Results

Scholarship Plus gives low-income students research-driven supports: peer learning and social-emotional tools; intensive adult mentoring; and ongoing skill building and learning to bridge knowledge for success in college and university programs (e.g. Economic Costs of Youth Disadvantage, High-Return Opportunities for Change. Washington, DC: Executive Office of the President of the United States, 2015.)

Demand is high. With 250 applicants from underserved populations for only 15 spots in 2020, Scholarship Plus and its board have pledged to expand incoming cohorts to 20 students by 2022 (from 10 per cohort in 2018). Such a large capacity increase requires resources to ensure that more deserving students get this important boost.

We request funds from the Achelis and Bodman Foundation to expand our programs:

1. Recruit and support 10 more mentors to provide 5 hours/month of 1:1 contact with scholars via in-person meetings, phone calls, and email/text.
2. Identify, recruit, and enlist 3 more internship partners to provide year-long/summer-long internship work opportunities for scholars starting in Summer 2020.
3. Add two workforce/career success trainings to give scholars tools for career and post-graduation success.
4. Expand staff support for 10-12 additional scholars (3-4 new from each incoming cohort, 2019, 2020, 2021) in planned and as-needed advocacy, problem-solving, job placement, and more.

Program Activity/Impact	Description	Cost
Recruit/Support 10 mentors	Includes paid staff time, mentor trainings, meeting supplies/food, transportation, \$500/mentor.	\$5,000
Internship Partners	Outreach and recruitment costs; contribution to internship overhead/stipend @ \$5K per partnership	\$10,000
Workforce/Career Trainings	3@ \$1,000 each (includes space rental, food, materials, preparation time, delivery, follow-up)	\$3,000
Staff support to 10-12 scholars	5 hours/scholar/month @\$50/hour, for \$2,500/scholar/month	\$36,000
TOTAL Expansion Cost		\$54,000
Requested Achelis-Bodman funds		\$25,000

We welcome this opportunity to partner with the Achelis and Bodman Foundation in support of New York City's underserved youth, and look forward to sharing more information about our programs. Scholarship Plus manages its own budget, staff, and board of advisors, with administrative services and support supplied by Fund for the City of New York, as a Partner Project of FCNY.