

# **Ron Brown Scholar Program evaluation**

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# **Ron Brown Scholar Program evaluation**

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# Summary

The Ron Brown Scholar Program provides academic scholarships, service opportunities, and leadership experiences to exemplary young African Americans. Established in 1996 in honor of the late Secretary of Commerce, the Ron Brown Scholar Program's mission is to accelerate the progress of African Americans into the mainstream of leadership in business, education, government, and a wide spectrum of professions, while instilling a strong dedication to leadership and public service. The Ron Brown Scholar Program provides financial assistance as well as an extensive support network intended to mentor, nurture, and motivate students to flourish in college and beyond. The Program was originally founded and privately funded by the CAP Charitable Foundation with additional support from partner organizations and individual donors. On April 9<sup>th</sup> 2009, the Ron Brown Scholar Fund received an advance ruling by the IRS which allows it to operate as a **public 501(c)3 charity**.

The Ron Brown Scholar Program began awarding 20 college scholarships per year to outstanding African American students in 1997. By 2008, the Program had awarded 241 scholarships of \$40,000 each (\$10,000 per year) to help cover recipients' educational expenses at a four-year college or university of the recipient's choice. African American high school students are selected for the scholarship based on their academic achievement, leadership ability, communication skills, school and community involvement, and financial need. Scholarship recipients come from a variety of family, community, and socio-economic backgrounds. Many had overcome difficult circumstances and challenging conditions to achieve remarkable success before they were selected for the Ron Brown scholarship.

The Ron Brown Scholar Program contracted with Wilder Research in November 2008 to conduct an independent evaluation of the Program. The evaluation is designed to assess the following:

- Activities and accomplishments of Ron Brown Scholars
- Influence and impact of the Program on the Scholars' progress to date
- Effectiveness of Program elements and ideas for improvement

The primary method used in the evaluation was a web-based survey of current and alumni Ron Brown Scholars. The evaluation also drew on information about the Scholars from Program records.

## ***Results***

### **Activities and accomplishments of Ron Brown Scholars**

The accomplishments and activities of Ron Brown Scholars to date are summarized briefly below. Keep in mind that this includes Scholars at different stages of their educational and occupational careers – from those in the first year of their undergraduate education to those who completed their undergraduate degree eight years ago.

#### *Undergraduate college experience*

Most Scholars attended top colleges and universities with the majority attending Ivy League institutions. Seven in 10 Scholars said the Ron Brown scholarship enabled them to attend their first-choice college. They most frequently majored in the social sciences, biological sciences, engineering, and area or ethnic studies.

#### *Pre-professional internships and other such opportunities*

Most Ron Brown Scholars have had pre-professional internships or similar experiences, many with help from the Program in identifying the opportunity or providing financial assistance. Scholars found these experiences helpful in developing their skill set as well as in identifying future goals and interests.

#### *Opportunity to participate in programs abroad*

Over half of Ron Brown Scholars studied, served, or traveled abroad while in college or shortly thereafter. The Program helped to make this possible for over half of these Scholars by providing financial assistance. These opportunities helped Scholars in their personal and career development by broadening their horizons and contributing to their future plans, deepening their understanding of other cultures, and increasing their skills.

#### *Community service work*

Eight in 10 Scholars reported doing community service work in the past year, engaging in a variety of service activities for many different organizations. The amount of time Scholars devoted to community service varied widely with about half of the Scholars estimating that they spent one hour or more per week on such activities in the past year.

#### *Leadership activities*

Among current Scholars, 7 in 10 reported that they had held a leadership position on campus and just over one-quarter reported that they had held a leadership position off campus. Among alumni Scholars, almost two-thirds indicated that they had held a



leadership position in the past year in graduate/professional school, at work, or in their community. Leadership accomplishments mentioned by Scholars included founding an organization or group, organizing an event, and receiving an award for their work.

### *Graduate or professional school education*

Almost all Scholars complete their undergraduate education in four years, and the majority go on to graduate or professional school at outstanding universities. Among those who completed their undergraduate education five or more years ago (scholarship award cohort years 1997-2000), 59 percent had obtained an advanced degree and another 15 percent were attending or did attend graduate or professional school but had not obtained a degree yet. Master's degrees were the most frequently obtained degrees, followed by professional degrees in law and medicine.

### *Employment*

Eight in 10 employed alumni Scholars have positions categorized as managerial or professional specialty occupations. This includes such positions as executive, administrator, manager, consultant, analyst, investment banker, writer, doctor, teacher, lawyer, engineer, and scientist. Besides their main occupation, about 4 in 10 alumni Scholars reported that they are pursuing other business ventures or projects.

## **Influence and impact of the Program on the Scholars' progress to date**

Ron Brown Scholars were very enthusiastic about the Program. They saw the Program as having a major positive impact, many describing it as life-changing.

### *Support system for Scholars*

The comments of Scholars indicated that while the scholarship funds themselves were critical, becoming part of the Ron Brown Scholar Program community or family – a supportive network of Scholars, staff, friends, and partners of the Program – was equally important. Through access to this community, Scholars were able to develop close ties, sometimes for the first time, with other young, talented, and ambitious African Americans like themselves. More broadly, Scholars felt the support, guidance, opportunities, and long-term friendship provided by members of this community had a large impact on their own personal and professional development and success, helping to shape and sometimes alter the trajectory of their lives. In short, this community is a unique, “value-added” component that sets the Ron Brown Scholar Program apart from other scholarship programs.

### *Program influences*

The extensive comments of Scholars provided as part of the survey indicate that the support system just described, plus other Program elements, had a major influence on Scholars' goals and aspirations, motivation, commitment to community service, educational opportunities, and pre-professional and career opportunities, as described below.

- *Goals and aspirations.* The Program helped shape Scholars' educational and career goals and encouraged them to set their sights high for what they could accomplish, partly through exposure to other successful African Americans with whom they could identify (e.g., alumni Scholars and friends of the Program).
- *Inspiration and motivation.* Similarly, the successes of others like them in the Ron Brown Scholar community, and the network of support available to them, inspired Scholars to set aside their doubts and vigorously pursue their goals and dreams.
- *Commitment to community service.* The legacy of Ron Brown and the corresponding emphasis of the Program on community service reinforced service values among the Scholars. Their comments indicated that it fostered a desire to serve others, a sense of responsibility ("to whom much is given, much is expected"), and a heightened awareness of inequality that requires an ethical or just response.
- *Educational opportunities.* The Ron Brown scholarship and other financial assistance provided by the Program opened up educational opportunities for Scholars that they otherwise would likely not have had.
- *Pre-professional and career opportunities.* Through the Program, Scholars gained access to valuable experiences and opportunities (internships, study abroad, contacts with key people, and job leads) that contributed to their personal growth and career development.

### **Effectiveness of Program elements and ideas for improvement**

#### *Program staff*

Scholars had high praise for the Program staff, appreciating their extraordinary attention and dedication to the Scholars' success and well-being. The staff maintained regular contact with Scholars and were very accessible to them. Scholars reported that staff were especially helpful to them in obtaining internship opportunities; providing academic and career guidance and support; linking them with professionals, mentors, and each other; and providing guidance and support on personal matters as well.

Some Scholars offered suggestions on how staff might further develop or improve the Program. The most frequent suggestions were creating an online database and networking site, doing more to facilitate the mentoring of Scholars, and providing more frequent check-ins and updates to Scholars. Steps have been taken to respond to these suggestions with the creation of RBSnet, a new online service. Several Scholars also suggested improvements in the process of disbursing scholarship funds.

#### *Scholars' relationships and mentoring*

Most Scholars have formed close relationships with multiple other Scholars and keep in regular contact with them. Furthermore, most Scholars have been mentored informally by another Scholar or friend of the Program (in addition to being mentored by Program staff). Scholars highly value this mentoring and indicated that they received help in a variety of areas including career planning, internships, graduate/professional school decisions, and leadership opportunities.

Scholars were asked if they had suggestions for improving mentoring or strengthening connections among Scholars. Some Scholars expressed a desire for a more formal mentoring system with clearer expectations and greater accountability. Other Scholars wanted more Program-sponsored events that provide opportunities to connect and network with each other.

#### *Program events including the triennial leadership conference*

Most current and alumni Scholars attend Program events at least once per year. Over 80 percent of current Scholars and about half of the alumni Scholars attended the 2008 Triennial Leadership Conference. Scholars find these events valuable, especially as opportunities to connect and network with other Scholars and members of the Ron Brown Scholar Program community, gain inspiration, and learn about new topics and initiatives.

When asked for suggestions, many Scholars recommended having fewer speakers at the triennial leadership conference and more time for interacting and networking, and for discussion sessions. Some Scholars also suggested making the conference more appealing to the interests of alumni Scholars by diversifying programming or inviting alumni Scholars to present or lead sessions.

#### *Ron Brown Scholar Alumni Association*

Most alumni Scholars have attended Alumni Association meetings. They participate in the Association to stay connected with fellow alumni, mentor other Scholars, support philanthropic and social causes, and give back to the Program.

### *Community Service Foundation*

Scholars were asked how the newly-formed Community Service Foundation might be further developed and made more effective. They recommended that it increase its visibility, encourage and facilitate collaboration on community service projects, give more assistance in service project design, strengthen the accountability system for funded projects, and provided more information about funded projects to Scholars.

## ***Potential areas for further Program development***

Scholars' comments suggest several areas for Program improvement or further development as described briefly below. Program leaders may want to consider these ideas as the Program continues to grow and adapt to meet Scholars' changing needs.

### *Increasing the capacity to meet Scholars' needs*

Some Scholars mentioned that the staff may be over-extending themselves when it comes to meeting Scholars' needs. As the Program continues to grow, providing a high level of service to all Scholars is quickly becoming an issue of concern. Program staff will likely need to prioritize and delegate responsibilities to members of the Program community or hire additional staff in the near future.

### *Strengthening communications and connections*

Some Scholars indicated a desire for more communication and contact from the Program; they want more email check-ins and updates, in-person visits, events, and online opportunities to search for people and pre-professional experiences. A number of Scholars indicated a desire to feel more connected to the Program and for more opportunities for connecting and networking with each other. Some suggested that further communication and contact from the Program and more Program-sponsored events with opportunities to network would be helpful in this regard.

### *Addressing alumni-specific needs*

The number of alumni Scholars is currently twice that of current Scholars, and this group will only continue to grow. To foster life-long connections with Scholars, the Program may have to give more attention to alumni Scholars' unique and varying needs in comparison to those of current Scholars. The Program staff and the Alumni Association might work together to address these issues.

### *Developing a more structured mentoring component*

Some Scholars suggested that the Program develop a more formal or structured mentoring component. These Scholars' comments indicate that they would like a stronger mentoring framework; clearer and higher mentor-mentee expectations; and options regarding mentoring formats. Other Scholars suggested that the Program sponsor formal mentor-mentee events; provide inspirational stories or new ideas about mentoring; or emulate the Big Brothers Big Sisters model.

### *Expanding community service*

Most Scholars expressed a belief in the importance of and an interest in doing community service work. However, one in five Scholars reported that they had not done any community service in the past 12 months, likely falling short of Program expectations. The newly-created Community Service Foundation has the potential to serve as a stepping stone between Scholars' beliefs and their actual engagement in service activities. Scholars indicated that in addition to funding, they would like the Foundation to facilitate Scholar collaboration and give more assistance in designing service projects.

### *Ensuring inclusivity*

While not a major theme in any area, there seems to be an underlying current regarding the inclusivity of the Program. A small group of Scholars perceives that they are not receiving the same level of services or opportunities as the mainstream group. This group includes Scholars whose undergraduate college or university, geographic residence, field of study or work, or political affiliation may not be the Ron Brown Scholar Program norm. The Program should be aware of these concerns and continue to reach out to all Scholars.

# Introduction

The Ron Brown Scholar Program provides academic scholarships, service opportunities, and leadership experiences to exemplary young African Americans. Established in 1996, the Program honors the legacy of Ronald H. Brown, who was the first African American appointed to the Cabinet post of Secretary of Commerce. During his life, Ron Brown served in the U.S. Army, worked as a welfare caseworker and for the Urban League, and was partner at a prestigious law firm. At the time of his death, he was a global figure known and respected for his leadership, intelligence, and commitment to public service. Inspired by Ron Brown's life work, the Program's mission is to accelerate the progress of African Americans into the mainstream of leadership in business, education, government and a wide spectrum of professions, while instilling a strong dedication to leadership and public service. The Ron Brown Scholar Program provides financial assistance as well as an extensive support network intended to mentor, nurture, and motivate students to flourish in college and beyond. The Program was originally founded and privately funded by the CAP Charitable Foundation with additional support from partner organizations and individual donors. On April 9th 2009, the Ron Brown Scholar Fund received an advance ruling by the IRS which allows it to operate as a **public 501(c)3 charity**.

The Ron Brown Scholar Program contracted with Wilder Research in November 2008 to conduct an independent evaluation of the Program. The evaluation is designed to assess the activities and accomplishments of Ron Brown Scholars, the role of the Program in the Scholars' progress to date, and the effectiveness of the various Program elements. The primary method used in the evaluation was a survey of current and alumni Ron Brown Scholars. The evaluation also drew on information about the Scholars from Program records. This report describes the results of the evaluation and their possible implications.

## *Program description*

### **Scholarship applicants and recipients**

The Ron Brown Scholar Program began awarding 20 college scholarships per year to outstanding African American students in 1997. By 2008, the Program had awarded 241 scholarships (21 scholarships were awarded one year). The scholarship provides \$40,000 (\$10,000 per year) to help cover recipients' educational expenses at any four-year college or university of their choice. African American high school students are selected for the scholarship based on their academic achievement, leadership ability, communication skills, school and community involvement, and financial need. The Program is highly selective. Through 2008, the Program had received approximately 74,000 applications, an average of over 6,000 applications per year for the 20 scholarships awarded. In 2009,

applications soared to over 10,000 although only 12 scholarships could be awarded due to a substantial drop in the Program's endowment. Applications have come from all 50 states and some foreign countries. Applications are especially high from eastern seaboard states, with Texas, California, and Illinois also having large numbers of applicants. Career interests of applicants cover a wide spectrum from the humanities to business to medicine, engineering, law and government.

Scholarship recipients come from a variety of family, community, and socio-economic backgrounds. Many have overcome difficult circumstances and challenging conditions to achieve remarkable success before they were selected for the Ron Brown scholarship. These circumstances and conditions include poverty, homelessness, dangerous neighborhoods or living situations, severe family problems, and racism. Some of their stories are told by the Scholars themselves in an inspirational book available from the Program, entitled *I Have Risen: Essays by African-American Youth*. Scholarship recipients to date have come from 37 states and the District of Columbia, with the largest numbers coming from California, New York, and Florida (24 or more). The scholarship recipients are quite evenly divided between women (52%) and men (48%).

### **Producing future leaders**

As indicated, the mission of the Ron Brown Scholar Program is to be a major force in producing the nation's next generation of African American leaders. However, the exceptional young men and women who become Ron Brown Scholars come from backgrounds that generally don't offer the opportunities and resources usually associated with the rise to positions of significant leadership in American society. That is, they have the intellect and drive to achieve great things but likely lack access to the resources, opportunities, experiences, and supports needed to rise to leadership in their chosen fields. The Ron Brown Scholar Program seeks to provide these missing ingredients so that the Scholars might realize their full potential. These ingredients, depending on the Scholar, may include:

- Financial assistance to enable attendance at the best colleges and universities and participation in other important related experiences (e.g., study abroad)
- A support system to provide guidance and mentoring in working through personal, educational, and career issues and decisions
- Exposure to a wide array of career and leadership possibilities to broaden horizons and encourage high aspirations
- Inspiration to pursue ambitious goals, gained through such experiences as getting to know successful leaders who came from backgrounds similar to their own

- Access to opportunities for pre-professional growth experiences (e.g. internships) and entry into career positions
- Reinforcement of key values (excellence, community service, leadership)

### **Program elements**

The Ron Brown Scholar Program strives to provide these ingredients through various Program elements and activities briefly described below.

- *Scholarship funds.* Scholars are awarded a total of \$40,000 over four years to fund undergraduate education at the college or university of their choice. Scholars may pursue any discipline of study.
- *Program staff.* Staff of the Program strive to create a strong family bond among Scholars and themselves by offering long-term support, opportunities, and friendship. Staff are able to provide some additional financial assistance to Scholars to enable them to pursue development opportunities such as studying abroad.
- *Friends of Ron Brown Scholars.* These are respected leaders in their field who are dedicated to supporting Ron Brown Scholars through mentoring; professional and personal development; and internship and career opportunities.
- *Ron Brown Scholar Alumni Association.* Created in 2001, the Association sustains and furthers lifelong connections among Ron Brown Scholars as well as supports Scholars in their pursuit of excellence, leadership, and service.
- *Ron Brown Scholar Community Service Foundation.* Started in 2008, the Foundation awards small grants to Ron Brown Scholars who have innovative and visionary solutions to problems of social importance. Scholars are encouraged to collaborate and there are no restrictions with regard to type or location of service projects.
- *Triennial Leadership Conference.* This triennial event is an opportunity for current and alumni Scholars, Program staff, friends, and partners of the Program to connect, network, learn, and be inspired by each other.
- *Ongoing events and communication.* The Program sponsors annual family reunions; smaller, more regular events, meetings, and dinners for Scholars from similar locations or with similar interests; and regular newsletters and email updates.

In addition, RBSnet was recently launched. It is a social and professional networking site where Ron Brown Scholars, staff, and friends of the Program can learn more about each other, share ideas, and build relationships.



## ***Evaluation questions***

The evaluation addressed the following questions:

1. How are Ron Brown Scholars faring and what have they accomplished to date?

This includes gathering information on such areas as the following: choice of college and major; pre-professional internships, summer jobs, or volunteer opportunities; study abroad; community service; leadership activities; graduate and professional school; and early career progress.

2. What impact does the Ron Brown Scholar Program have on recipients? To what degree has the Program contributed to recipients' opportunities, progress, and accomplishments to date?

That is, what was the role of the Program in the opportunities, activities, and accomplishments listed under question 1? In addition, information is gathered on the network of relationships and support the Program offers to Scholars.

3. How effective are different elements of the Ron Brown Scholar Program?

Information is gathered on Scholars' perceptions and participation in the various Program elements described above, and their ratings of their helpfulness and significance.

4. What are the implications of the evaluation results for the Program?

That is, what issues do the results reveal for consideration and potential action in further developing the Program?

## ***Evaluation methods***

A survey of all Ron Brown Scholars, both current and alumni Scholars, was conducted via the Internet over about a six-week period from early February to mid-March 2009. Program staff provided contact information on the 241 Scholars as well as other information such as college attended, major, and graduation date. Of the 241 Scholars, 221 completed the survey (92%). For current Scholars, 78 of 80 completed the survey (98%), and for alumni Scholars, 143 of 161 completed the survey (89%). This is a very high completion rate, which helps to ensure that the survey results are representative of the views of Ron Brown Scholars. Program staff helped to achieve the high completion rate through providing up-to-date contact information on the Scholars and encouraging Scholars to complete the survey.

Wilder Research staff developed a draft of the survey questionnaire based on the evaluation questions listed above, a review of Program goals and components, and consultation with Program staff. Program staff and a number of Ron Brown Scholars then reviewed the draft and provided comments and suggestions. These suggestions were taken into account in revising and finalizing the survey. Separate versions of the survey were developed for current Scholars and alumni Scholars, although most of the questions were the same or similar in both versions. The current Scholar survey asked more questions about activities in college, while the alumni Scholar survey asked more questions about graduate school and jobs/career. The survey questions for both versions are provided in the Appendix.

# Survey results

This section presents an overview of Scholars' careers from the time they are selected to the Ron Brown Scholar Program to their current educational or occupational status highlighting major events and accomplishments and the role of the Program in each. Subsections include early success factors, undergraduate college experience, pre-professional opportunities, experiences abroad, community service, leadership, graduate or professional school, employment and other ventures, and current motivating factors. Then, Scholars' ratings of the importance and helpfulness of Program elements are reported. This is followed by more in-depth information on Scholars' participation in and views about Program elements and activities, including their suggestions for improving them. Finally, Scholars' views on the overall influence of the Program on their lives are reported.

Survey results are presented for all Scholars as well as by Scholar group when there are meaningful differences between groups. The alumni Scholar group includes Scholars from award years 1997-2004 and the current Scholar group includes those from award years 2005-2008. Additionally, the alumni group is divided into earlier alumni classes of 1997-2000 and more recent alumni classes of 2001-2004 for certain measurements. Similarly, the current Scholar group is divided into upperclassmen, comprised of men and women who entered the Program in 2005-2006, as well as underclassmen from award years 2007-2008. Any reference to Scholars in general includes all Scholars.

## ***Factors in Scholars' early success***

***Finding. Scholars identified family, a personal commitment to success, and support and encouragement as three primary contributing factors in their success before being selected to the Program.***

Given the highly selective nature of the Ron Brown Scholar Program, it is expected that each entering class is made up of exceptional individuals. Scholars had overcome severe obstacles and accomplished major triumphs before being selected to the Program. When Scholars were asked to list up to three primary factors that helped them succeed up until the time they became a Ron Brown Scholar, it was clear that the most common response was family (76%). Families served as positive forces in different ways including providing support, love, and encouragement; establishing high expectations; and making sacrifices in the interest of the Scholar.

Scholars' responses were grouped by theme, and other common response themes include a personal commitment to success (46%), and support and encouragement (41%). Scholars generally described their commitment to success with phrases like drive for

excellence, determination to maximize available resources, relentless work ethic, personal ambition, and motivation to succeed. The support and encouragement theme was often used in relation to one's family, but was also used to describe teachers, mentors, and friends more broadly. Teachers, counselors, and coaches were specifically mentioned as primary success factors in one-quarter of responses. Additionally, extracurricular activities and support programs were indicated in nearly one in five responses, followed by a high quality educational environment and faith in God or a higher power (16% each). Additional themes can be found in the Appendix and are similar across Scholar groups (Figure A1).

Selected responses regarding factors in Scholars' early successes are as follows:

I come from a family that values education as a means of improving one's lot in life and effecting positive change in the community. My parents set very high expectations for me and also set positive examples. I also went to a school that cared about my success.

Strong encouragement of a struggling single mother and my personal will to make it despite negative odds.

1) The support of my mother. 2) Membership on my high school debate team: the other students were very successful and seeing them pursue success was a real motivating force. 3) Personal commitment to success and finding opportunities that would open doors for me to move forward in life.

People who believed in and encouraged me.

1) Desire to improve the economic condition of my family and my community, 2) Supportive school personnel and program leaders that provided valuable information to me throughout my journey to higher education, and 3) God!

A mother who valued education despite our circumstances [and] supportive community services like the Harlem Children's Zone and the Children's Aid Society.

My parents didn't make a lot of money, and as one of seven children, I learned early on how to work hard. My relationship with Christ and my parents' guidance has helped me incredibly.

1) Teachers. 2) A desire to lift myself out of poverty. 3) My interest in learning, obtaining knowledge, and making something out of myself some day.

1) Sacrificing parents. 2) Generous administration at my private high school. 3) Hard work.

Mother, basketball coaches, high school teachers, middle and high school scholarships, [and] personal ambition.

- 1) Extremely supportive family environment. 2) Hard work [and] discipline.
- 3) Exposure to higher education through advanced summer programs.

My mom; the memory of my grandma who told me I could do anything. A desire to not live in the ghetto when I grew up and to give my kids a good life. A desire to affect the world. Seeing the older waitresses at my job in high school and knowing I did not want to be a waitress when I was 60. A belief that God had a purpose for my life. My dad saying it is good to enjoy your job and not just do it because you have to pay bills.

## *Undergraduate college experience*

### **Additional scholarships**

***Finding. Almost all current Scholars are recipients of other scholarships, including highly prestigious, university-based, national, and local scholarships.***

Survey results indicate that about 90 percent of current Ron Brown Scholars have received another college scholarship in addition to the Ron Brown scholarship. Current Scholars were asked to list the names of any additional scholarships they have received and 60 percent reported they have been awarded one or two additional scholarships, 23 percent have been awarded three or four other scholarships, and 6 percent have received five to seven additional scholarships (Figure A2).

Of the additional scholarships received, 26 percent are considered prestigious, meaning they are the most well-known and lucrative scholarships according to FinAid (Figure A3). Twenty-eight current Scholars (36%) have received at least one prestigious scholarship (Figure 1) including ten Scholars who have received more than one prestigious scholarship. Examples of prestigious scholarships awarded to current Scholars include the Gates Millennium Scholarship; Elks National Foundation Most Valuable Student; National Merit Scholarship; Coca-Cola Scholarship; Robert C. Byrd Honors Scholarship; Siemens Westinghouse Competition in Math, Science, and Technology; and the Harry S. Truman Scholarship.

University-based scholarships, such as the Harvard Faculty Scholarship, account for 15 percent of additional scholarships received (Figure A3). About one-quarter of all current Scholars (26%) have received at least one scholarship from their college or university (Figure 1). Finally, 6 in 10 reported scholarships are national or local awards such as the Ronald McDonald House Scholarship or National Achievement Scholarship (Figure A3). Most current Scholars (68%) indicated that they have received at least one local or national scholarship (Figure 1).

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## 1. Current Scholars who have received each type of scholarship

Scholarship type N=78	Number <sup>a</sup>	Percent <sup>b</sup>
Prestigious	28	36%
University-based	20	26%
National or local	53	68%
Total (any type)	70	90%

<sup>a</sup> The number of Scholars per scholarship type is an unduplicated count.

<sup>b</sup> Scholars may have received more than one type of additional scholarship, so percentages do not sum to 100 percent.

**Notes.** 1) Includes all current Scholars.

2) Scholarship responses were categorized by Wilder Research using FinAid definitions.

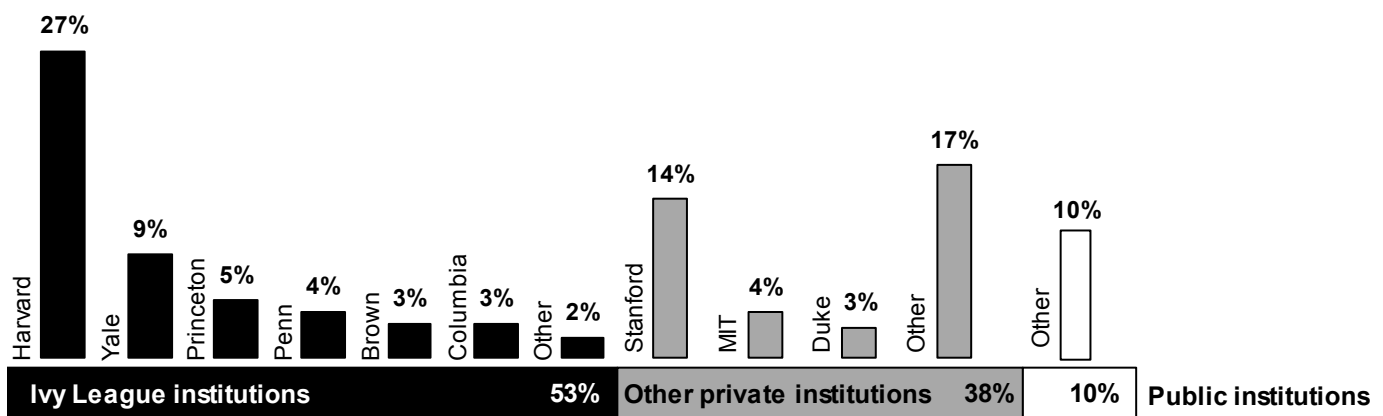
## Institution

**Finding.** *The majority of Scholars attend or attended an Ivy League institution for their undergraduate education. Harvard is the most frequently attended institution.*

Program records indicate that over half (53%) of all Scholars currently attend or have attended an Ivy League institution for their undergraduate education. The most frequently attended institution is Harvard (27%), although Scholars have attended each of the eight Ivy League schools. An additional 38 percent of Scholars enrolled in another private institution, such as Stanford, which is the second most attended institution among Scholars (14%). Just one in ten Scholars attends or attended a public college or university as shown in Figure 2.

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## 2. Scholars' undergraduate institution



**Note.** 1) See Figure A4 for more details.

## **Field of study**

***Finding.** Scholars have a wide variety of majors, but the most popular include those in the social sciences, biological sciences, engineering, and area or ethnic studies.*

As indicated by Program records, Scholars have majored in over 70 different fields of study as undergraduates. The most common area of study is the social sciences (37%), especially the fields of political science (12%) and economics (9%). Other popular areas of study include the biological and biomedical sciences; engineering; and area, ethnic, cultural and gender studies (11%-13% each). Other notable areas of study include business, management, and marketing; interdisciplinary studies; English language and literature; romance languages, literatures, and linguistics; and physical sciences (5-8% each). Each field of study was classified separately for Scholars who indicated more than one major (Figure A5).

## **Ron Brown Scholar Program's role**

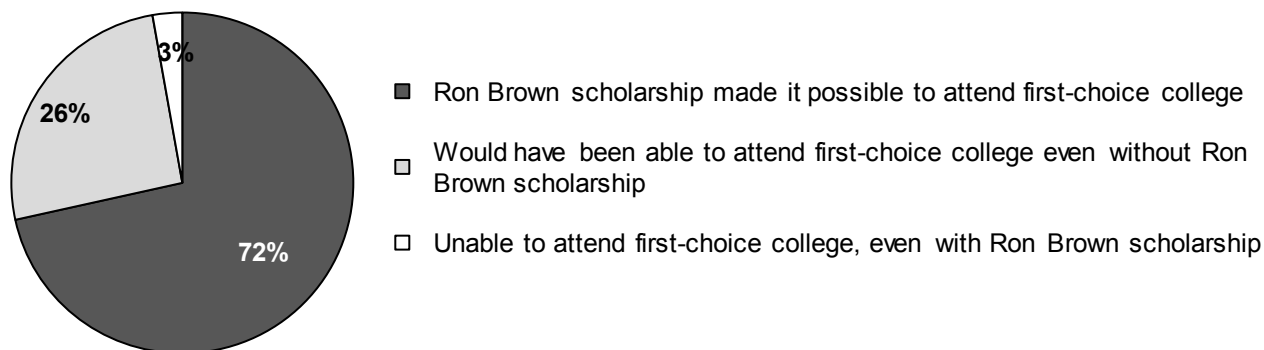
***Finding.** The Ron Brown scholarship funds made it possible for most Scholars to attend their first-choice college or university.*

Survey results indicate that Ron Brown scholarship funds made it possible for 72 percent of all Scholars to attend their first-choice college or university. An additional 26 percent of Scholars reported that they would have been able to attend their first-choice college or university without the Ron Brown scholarship funds, and three percent of Scholars were unable to attend their first-choice school, even with the scholarship funds (Figure 3).

These findings suggest that although Scholars entered the Program with an impressive résumé of accomplishments, the Ron Brown scholarship funds made a crucial contribution to Scholars' financial packages allowing most of them to enroll in the prominent institutions of their choice.

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### 3. Ron Brown scholarship funds impact on first-choice college attendance



**Note.** Includes all Scholars.

#### ***Scholars' pre-professional internships and other positions***

***Finding. Most Scholars have had a pre-professional internship, summer job, or volunteer position that was helpful to their personal or professional development.***

Overall, 89 percent of Ron Brown Scholars reported that they have had an internship, summer job, or volunteer position while in college, or shortly thereafter, that was helpful to their personal or career development. A greater percentage of alumni and college upperclassmen indicated that they have had a meaningful pre-professional experience, (94% and 97%, respectively), compared to underclassmen (61%). This finding suggests that a number of Scholars are not participating in a meaningful pre-professional experience until their junior or senior year in college, which is an expected finding given that older Scholars have had more time to acquire such an experience (Figure A6).

#### **Ron Brown Scholar Program's role**

***Finding. The Program was helpful in making many of these pre-professional opportunities possible, especially by identifying the opportunity and providing financial assistance.***

Two-thirds of all Scholars who have had a pre-professional opportunity indicated that the Ron Brown Scholar Program was helpful in making it possible. However, only 45 percent of current freshmen and sophomores who have had a pre-professional opportunity reported that the Program was helpful in making such an experience possible, compared to 74 percent of current juniors and seniors. As noted above, it is expected that fewer underclassmen will have had a pre-professional experience compared to upperclassmen. However, this finding suggests that, of the underclassmen who have had such an experience, fewer



received help from the Program than upperclassmen, which is not necessarily expected (Figure A7).

Scholars with Program-aided pre-professional experiences indicated that the Program was helpful in making the opportunity possible by providing financial help and in finding the opportunity (66% and 63%, respectively). Fewer Scholars (41%) indicated that the Program helped them to be selected for the opportunity. Additionally, Scholars had the opportunity to write in other ways in which the Program was helpful, and nearly 20 percent of Scholars did so. Scholars added that the Program had also been helpful by providing professional and personal guidance (12%) and logistical assistance (6%). Ways in which the Program was helpful is similar across Scholar groups (Figure A8).

The following comments illustrate how some Scholars felt the Program was helpful:

The [Ron Brown Scholar] Program introduced me to Breakthrough and then helped me pay for doing the internship my first summer. Working at Breakthrough helped me realize that I want to be a teacher and that [it's a] realistic [goal].

The Ron Brown Scholar Program helped me as they had stronger connections to the organization I wanted to work with, which helped me to have some say in my site placement and other elements of the internship that had previously been presented to me as non-negotiable.

[The Ron Brown Scholar Program staff] helped me think through the issues surrounding the opportunities.

Going to Africa was my first time out of the country and it would not have been possible without the monetary assistance provided to me by the [Ron Brown Scholar Program]. I am interested in going into the health field so it was important to me to be able to go to Swaziland and South Africa to learn firsthand about public health as well as the effects of the AIDS epidemic.

***Finding. The Program was more likely to help Scholars obtain internships than other pre-professional positions (summer jobs or volunteer positions).***

Scholars indicated that the most common type of opportunity the Program helped them obtain was a pre-professional internship (71%), followed by a summer job (50%), and a volunteer position (34%). Scholars were able to write in additional types of opportunities, and 12 percent (mostly alumni Scholars) took the opportunity to do so. Additional opportunities in which the Program helped included full-time employment positions, programs abroad, leadership programs, research experiences, and networking opportunities. This finding suggests that the Program is aiding Scholars in obtaining a wide variety of pre-professional opportunities. Additionally, it does not mean that

Scholars are not obtaining volunteer positions, but rather that the Program is helping Scholars obtain pre-professional internships more often (Figure A9).

Scholars were asked to elaborate on their pre-professional experience, and results indicate that Scholars worked or volunteered with a broad range of organizations ranging from non-profit arts programs to Wall Street investment banks to medical research laboratories. In order to gain a better understanding of the diversity of pre-professional experiences reported by Scholars, they were categorized into one or more organizational types. The most popular organizational types include cultural, service, business, education, advocacy, college, and health organizations (19%-25% each). Additionally, Scholars worked or volunteered with some of the most prominent organizations in their field such as the Children's Defense Fund, Clinton Foundation, Goldman Sachs, Habitat for Humanity, Institute of Human Virology, JP Morgan Chase, Lehman Brothers, Merrill Lynch, NASA, National Football League, National Institutes of Health, Sony Entertainment, and the United Nations (Figures A10-A11).

### **Importance of pre-professional opportunities**

***Finding. Scholars who participated in a meaningful pre-professional experience with the help of the Program found the opportunity helpful by aiding in the development of their skill set as well as in identifying future goals and interests.***

It is clear that the Ron Brown Scholar Program believes in the importance of pre-professional internships, as it is one of few requirements that Scholars must complete as an undergraduate. Scholars were asked to comment on how their pre-professional experience was helpful to them, and their responses were then categorized into one or more response themes. The two most common themes that emerged were that it helped them develop their skill set (43%) and identify or clarify goals and interests related to both work and life more broadly (32%). A number of Scholars expressed that the things they learned and experienced during their pre-professional opportunity can be directly applied to future careers and academic endeavors. Also, these experiences often solidified a Scholar's desire to enter a specific field or, equally important, to explore a new one.

Other response themes indicate that Scholars appreciated the general personal development they gained through these experiences (17%) and they were more prepared for some sort of competitive application process such as being accepted into graduate school or obtaining a full-time job (14%). Response themes are consistent across Scholar groups, and additional themes can be found in the Appendix (Figure A12).

Selected Scholar comments about how their pre-professional experience was helpful include the following:

I am figuring out where I want to be upon college graduation and these internships and fellowships are critical in the exploration of career opportunities that I have available to me. I am expanding my network and gaining valuable skills that will help me in both acquiring and succeeding at my job.

I interned at the Institute of Human Virology conducting HIV/AIDS research. This opportunity actually helped me realize that I did not want to pursue a career in medical research. [Alternatively,] my internship with the Ron Brown Scholar Program taught me the behind-the-scenes of a non-profit organization and I think it has equipped me with the tools to successfully run my own non-profit.

The program motivated me to seek out a research internship instead of doing summer school/taking classes at my undergraduate institution. This internship led to other opportunities and now I am completing my MD/PhD. I would not be on this path had it not been for the [Ron Brown Scholar] Program leading me to my first internship.

[The opportunities] changed my life! They exposed me to the world, through travel, work and research! I learned about myself, about my intellectual interests, and about my life's purpose! I found great intellectual and emotional fulfillment through these opportunities and the Ron Brown Scholar Program was there every step of the way!

Both were pivotal experiences for me in the development of my life goals and purpose. [The leadership program] was an unforgettable month-long course in the wildernesses of Montana and Wyoming that revealed a deep-seated love of nature and its healing effects. Interning at [the eco-spiritual] magazine immersed me in a wealth of spiritual texts that helped hone and define my passion for spiritual counseling and psychology, for which I start a master's program in the fall.

[The Ron Brown Scholar Program] allowed me to focus on serving my community in New York City in a way I didn't think possible. I helped address a critical need for African Americans in New York City, a role that was fulfilling and very much in line with all [that the Ron Brown Scholar Program] has taught me.

## ***Scholars' programs abroad***

***Finding. The majority of Scholars have had the opportunity to study, serve or travel abroad.***

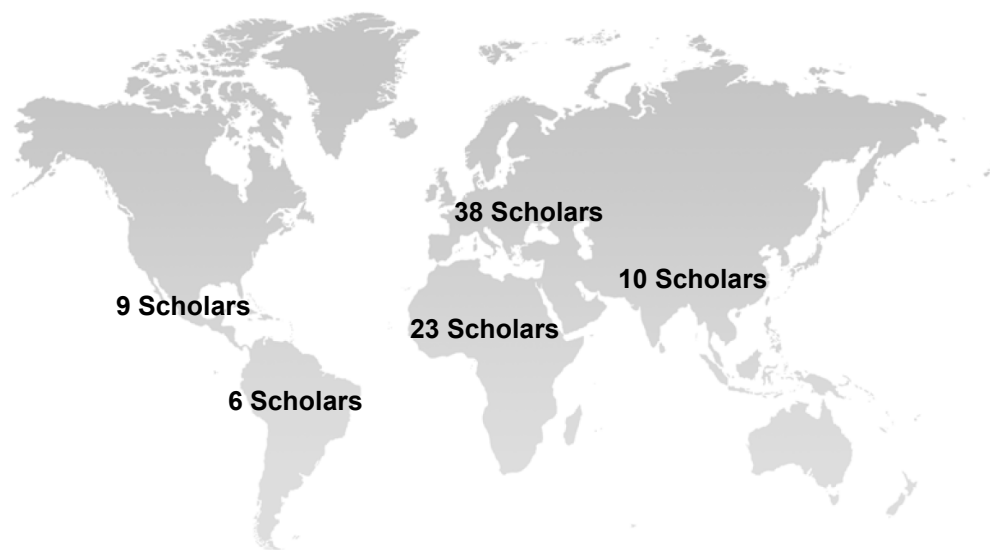
Over half (56%) of Ron Brown Scholars have studied, served, or traveled abroad while in college, or shortly thereafter. Slightly more alumni (62%) than current Scholars (44%) have had the opportunity to go abroad. This is not surprising since alumni Scholars have had more time to acquire such an experience and it's not uncommon for college graduates to travel abroad shortly after completing school (Figure A13). Scholars were instructed to

list the most recent country they had traveled to in which the Program was helpful in making it possible. Results indicate that Scholars have traveled to countries on five continents with Europe (38 Scholars) and Africa (23 Scholars) being the most popular (Figure 4). Overall, Scholars have gone to more than 30 different countries with the help of the Program; the most traveled destinations include Spain, South Africa, England, India, and Brazil (Figure A14).

Just under half (49%) of all Scholars who traveled abroad with the help of the Program stayed for one to three months, 37 percent were abroad for four to six months, and 15 percent were overseas for 7 to 14 months (Figure A15). The average length of stay was 3.6 months for current Scholars and 4.6 months for alumni Scholars.

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#### 4. Scholars' most recent Program-aided experience abroad



**Notes.** 1) Includes only those Scholars who reported having had the opportunity to travel abroad in which the Ron Brown Scholar Program was helpful in making possible.

2) Scholars who visited more than one continent on their most recent Program-aided trip are counted on each continent visited.

#### Ron Brown Scholar Program's role

**Finding.** *The Program was helpful in making many of these abroad experiences possible, particularly by providing financial assistance.*

When asked if the Ron Brown Scholar Program was helpful in making their experience abroad possible, 61 percent of Scholars indicated that it was. Slightly more current Scholars (69%) answered in the affirmative compared to alumni Scholars (58%). Almost

all Scholars who received help from the Program reported receiving financial assistance to travel abroad (94%). Just 13 and 14 percent of respondents, respectively, indicated that they received Program assistance in finding the opportunity or being selected for it. Ten percent of Scholars indicated other ways the Program was helpful, and the most common response themes include providing guidance and networking opportunities. Specific ways in which the Program was helpful is consistent across Scholar groups (Figures A16-A17).

Other ways the Program was helpful are illustrated by the following Scholar comments:

Just [helping me] realize it was possible for me to [travel abroad].

[The Ron Brown Scholar Program] connected me to another Scholar who had traveled to the same country I was visiting and she was able to offer some perspective on what my experience would be like as well as more practical advice about what items to bring, where to stay, where it was and was not safe to go alone, etc.

I got [an internship] with the help of a friend of the Program with Lehman Brothers in London.

### **Importance of abroad opportunities**

***Finding. Scholars reported a variety of accomplishments while abroad ranging from language development to completion of research projects to greater cultural understanding.***

Scholars were asked to comment on what they accomplished abroad, and their answers were grouped by theme. Response themes indicate that just over half (54%) of Scholars completed a term of academic study or internship while overseas. Scholars studied many different academic topics including economics, media, medicine, philosophy, and the slave trade. Four in 10 responses specified that Scholars had learned or further developed language skills in Spanish, French, Gaelic, Wolof, Arabic, Japanese, Chinese, German, Russian, Twi, or Portuguese. Engaging in service work or gaining greater cultural understanding and awareness were also indicated in Scholar responses (21% and 20%, respectively) as was working on research (16%) (Figure A18).

Below are selected comments regarding Scholars' accomplishments abroad:

I studied medical Spanish, volunteered as an EMT, volunteered with underserved populations in free medical clinics, [and] wrote a thesis on emergency care in Guatemala.

[I] served as a community organizer and teacher of HIV/AIDS prevention in a rural village.

I traveled with a design/build team from MIT's Department of Architecture. We completed a project where we designed and built a plaza for an elementary school in Perquin, El Salvador.

I worked at the Foreign Commercial Service at the U.S. Consulate General in Cape Town, South Africa. During my time [there,] I wrote several research reports on various economic issues, met with numerous South African business men and women, and had the opportunity to see much of the country.

[I] obtained firsthand knowledge regarding humanitarian crises in 3rd world countries and was able to see how I could increase my expertise to become a future leader in the politics of humanitarian assistance.

I gained higher level proficiency in the Japanese language and a more realistic, balanced perspective on what life is like in Japan. My study abroad experience was crucial in helping me decide what I wanted to do after college and what sort of careers I would pursue later.

[I] conducted site analysis of an earthquake destroyed community; researched community history for redevelopment plans; drafted recommendations for implementing redevelopment; and presented recommendations to stakeholders in Kefalonia and Athens, Greece.

[I] conducted qualitative research on the political attitudes of gay South African university students.

It was [an] opportunity to be fully immersed in [a] different culture for an extended period of time. Besides having the privilege of studying at the world-renowned Sorbonne, I also developed long-lasting friendships with people I met in France who I still keep in contact with to this day.

I took courses in Italian language and culture, art history and Medieval Studies in preparation for a graduate program in Medieval Art History.

[I] learned about tropical ecology, watershed and habitat protection, and team and group development.

***Finding. Scholars who traveled abroad with the help of the Program found the opportunity helpful to their personal or career development.***

All of the Scholars indicated that the Program-aided experience abroad was helpful to their personal or career development. Scholars were then asked to explain how the experience was helpful, and their responses were grouped by theme. Nearly half (49%) of the responses indicated that Scholars had developed personally, often through exposure and immersion into a new culture. Others popular themes included that they learned new skills, such as a language or how to work with people from different backgrounds more effectively, and the experience helped them define and clarify future goals and interests (47% and 35%, respectively) (Figure A19).

The following are examples of Scholars' answers regarding how their experience abroad was helpful:

I now approach the classroom differently and am more focused and motivated than ever.

Brazil has inspired me to love research and to want to be involved in the international issues affecting the African Diaspora. Overall, it gave me an intense passion that I lacked before.

I was able to broaden my skill set, by learning much about the design process, masonry, welding, metal cutting, etc. I also was able to improve my Spanish, and strengthen my understanding of the team dynamic. I also was able to study the region, and better understand Latin America, an area which I am focusing my studies in.

[It] helped me to understand how I want to serve in the future and more specifically to gain hands-on experience working with underserved populations, which are the populations I hope to work with in my future medical career. This program solidified my desire to be a doctor.

Aside from helping to develop my language skills, the program was my first experience of being fully integrated into another culture, and helped peak my interest in a career in international law.

Again, the ability to conceptualize yourself in a context that is bigger than just your local surroundings is an immense attribute. It gives you a broader vantage point and helps you think more critically and openly about various issues.

I studied the traditional religion and spiritual system in Brazil during my three month visit, which helped further my interest in and passion for spirituality as a tool of survival and emotional health. This is what I look forward to studying in my master's program this fall.

Personally, it was an eye-opening and life changing experience. Academically, I studied Black philosophers and movements that really inspired and motivated me and allowed me to think critically about the world. Studying abroad was the best decision I made during college and Ron Brown's financial and overall support made it possible!

## *Scholars' community service work*

### **Type of service work**

***Finding. Most Scholars have done community service work during the past year. Scholars have participated in a variety of service activities with many different organizations, ranging from local to national in scope.***

The Ron Brown Scholar Program has a strong commitment to public service and ascribes to the philosophy that to whom much is given, much is expected. Scholars are encouraged to integrate service into their daily lives, and survey results indicate that 8 in 10 Scholars have done community service work in the past 12 months. Slightly more current Scholars (87%) than alumni Scholars (76%) have participated in service work during this time period (Figure A20). When asked to elaborate on their community service work, whether it is volunteering or working for minimal pay, Scholars reported that they have participated in a wide range of activities, which were then categorized by type. Providing educational services such as tutoring and mentoring youth were the most frequent response themes (43% and 30%, respectively), followed by physical labor activities including building homes and serving meals (17%). Other types of service activities conducted by Scholars include the provision of health services and participation in election activities such as registering people to vote (8% each) (Figure A21).

Similarly, Scholars have volunteered for a variety of organizations from local to international in scope and with a diversity of mission statements. Volunteer organizations were categorized by type, and the most common include service and educational (44% and 30%, respectively), followed by health and cultural groups (14%-15% each). Prominent organizations that Scholars have volunteered for include the American Red Cross, Big Brother Big Sisters, City Year, Habitat for Humanity, NAACP, Planned Parenthood, Rotary Club, and YMCA (Figures A22-A23).

Examples of Scholars' community service work include:

I spoke to youth promoting the I Have Risen book for the Ron Brown [Scholar] Program. I'm still in contact with one of the boys and girls clubs I spoke to and go to events there to help.

I help kids from inner city neighborhoods prepare for college applications and the SAT.

[I do] media outreach for socially conscious films [and I am] producing a [public service announcement].

I volunteered at a prison teaching inmates how to make better decisions in life.



I work at a clinic that serves [the] uninsured population in the community.

[I] mentored my [Ron Brown Scholar] mentee.

[I] serve and prepare food for local homeless people.

[I work on] labor rights, anti-racism, [and] pro women's health rights.

[I provide] community education about obesity.

I am assisting in the organization of a Mother's Day celebration for mothers with mental illness.

[I provide] pro bono [legal] representation for indigent clients.

[I do] computer upgrades, office work, and [am] helping to host a donor event.

I canvass neighborhoods distributing information about free legal aid to homeowners at risk for eviction.

[I] refurbished bicycles to be sold at a very low price to inner city kids.

[I] teach English and literacy skills to immigrants and refugees.

### **Amount of service work**

***Finding. The amount of time spent on community service work varies greatly among Scholars. Half of all Scholars estimated spending 56 or more hours doing service work in the past year, or about one hour per week on average.***

Ron Brown Scholars estimated that they spent anywhere from 1 to 2,700 hours participating in community service work during the past 12 months. Scholars' most common response was 20 hours (14%) followed by 100 hours (12%) of volunteer work this past year. It should be noted that Scholars were asked to approximate how many hours they spent on community service over the past 12 months, which may have been difficult for some Scholars resulting in a somewhat rough estimation of total hours. Additionally, of the Scholars who indicated that they did some community service work over the past year, 35 percent responded that they didn't know how many hours they volunteered. Scholars who answered "don't know" were excluded from volunteer hour calculations.

About half of all Scholars estimated spending at least one hour per week doing community service work. This includes 8 percent of Scholars who reported to have spent more than 416 hours volunteering last year, which translates to over eight hours of service work per week, on average. Alternatively, around one-third (32%) of Scholars estimated that they spent 26 hours or less doing service work over the past 12 months, or about 30 minutes or

less each week, on average. More alumni (36%) than current Scholars (24%) estimated spending 26 hours or less on community service during the past year (Figure 5).

#### 5. Estimated number of hours Scholars spent on community service work in the past 12 months

Range of estimated hours	Current Scholars N=42 Percent	Alumni Scholars N=69 Percent	Total Scholars N=111 Percent
1-26 hours (30 minutes per week or less)	24%	36%	32%
27-52 hours (30 minutes-1 hour per week)	19%	15%	16%
53-104 hours (1-2 hours per week)	29%	23%	25%
105+ hours (2 or more hours per week)	29%	26%	27%
Median	66 hours	50 hours	56 hours

**Note.** Includes only those Scholars who reported having done community service work and estimated how many hours they spent on community service work in the past 12 months.

### *Scholars' leadership activities*

#### **Current Scholars' participation rates**

**Finding.** All current Scholars are active in their campus community; most belong to an on-campus student group.

All current Ron Brown Scholars have been involved in their campus community this school year, and most (85%) have participated in a student group or club. Student groups were categorized by type based on Scholar responses, and the most popular types include cultural groups (44%), such as the Black Students Association, and academic or professional clubs (40%), such as the Pre-law Society. Student groups that fell into more than one category, such as the National Society of Black Engineers, were categorized as both. Other types of student groups that Scholars participated in include arts (19%), advocacy (18%), service (18%), media (13%), and spiritual organizations (11%). The percentages of Scholars belonging to a student organization are consistent across grade levels.

Besides student groups, the most popular on-campus activities for all current Scholars to participate in are athletics, student government, and residence hall groups (23-26% each). The most common activities for underclassmen to take part in are student government and choir or band (29% and 24%, respectively), while upperclassmen are active in residence hall groups, athletics, and fraternities or sororities (27-32% each) (Figure A24).

## **Scholars' leadership positions**

### **Current Scholars**

***Finding. Most current Scholars have held leadership positions on college campuses, and about one-quarter have held leadership positions off campus.***

Current Scholars were asked if they have held an on-campus leadership position, and if so to elaborate on the nature of each position. Overall, 7 in 10 current Scholars have held an on-campus leadership position, with more upperclassmen (81%) than underclassmen (59%) holding such a designation, which is to be expected (Figure A25). Nearly one-quarter (23%) of current Scholars have held one leadership position, and 27 percent have held three or more leadership positions on campus in a group or club (Figure 6). They have held leadership positions with titles such as founder, president, vice president, treasurer, secretary, team leader, and chair. On-campus groups in which Scholars held a leadership position were categorized by type, and the most common types include advocacy (29%), cultural (27%), and service organizations (23%) (Figure A26).

Similarly, current Scholars were asked about any off-campus leadership positions they have held. Significantly fewer current Scholars have held a leadership position off campus than on campus (27% vs. 70%) since becoming a Ron Brown Scholar. Slightly more upperclassmen (30%) than underclassmen (24%) have held an off-campus leadership position. Although it is expected that more older Scholars will have held a leadership position in general, the gap between upper- and underclassmen is much smaller off-campus compared to on-campus (6% vs. 22%) (Figure A25). When asked to elaborate on the nature of their leadership position(s), one in five current Scholars indicated that they have had held one off-campus leadership position, while 7 percent had held two or more positions with titles such as head translator, field director, advisor, CEO, and founder (Figure 6). Off-campus organizations where Scholars served as leaders were categorized by type, and the most common include service (53%), business (21%), and cultural organizations (16%) (Figure A27).

### **Alumni Scholars**

***Finding. Nearly two-thirds of alumni Scholars reported holding leadership positions during the past year.***

Survey results indicate that nearly 9 in 10 alumni Scholars (88%) have held a leadership position on a college campus, at their job, or in the community since becoming a Ron Brown Scholar. Additionally, 64 percent of alumni Scholars indicated that they have held such a position in the past 12 months, suggesting that many Scholars continue to serve as leaders in graduate school, at work or in their community. When asked to

elaborate on their leadership positions, alumni Scholars indicated that they had held positions such as project manager, organizer, consultant, lead researcher, president, and founder. Almost 4 in 10 alumni Scholars (38%) indicated that they had held one leadership position, and 9 percent had held three or more prominent positions in the past year (Figure 6).

Alumni Scholars listed organizations where they had served in a leadership capacity, and they were then categorized by type. Similar to current Scholar results, the most common types of organizations include business (34%) and service groups (31%), followed by cultural (21%) and educational (18%) organizations. Examples of well-known organizations in which alumni Scholars held leadership roles include the American Medical Association, Chevron, Habitat for Humanity, Morgan Stanley, New York Press, and Urban League (Figures A27-A28).

## 6. Number of Scholars' leadership positions

Number of positions	Current Scholars on-campus leadership N=75		Current Scholars off-campus leadership N=70		Alumni Scholars leadership this past year N=110	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
0 positions	23	31%	51	73%	42	38%
1 position	17	23%	14	20%	42	38%
2 positions	15	20%	4	6%	16	15%
3 or more positions	20	27%	1	1%	10	9%

## Scholars' accomplishments

*Finding. Scholars have made distinguished accomplishments as leaders in their communities.*

### Current Scholars

When asked if they had any notable accomplishments as a leader on or off campus that they would like to mention, 38 percent of current Scholars indicated that they did. Accomplishments were then grouped into themes based on Scholars' responses. The most common themes include worked on a meaningful project (12%), founded an organization, and received an award (9% each) (Figure A29).

Selected examples of current Scholar's notable accomplishments include:

I started a small-scale barbershop in Tambo de Mora, Peru, a poor, marginalized coastal community with little means of generating revenue. My partner and I had clippers donated to the community and I taught select individuals how to cut hair using clippers.

I was selected to give the welcome address to the incoming freshman class of the School of Theatre in August 2008.

[I am] having a dermatological science paper published.

[I] interned at Botswana International Financial Services Centre, won [the] Seltzer Research Award, [and] won [the] JPMorgan Launching Leaders Scholarship and Internship.

I became a founder and CEO.

[I was selected for the] USA U-19 Rugby Team.

[I] developed [a] web intervention to facilitate [the] flow of emergency information between service providers and [the] public with the Social Innovation and Entrepreneurship Team.

I was a founding member of the group "Sustainable U," an organization that promotes sustainable practices on campus and beyond. The organization was influential in getting [the] university President to sign the Talloires Declaration of the Association of University Leaders for a Sustainable Future, and the American College and University Presidents Climate Commitment.

Last year, I won the award for "Sophomore Leader of the Year."

[I] successfully pushed for greater university resources for [the promotion of] faculty and graduate student diversity, gender-neutral housing, restoration of [the] Stanford Course Guide, creation of [the] first-ever student group summit, re-opening of Stanford's CoHo (Coffee House), creation of [the] student union programming board, and [the] NAACP resolution encouraging state pension funds to divest from the Janjaweed government in Darfur.

I have rolled out half a dozen campus-wide campaigns/student services, headed Stanford Internet Solutions' most lucrative development contracts and generally revolutionized the way student government uses its technology infrastructure.

## Alumni Scholars

Alumni Scholars were also asked to comment on their notable accomplishments as a leader, and their responses were grouped by theme. Half of all alumni Scholars reported a noteworthy accomplishment since becoming a Ron Brown Scholar, and the most frequent theme was led a group (21%). Similar to current Scholar results, other popular

response themes include founded a group or organized an event (9% each), received an award, and worked on a meaningful project (8% each) (Figure A29).

Selected alumni Scholar accomplishments include the following:

[I] founded the Student Global AIDS Campaign in 2001, which became the nation's largest student AIDS advocacy organization.

[I am a] Mellon Fellow, [and] editor of [a] college literary newspaper.

[I am a] First Class Marshal of Harvard.

[I] found[ed] the D-Lab at MIT which has now grown to 6 classes and is [on] track to becoming a sustainable engineering minor and major at MIT.

[I am a] member of [the] Quill and Dagger Senior Honor Society.

I organized a major campus protest against the wave of racist graffiti sweeping our campus.

I was president of the Harvard Black Students Association where I created an annual scholarship and corporate sponsorship program; I was a founding member and Alumni Affairs Chair for the Harvard Black Alumni Society.

[I was selected to] Phi Beta Kappa.

I started a Silicon Valley venture backed start up [and] advised the University president on institution-led community service programs.

[I] worked with Oprah & Friends [and] produced a critically-acclaimed off-Broadway play.

I held multiple leadership positions in college. Now that I'm in the workforce, I am in management very early in my career through a management training program. As a [20-something] Black female managing people who don't like me and who are, in some cases, old enough to be my parents, leadership experience gained in college and nurtured by [the Ron Brown Scholar Program] has been essential to my confidence and success.

[I] created a series of Orkut themes adopted by millions of Brazilian users while at Google.

I sat on the boards of the Council on African American Affairs and the Ron Brown Scholar Alumni Association (on the latter, I was the Treasurer).

In college (2003), I co-founded an SAT prep program for underprivileged high school students. Today, in 2009, the program is still running, students are still benefiting from it, and it continues to use the same framework we established in the beginning.

[M]y company submit[ted] one of my ideas for a patent.

[I] started a micro-finance NGO in Kenya.

I've produced a couple of award winning films.

I have written several history curricula over the course of my tenure.

[I] published a magazine.

[I was] President of the Ron Brown Scholars Alumni Association, Chair of [the] Council for African American Affairs, [and] Co-chair of [the] business school variety show.

[I am] joining [the] Obama administration to work in [the] Treasury department.

## ***Alumni Scholars' graduate or professional education***

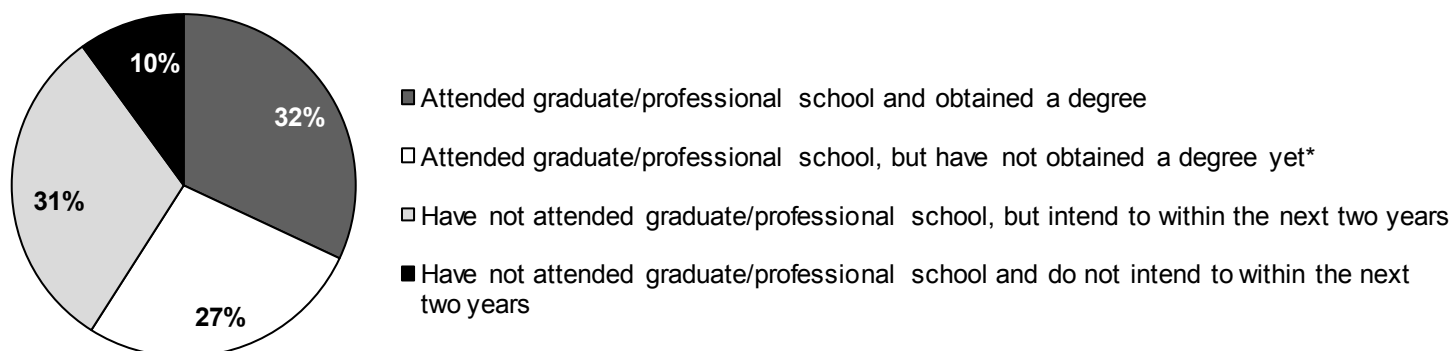
### **Attendance**

***Finding.** Nine in 10 alumni Scholars have either attended graduate or professional school since graduating from college or intend to enroll within the next two years.*

Alumni Scholars were asked about their educational experiences and plans since graduating from college. The alumni Scholars were analyzed as a whole and then divided into two groups, the earlier alumni classes of 1997-2000 and the more recent alumni classes of 2001-2004. Overall, nearly 6 in 10 alumni Scholars have attended some graduate or professional school since graduating from college, and of those who have not, three-quarters plan to enroll within the next two years. This means that almost all alumni Scholars (90%) have attended graduate school and have earned a degree (32%), are in the process of earning a degree (24%), taking a break (3%), or are planning to enroll shortly (31%) (Figure 7).

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### **7. All alumni Scholars' graduate and professional school attendance and intentions**



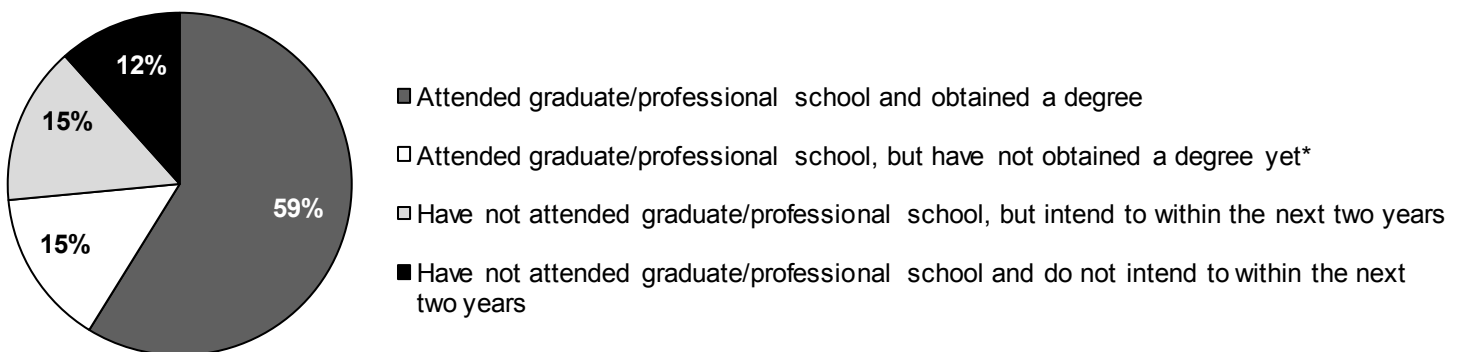
\* Ninety percent of this group are currently enrolled.

**Note.** See Figure A30 for more details.

Further analyses indicate that, as expected, more alumni from the earlier classes have attended graduate school compared to those from more recent alumni classes (74% vs. 46%). Additionally, among alumni Scholars who have not attended graduate or professional school, more younger alumni in comparison to older alumni intend to enroll within the next two years (83% vs. 56%). These findings suggest that a number of young alumni are not enrolling in graduate school directly from college, but most plan to in the near future. As expected, of those who have already attended graduate school, more alumni from the earlier classes have obtained a post-graduate degree in comparison to younger alumni (80% vs. 18%), and the gap is even larger for doctoral and professional degrees, which often take longer to obtain.

Figure 8 below shows that nearly 6 in 10 older alumni Scholars, those who have been out of college for five to eight years, have earned a post-graduate degree. This is a substantially higher percentage for older alumni in comparison to all alumni Scholars, as expected. Additionally, in comparison to all alumni, a smaller portion of older alumni are currently working toward a post-graduate degree (15% vs. 27%) or intend to enroll in the next two years (15% vs. 31%), suggesting that few older alumni Scholars who want to obtain a post-graduate degree have not already taken the necessary steps to do so.

#### 8. Older alumni Scholars' (award years 1997-2000) graduate and professional school attendance and intentions



\* Seventy percent of this group are currently enrolled.

**Note.** See Figure A30 for more details.

#### Post-graduate degree

**Finding.** Master's degrees are the most common type of degree obtained, in progress, or planned to be pursued by alumni Scholars, followed closely by professional degrees in law or medicine. Fewer Scholars are interested in a Ph.D. or joint degree.



Of those approximately one-third of alumni Scholars who have already obtained a post-graduate degree, the majority (59%) have earned a master's degree only. Fewer have earned a law (16%), medical (14%) or doctoral degree (7%). Additionally, 5 percent (two Scholars) have earned a joint degree; one earned medical and master's degrees (M.D./M.B.A), and the other earned law and master's degrees (J.D./M.A.). These percentages represent degrees obtained, so Ph.D. candidates who have earned their master's degree en route to a doctoral degree are only credited with a master's degree at this time (Figure 9).

Most alumni Scholars who are currently enrolled but have not yet obtained a post-graduate degree indicated that they are working toward a master's (32%), medical (29%), or law degree (24%). Additionally, 9 percent of Scholars are working toward a joint degree such as a M.D./Ph.D., and 6 percent are pursuing their Ph.D. only (Figure 9).

Of alumni who have attended graduate school (i.e., combining the two groups just described), the most common types of degrees are the master's (47%) and professional medical or law degree (40%). Only a handful of alumni Scholars have obtained or are working toward a Ph.D. or joint degree (6% each). While it is expected that more alumni Scholars will obtain a post-graduate degree compared to the general population, it is not necessarily expected that the distribution of types of degrees will be as dissimilar as it is. The alumni Scholar distribution of degree types above indicates that professional degrees (law and medicine) are a close second to master's degrees (40% vs. 47%), while in the general population there are three times more people with master's degrees than professional degrees (Bauman & Graf, 2003).

#### 9. Post-graduate degree obtained, currently working toward, or planning to pursue

Post-graduate degree	Scholars who have obtained a degree N=44		Scholars who are currently working toward a degree N=34		Scholars who plan to pursue a degree N=36		Total N=114	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Master's	26	59%	11	32%	17	47%	54	47%
Law (J.D.)	7	16%	8	24%	12	33%	27	24%
Medical (M.D.)	6	14%	10	29%	4	11%	20	18%
Doctorate (Ph.D.)	3	7%	2	6%	-	-	5	4%
Joint (e.g., M.D./Ph.D.)	2	5%	3	9%	3	8%	8	7%

**Note.** Includes only alumni Scholars who have obtained a post-graduate degree, are currently enrolled in graduate or professional school or plan to enroll within the next two years.

## **Field of study**

***Finding. Among those who have obtained a post-graduate degree or are currently attending graduate or professional school, the most common fields of study include medicine, law, public administration and social service professions, and the social sciences.***

Alumni Scholars who have earned a post-graduate degree or are currently enrolled and working toward one were asked what their field of study was or is. Scholars' responses were then categorized according to the Classification of Instructional Programs (National Center for Education Statistics, 2000); each field of study was classified separately for Scholars with multiple fields of study. Of those Scholars who have obtained a post-graduate degree, almost half obtained a professional degree; 23 percent reported medicine and 21 percent law. The social sciences and public administration and social service professions were the most frequently reported fields of graduate study (14% and 11%, respectively), followed by other health professions and business (9% each).

Of alumni Scholars who are currently attending graduate or professional school, 6 in 10 reported pursuing a professional degree such as medicine (36%) or law (24%). The most common graduate fields included public administration and social service professions and education (12% each). More alumni Scholars who have not enrolled in graduate or professional school but intend to shortly are interested in pursuing business (35%), and fewer plan to study medicine (14%) in comparison to those who have or are working toward a post-graduate degree (Figure A31).

## **Institution**

***Finding. Harvard is the most frequently attended institution for graduate or professional school. Nearly one-third of alumni Scholars who have attended graduate or professional school have attended or are currently attending an Ivy League institution for their graduate studies.***

Scholars who have attended graduate or professional school since college were asked to indicate in which institution they were or are currently enrolled. Similar to undergraduate college responses, the most common graduate school institution is also Harvard; one in five such alumni Scholars have earned or are working toward a degree from Harvard. The second most frequently attended institution is Stanford; 9 percent of such alumni Scholars have obtained, and 16 percent are currently working toward, a post-graduate degree from Stanford.

Nearly one-third (31%) of Scholars who have a post-graduate degree obtained it from an Ivy League institution such as Harvard, Columbia, or Yale; one-third (33%) obtained it

from another private institution such as Stanford, MIT, or Syracuse; and 4 in 10 obtained it from a public institution such as Berkeley, UCLA, or the University of North Carolina. Some alumni Scholars have received graduate or professional degrees from more than one institution, so percentages do not sum to 100 percent.

Survey results also indicate that 31 percent of alumni Scholars with post-graduate degrees in progress attend an Ivy League institution. However, in comparison to those who have already obtained degrees, more Scholars who are working toward a degree attend a private institution besides the Ivy League (47%) and fewer attend a public school (25%) (Figure A32).

## *Alumni Scholars' employment and other projects*

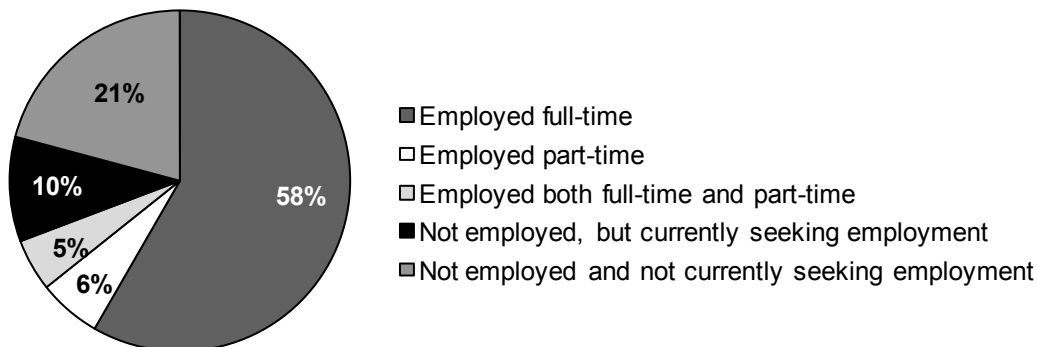
### **Employment**

***Finding. Seven in 10 alumni Scholars are currently employed, and of those who are not, most are not currently seeking employment.***

All alumni Scholars, regardless of school enrollment status, were asked to comment on their employment status. Nearly 70 percent of alumni Scholars indicated that they are currently employed; the majority (58%) are working full-time, 6 percent are employed part-time, and 5 percent are working both full- and part-time as shown in Figure 10. Approximately one in five (21%) alumni Scholars are not employed and not currently seeking employment. A final 10 percent are unemployed, but currently looking for work (Figure 10).

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#### **10. Alumni Scholars' employment status**

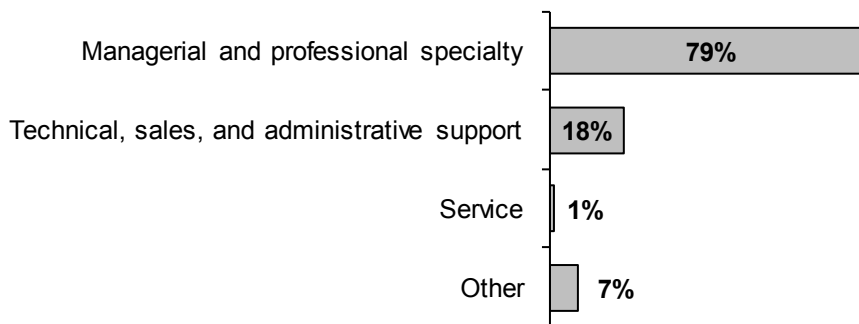


***Finding. Most employed alumni Scholars have a managerial or professional specialty occupation.***

Employed alumni Scholars were asked to elaborate on their main occupation, and responses were categorized into type of occupations. Nearly 80 percent of Scholars indicated that they worked in a managerial or professional specialty occupation. Just over one-third (34%) of responses in this category include jobs like executive, administrator, manager, consultant, analyst or investment banker. Another 45 percent of occupations in this category include jobs such as writer, doctor, teacher, lawyer, engineer, and scientist. Eighteen percent of jobs fell into the technical, sales, and administrative support category; examples of jobs include administrative assistant, paralegal, computer programmer, sales representative, and retail worker (Figure 11). Furthermore, three-quarters of employed alumni Scholars reported that their current occupation is related to their college or post-graduate degree.

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**11. Alumni Scholars' occupation type**



**Notes.** 1) Alumni Scholars may have listed more than one main occupation, so percentages do not sum to 100 percent.  
2) See Figure A33 for more details.

Alumni Scholars also indicated what organization they work for, and responses were categorized by type. Just over one-third of alumni Scholars work for a business (35%), 18 percent work in an educational organization, and 14 percent work for the government. Other common types include health, media, and legal organizations (9-11% each) (Figure A34).

Examples of prominent organizations where Scholars work include the following:

- Barclays Capital
- Environmental Protection Agency
- Fannie Mae

Google, Inc.  
Harvard's Rowland Institute  
J.P. Morgan  
Maryland's Department of Human Resources  
MTV Networks/Viacom  
National Institutes of Health  
Nickelodeon  
New York City Department of Education  
Saks Fifth Avenue  
Sony Pictures  
United States Department of Treasury  
United States Navy  
United States Supreme Court

### **Other projects and ventures**

***Finding. Some alumni Scholars are currently pursuing other business ventures or projects in addition to their main occupation. Of those that are, few are collaborating with other Ron Brown Scholars.***

Besides their main occupation, around 4 in 10 alumni Scholars (39%) reported that they have other business ventures or projects that they are currently pursuing. Scholars were then asked to elaborate on their project, and categories were constructed based on Scholars' responses. Arts projects, including those related to music, writing, and film, made up 29 percent of projects, and entrepreneurial ventures comprised another 25 percent. Projects related to education (14%) and health (11%) were other common response themes (Figure A35). Just 18 percent of alumni Scholars who are working on a venture or project indicated that they were collaborating on it with another Ron Brown Scholar. This result is consistent across alumni Scholar groups.

Examples of Scholars' ventures and projects include:

I am writing a pilot for television. I hope to pitch to major networks in the summer of 2009.

I am writing a novel and getting ready to go to Guatemala for seven months to work as a human rights observer.

I'm an aspiring musician. I have nearly two dozen original songs, and I'm working on a symphony/song cycle for solo guitar and voice performance.

[I am] writing [a] book on the Obama presidency and its implications on the U.S. political system.

I work with entrepreneurs who are starting up and need help with business planning and documentation/process development. I am working on it part-time with the intent to go full-time in the next year or so. I am also developing some leadership development tools for entrepreneurs (and others) that I want to incorporate into the business.

I am working on a few start-ups: 1) An automated online financial advisory company (allows customers to track personal expenditures and consolidate accounts). 2) A consulting firm for entrepreneurs.

[I am] establishing a nonprofit organization for homeless people that focuses on total rehabilitation of the person in an effort not just to stabilize them but also to give them the tools for social and personal advancement and development.

I am starting a non-profit organization that is designed to help rebuild New Orleans; I am also starting a financial literacy program in my hometown.

[I am] helping to start "eHealth Global," [an] online telemedicine management system to facilitate provision of healthcare by physicians in the Diaspora to patients in developing countries through videoconferencing.

## ***Current motivating factors for Scholars***

***Finding. Scholars reported that service and family motivate or inspire them to continue to achieve and reach their full potential.***

In addition to asking Scholars' about the primary factors that helped them succeed up until the time they became a Ron Brown Scholar, they were also asked to list up to three factors that motivate or inspire them to continue to achieve and reach their full potential now. Scholars' responses were categorized into themes, and unlike the factors in success before entering the Program (family, personal commitment to success, and support and encouragement), now the most frequent response theme is service. Service was listed as a motivating factor in three related yet distinct ways: desire to serve and impact others (29%); sense of responsibility, "to whom much is given, much is expected" (19%); and a heightened social awareness of inequality in which an ethical or just response is needed (9%). Family was mentioned in approximately one-third (34%) of responses, followed by a number of personal characteristics including a desire for material or social success and a

personal commitment to success (20% and 17%, respectively). Finally, 11 percent of Scholars specifically mentioned the Ron Brown Scholar Program as a motivating or inspiring factor that helps them to achieve and reach their full potential now (Figure A36).

Examples of Scholars' motivating or inspiring factors include:

1) Community – I am surrounded by so many friends and acquaintances and fellow Scholars at the top of their game. 2) Support – Knowing that my family and the [Ron Brown Scholar] Program are cheering on the sidelines helps me to keep pushing forward. 3) Service – I am driven.

The great potential of what I stand to achieve if I work hard.

Knowing that I've been afforded an incredible amount of privilege in the last few years of my life, and the desire to do something positive with the investments people have made in me.

1) My parents, my husband, my friends. 2) Dream that underserved communities will have equal health status to resource-rich communities. 3) Principles of social justice and equality.

1) Desire for a comfortable lifestyle. 2) Pursuit of knowledge. 3) Desire to be a successful entrepreneur.

1) My mother. 2) A desire to make good on the investment that others have made when helping me. 3) A realization that happiness comes from giving.

1) I want to be financially independent. 2) I want to secure my future. 3) I want to help my younger family members in their educational needs, financially, as well as future [Ron Brown Scholar] generations.

The fact that I have already accomplished so much and that I have built the right foundation to do even more – the need to give back and make life better in communities like the ones in which I was raised, and for kids like the one I used to be.

Religion, current Social Problems, my fellow Ron Brown Scholars.

I just keep in mind why I wanted to come to this school in the first place – I want to equip myself to give a voice to the oppressed, and I believe that this level of education is the first step in that direction.

1) Sense of obligation to make a difference in the lives of others to create the types of opportunities I was fortunate enough to enjoy. 2) Sincere belief that I have the talent to make such a difference. 3) Being around other people with big ideas for how to affect our society in a positive way.

Helping to make the changes I wish to see in the world. I have come to believe that obtaining a strong base of intellectual and literal capital is the best route to this goal. The [Ron Brown Scholar] Program has played a role in informing what changes I want to see and keeping me inspired to succeed.

## ***Importance and helpfulness of Program elements and activities***

In this section, results of Scholars' ratings of the elements of the Ron Brown Scholar Program are reported. Scholars rated both the importance of Program elements and the helpfulness of the Program in various areas.

### **Scholars' ratings of the importance of Program elements**

***Finding. Program elements rated most important by Scholars were the scholarship funds, help from Program staff, relationships with other Ron Brown Scholars, and the triennial leadership conferences.***

Scholars were asked to rate each of the following eight Program elements as extremely important, very important, somewhat important, or not important:

- Scholarship funds
- Help from Program staff
- Relationships with Ron Brown Scholars
- Help obtaining pre-professional internships
- Funding for community service work
- Triennial leadership conferences
- Other Program sponsored events
- Ron Brown Scholar Alumni Association

Figure 12 indicates the percentages of all Scholars who rated each element “extremely important” and “very important,” and the sum of these two percentages. The highest rated element was the scholarship funds, with 81 percent rating it extremely important and 95 percent rating it as either very or extremely important. As reported earlier, the Ron Brown scholarship made it possible for most Scholars to attend their first-choice college. The second highest rated element was help from the Program staff, with 53 percent rating it as extremely important and 84 percent rating it as very or extremely important. A close third was relationships with other Ron Brown Scholars, with 79 percent rating it as very or extremely important. The triennial leadership conference was in fourth position, with 71 percent rating it as very or extremely important. Following that were help obtaining pre-professional internships, other Program sponsored events, the Ron Brown Scholar Alumni Association (rated only by alumni Scholars), and funding



for community service work – with 54 percent, 44 percent, 41 percent, and 34 percent, respectively, rating these elements as very or extremely important. In interpreting these ratings, it is important to keep in mind that some elements are interrelated. In particular, help from Program staff and relationships with other Scholars are broader elements that are a factor in other elements. For example, Program staff and other Ron Brown Scholars help Scholars obtain internships. Program staff may help Scholars with funding for community service work.

Scholars also had the opportunity to write in other Program elements they felt were important, and several did so (8%). These additions focused on the interpersonal bonding that occurs as part of the Program (familial or communal aspect of the support given), Friends of Ron Brown Scholars, and the networking that links Scholars to professionals and mentors. Below are a couple examples of such additions.

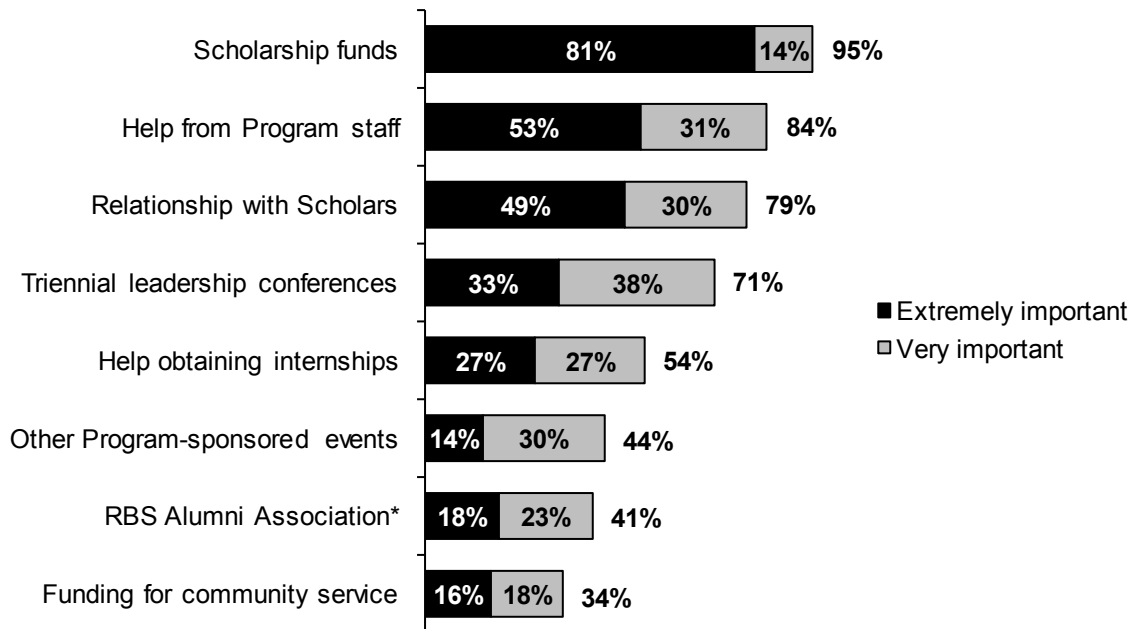
The feeling of having a support network, should you need it, and the fact that Ron Brown Scholars have more doors open to them simply because they are Ron Brown Scholars.

The continuous program support, encouragement, and ever present network. The stability of the program and the staff and [the executive director].

The ratings of the Program elements were generally very similar between current and alumni Scholars (Figure A37). The one notable difference between the two groups was for other Program sponsored events, with a higher percentage of alumni Scholars rating this element as extremely or very important compared to current Scholars (52% vs. 31%). Within the current Scholar group, the ratings of underclassmen and upperclassmen were compared. Although the ratings of these two subgroups were generally quite similar, they differed slightly on a few items (Figure A38). Underclassmen Scholars were somewhat more likely to rate the help from Program staff as extremely or very important than upperclassmen Scholars (88% vs. 79%), as well as the relationships with other Scholars (90% vs. 79%). Underclassmen were less likely to rate funding for community service as extremely or very important compared to upperclassman (23% vs. 37%).

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## 12. Scholars' views of importance of Program elements (N=221)



\* Includes only alumni Scholars.

**Notes.** 1) Response options include extremely important, very important, somewhat important, not important, don't know, or not applicable.

2) Includes all Scholars.

### Areas of Program helpfulness

**Finding.** Among those who needed help, Scholars were most likely to report receiving a lot of Program help with connecting with other Ron Brown Scholars, funding for community service, and pre-professional internship opportunities.

In a somewhat related question, Scholars rated the helpfulness of the Ron Brown Scholar Program (staff, Scholars, steering committee, friends, or others associated with the Program) in the following areas:

- Education planning or decision-making
- Connecting with professors or college personnel
- Academic help
- Connecting with other Ron Brown Scholars

- Finding leadership opportunities
- Finding pre-professional internship opportunities
- Funding for community service work or projects
- Career planning or decision-making
- Letters of recommendation for graduate/professional school or jobs
- Job search
- Personal or family issues

These areas overlap somewhat with the list of Program elements in the previous section and each other or are interrelated. For each of the 11 types of help listed, Scholars indicated whether they had received a lot of help from the Program, some, none, or not applicable/no help needed. Figure 13 excludes Scholars who indicated that the help item was not applicable/no help needed. That is, Figure 13 includes only Scholars who indicated that the help item was applicable and indicated how much Program help they received, if any. We would not expect all Scholars to have received help in each of these areas since the need for help in some of the areas would likely occur later in college or after college (e.g., letters of recommendation for graduate school or job search help), and some Scholars likely do not need the Program's help in some of the areas.

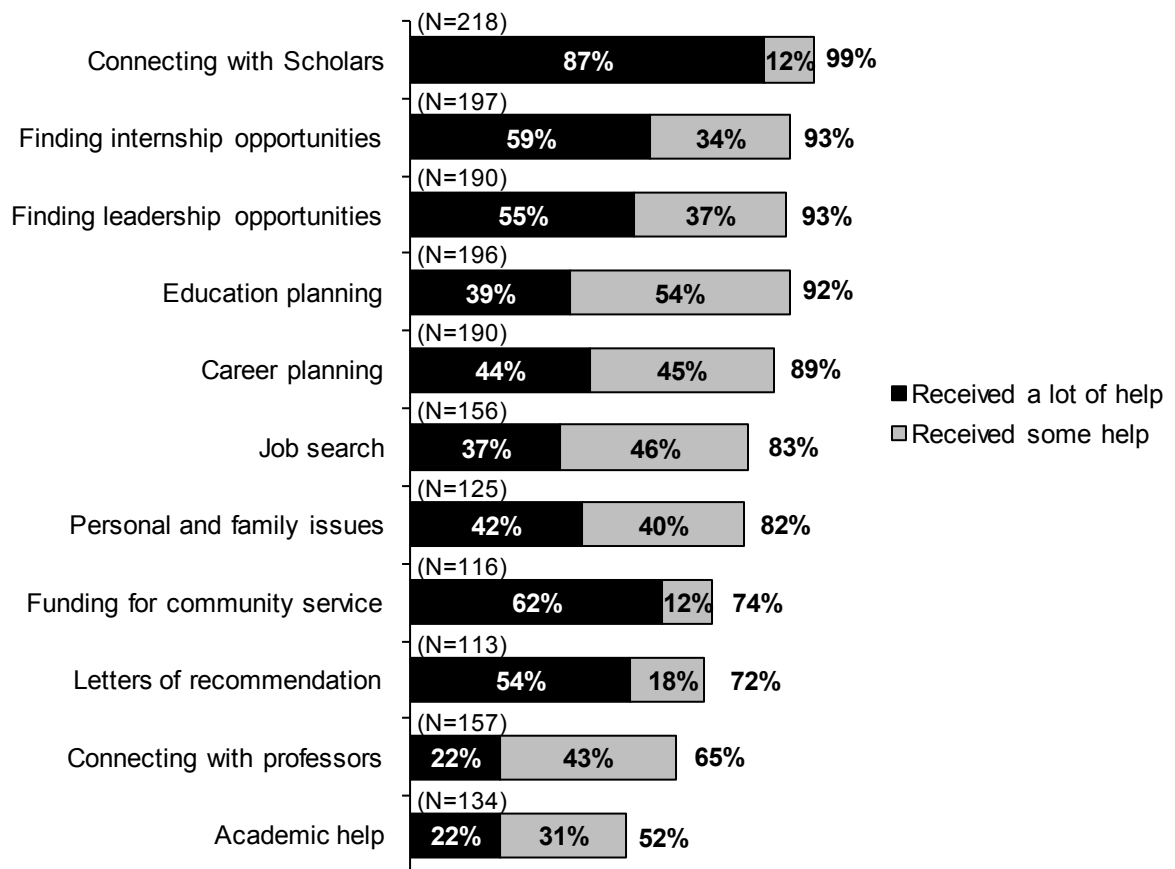
Results from Figure 13 indicate that, of the Scholars who indicated the help item was applicable, nearly all Scholars (99%) received some or a lot of the Program's help in connecting with other Ron Brown Scholars, including 87 percent who received a lot of help. Other areas where 80 percent or more of Scholars, who indicated the help item was applicable, received some or a lot of Program help were the following: pre-professional internships, leadership opportunities, education planning, career planning, job search, and personal or family issues (82%-93%). Additionally, of the Scholars who indicated the community service funding item was applicable, 62 percent reported that they had received a lot of help in this area, and about three-quarters (74%) reported they had received either a lot or some help.

Survey results also indicate that, of the Scholars who indicated that help was applicable, the Program provided help to fewer Scholars in areas more closely related to Scholars' college education, including connecting with professors and academic help. Of the Scholars who indicated the help item was applicable, 65 percent of Scholars reported that they had received a lot or some help in connecting with professors, and 52 percent of applicable Scholars received a lot or some academic help from the Program. Results are

similar across Scholar groups, although more underclassmen reported receiving help, across all help items, in comparison to upperclassmen (Figures A39-A40).

Overall, these findings suggest that the Program is providing help to most Scholars in need in areas related to providing advice, support, or guidance for future goals or endeavors (e.g., connecting with Scholars; finding internship and leadership opportunities; education and career planning). Alternatively, fewer Scholars in need are receiving Program help in direct service areas (e.g., academic help, connecting with professors).

### 13. Type and amount of Program help given to Scholars in need of it (N=113-218)



**Notes.** 1) Response options include yes, a lot; yes, some; no; don't know; or not applicable/no help needed.  
2) Excludes Scholars who indicated not applicable/no help needed or don't know on an individual help item.

## ***Scholars' perspectives and participation in Program elements and activities***

This section reports survey results on specific Program elements or activities, complementing the rating information just discussed. The results indicate Scholars' perspectives on these elements/activities and their level of participation in them. Scholars expressed their views about what they found most valuable or helpful about particular Program elements and activities. They also offered suggestions about how Program elements might be strengthened or improved.

### **Program staff help and guidance**

#### **Frequency of contact and types of help provided**

***Finding. Program staff are in regular contact with nearly all Scholars. Scholars reported that staff were especially helpful to them in obtaining internship opportunities; providing academic and career guidance and support; linking them with professionals, mentors, and each other; and providing guidance and support with personal matters as well.***

Both current and alumni Scholars were asked how frequently they are in contact with Ron Brown Scholar Program staff. About one-quarter of the Scholars reported being in contact with Program staff at least once every two weeks, about one-quarter were in contact with staff once a month, and most of the remaining Scholars were in contact with staff several times a year. Current Scholars, and particularly underclassmen, tended to be in contact with staff more often. Over 4 in 10 underclassmen were in contact with staff at least once every two weeks (Figure 14).

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#### **14. Frequency of staff contact with Scholars**

How often have you been in contact with the Ron Brown Scholar Program staff?	Current Scholars			Alumni Scholars N=143	Total N=221
	Award year 2007 & 2008 N=40	Award year 2005 & 2006 N=38	Total N=78		
At least once every two weeks	43%	29%	36%	18%	24%
Once a month	32%	39%	36%	18%	24%
Several times a year	25%	29%	27%	54%	44%
Once a year or less	-	3%	1%	10%	7%
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

Scholars were asked in what areas Program staff were especially helpful. Figure 15 shows that Scholars were helped in a variety of different ways by staff, but most revolve around the general idea of advice, guidance, and support. About 3 in 10 Scholars mentioned being helped in obtaining internship opportunities. About one in four Scholars mentioned that staff provided academic or career guidance and support (including writing letters of recommendation). A similar proportion mentioned that staff kept up with them by checking in and providing updates on other Scholars. About one in five mentioned that staff provided personal support, and about one in five mentioned that staff linked them to professionals, mentors, and friends of the Program.

## 15. Types of help from Program staff

What things have Program staff done that have been especially helpful to you? <sup>a</sup>	Current Scholars N=78	Alumni Scholars N=140	Total N=218
Identifying and setting up internship and job opportunities	36%	28%	31%
Academic or career guidance and support	24%	24%	24%
Checking in, providing updates on other Scholars	18%	27%	24%
Personal support	19%	23%	22%
Networking/linking to professionals, mentors and friends of the Program	8%	29%	21%
General advice or guidance	9%	15%	13%
Personal or social advice or guidance	6%	9%	8%
Responsiveness of staff	12%	5%	7%
Logistical, technical assistance	14%	3%	7%

<sup>a</sup> Categories developed by Wilder Research based on Scholars' responses. Scholar's responses could be placed into multiple categories.

**Note.** Other areas of staff help cited by Scholars included providing special funding for activities or help in obtaining funding (e.g., for graduate school), providing or coordinating events, and making in-person visits.

It was clear from the Scholars' comments that Program staff make extraordinary efforts to stay in touch and guide and support them as they make their way through college and into careers. The following are illustrative comments from Scholars about how staff helped them:

[Staff opened] doors for additional scholarships and educational opportunities. [Staff] really use their connections to help Scholars obtain positions, awards, etc., for which they otherwise may have been passed over. They also do the small things, such as remembering birthdays and just keeping the family-like atmosphere in the [Ron Brown Scholar] Program.

[Staff] helped me to find my first job out of college; gave me advice on academic and job-related matters; connected me with people in the [Ron Brown Scholar] network (Scholars, alumni, friends) who have been helpful with a range of issues with which I needed advice/help.

The staff are extremely resourceful. They've connected me to other Scholars and are very invested in my personal development. They have also provided links to help in my entrepreneurial endeavors.

Again, they're always an open ear/shoulder/sounding board. They call and/or email to check in. It is also great when they call to get another opinion or perspective on something related to the program. It's a really good way of making Scholars, especially alumni Scholars, feel connected to the Program.

They have referred me to mentors, helped me with internship applications, as well as made me aware of community service opportunities.

Program staff have mentored me through challenging periods in my life. They have answered questions about career planning. They have connected me to some wonderful friends of the program who have become mentors to me. My relationship with the staff goes way beyond a staff/Scholar business relationship – I consider them true friends.

They have guided me through every academic step I've taken, and they have also supported me through personal issues. The Program staff is my haven for intellectual inspiration, support and personal strength and encouragement.

[Ron Brown Scholar] staff have written letters of recommendation for jobs/internships and connected me with pre-professional internships. Also, during the summers when I did public interest internships, I received a generous stipend from the program.

They have helped me with jobs leads, navigating personal struggles, aided me with school problems, and with my personal finances.

They periodically send me personal emails or letters to ask how I'm doing and it really means a lot to have that one on one personal interaction, especially when I know they are so busy running this program. They also are there for advice for jobs or they put me in contact with people that can help me out. Everything is done in a time efficient manner also.

## **Scholarship administration**

***Finding. Most current Scholars were always or usually satisfied with the way staff handled matters pertaining to their scholarship. A few had concerns about the process for disbursement of funds.***

Current Scholars were asked if they were satisfied with the way Program staff handle things regarding their scholarship (forms, information provided, answering questions, etc.). Almost 9 in 10 (86%) reported they were usually or always satisfied, and the rest

(14%) were sometimes satisfied. No one was rarely or never satisfied (Figure A41). Those few who were sometimes satisfied were asked what things the staff could have handled better. The primary issue mentioned was the process for disbursement of funds, as illustrated by the following comments:

The whole receipt process is a bit difficult as it is hard to request exact funds and send receipts for everything. Things come up you don't expect and things may need to shift. I liked the old disbursement process a lot better.

It's very challenging having to anticipate and request money for expenses a month in advance. It's also hard to keep track of receipts for every purchase made. I wish this could change.

### **Suggestions for further Program development**

***Finding. Scholars' suggestions to Program staff for further Program development included creating an online database and networking site and doing more to facilitate mentorships.***

Both current and alumni Scholars were also asked what other things Program staff might do to help Scholars. Most Scholars (70%) did not have any suggestions or responded that things were good as currently done. Several themes emerged from those Scholars who made suggestions, and these are discussed below.

#### *Provide information online (suggested by 37 Scholars)*

Throughout the survey, a number of Scholars suggested creating an online database or secure website to provide easy access to Program-related information and to facilitate networking, mentoring, and collaboration. (At the time the survey of Scholars was being done, an online service of this kind was being launched by the Program.) A variety of ideas were offered in this area, and a few key points followed by illustrative comments are provided below.

#### **Restrict access to Scholars, staff, and friends of the Program:**

Create a private website that posts current information about Scholars (major, goals, travel plans, current job, etc.).

Utilize social networking resources such as Facebook (restricted to Scholars and alumni only-by invitation).

Maybe maintain a standing archive of internship, fellowship, and research [opportunities] on a secure part of the website.



User friendly, easy to navigate, and searchable:

Some sort of searchable database, for people in related fields or areas, like an alumni directory as well as contact information.

In addition to sorting out Scholars by their interest via affinity groups, we should keep some kind of accessible database that sorts Scholars based on discipline.

Assist in networking and relationship building (find others with similar interests, goals and experiences and create groups):

I think an online method of connecting will facilitate mentoring. RBSnet will be great value-added for this aspect of the program.

Creation of online groups based on profession/interest where people can seek out advice and people.

I think boosting the technology will just help people stay connected. So more online access to contact information and interests, etc.

Source of current information as well as an archive of past experiences (contact information; calendar of events and due dates; personal scholarship fund information; list of internship opportunities, community service projects, and graduate school information, etc.):

It might help to create a directory of all things that [Ron Brown Scholars] are involved in divided up by discipline. Everything from service, to professional opportunities, to academic disciplines etc., could be cataloged so that people could go to a centralized location to find such information. It would help when people are looking for internships, for connections in certain places, for a partner on a project of shared interest, etc. It would be wonderful in the form of a web database.

Create a directory of Friends of the Program: include name, degrees obtained, field of expertise, email address, phone number.

Maintain and upkeep a database of graduate level scholarships and grants to help Scholars when they begin to pursue higher levels of education.

Perhaps have a web portal with your scholarship account information where Scholars can check the amount of funds they have left and how much they have requested. Some type of online banking portal for your scholarship.

Make all forms available online.

Create an online calendar where Scholars can fill in due dates for various applications, and reminders for financial events like the FAFSA deadline, etc.

*More frequent check-ins or updates (suggested by 14 Scholars)*

Some Scholars wanted staff to check in with them more frequently or send more updates about the Program or other Scholars, with several recognizing this might be difficult given staff's current responsibilities. A couple of representative comments are as follows:

They could regularly check up on us when they haven't heard from us in a while. However, I am aware at how time consuming this is.

Share more information regularly, for instance when they get updates from Scholars, they can let everyone know about them.

*More facilitation of networking and mentorships (suggested by nine Scholars)*

Several other Scholars suggested that Program staff do more facilitation of networking and mentorships as illustrated by the following comments:

I think that connecting Scholars to mentors earlier and more aggressively would be a huge plus. More direct career development, especially for younger Scholars.

Continue introducing us to friends of the Program who may work/reside where we [the Scholars] go to school/live.

I wonder if there is a role for program staff to facilitate more informal connections among Scholars. For example, all the Scholars thinking of applying to law school would receive a list of all the Scholars currently enrolled in order to contact them and ask questions.

*Help in making the transition to college (suggested by five Scholars)*

A few Scholars pointed to a need for more Program assistance in making the adjustment to college, as described in the following suggestion:

I think it would be quite helpful for the staff to connect with Scholars when they first get to college and provide them with a "College 101" guide for Scholars. The guide could provide key advice for Scholars from past Scholars, including how to handle class, how to handle studying, how to balance extracurricular activities with academics, etc. Too many Scholars thrive academically in high school and then don't do as well in college. We can fix that with something like this guide.

Other Scholar suggestions included more help in career preparation and development, and more in-person staff visits, although Scholars recognized that this could be difficult because staff were already very busy.

## **Scholars' relationships**

***Finding. The Program fosters familial relationships between Scholars, staff, friends, and partners of the Program. Most Scholars have formed close friendships with other Scholars and keep in regular contact.***

The Ron Brown Scholar Program sets itself apart from other scholarship programs not only by the caliber of individuals accepted into the Program, but the relationships formed among Scholars and the greater Program community including staff, friends, and partners of the Program. The Program fosters life-long familial connectivity and a sense of belonging as well as regular individual attention from staff as just described above. Through the course of a Scholar's career, as outlined in the above sections, it is clear that the Ron Brown Scholar family plays an influential role in many major opportunities, decisions, and events.

Survey results indicate that almost all Scholars (93%) have formed close friendships with other Scholars, and two-thirds (67%) have formed three or more of these relationships (Figure A42). Scholars were then asked to indicate how often they are in contact with other Scholars on a five-point scale ranging from "daily or almost every day" to "very rarely or never." Three-quarters of all Scholars indicated that they are in contact with other Scholars at least "1-2 times a month" or more. As expected, current Scholars were in much more frequent contact than alumni Scholars; 64 percent of current Scholars were in contact with other Scholars "at least once a week" or more compared to 33 percent of alumni Scholars (Figure A43).

Examples of Scholar comments on the importance and scope of Program and Scholar relationships include the following:

Again, I have formed some of my closest friendships with Ron Brown alumni and current Scholars, staff and friends of [Ron Brown Scholars]. At every step of my career, life changes, location changes, or just to have fun, there has always been some component of [the Ron Brown Scholar Program] involved. I am constantly amazed by the continued impact of [the Ron Brown Scholar Program] on my life. All positive. Totally.

[The Ron Brown Scholar Program] is not just a scholarship program, it's a family. The founder, executive director, staff and friends of the Program all go above and beyond the call of duty to keep us connected. In addition to meeting great professional contacts, I have developed strong friendships that I will cherish for years to come. I also love that the Program is about action and collaboration, serving as a vehicle through which we can pool our resources and talents together to achieve a greater good.

I am grateful and honored to be associated with such an organization. The opportunities that I have received and will receive because of this scholarship are better than I ever could have dreamed. The [Ron Brown Scholar Program] is different than any other scholarship program because with it comes a true family, a place where I feel I can belong.

Becoming a [Ron Brown Scholar] was one of the best things to happen to me, it gave me a network of talented young Black leaders that I did not have before coming to the program.

## **Scholars' mentoring**

### **Scholars' mentor and mentee experiences**

***Finding. Most Scholars have been mentored by another Scholar or friend of the Program. Scholars highly value this mentoring and indicated that they received help in a variety of areas including career planning, internships, graduate/professional school decisions, and leadership opportunities.***

Although the Program does not currently have a formal mentoring component, the tight-knit relationships formed by Scholars, staff, and friends often resemble mentorship. Staff aside, most Scholars (87%) indicated that they have been mentored by an alumni Scholar (68%), current Scholar (33%), or friend of the Program (47%), or a combination of these people. The Scholar group with the most members receiving mentoring was the underclassmen (92%) (Figure A44). Of those Scholars who had not been mentored by a Scholar or friend, 85 percent were interested in being a mentee in the near future (Figure A45).

About 6 in 10 (62%) Scholars reported mentoring at least one other Scholar during the past year, and 36 percent have guided or advised two or more Scholars during that time. As expected, more alumni Scholars (69%) compared to current Scholars (49%) have served as mentors (Figure A46).

On a four-point scale (extremely important, very important, somewhat important, not important), nearly three-quarters (72%) of mentee Scholars indicated that the mentoring they have received from Scholars or friends has been “extremely important” or “very important” to them. About one-quarter of Scholars reported that it was “somewhat important,” and just 2 percent rated it as “not important.” Slightly more current Scholars (77%), and especially underclassmen (81%), rated the mentoring as “extremely” or “very important” in comparison to alumni Scholars (70%) (Figure A47).

Scholars who received mentoring were provided a list of areas and asked to indicate those in which they received help from their mentor(s). Most of the Scholars with mentors indicated that they received help from their mentors for career planning, pre-professional

internships, graduate/professional school exploration or decision-making, and leadership opportunities (64%-87%). About half said that they received help with community service opportunities, job searches, academic help, and personal/family issues (47%-57%). Current Scholars, especially underclassmen, were more likely to receive academic help from their mentors, while alumni Scholars were more likely to receive help with graduate/professional school decisions and job searches (Figures A48-A49).

These findings suggest that, even without a formal Program component, the Ron Brown Scholar Program promotes a robust mentoring environment.

### **Suggestions for further development**

***Finding. Many Scholars suggested the Program create a more structured mentoring component, and some Scholars also suggested the Program sponsor more events.***

In addition to their experiences regarding being a mentor or mentee, Scholars were asked if they had any suggestions for improving mentoring or strengthening connections among Scholars. Scholar responses were then grouped by theme. Over one-third of Scholars (36%) indicated that they did not have any suggestions or were satisfied with the current state. Of those who offered suggestions for improvement, two major themes emerged: a more structured mentoring component and more events, which are described below. Other response themes can be found in the Appendix (Figure A50).

#### *More structured mentoring component*

Although some Scholars prefer informal mentor relationships, about one-third of Scholar responses (32%) indicated that they would appreciate a more formal mentoring Program component, especially for Scholars who attend more isolated universities (5%). Some Scholars want higher and clearer expectations for mentors and mentees as well as greater accountability. It became clear that Scholars have different expectations of a mentor's role when they were asked how often they are in contact with their mentee. On a four-point scale ranging from "daily or almost daily" to "several times a year or less," nearly half (48%) of all Scholar mentors and 59 percent of alumni Scholar mentors indicated that they were in contact with their mentee "several times a year or less." This finding suggests that many Scholar mentors are in infrequent contact with their mentee (Figure A51).

Examples of suggestions regarding a more formal mentoring component include the following:

Consistency. I feel like when mentoring comes up, it just does randomly. It would probably [be] better to have some run point on this in a more structured way from year-to-year. Additionally, when I was assigned a mentee, no one checked in on us to make sure the relationship was going well, etc.

Perhaps consider assigning mentors from a volunteer pool of older/alumni Scholars to incoming Scholars during selection weekend, this would need a bit of streamlining, but it would keep older Scholars involved with and connected to the incoming classes. Perhaps pair up by class, i.e., the class of 2000 mentors the incoming class of 2010, etc.

Have mentor requirements (perhaps even a "contract") where mentors agree to make a monthly call, meet 2-4 times a year if possible with his or her mentee. Also reminders to keep in touch with your mentee as well as suggestions about how to do it would be helpful.

I think that it is difficult for those students who attend schools which are not very highly populated by Ron Brown Scholars. Having a Ron Brown Scholar put in charge of communication within geographical regions would greatly increase the amount of contact that we would have with one another. This would serve as motivation to keep in touch with people in our area, as opposed to simply relying on those Scholars from our respective classes.

Maybe more structured events – like outings specifically designed as bonding moments for mentors and mentees.

### *More events of any kind*

About one-quarter (26%) of Scholar responses indicated that Scholars are looking for more opportunities to connect and network with each other. Most Scholars indicated that they would like more regional, affinity, social, and community service events, conferences, and retreats. Examples of event-related suggestions include:

It would be great if there were more [Ron Brown Scholar] sponsored gatherings in cities where Scholar concentration is high supplemented with smaller dinners in areas where there are fewer Scholars.

I would suggest more contact or events that engage all the Ron Brown Scholars. Networking seems to be very useful and the way to foster relationships in order to take advantage of this huge network is to get to know each other.

Create/strengthen mentoring relationships between Scholars/Alumni within affinity groups (Education, Business, etc).

More Scholar/alumni networking events or weekend retreats organized. If there are more events per year (increased frequency) even if they are not regional, perhaps more Scholars who are super busy with inflexible schedules will be able to attend.

More events and conferences, such as the conferences held every three years. Service projects that we could do as a group. More localized events for Scholars in the same regions.

More opportunities to meet up (informally or otherwise). Updates on what Scholar's are doing over email. Continuing to build our community that we've strengthened offline, online, as well!

## **Program events including the triennial leadership conference**

### **Attendance**

***Finding.** Over 8 in 10 Scholars reported attending Program events at least once a year. Most current Scholars and about half of the alumni Scholars attended the 2008 Triennial Leadership Conference.*

As part of the survey, Scholars were asked how often they attend Program events (such as regional events) and whether they attended the 2008 Triennial Leadership Conference. They were also asked what they found most valuable about Program events and whether they had any suggestions for improving such events.

Over one-third (36%) of the Scholars reported attending Program events several times per year, about half (48%) reported attending once a year, and 16 percent reported attending very infrequently or never (Figure 16). Alumni Scholars were more likely to attend very infrequently compared to current Scholars (20% and 9%, respectively).

About 6 in 10 (61%) Scholars reported attending the 2008 Triennial Leadership Conference (see Figure 17). Most current Scholars attended (83%), while about half of the alumni Scholars attended (48%).

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### **16. Attendance at Ron Brown Scholar Program events**

<b>How often have you attended Ron Brown Scholar Program events or meetings?</b>	<b>Current Scholars N=77</b>	<b>Alumni Scholars N=143</b>	<b>Total N=220</b>
Several times a year	33%	37%	36%
Once a year	58%	43%	48%
Very infrequently or never	9%	20%	16%
Total	100%	100%	100%

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### **17. Attendance at 2008 Triennial Leadership Conference**

<b>Did you attend the 2008 Triennial Leadership Conference in Charlottesville, Virginia this past August?</b>	<b>Current Scholars N=78</b>	<b>Alumni Scholars N=143</b>	<b>Total N=221</b>
Yes	83%	48%	61%
No	17%	52%	39%
Total	100%	100%	100%

## Most valuable aspects of Program events

***Finding. The most valued aspect of Program events was the opportunity to connect, bond, and network with other Scholars and members of the Program community. Scholars also valued the inspiration and learning they gained from these events.***

Scholars were asked what they find most valuable about attending Program events. Major themes in their responses are shown in Figure 18. Most of the Scholars (75%) valued connecting or reconnecting with other Scholars and the Ron Brown Scholar Program community (familial or communal bonding). The next most frequent theme in their answers was networking with mentors, professionals, and friends of the Program (mentioned by 38% of the Scholars). Another frequent theme in what they found most valuable was being energized and inspired through their participation in the event or conference (mentioned by 22%). Some Scholars (16%) valued the learning that occurred from their participation (exposure to new topics and initiatives, or the exchange of ideas). Some of the Scholars valued the renewed commitment to service and issues of social importance they gained from attending (8%).

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### 18. Most valuable aspect of Program events

**What do you find most valuable about attending Ron Brown Scholar Program events or meetings?<sup>a</sup> (N=213)**

	Number	Percent
Connecting/reconnecting with other Scholars and the RBSP community	159	75%
Networking with professionals, mentors, and friends of the Program	80	38%
Being energized and inspired	46	22%
Learning – exposure to new topics and initiatives, exchange of ideas	35	16%
Committing to service, social change	18	8%
Reminder of Program mission & vision, value of one, power of all	15	7%

<sup>a</sup> Categories developed by Wilder Research based on Scholars' responses. Scholars' responses could be placed in multiple categories.

Below is a sampling of Scholars' responses regarding what they found most valuable about Program events, most including several of the themes just described.

Maintaining close relationships with Scholars and Alumni; getting advice on work, school, etc.; being inspired to continue to succeed (by seeing the range of successes of others in the program); being inspired to continue to stay involved in the community.

Re-connecting with Scholars and being inspired about what they are doing/working on. We are now getting to the point where people have significant careers and are able to really start collaborating to make change happen.



Learning about new topics not specific to my professional interests. Meeting new people (new Scholars and friends of the program). Getting energized and motivated by hearing about what others are doing or getting involved in. Having a good time with people who have goals and a vision like you. Feeling proud of other young Black people doing well. Seeing other successful Black people and knowing they want you to succeed too and invest their time and effort in you.

Engaging in the series of invigorating lectures, networking with the community of Scholars and prominent supporters of the Program. I consider everyone involved in the Program to be my FAMILY.

Relationship building – this leads inevitably to mentoring and leadership skills building and support in personal crises, etc.

The opportunity to see all of the Scholars, hear updates, and be re-inspired by the program and people who have been such a positive force in my adult life. Also, having the opportunity to give what knowledge I have to those Scholars younger than myself and passing on the inspiration I have received from the members of this Scholar program.

The opportunity to re-connect with other Scholars and feel that sense of community again; just being around such talented and ambitious individuals is a chance to be re-energized and spurred on to achieve even more. As time has progressed and Scholars have progressed up the career ladder, it has become more and more useful as a professional networking circle as well.

Connecting with other Scholars and [Program staff]; the Scholars are a wonderful bunch of people, and it's good to see old friends I haven't seen in a while, also it's nice to feel understood and socially connected as I always feel at Scholar gatherings.

I feel that the networking and sense of family are the most important aspects of these meetings. You are together with some of the country's best and brightest students and also in the company of some amazing guests and speakers.

Learning more about other Scholars and how the Program is developing and improving; being energized and inspired by other Scholars, staff and friends of the Program; spending time with people who have a diversity of talents, interests, opinions, experiences and goals, but are all committed to leadership and service.

I find the opportunity to connect with other Scholars that one wouldn't see otherwise most valuable. Building relationships within our community is very important. That is what will keep the program going.

## Suggestions for improving Program events

***Finding. Many Scholars suggested having fewer speakers at the triennial leadership conference and more time for interacting and networking, and for discussion sessions. Some Scholars also suggested making the conference more attractive to alumni, including having more alumni Scholars as speakers.***

Slightly over half the Scholars (116 of 221) offered suggestions for improving Program events. Themes that emerged from their suggestions are described below (and summarized in Figure A52).

*Less structured time and fewer speakers; more time for interacting, networking, and discussion sessions (suggested by 49 Scholars)*

It appeared that Scholars' suggestions primarily referred to the triennial leadership conference. By far, the leading suggestion Scholars offered was to have less structured time or fewer lectures/presentations and more time for socializing and networking with those in attendance, as well as more discussion sessions. Examples of such suggestions are as follows:

Suggestion for the next Leadership Conference: include fewer keynote speakers, and give the Scholars more opportunities to workshop/converse/debate/mingle together in smaller groups. This, I found, was often the best way for me to learn and to get to know the Scholars in other class years.

More break-out sessions. They were quite engaging and afforded the Scholars to get to know each other intellectually as well as socially.

I thought the conference this summer was awesome. It was definitely one of the highlights of the year. At times, it was a little like drinking from a fire hose, though. I might have gotten more out of it if there had been a little more free time in order for the Scholars to refresh themselves before attending another lecture. It's hard to receive so much input in such a short amount of time and actually implement it in our lives.

Again, more time for informal interactions. This can still be structured around a topic, but less of a presenter-attendee type structure and more of a discussion structure would be beneficial.

More free time for Scholars to just get to know each other.

*Hold more Program-sponsored events (suggested by 24 Scholars)*

Some Scholars wanted Program events to be held more frequently. This included the conference and smaller events, especially the regional events.

*Vary the location of the conference or other meetings (suggested by 11 Scholars)*

Some Scholars suggested that the conference or other Program sponsored events be held (or continue to be held) in varying locations around the country, as the following comments indicate:

I think continuing to move the meetings around the country is beneficial and makes it more accessible to Scholars spread throughout the country.

An attempt to vary the location of events as much as possible, so as many Scholars can come as possible.

*Make conferences more appealing to alumni Scholars (suggested by 10 Scholars)*

Some Scholars suggested making the triennial leadership conference more appealing to the interests and concerns of alumni Scholars as indicated by the following comments:

At the triennial gatherings, the Alumni should have a different focus/emphasis than current Scholars.

In terms of the conference, there has got to be parallel programming for the alumni that is aligned with our current life stages, and programming that allows people to bring their kids and spouses. I personally want my kids to grow up knowing the kids of my fellow Scholars. I think that would increase alumni turnout, so it's more of a retreat for us than a conference. But the alumni-Scholar interaction must be mandatory with competitions and the family group sessions.

More events for alumni (expanding outside of academia and going into more personal issues – for example, how does one balance the quest for success with their personal life).

Related to this theme, several Scholars suggested inviting more Scholars, particularly alumni Scholars, to speak at the conference, as the following remarks indicate:

Fewer sponsored speakers and more alumni giving talks.

Continue to have alumni Scholars involved and taking the lead on presenting, mentoring, etc.

More opportunities for us to learn from and support each other – more Scholars on panels and team building/collaborative activities.

*Provide more diversity in conference sessions or more emphasis on social issues (suggested by 10 Scholars)*

Several Scholars wanted sessions focused on specific career or personal interests. A couple of others wanted to see more diversity in the topics and perspectives offered at the conference, with more emphasis on social issues. The following suggestions illustrate this view:

More diverse workshops/activities. Increased focus on activism, politics, gender/sexuality in the Black community.

Include a broader range of perspectives. These events and the friends of the program who are asked to attend them tend to over-represent corporate interests. More interaction with activist organizations, social movement leaders, or community organizations would be appreciated.

Finally, other suggestions include the following: encourage better attendance at the conference, have a longer conference, hold the conference at different times during the year, provide more financial support to attend the conference, include sessions on practical topics (e.g., money management), and have a more focused theme for the conference.

### **Ron Brown Scholar Alumni Association**

***Finding. Most alumni Scholars have attended an Alumni Association meeting. They participate in the Association to stay connected with fellow alumni, support or mentor other Scholars, support philanthropic and social causes, and give back to the Program.***

Most alumni Scholars (84%) reported that they had attended a meeting or other function of the Ron Brown Scholar Alumni Association. When asked the reasons why they participate in the Alumni Association (from a set of reasons provided), almost all (98%) indicated that they attend to stay connected with other alumni Scholars, 73 percent attend to support or mentor other Scholars, and 61 percent attend to support philanthropic or social causes (Figure 19). (Scholars could check multiple reasons.) Scholars could also specify other reasons beyond the three listed. Several Scholars offered another reason. The main theme of these other reasons was to give back or support the Program as illustrated in the following comment:

Because this program has given me so much, I want to give back and participate as much as possible. We are a family and family supports each other.

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## 19. Participation in the Ron Brown Scholar Program Alumni Association

		Yes	No	Total
Have you attended meetings or other functions of the Ron Brown Scholar Alumni Association?	Number	114	22	136
	Percent	84%	16%	100%
IF YES, why do you participate in the Alumni Association? (N=113)				Percent <sup>a</sup>
To stay connected with other alumni/ae				98%
To support or mentor Ron Brown Scholars				73%
To support philanthropic and social causes				61%
Other reasons <sup>b</sup>				12%

<sup>a</sup> Scholars could choose more than one reason for participating.

<sup>b</sup> The primary reason mentioned was to “give back” or support the Program.

### Community Service Foundation

***Finding. Scholars suggested that the newly-formed Community Service Foundation could improve its effectiveness by increasing its visibility, encouraging and facilitating collaboration on community service projects, strengthening the accountability system for funded projects, and providing more information about funded projects to Scholars.***

Scholars were asked if they had suggestions for making the newly-formed Community Service Foundation more effective. Suggestions were provided by 138 of the 221 (62%) Scholars who completed the survey. Themes that emerged from their suggestions are discussed below (and summarized in Figure A53).

#### *Increase visibility of the Foundation (suggested by 43 Scholars)*

The leading theme in the suggestions offered by Scholars was to increase the publicity and visibility for the Foundation and the grant application process. Examples of suggestions in this area are as follows:

Make the foundation as visible as possible early on in the Scholars' college careers (i.e., encourage them to seek funding for projects they start at school). This could help them become community service entrepreneurs and establish sustainable projects that can survive after they graduate.

Continue publicizing grant process/due dates and writing about how Scholars have used the funds in the newsletter (these stories are very inspiring).

Send literature about it, not just emails. Also, provide different deadlines for the year at one time. Finally, provide examples of projects that earned funding.

*Encourage collaboration on community service projects (suggested by 30 Scholars)*

The next most frequent theme was to help Scholars collaborate with each other or to encourage collaboration with other organizations in developing projects. Examples of suggestions in this area included the following:

Connect Scholars who have similar proposals so they can collaborate on projects.

Try to get groups of Scholars to work together on proposals (as it is easier to do something in groups than individually, given our hectic lifestyles). Provide information on best practices and other (non-Ron Brown) service projects going on to provide inspiration and reference.

Push Scholars to apply for funding by suggesting possible ideas, helping to network Scholars together at the same schools so that it can be a team of Ron Brown Scholars rather than just independent work.

Promote communication and collaboration amongst Scholars, and between [the Ron Brown Scholar Program] and other scholarship programs.

They should encourage collaborations with existing non-profits or enlist an older Scholar with that kind of experience.

Encourage Scholars to work with existing organizations within local communities to ensure a more sustainable and grassroots approach to social issues; mandate that all community service programs have a plan for sustainability.

Allow grants for projects done in collaboration with existing organizations or projects.

Collaboration among Scholars on projects was already occurring quite frequently according to other information in the survey. About one-quarter of the Scholars reported that they had collaborated with other Scholars on a community service project, with alumni Scholars being more likely to have done so than current Scholars (29% and 14%, respectively). Of those that indicated they had collaborated with other Scholars, 22 percent said they were doing so at present (Figure A54). The fields in which projects were initiated varied widely, with education being the most frequent field, followed by research and policy (Figure A55). Examples of the collaborative projects of Scholars are provided in Figure A56. Among those Scholars who had not collaborated on a project, more than 8 in 10 indicated that they would be interested in doing so (Figure A57).

*Strengthen the accountability system for projects (suggested by 26 Scholars)*

The third most frequent theme was strengthening the accountability system and guidelines for projects. Scholars' comments in this area included the following:

[Provide] strict guidelines and follow-through and check-ups. Maybe require write-ups and a progress-checking system for each project.

Keep track of and evaluate the effectiveness of each project; encourage projects among affinity groups; highlight Scholars work on the website and internally to other Scholars.

Focus on projects that can bring measurable results.

The Foundation should focus on quantifiable deliverables, i.e., number of people helped, grade improvement, volunteer hours donated, partnerships developed, etc. If I am correct in assuming that the Foundation solicits funding from other organizations, it is important for the CSF to be able to provide reports on the specific outcomes of the projects beyond anecdotes.

Have advisory teams of Scholars interested in the area of the project serve as a mini-board to oversee the use of the funds.

*Provide more information on funded projects (suggested by 22 Scholars)*

Another frequent suggestion of Scholars was to provide more information on projects that have been funded as the following comments illustrate:

After a project is complete it should be logged so that the details of the project can be reviewed, helping other Scholars see how they might be effective in their own community.

[Provide a] website with plenty of examples of what has been done and how it turned out along with space for discussion about what is being considered and how other Scholars could help.

*Provide technical assistance (suggested by 11 Scholars)*

Some Scholars saw a need for providing technical assistance to those interested in developing projects or to those implementing projects:

Help Scholars who want to do something but don't know how to funnel their passion into a concrete initiative.

Ron Brown Scholars are hosting a workshop on entrepreneurship – if we could arrange a similar workshop focused on effective and innovative service projects that might inspire Scholars to lead their own projects.

Work closely with Scholars to help make the initiatives successful.

### *Suggest problems that need solutions (suggested by eight Scholars)*

Several Scholars wanted the Program to provide examples of problems in need of solutions to stimulate thinking and discussion as reflected in the comments below.

When CSF sends messages to solicit applications, include ideas for possible projects to get people thinking about project areas, scope.

Provide case studies for which Scholars design solutions and strategies to implement those solutions; organize service projects through our Program partnerships.

As the program develops, report out on what the Scholars accomplished through their projects to inspire others. Another way to go might be to have a "challenge" or "theme" during every other round of funding to get Scholars to work together to serve and focus on a particular social issue/challenge.

### *Other suggestions*

Finally, other suggestions included provide more funding for projects (10 Scholars) and encouraging more participation in community service projects, especially among younger Scholars (nine Scholars).

## ***Overall Program influence on Scholars***

***Finding. Scholars indicated that the Program had a major influence on their goals and aspirations, motivation, commitment to community service, support system, educational opportunities, and pre-professional and career opportunities.***

Scholars were asked in what ways being a Ron Brown Scholar had influenced their current activities or future plans. Major themes in their answers included the following:

- Commitment to community service (44%) – the Program instilled or reinforced the importance of community service or “giving back” and social consciousness.
- Goals and aspirations (36%) – the Program helped Scholars determine their plans for the future, and encouraged them to set their sights high with regard to what they could accomplish.
- Supportive community (31%) – Scholars had access to the Ron Brown Scholar Program “family” or “community” which provided them with personal, educational, and career support and guidance.



- Pre-professional and career opportunities (13%) – through the Program’s assistance, Scholars gained valuable experiences (internships, study abroad, and jobs) that contributed to their personal growth and career development.
- Inspiration and motivation (12%) – through the Program, Scholars gained inspiration and motivation to pursue challenging goals and big dreams.
- Educational opportunities (8%) – the scholarship funds and other financial support provided by the Program have opened-up educational opportunities for the Scholars.

Figure 20 indicates the number of Scholars whose responses fell into each of the categories listed above. The responses of many Scholars touched on two or more of these categories as the following response illustrates:

It has provided a supportive and rich environment for me to grow as a professional and a human being. Being exposed to all these amazing, accomplished people has pushed me to want to excel even more and give back a little of what has been offered me. The program encourages and fosters excellence and makes you want to live up to that standard.

## 20. Program influences on Scholars

Ways being a Ron Brown Scholar have influenced their current activities and future plans <sup>a</sup> (N=187)	Number	Percent
Instilled or reinforced commitment to community service	82	44%
Helped to set goals; raised their aspirations	67	36%
Became part of a special, supportive community	57	31%
Provided access to pre-professional and career opportunities	24	13%
Provided inspiration and motivation	22	12%
Provided educational opportunities through financial support	15	8%

<sup>a</sup> Categories developed by Wilder Research based on Scholars’ responses. Scholars responses could be placed in multiple categories. The percentage of current and alumni Scholars whose responses fell in each category were similar.

We turn to considering Scholars’ comments in each of these areas of influence.

### Commitment to community service

Scholars indicated that they had been influenced by the Program’s emphasis on community service and the legacy of Ron Brown. Community service grants have also helped to reinforce this Program value. Some Scholars indicated that they felt a sense of responsibility to “give back” because so much had been given to them through the Program. Some Scholars mentioned more specifically how their commitment to

community service has shaped their career plans. The following comments of Scholars illustrate these influences:

I always want to give back, and [the] Ron Brown [Scholar Program] has made this such a central tenant of the program that it continually reminds me and motivates me to serve my community.

[The] Ron Brown [Scholar Program] gives me a sense of obligation/duty to make a difference in the lives of others, just as they have done for me.

I have not only my own legacy to think of but that of Ron Brown and all of the other Scholars with whom I share this honor. The programs deep commitment to service and leadership, in addition to academic excellence, was influential in me getting an education degree and in my long term interest in education and business and creating opportunities for under-served groups to thrive. My personal path to that is through focusing on creating opportunities in leadership and entrepreneurship.

I think I have learned from other Scholars that it's important to keep sight of a broader goal and a broader community, and that we can creatively pursue those things through various channels, in concert with other like-minded people.

The program gave me the opportunity to manifest my passion for service in a concrete and fulfilling way through the community service foundation grant. I was able to start a project which evolved into a non-profit. Working on my non-profit community service organization has been enriching in many respects.

It's important to understand that the world is not ethical or fair to everyone individually, and it's necessary to find out who might benefit from special attention and concern, and to provide it.

I think it's motivated me to become more interested in areas of medicine that disproportionately affect blacks and other minorities and where there's still a lot of work to be done.

I have become a teacher because the Ron Brown Scholar Program instilled in me the passion for great intellectual achievement and great community service.

[The Ron Brown Scholar Program] pushed me towards doing something with more of a social consciousness bent, rather than being a traditional engineer.

## **Goals and aspirations**

The Program helped Scholars to make plans and decisions about their education and career, as the following responses illustrate:

Early experiences and connections led me to pursue research and premed opportunities as an undergraduate.

It was only through the [Ron Brown Scholar Program] that I found my passion to work in the business of entertainment.

The Ron Brown Scholar Program introduced me to my current career and I love it.

Furthermore, the Program staff, other Scholars, or friends of the Program have raised Scholars' expectations for what they can accomplish, and encouraged Scholars to dream big and set ambitious goals. The Program does this, in part, through the examples of successful alumni Scholars and friends of the Program. Some of the Scholars' comments in this regard are as follows:

It has impelled me to dream higher.

[The Ron Brown Scholar Program] has helped me realize the scope of the impact that I can make and that I shouldn't underestimate my abilities.

Being a Ron Brown Scholar has shown me that anything truly is possible if you put your mind to it. I have been introduced and exposed to great role models, mentors and figures who have achieved so much that I no longer feel like I can't do something, simply because I don't have the resources to do it.

I definitely see how possible it is to be very successful in some of the most high-powered fields even as a Black female.

It helped me to consider myself as excellent and recognize my potential. I elevated my own expectations for myself and realized the scope of the world.

It has raised the bar of what I could accomplish by providing real examples of people with similar backgrounds to mine who had already accomplished amazing goals.

## **Support system**

By receiving the Ron Brown scholarship, Scholars became part of a special community that includes current and alumni Scholars, Program staff, and friends of the Program. This community, or "family" as many Scholars referred to it, provides a supportive foundation for Scholars in their journey through college, into graduate school and careers, and likely on to leadership positions in a variety of fields. Significantly, it enables Scholars to develop strong relationships with other young, talented African Americans with similar values and aspirations. Being a member of such a community is both uplifting and a source of ongoing support, as the following Scholar comments indicate:

[I am] part of a community of gifted, young Black people committed to their community. Prior to the Ron Brown Scholar Program I had not had meaningful relationships with so many people from similar backgrounds, with similar gifts, and similar commitment to the future.

It has shown me that there is a strong supportive network out there for me.

Being a Ron Brown Scholar has shown me that there are talented, motivated young Black people working hard to positively influence the world. They're not just on television and in the newspaper, they're a part of my life.

I have met people that I now consider family and together we will help change the world through all of the programs with which Ron Brown is involved. I realized through becoming a Ron Brown Scholar that I must help to give people the chance to realize their potential like the Ron Brown [Scholar Program] did for me.

[I] feel that I am anchored in a strong community of young Black folks who are doing great things; not always as connected as [I] should be, but [it] helps to know that you are not alone.

I have come to see the value in my heritage where, for a time, I had only seen it as a handicap. The Ron Brown Scholar Program allows me to see the best in the African-American community and remember not to be afraid of success.

### **Pre-professional and career opportunities**

Scholars indicated that the opportunities they had gained through the Program contributed to their career development and success to date. That is, it afforded them access to the education, people, and pre-professional experiences that furthered their career goals, as the following Scholar comments illustrate:

Being a [Ron Brown Scholar] allowed me to get the appropriate education and internship opportunities necessary for success in my field. It has also created a network of intelligent, successful, BLACK, young professionals from which I continually learn.

Being a [Ron Brown Scholar] is very impressive and I feel that it has helped me get my foot in the door or has allowed my foot to "stay in the room." I'm not certain that I would be where I am in my career if not for the [Ron Brown Scholar Program].

The Ron Brown Scholar [Program] has fostered meeting opportunities with journalists that have been the foundation for my career, and cheered me along to pursue my dreams when I didn't believe in myself.

Through [the Ron Brown Scholar Program] I was able to get internships that helped me pinpoint my interests and goals.

Being in this program showed me opportunities and jobs I did not know existed and introduced me to people with similar goals and interests. It also reminds me that I have a support system and network that is there to help if I need or want it.

I am extremely involved with the program now because I see how it can have a dramatically positive impact on my life. I just moved to a new city, and [the Ron Brown Scholar Program] has helped me find a job, grow my social networks, and will give me opportunities for leadership in my work and community service.

## **Inspiration and motivation**

Scholars indicated that the Program, and especially the successes of other Scholars, has inspired them to put aside their doubts and pursue their dreams and passions. Sample comments on this theme are as follows:

It has motivated me to believe that I can achieve my dreams.

With being a Scholar comes an expectation of excellence. This helps to drive me.

Being around other Scholars inspires me to pursue the things that I am passionate about, and to not give up on the direction I want my life to go in.

[The Ron Brown Program] provided a source of encouragement and inspiration when I doubted my ability to complete my path.

I love the program because it exposes us to higher education in a way that lets Black students know that they can and will be successful in college and beyond.

Ron Brown Scholars are all passionate about their pursuits, and all go on to do incredibly varied and interesting things. I've been inspired by fellow Scholars to discover my own passion, and have been exposed to various alternative professional paths by other Scholars.

When I see the incredible things that other Scholars have done (and are doing), I'm encouraged to broaden my focus and consider what I can do. I am inspired [by] our successes despite the difficulties of our lives before college.

## **Educational opportunities through financial support**

The Ron Brown scholarship increased the options available to Scholars in choosing a college. It also enabled them to focus more fully on their studies by not having to work as much at a paid job and by not having to be so concerned about their finances.

Examples of Scholars' comments in this regard are as follows:

It has allowed me to consider programs regardless of the cost.

I have been more able to explore my academic interests because I did not have to worry about loans and debt and working to afford school.

The [Ron Brown Scholar] Program has first and foremost provided the financial security necessary for finances to not be a deciding factor in my academic decisions. I have been able to push myself academically, working less and devoting more time to school work. The Ron Brown Scholar program has also introduced me to many new people and diverse career options that I wouldn't have otherwise even imagined existed.

The support given to me, both financially and professionally, have helped me reached my goal of going to medical school and becoming a doctor.

## ***Other comments about the Program***

***Finding. In their final comments about the Program, Scholars especially focused on the unique and supportive family that this scholarship program has created. They also emphasized the life-changing impact of the Program on their aspirations, relationships, opportunities, and accomplishments.***

Scholars were asked if they had any final thoughts about the Program. Overall, Scholars were extremely enthusiastic about the Program and the positive impact it has had on their lives. Scholars used such terms as amazing, wonderful, excellent, phenomenal, fantastic, great, incredible, and awesome to describe the Program. They mentioned many of the Program features and influences highlighted throughout the report. They especially emphasized the unique and supportive “family” of which they are a part of by virtue of being a Ron Brown Scholar, and the life-changing effects of the opportunities and experiences gained through the Program. Many saw the Program as different from any other scholarship program because of the family or communal aspect – that is, the bonds between the Scholars themselves, as well as the bonds between the Scholars and staff and friends of the Program. Frequent themes in their comments about the Program included the following:

- Life-changing with regard to becoming part of the Ron Brown family, a unique network of supportive relationships
- Life-changing with regard to how they view themselves and their potential
- Life-changing with regard to the doors that have been opened to them
- Gratitude, appreciation, and thankfulness for being part of the Program
- Feeling proud, honored, and privileged to be a Ron Brown Scholar
- Being inspired and motivated to set ambitious goals and pursue them
- Extraordinary Program staff attention and dedication to the Scholars’ success and well-being
- The Program scholarship or other financial assistance having a major impact on their progress and accomplishments to date
- Strong affection for the Program (“I love it!”) and an interest in giving back to it

Examples of the Scholars' comments are provided below. Most of the comments touch on a number of the themes just described.

Without the guidance, love and encouragement of my Ron Brown Family, I would have settled for the world's standard of excellence. But with such a strong history rooted in Mr. Brown's legacy, I will always reach for the highest possible heights. Without the financial assistance, getting to where I am now would have been a much tougher road to travel. I thank God for them, and cannot wait for the day when I can truly thank them for what they have done for me.

I am enormously proud to be part of this community and have no doubt that we will change the world, collectively and individually – I have already started to see this, from campus life at Stanford to the halls of the Supreme Court.

This Program has changed my life for the better. [The Program Executive Director and Associate Director] and the whole team work tirelessly for us, and we are all so grateful. I thank God for this family that works together and builds each other up so that we might all reach our full potential.

The Program is truly life changing. The resources (financial, personal, and network-related) behind the program are just un-paralleled. It truly brings out the best in people who are already amazing!

This Program is unquestionably value-added in the lives of Scholars and opens doors for highly qualified students that just need resources and access. This Program changes lives.

It's great. The money is the initial attractor for many, I would guess (me included). And the money is incredibly useful – it gives you more time to focus on your studies/future plans and to catch up to others in your college class who were more fortunate and went to better high schools. But I would give the money up in a heartbeat if I had to choose between it and the relationships/network I have.

It really is phenomenal. The money isn't even the greatest part for me. The staff is encouraging, genuine, and helpful. They have made a scholarship foundation into a family.

The network that the [Program founders and staff] have developed and nurtured is extremely unique and special. It is awesome to realize that all of us are just at the beginning of our careers, have these wonderful bonds, and will continue to be a growing, positive, strengthening leadership force in the US. This program was wonderfully conceived and will truly do some great things in the future, this is just the beginning!

The Program really widened my horizons and provided a group of life-long friends and colleagues. Before I was selected as a Ron Brown Scholar, I had never had the opportunity to engage other African American youth who possessed a similar intellectual curiosity and many of the same values and interests as me. This newfound camaraderie was particularly important to me as I made the transition from an inner-city public high school to an Ivy League university.

I love the Program because it exposes us to higher education in a way that lets Black students know that they can and will be successful in college and beyond.

It's simply amazing. Whenever I reflect upon my life, I feel like I am a truly blessed individual. The Ron Brown Scholar Program is nothing short of a miracle for me. More than just supplying resources such as networking and finances, it has definitely bolstered my self-confidence. I am so lucky to have this program in my life. I thank God everyday for it.

I love the Program. [The Ron Brown Scholar Program] goes far beyond financial support. There isn't any other scholarship program that plays such an influential role in my life. It's such a personal program, and I really do feel like I'm part of a family.

The beauty of the Ron Brown Scholar Program is that its true potential has yet to be achieved. The network grows every year, and as the Scholars grow and learn and accomplish more they become more capable of empowering one another.

I love the Program and its leaders. The idea behind the program to create a connected group of motivated leaders to help tackle current and future issues is starting to take shape. I look forward to the successful collaborations in the future!



# Issues to consider

This section discusses several issues that emerged from the survey results. Many of the issues in this section are related to specific Program development suggestions discussed above in the *Scholars' perspectives and participation in Program elements and activities* section (pages 47-66). However, efforts were made to minimize overlap between these sections so staff and directors may want to consider issues from both sections in future Program planning and development.

## *Increasing the capacity to meet Scholars' needs*

The Program values the ability to give individual attention to each Scholar and fosters a sense of connectivity among Scholars and the larger Program community. Indeed, this is one of the Program's greatest strengths. Although Scholars praised the staff for often going above and beyond to meet Scholars needs, others have recognized that the staff may have already over-extended themselves. With an additional 12 to 20 Scholars added each year, coupled with increasingly divergent needs related to differing stages of personal and career development, providing a high level of service to all Scholars is quickly becoming an issue of concern. Program staff will likely need to prioritize and delegate responsibilities or hire additional staff in the near future. Members of the Program community may be able to take on a more formal volunteer role with clear guidelines. Otherwise, Scholars who suggested the Program add additional staff proposed that the Program do so based on topical area, Scholar status, or geography. Illustrative Scholar comments include the following:

The staff, overall, does a great job given the diverging interests and size of the Scholar group.

I honestly believe that the staff has almost over-extended themselves in their effort to keep the Scholars connected.

Additional staff is necessary to keep up with growing number of Scholars.

Have a paid staff member in charge of [mentoring and Scholar connections].

I think there could be a program staff member that is solely focused on alumni Scholars.

We need regional satellite offices (coordinators) to keep/build our bonds.

If another staff member were available, perhaps send out program updates slightly more frequently (weekly/bimonthly).

## ***Strengthening communications and connections***

Throughout the survey, Scholars indicated a desire for more communication and contact from the Program. Although Scholars are generally quite satisfied with the services they currently receive, they still want more email check-ins and updates, in-person visits, events, and online opportunities to search for people and pre-professional experiences. Certainly, a number of these requests were mentioned in the earlier Program development section (pages 50-52). Some Scholars indicated a desire to feel more connected to the Program and recommended that further communication and contact, overall would be helpful in this pursuit. Scholars are also interested in more opportunities for connection and networking with each other. They recommended having more opportunities to do this at Program-sponsored events such as the triennial conference, as described earlier (pages 60-62). Examples of Scholar comments regarding a desire for greater contact and communication follow:

I think there should be greater focus on keeping people connected and teaching us how to stay connected despite how busy we are.

Provide scholarship status reports more often.

My only suggestion would be to have more reunions across various geographies.

Investing in technology to connect Scholars. The program has been doing a good job given the resources they have. However, a huge investment in technology will keep Scholars connected. The key with technology is to integrate it into Scholars' current habits. I hope there will be a day when we can have a personalized [Ron Brown Scholar] homepage (like MyYahoo, iGoogle) that Scholars can set as their homepage on their computers, with an integrated social network, easy download of Scholars contact info, etc.

More updates on where Scholars are currently working, living, etc., so that we feel more connected and also like we can track their progress on a more regular basis.

A few more checkups, i.e., just individualized "how are you doing?" emails.

I would like to arrange more meetings and connections with Scholars in the area. I believe we have student representatives to arrange this but it often falls to the wayside.

Become more involved or at least knowledgeable about the campuses where there are large or growing numbers of Scholars.

I would like to see the staff more often. It would be nice if they could come visit the Scholars at their schools.

I wish the program was more successful at keeping the Scholars' network close.

## ***Addressing alumni-specific needs***

Closely related to capacity issues in general, the number of alumni Scholars is already double that of current Scholars, and this group will only continue to grow. To foster life-long connections with Scholars, the Program may have to give more attention to alumni Scholars' unique and varying needs in comparison to those of current Scholars. This issue was most prevalent with regard to the triennial conference and other events; some alumni Scholars asked for different and more relevant programming for their current phase in life (page 61). Currently, almost all Scholars are in their late teens or twenties, but the issue of meeting the needs of varying age groups will continue to intensify in coming years. Scholars recommended a few solutions including parallel or alternate programming at conferences and events, and encouraging alumni to be more active in giving back to the Program as mentors or speakers. It seems that the Program staff and the Alumni Association could work together to address these issues. Examples of Scholars comments regarding alumni needs include the following:

I think as more alumni appear, priorities for older alumni versus current Scholars become more disparate. Somehow this needs to be addressed, e.g., career planning versus career growth.

The larger the group gets the tougher it is to plan [programming].

As we look towards the future, it might be nice to begin thinking about creating programs to support Scholars who have completed their undergraduate education and are either in their first job or attending graduate school.

[I] look forward to how the program incorporates its professionally active alumni into future activities.

## ***Developing a more structured mentoring component***

About one-third (32%) of Scholars suggested that the Program develop a more formal or structured mentoring component. These Scholars' comments indicate that they would like a stronger mentoring framework; clearer and higher mentor-mentee expectations; and options regarding mentoring formats (e.g., online, telephone, in person, or pod structure). Other Scholars suggested that the Program sponsor formal mentor-mentee events; provide inspirational stories or ideas of activities for mentors and mentees to do together; or emulate the Big Brothers Big Sisters model. Additionally, some Scholars (mostly alumni Scholars) indicated that they would appreciate more help in connecting to mentors and other Scholars earlier in their undergraduate career. Additional information related to suggestions for a more structured mentoring program can be found in the *Program*

*elements* section (pages 55-56). The following Scholar comments focus on establishing a more structured mentoring Program component.

I would like to see a stronger framework for the mentoring program.

I think it would be beneficial to be paired with a senior in college during freshman year, so that the senior could help with the tough decisions and adjustments of college life.

Potentially, a formal program linking alumni and current students might be helpful.

I truly believe that it is the best scholarship in America. That said, there is huge room for improvement in terms of connecting Scholars to mentorship earlier.

I am not sure how to seek out mentors who are Friends of Ron Brown Scholars. Maybe there should be a streamlined process to make this possible.

There should be monthly or bimonthly mandatory interaction between a Ron Brown mentor and mentee – therefore Scholars should be paired up according to relative city (and of course career interest).

Provide guidelines for mentors, so they know where to start, what's expected of them. Also, [coordinate] beginning of the year kickoffs to get the mentor-mentee pairs off to a good organized start.

Maybe some additional training or workshops for the mentors to better equip them to mentor other Scholars.

The program can be improved by highlighting the most successful mentoring relationship every other month as an inspiring example.

At conferences, it might be helpful to have a segment specifically for paired mentors and mentees to spend some time together. One event now and then might strengthen connections.

## ***Expanding community service***

Most Scholars expressed a belief in the importance of and an interest in doing community service work. For example, about half of the Scholars indicated that the Program has instilled or reinforced their commitment to service or that service is a motivating factor in their current pursuit to achieve. Most Scholars (80%) have participated in service work this year and some have done so quite extensively, but one in five Scholars reported that they had not done any community service in the past 12 months. Additionally, of those Scholars who had volunteered, about one-third (32%) estimated doing 30 minutes of service work or less per week, on average. Although these rates may seem exceptional compared to the general population, the number of Scholars doing any volunteer work

and the amount of service work being done seem to fall short of the Program's high expectations in this area.

The Program may already be taking steps to remedy this issue as the Community Service Foundation was recently formed. The Foundation has the potential to serve as a stepping stone between Scholars' beliefs and their actual engagement in service activities. Some Scholars find the Foundation's service grants both important and helpful, but many Scholars are looking for more than funding. Over 8 in 10 Scholars, who have never collaborated before, indicated that they are interested in working with another Scholar on a community service project, and a number reported that they are looking to the Foundation for help in making it happen. Other Scholars are looking for ideas of what to do or technical assistance in developing service ideas that they already have (pages 63-66). The Program has helped instill the value of service in almost all Scholars, now the Community Service Foundation has the opportunity to solidify those beliefs into action. Examples of Scholar's comments regarding service include the following:

Focus less on certain areas such as business and provide more support for Scholars who want to work to make the world a better place through service, human rights, or grass roots work.

I'd like to see more summer service projects that bring the [Ron Brown Scholar] family together in order to impact people and communities as a group.

Also, have more activities that will help the communities that we talk about, such as community service projects [in reference to events and conferences].

It might be a good idea to make it a mandatory requirement for 1st year Scholars to participate in one of these service projects. From my personal experience, after my first year of being involved with a volunteer program, I just had to make time to continue doing it every year. The impetus for maintaining Scholar participation in community service is just providing that initial push.

I wish the Program focused more on selecting people who have a demonstrated passion for giving back to disadvantaged communities. I have met some people who don't seem to have that passion and have been disappointed.

I think that the best way to make the Foundation more effective than it already is, is to emphasize the links of service to a given career/career aspirations. By showing that community service is not just going to the food bank to feed the hungry, but can range from helping to create renewable energy for personal consumption (physics) to working as a public defender (law).

## ***Ensuring inclusivity***

While not a major theme in any area, there seems to be an underlying current regarding the inclusivity of the Program. Whether it is in terms of college or university attended, geographical residence, field of study or work, or political affiliation, there is a small group of Scholars who perceive that they are not receiving the same level of services or opportunities as the mainstream group. The Program should be aware of these concerns and continue to reach out to all Scholars. Selected examples of Scholars' comments regarding inclusivity include the following:

There is a great deal of support for those entering professional careers (in business, law, politics, etc.), and less help for those seeking to enter academia or looking to work in the arts and humanities. I would appreciate being able to make connections with more mentors (beyond [Ron Brown Scholar] alumni) who work in these fields.

It would be nice to see more support for artistic interests that [Ron Brown Scholars] would like to pursue...

The current formal mentoring forum in place doesn't utilize all alumni Scholars.

I am glad to be associated with the Program and my experience with the Program has been largely positive. With that said I do believe that in recent history, there appears to be a political left leaning of members in the program which is fine, but can become problematic if those who are right leaning are treated to a different standard than their fellow left leaning Scholars.

I think that it is difficult for those students who attend schools which are not very highly populated by Ron Brown Scholars. Having a Ron Brown Scholar put in charge of communication within geographical regions would greatly increase the amount of contact that we would have with one another. This would serve as motivation to keep in touch with people in our area, as opposed to simply relying on those Scholars from our respective classes.

I would like to see [the Executive Director] in person. I understand that he is very busy, but only going to NYC/Harvard/Stanford leaves a lot of people out.

Try to connect with Scholars that go to schools that are not the "Ron Brown norm."

## ***Final note***

Overall, the responses of Ron Brown Scholars to the survey indicate that the Program has been very successful. The Program selects highly talented individuals and provides them with the support, guidance, and opportunities to achieve ambitious goals. Scholars also saw areas where the Program might be improved or further developed and offered some ideas and suggestions in this regard. Program leaders may want to consider these ideas as the Program continues to grow and adapt to meet Scholars' changing needs.

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# Appendix

*Factors in Scholars early success*

*Undergraduate college experience*

*Scholars' pre-professional internships and other positions*

*Scholars' programs abroad*

*Scholars' community service work*

*Scholars' leadership activities*

*Alumni Scholars' graduate or professional education*

*Alumni Scholars' employment and other projects*

*Current motivating factors for Scholars*

*Importance and helpfulness of Program elements and activities*

*Scholars' perspectives and participation in Program elements and activities*

*Survey instruments*



## *Factors in Scholars early success*

**A1. What were the primary factors that helped you succeed up until the time you became a Ron Brown Scholar? This could include people, events, programs or services, a job, other experiences, personal characteristics, financial help, books, etc. (Please be brief but specific; list up to 3 primary factors)**

Primary factor response theme <sup>a</sup> N=216	Number	Percent <sup>b</sup>
<b>Background and people</b>		
Family	165	76%
Support, love, and encouragement	89	41%
Teacher, counselor or coach	53	25%
Obstacles faced growing up such as being low-income	20	9%
Mentor or unspecified person	18	8%
High expectations from others	16	7%
Friends	13	6%
<b>Personal characteristics</b>		
Personal commitment to success	99	46%
Faith, religion or spirituality	34	16%
Intellectual ability and curiosity	29	13%
Sense of responsibility to others	12	6%
Goal-oriented	9	4%
<b>Opportunities and experiences</b>		
Extracurricular activities and programs	41	19%
High quality education	35	16%
Financial help	16	7%
Community service	9	4%

<sup>a</sup> Categories developed by Wilder Research based on Scholars' responses.

<sup>b</sup> Each response included up to three factors and each factor could be categorized into multiple themes, so percentages do not sum to 100 percent.

**Notes.** 1) Includes all Scholars.

2) Other primary factor response themes include: desire for material or social success (3%), competition (3%), job (3%), pride (2%), international travel (2%), and books and internet (2%).

## *Undergraduate college experience*

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### **A2. Number of additional scholarship(s) received by current Scholars**

<b>Additional scholarships N=78</b>	<b>Number<sup>a</sup></b>	<b>Percent</b>
0 scholarships	8	10%
1 – 2 scholarships	47	60%
3 – 4 scholarships	18	23%
5 – 7 scholarships	5	6%

<sup>a</sup> Scholarship responses counted by Wilder Research.

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### **A3. Please indicate the name(s) of the scholarship(s) that you have received.**

<b>Additional scholarships N=70</b>	<b>Number</b>
<b>Prestigious scholarships</b>	<b>41 (26%)</b>
Gates Millennium Scholar	14
Elks National Foundation Most Valuable Student Competition	9
National Merit Scholarship	7
Coca-Cola Scholarship	5
Robert C. Byrd Honors Scholarship Program	4
Other prestigious scholarships	2
<b>University-based scholarships</b>	<b>23 (15%)</b>
Harvard Scholarship	3
John B. Ervin Scholarship, Washington University	2
Other university-based scholarships	18
<b>National and local scholarships</b>	<b>92 (59%)</b>
National Achievement Scholarship	16
Ronald McDonald House Scholarship	5
Toyota Community Scholarship	3
Horatio Alger National Scholarship	2
Horatio Alger State Scholarship	2
Jack Kent Cooke Foundation College Scholarship	2
Sam's Club/Wal-mart Scholarship	2
Washington Metropolitan Scholarship	2
Other national and local scholarships	58
<b>Total scholarships</b>	<b>156</b>

**Notes.** 1) Includes only those current Scholars who indicated that they received an additional scholarship. Scholars could receive multiple scholarships within each category.

2) Scholarship responses were categorized by Wilder Research according to FinAid.

#### A4. Undergraduate institution

<b>Institution N=241</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>Percent</b>
<b>Ivy League institutions</b>	<b>127</b>	<b>53%</b>
Harvard University	65	27%
Yale University	21	9%
Princeton University	11	5%
University of Pennsylvania	9	4%
Brown University	8	3%
Columbia University	8	3%
Cornell University	2	1%
Dartmouth College	3	1%
<b>Other private institutions</b>	<b>91</b>	<b>38%</b>
Stanford University	34	14%
Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT)	10	4%
Duke University	7	3%
Northwestern University	4	2%
Other <sup>a</sup>	36	15%
<b>Public institutions</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>10%</b>
University of North Carolina – Chapel Hill	5	2%
University of Virginia	4	2%
University of Michigan	3	1%
Other <sup>b</sup>	11	5%

<sup>a</sup> Amherst College (3); Emory University (3); George Washington University (1); Georgetown University (3); Howard (1); Macalester College (1); Mills College (1); New York University (2); Pomona College (1); Rice University (1); Roger Williams University (1); Rose-Hulman Institute of Technology (1); Simmons College (1); Smith College (1); Southeastern University (1); Tufts University (1); University of Chicago (1); University of Miami (1); University of Southern California (2); Vanderbilt University (1); Wake Forest University (1); Washington and Lee University (1); Washington University in St. Louis (2); Williams College (2); and Xavier University of Louisiana (2).

<sup>b</sup> Arizona State University (1); Florida A&M University (1); Georgia Institute of Technology (1); Iowa State University (1); Mississippi State University (1); U.S. Military Academy – West Point (1); University of California – Berkeley (1); University of California – Los Angeles (1); University of Iowa (1); University of Texas – Austin (2).

**Note.** Includes all Scholars.

#### A5. Scholars' undergraduate field of study

Field of study <sup>a</sup>	Current Scholars N=80		Alumni Scholars N=161		Total Scholars N=241	
	N	% <sup>b</sup>	N	% <sup>b</sup>	N	% <sup>b</sup>
Social sciences	27	34%	63	39%	90	37%
<i>Political science and government</i>	11	14%	18	11%	29	12%
<i>Economics</i>	5	6%	16	10%	21	9%
<i>Sociology</i>	2	3%	12	7%	14	6%
Biological and biomedical sciences	8	10%	23	14%	31	13%
Engineering	7	9%	21	13%	28	12%
Area, ethnic, cultural, and gender studies	3	4%	23	14%	26	11%
Business, management, and marketing	7	9%	12	7%	19	8%
Romance languages, literatures, and linguistics	3	4%	10	6%	13	5%
Multi/Interdisciplinary studies	7	9%	5	3%	12	5%
English language and literature	2	3%	9	6%	11	5%
Physical sciences	4	5%	7	4%	11	5%
Public administration and social service professions	4	5%	6	4%	10	4%
Health professions and related clinical sciences	5	6%	3	2%	8	3%
Mathematics and statistics	4	5%	4	2%	8	3%
Philosophy and religious studies	3	4%	5	3%	8	3%
Visual and performing arts	6	8%	2	1%	8	3%
Education	4	5%	3	2%	7	3%
Psychology	1	1%	6	4%	7	3%
Architecture and related services	3	4%	3	2%	6	2%
Computer and information sciences	1	1%	5	3%	6	2%
Communication, journalism, and related programs	2	3%	2	1%	4	2%
Undecided	3	4%	-	-	3	1%

<sup>a</sup> Field of study categorized by Wilder Research according to the Classification of Instructional Programs (National Center for Education Statistics, 2000).

<sup>b</sup> Percentages do not sum to 100 percent due to multiple fields of study.

**Note.** Includes all Scholars.

## *Scholars' pre-professional internships and other positions*

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**A6. Did you have an internship, summer job, or volunteer position while in college or shortly thereafter that was helpful to your personal or career development?**

	N	Scholars responding "yes"	
		Number	Percent
All Scholars	216	192	89%
Alumni Scholars	142	133	94%
Current Scholars	74	59	80%
Award year 2007 & 2008	36	22	61%
Award year 2005 & 2006	38	37	97%

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**A7. Was the Ron Brown Scholar Program helpful in making this opportunity (internship, summer job or volunteer position) possible (or at least one such opportunity if you had several)?**

	N	Scholars responding "yes"	
		Number	Percent
All Scholars	186	121	66%
Alumni Scholars	128	86	67%
Current Scholars	55	35	64%
Award year 2007 & 2008	20	9	45%
Award year 2005 & 2006	35	26	74%

**Note.** Includes only those Scholars who reported having had an internship or other pre-professional opportunity that was helpful to their personal or career development.

**A8. In what ways? (was the Program helpful in making your pre-professional opportunity possible) (Check all that apply)**

	N	Helped you find the opportunity <sup>a</sup>	Helped you to be selected <sup>a</sup>	Provided financial help <sup>a</sup>	Other assistance (specify) <sup>a,b</sup>
All Scholars	120	63%	41%	66%	19%
Alumni Scholars	85	66%	46%	63%	17%
Current Scholars	35	57%	29%	74%	23%

<sup>a</sup> Percent of Scholars responding "yes." Respondents could check more than one response.

<sup>b</sup> Other ways the Program was helpful included personal and professional guidance, logistical assistance, and networking.

**Note.** Includes only those Scholars who reported having had an internship or other pre-professional opportunity that was helpful to their personal or career development in which the Ron Brown Scholar Program was helpful in making possible.

**A9. For what type(s) of opportunity was the Ron Brown Scholar Program helpful? (Check all that apply)**

	N	Pre-professional internship <sup>a</sup>	Summer job <sup>a</sup>	Volunteer position <sup>a</sup>	Other (specify) <sup>a,b</sup>
All Scholars	119	71%	50%	34%	12%
Alumni Scholars	84	71%	46%	33%	14%
Current Scholars	35	69%	60%	34%	6%

<sup>a</sup> Percent of Scholars responding "yes." Respondents could check more than one response.

<sup>b</sup> Other types of opportunities include full-time employment position, program abroad, leadership program, research opportunity, and networking opportunity.

**Note.** Includes only those Scholars who reported having had an internship or other pre-professional opportunity that was helpful to their personal or career development in which the Ron Brown Scholar Program was helpful in making possible.



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**A10. What is the name of the organization(s) where you worked or volunteered (for your pre-professional opportunity) where the Ron Brown Scholar Program was helpful? (list up to 6) TYPE**

<b>Type of organization<sup>a</sup> N=114</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>Percent<sup>b</sup></b>
Cultural	29	25%
Service	27	24%
Business	25	22%
Education	25	22%
Advocacy	25	22%
College	24	21%
Health	22	19%
Research & policy	10	9%
Program abroad	9	8%

<sup>a</sup> Categories developed by Wilder Research based on Scholars' responses.

<sup>b</sup> Specific organizations could be categorized into multiple types, so percentages do not sum to 100%. E.g., a tutoring program for African American youth would be categorized as "Education" and "Cultural."

**Notes.** 1) Includes only those Scholars who reported having had an internship or other pre-professional opportunity that was helpful to their personal or career development in which the Ron Brown Scholar Program was helpful in making possible.

2) Other types of organizations include: technological, legal, arts, media, environmental, spiritual, and recreational organizations (2-6 each).

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**A11. What is the name of the organization(s) where you worked or volunteered (for your pre-professional opportunity) where the Ron Brown Scholar Program was helpful? (list up to 6) NAME**

**Selected organizations**

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Boys and Girls Club

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Breakthrough Collaborative, Inc.

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Children's Defense Fund

---

Clinton Foundation

---

Council on African American Affairs, Ron Brown Scholar Program

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DLA Piper

---

Goddard Space Flight Center, NASA

---

Goldman Sachs

---

Habitat for Humanity

---

Hugh O' Brian Youth Leadership

---

Institute for Recruitment of Teachers

---

Institute of Human Virology

---

JP Morgan Chase

---

Learning Bridge

---

Lehman Brothers

---

Merrill Lynch

---

Morgan Stanley

---

National Football League

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National Institutes of Health

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Obama for America

---

Rocky Mountain Institute

---

Sony Entertainment

---

Stonebridge International LLC

---

UNICEF

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United Nations Convention on Biological Diversity

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Unite for Sight

---

The Vanguard Group

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**Note.** *Includes only select examples of prominent organizations.*

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**A12. Briefly explain how this (Program-aided pre-professional) opportunity was (or these opportunities were) helpful to you.**

<b>Response theme<sup>a</sup> N=118</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>Percent<sup>b</sup></b>
Developed skill set	51	43%
Developed goals and interests	38	32%
Personal development	20	17%
Preparation for a competitive process	16	14%
Networked professionally	12	10%
Financially	10	9%
Research	8	7%
Served a community	8	7%
Other	5	4%

<sup>a</sup> Categories developed by Wilder Research based on Scholars' responses.

<sup>b</sup> Responses could be categorized into multiple themes, so percentages do not sum to 100 percent.

**Note.** 1) Includes only those Scholars who reported having had an internship or other pre-professional opportunity that was helpful to their personal or career development in which the Ron Brown Scholar Program was helpful in making possible.

## *Scholars' programs abroad*

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**A13. Did you have the opportunity to study, serve, or travel abroad while in college, or shortly thereafter**

	<b>N</b>	<b>Scholars responding "yes"</b>	
		<b>Number</b>	<b>Percent</b>
All Scholars	215	120	56%
Alumni Scholars	140	87	62%
Current Scholars	75	33	44%
Award year 2007 & 2008	37	12	32%
Award year 2005 & 2006	38	21	55%

**A14. For the opportunity where you were helped by the Program, to which country did you travel? (If more than one, answer for the most recent)**

<b>Country N=71</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>Country N=71</b>	<b>Number</b>
<b>Africa</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>Europe</b>	<b>38</b>
South Africa	10	Spain	12
Ghana	4	England	6
Morocco	2	France	4
Swaziland	2	Ireland	3
Mozambique	1	Germany	2
Nigeria	1	Italy	2
Senegal	1	Russia	2
Tanzania	1	Czech Republic	1
<b>Americas</b>	<b>15</b>	Estonia	1
Brazil	5	Finland	1
Costa Rica	2	Greece	1
Guatemala	2	Netherlands	1
Mexico	2	Switzerland	1
Chile	1	<b>Total</b>	<b>86</b>
Cuba	1		
El Salvador	1		
Panama	1		
<b>Asia</b>	<b>10</b>		
India	5		
China	2		
Japan	2		
Korea	1		

**Notes.** 1) Includes only those Scholars who reported having had the opportunity to travel abroad in which the Ron Brown Scholar Program was helpful in making possible.

2) Respondents were instructed to list only the most recent country visited if they have traveled to more than one. Scholars who visited more than one country on their most recent trip are counted for each country, so there are slightly more visits (86) than Scholars (71) in this figure.

3) The country summations and continent count may not be equal due to a few respondents answering the question with a continent.

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**A15. For what period of time? \_\_\_\_ Number of months (you traveled abroad).**

Range of months N=68	Number	Percent
One to three months	33	49%
Four to six months	25	37%
Seven to 14 months	10	15%
Mean	4.3 months	
Median	4.0 months	

**Note.** Includes only those Scholars who reported having had the opportunity to travel abroad in which the Ron Brown Scholar Program was helpful in making possible.

---

**A16. Was the Ron Brown Scholar Program helpful in making this (abroad) opportunity possible (or at least one such opportunity if you had several)?**

	N	Scholars responding "yes"	
		Number	Percent
All Scholars	118	72	61%
Alumni Scholars	86	50	58%
Current Scholars	32	22	69%

**Note.** Includes only those Scholars who reported having had the opportunity to travel abroad.

**A17. In what ways was the Ron Brown Scholar Program helpful (in making your abroad experience possible)? (Check all that apply)**

	<b>N</b>	<b>Helped you to find the opportunity<sup>a</sup></b>	<b>Helped you to be selected to go<sup>a</sup></b>	<b>Provided financial help<sup>a</sup></b>	<b>Other assistance (Specify)<sup>a,b</sup></b>
All Scholars	72	13%	14%	94%	10%
Alumni Scholars	50	12%	16%	94%	12%
Current Scholars	22	14%	9%	96%	5%

<sup>a</sup> Percent of Scholars responding “yes.” Respondents could check more than one response.

<sup>b</sup> Other ways the Program was helpful included providing guidance and networking.

**Note.** Includes only those Scholars who reported having had the opportunity to travel abroad in which the Ron Brown Scholar Program was helpful in making possible.

**A18. What did you study or accomplish while abroad on this trip?**

<b>Response theme<sup>a</sup> N=70</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>Percent<sup>b</sup></b>
Studied or interned	38	54%
Language	28	40%
Service work	15	21%
Greater cultural understanding	14	20%
Research	11	16%
Other <sup>c</sup>	3	4%

<sup>a</sup> Categories developed by Wilder Research based on Scholars’ responses.

<sup>b</sup> Scholar responses could be categorized into multiple themes, so percentages do not sum to 100 percent.

<sup>c</sup> Other responses include being able to perform in a play or concert (2 responses).

**Note.** Includes only those Scholars who reported having had the opportunity to travel abroad in which the Ron Brown Scholar Program was helpful in making possible.

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**A19. In what way was it (your abroad experience) helpful?**

<b>Response theme<sup>a</sup> N=66</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>Percent<sup>b</sup></b>
Personal development	32	49%
Developed skill set	31	47%
Developed goals and interests	23	35%
Preparation for a competitive process	6	9%
Networked professionally	3	5%

<sup>a</sup> Categories developed by Wilder Research based on Scholars' responses.

<sup>b</sup> Scholar responses could be categorized into multiple themes, so percentages do not sum to 100 percent.

**Notes.** 1) Includes only those Scholars who reported having had the opportunity to travel abroad in which the Ron Brown Scholar Program was helpful in making possible.

2) Other response themes include research (2 responses) and served a community (1 response).



## *Scholars' community service work*

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**A20. Have you done community service work in the past 12 months – i.e., volunteering or working for minimal pay on community/social issues, needs or concerns?**

	N	Scholars responding "yes"	
		Number	Percent
All Scholars	214	171	80%
Alumni Scholars	138	105	76%
Current Scholars	76	66	87%

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**A21. Very briefly, what is the nature of the community service work you did in the past 12 months?**

Type of service work <sup>a</sup> N=169	Number	Percent <sup>b</sup>
Education	73	43%
Mentor	51	30%
Physical labor	28	17%
Health	14	8%
Election activities	13	8%
Pro bono professional work	12	7%
Fundraising	11	7%

<sup>a</sup> Categories developed by Wilder Research based on Scholars' responses.

<sup>b</sup> Scholar responses could be categorized into multiple themes, so percentages do not sum to 100 percent.

**Notes.** 1) Includes only those Scholars who reported having done community service work in the past 12 months.

2) Other types of service work include: political activism, spiritual, minority outreach, arts, program development, event planning, supply collection, administrative work, research, work with elders, and motivational speaking (2-9 responses each).

---

**A22. For what organization(s) or group(s) did you do/are you doing community service work? (list up to 3) TYPE**

Type of organization <sup>a</sup> N=170	Number	Percent <sup>b</sup>
Service	75	44%
Education	51	30%
Health	26	15%
Cultural	24	14%
Advocacy	17	10%
Spiritual	17	10%
Legal	11	7%
College	11	7%
Recreational	10	6%

<sup>a</sup> Categories developed by Wilder Research based on Scholars' responses.

<sup>b</sup> Scholar responses could be categorized into multiple themes, so percentages do not sum to 100 percent.

**Notes.** 1) Includes only those Scholars who reported having done community service work in the past 12 months.  
 2) Other types of organizations include: abroad program, media, and business (3-4 each).

---

**A23. For what organization(s) or group(s) did you do/are you doing community service work? (list up to 3) NAME**

**Selected organizations**

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American Red Cross

---

AmeriCorps

---

Big Brothers Big Sisters

---

City Year

---

Girl Scouts

---

Habitat for Humanity

---

Harlem Children's Zone

---

InterVarsity Christian Fellowship

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Make-A-Wish Foundation

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Meals on Wheels

---

NAACP

---

National Society of Black Engineers

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Planned Parenthood

---

Read to Lead, Ron Brown Scholar Program initiative

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Rotary Club

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Salvation Army

---

Teach For America

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YMCA

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**Note.** *Includes only select examples of prominent organizations.*

## *Scholars' leadership activities*

### **A24. What activities have you been involved in on campus during the current school year?**

<b>Activity</b>	<b>Award year 2007 &amp; 2008<sup>a</sup> N=38</b>	<b>Award year 2005 &amp; 2006<sup>a</sup> N=37</b>	<b>Total current Scholars<sup>a</sup> N=75</b>
Other student group or club <sup>b</sup>	84%	87%	85%
Athletics	21%	30%	26%
Student government	29%	19%	24%
Residence hall group	13%	32%	23%
Choir or band	24%	14%	19%
Fraternity or sorority	11%	27%	19%
Other (specify) <sup>c</sup>	16%	16%	16%

<sup>a</sup> Percent of Scholars responding "yes." Respondents could check more than one response.

<sup>b</sup> Types of other student groups or clubs developed by Wilder Research based on Scholars' responses. Specific organizations could be categorized into multiple types and the most common include cultural (44%), academic or professional (40%), arts (19%), advocacy (18%), service (18%), media (13%), and spiritual (11%).

<sup>c</sup> Other activities include work and volunteer activities as well as singing, acting, and dancing.

**Note.** Includes only current Scholars.

### **A25. Current Scholars' leadership positions**

**While in college, have you held a leadership position on campus in a group, club or organization? Since becoming a Ron Brown Scholar, have you held a leadership position off campus (that is, related to your community service, job or other activities)?**

	<b>On-campus leadership position</b>			<b>Off-campus leadership position</b>		
		<b>Scholars responding "yes"</b>			<b>Scholars responding "yes"</b>	
	<b>N</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>Percent</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Award year 2007 & 2008	39	23	59%	37	9	24%
Award year 2005 & 2006	37	30	81%	33	10	30%
Total current Scholars	76	53	70%	70	19	27%

**Note.** Includes only current Scholars.

---

**A26. Current Scholars on-campus leadership: For each, indicate the title or nature of the leadership position and the name of the organization or group.**

Type of organization <sup>a</sup> N=52	Number	Percent <sup>b</sup>
Advocacy	15	29%
Cultural	14	27%
Service	12	23%
Media	9	17%
Recreational	7	14%
Arts	6	12%
Business	5	10%
Education	5	10%

<sup>a</sup> Categories developed by Wilder Research based on Scholars' responses.

<sup>b</sup> Specific organizations could be categorized into multiple types, so percentages do not sum to 100 percent. Additionally, some Scholars held leadership positions in more than one type of organization.

**Notes.** 1) Includes only those current Scholars who indicated that while in college they held a leadership position on campus in a group, club or organization.

2) Other types of organizations include: athletic, legal, health, and spiritual (2 each).

---

**A27. For each, indicated the title or nature or the leadership position held, the name of the organization, and the type of organization.**

Type of organization <sup>a</sup>	Current Scholars N=19		Alumni Scholars N=68		Total Scholars N=87	
	N	% <sup>b</sup>	N	% <sup>b</sup>	N	% <sup>b</sup>
Service	10	53%	21	31%	31	36%
Business	4	21%	23	34%	27	31%
Cultural	3	16%	14	21%	17	20%
Education	1	5%	12	18%	13	15%
College	1	5%	11	16%	12	14%
Health	1	5%	7	10%	8	9%
Advocacy	3	16%	4	6%	7	8%
Arts	1	5%	5	7%	6	7%
Legal	-	-	5	7%	5	6%

<sup>a</sup> Categories developed by Wilder Research based on Scholars' responses.

<sup>b</sup> Organizations could be categorized into multiple types. Additionally, some Scholars held leadership positions in more than one type of organization, so percentages do not sum to 100 percent.

**Notes.** 1) Includes current Scholars who indicated that they held a leadership position off campus since becoming a Ron Brown Scholar and alumni Scholars who indicated that they held any leadership position during the past 12 months.

2) Other types of organizations include: spiritual, media, athletic, and recreational (2-4 each).

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**A28. Scholars' leadership: For each, indicated the title or nature or the leadership position held, the name of the organization, and the type of organization.**

**Selected organizations**

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American Cancer Society

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American Medical Association

---

Black Law Students Association

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Boys and Girls Club

---

Chevron

---

Habitat for Humanity

---

Morgan Stanley

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NAACP

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New York Press

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Obama campaign

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Paramount Pictures

---

Ron Brown Scholar Program

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Sony Movies

---

Urban League

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**Note.** *Includes only select examples of prominent organizations where Scholars held leadership positions.*

**A29. Since becoming a Ron Brown Scholar, have you had a notable accomplishment as a leader that time that you would like to mention?**

Response theme <sup>a</sup>	Current Scholars N=78		Alumni Scholars N=143		Total Scholars N=221	
	N	% <sup>b</sup>	N	% <sup>b</sup>	N	% <sup>b</sup>
Lead a group	5	6%	30	21%	35	16%
Founded a group	7	9%	13	9%	20	9%
Worked on a project	9	12%	11	8%	20	9%
Received an award	7	9%	12	8%	19	9%
Organized an event	5	6%	13	9%	18	8%
Joined or was appointed to a committee or organization	2	3%	10	7%	12	5%
Published or produced work	1	1%	7	5%	8	4%
Career advancement	-	-	8	6%	8	4%

<sup>a</sup> Categories developed by Wilder Research based on Scholars' responses.

<sup>b</sup> Types of accomplishments could be categorized into multiple response themes, so percentages do not sum to 100 percent.

**Notes.** 1) Includes all current Scholars and only alumni Scholars who indicated that they held a leadership position on the college campus, at their job, or in the community since becoming a Ron Brown Scholar.

2) Other notable accomplishments include positively impacting an individual (3 alumni Scholars).



## *Alumni Scholars' graduate or professional education*

**A30. Have you attended graduate or professional school since graduating from college? If no, do you intend to enroll in graduate or professional school within the next two years? If yes, have you obtained a professional degree (e.g., masters, doctorate)? If no, are you currently enrolled?**

<b>Graduate school status</b>	<b>Award years 2001-2004 N=74</b>		<b>Award years 1997-2000 N=68</b>		<b>Total alumni Scholars N=142</b>	
	<b>N</b>	<b>%<sup>a</sup></b>	<b>N</b>	<b>%<sup>a</sup></b>	<b>N</b>	<b>%<sup>a</sup></b>
<b>Have attended graduate school<sup>b</sup></b>	<b>34</b>	<b>46%</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>74%</b>	<b>84</b>	<b>59%</b>
Have obtained a post-graduate degree <sup>c</sup>	6	8%	40	59%	46	32%
Have not obtained a post-graduate degree <sup>c</sup>	28	38%	10	15%	38	27%
Currently enrolled <sup>d</sup>	27	37%	7	11%	34	24%
Not currently enrolled <sup>d</sup>	1	1%	3	5%	4	3%
<b>Have not attended graduate school<sup>b</sup></b>	<b>40</b>	<b>54%</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>27%</b>	<b>58</b>	<b>41%</b>
Plan to enroll within next two years <sup>e</sup>	30	45%	9	15%	39	31%
Do not plan to enroll within next two years <sup>e</sup>	6	9%	7	12%	13	10%

<sup>a</sup> Percent responding "yes." All percentages are out of total Scholars in the previous question.

<sup>b</sup> Refers to "have you attended graduate or professional school since graduating from college?"

<sup>c</sup> Refers to "have you obtained a professional degree (e.g., masters, doctorate)?"

<sup>d</sup> Refers to "are you currently enrolled?"

<sup>e</sup> Refers to "do you intend to enroll in graduate or professional school within the next two years?"

**Note.** Includes only alumni Scholars.

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**A31. In what field of study? (for graduate or professional school)**

Field of study <sup>a</sup>	Scholars who have obtained a degree <sup>c</sup> N=44		Scholars who are currently working toward a degree N=33		Scholars who plan to pursue a degree <sup>d</sup> N=37	
	N	% <sup>b</sup>	N	% <sup>b</sup>	N	% <sup>b</sup>
Medicine (M.D.)	10	23%	12	36%	5	14%
Law	9	21%	8	24%	9	24%
Public administration and social service professions	5	11%	4	12%	6	16%
Social sciences	6	14%	2	6%	4	11%
Health professions and related clinical sciences (not M.D.)	4	9%	2	6%	2	5%
Business, management, and marketing	4	9%	2	6%	13	35%
Education	-	-	4	12%	2	5%
Engineering	2	5%	2	6%	1	3%
Biological and biomedical sciences	2	5%	2	6%	-	-
Area, ethnic, cultural, and gender studies	3	7%	-	-	1	3%
Mathematics and statistics	1	2%	2	6%	-	-
City, urban, community, and regional planning	-	-	-	-	3	8%

<sup>a</sup> Field of study categorized by Wilder Research according to the *Classification of Instructional Programs* (National Center for Education Statistics, 2000).

<sup>b</sup> Percentages do not sum to 100 percent due to multiple fields of study.

<sup>c</sup> Other fields of study include: English language and literature (2), physical sciences (2), visual and performing arts (2), computer science (1), radio, television, and digital communication (1), religion and religious studies (1), and theological and ministerial studies (1).

<sup>d</sup> Other fields of study include: computer science (1), romance languages, literatures, and linguistics (1), creative writing (1), neuroscience (1), psychology (1), visual and performing arts (1).

**Note.** Includes only alumni Scholars who have obtained a post-graduate degree, are currently enrolled in graduate or professional school and working towards a degree, or plan to enroll in graduate or professional school within the next two years.

---

**A32. At what institution? (for graduate or professional school)**

<b>Institution<sup>a</sup></b>	<b>Scholars who have obtained a degree N=45</b>		<b>Scholars who are currently working toward a degree N=32</b>	
	<b>N</b>	<b>%<sup>b</sup></b>	<b>N</b>	<b>%<sup>b</sup></b>
<b>Ivy League</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>31%</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>31%</b>
Harvard University	9	20%	6	19%
Columbia University	2	4%	3	9%
Yale University	2	4%	-	-
University of Pennsylvania	1	2%	1	3%
<b>Private</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>33%</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>47%</b>
Stanford University	4	9%	5	16%
Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT)	2	4%	-	-
Syracuse University	2	4%	-	-
New York University (NYU)	-	-	2	6%
Other private institutions	7 <sup>c</sup>	16%	8 <sup>d</sup>	25%
<b>Public</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>40%</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>25%</b>
University of California – Berkeley	2	4%	-	-
University of California – Los Angeles	2	4%	1	3%
University of North Carolina – Chapel Hill	2	4%	1	3%
University of Virginia	2	4%	2	6%
University of Illinois – Chicago	-	-	2	6%
Other public institutions	10 <sup>e</sup>	22%	2 <sup>f</sup>	6%

<sup>a</sup> Categorized by Wilder Research based on Scholars' responses.

<sup>b</sup> Scholars may have obtained or be working toward a graduate or professional degree from more than one institution, so percentages do not sum to 100 percent.

<sup>c</sup> Other private institutions include: Emory University, Georgetown, Johns Hopkins, Julliard, Loyola Law School, Simmons, and Union Theological Seminary in the City of New York (1 each).

<sup>d</sup> Other private institutions include: Albert Einstein College of Medicine, Duke, Hofstra University, Johns Hopkins, Mount Sinai School of Medicine, Northwestern, University of Southern California, and Pepperdine University (1 each).

<sup>e</sup> Other public institutions include: Georgia Tech, London School of Economics, Medical College of Virginia, Penn State, Temple, University of Cambridge, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, University of Michigan – Ann Arbor, Wayne State University School of Medicine, and University of Utah (1 each).

<sup>f</sup> Other public institutions include: George Mason University and the University of Wisconsin – Madison (1 each).

**Note.** Includes only alumni Scholars who have obtained a post-graduate degree or are currently enrolled in graduate or professional school.

## *Alumni Scholars' employment and other projects*

### **A33. What is your main occupation?**

<b>Occupation type<sup>a</sup> N=97</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>Percent<sup>b</sup></b>
<b>Managerial and professional specialty</b>	<b>77</b>	<b>79%</b>
Management related (accountant, consultant)	17	18%
Executive, administrative, and managerial	15	16%
Writer, artist, entertainer, and athlete	9	9%
Health diagnosing (doctor, dentist)	6	6%
Teacher, not postsecondary	6	6%
Lawyer and judge	5	5%
Engineer, architect, and surveyor	4	4%
Social scientist and urban planner (economist)	3	3%
Managerial and professional specialty, other	3	3%
Health assessment and treating (RN, pharmacist)	2	2%
Teacher, postsecondary	2	2%
Biological or life sciences scientist (biomedical researcher)	2	2%
Social, recreation, and religious worker	2	2%
Natural scientist (chemist, astronomer)	1	1%
<b>Technical, sales, and administrative support</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>18%</b>
Miscellaneous administrative support	6	6%
Technologist or technician (paralegal, programmer)	4	4%
Supervisor, administrative support	3	3%
Sales representative (realtor, buyer)	2	2%
Sales worker, retail and personal services	1	1%
Sales, supervisor, and proprietor	1	1%
<b>Service</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1%</b>
Protective services (police, firemen)	1	1%
<b>Other</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>7%</b>
Student, work study	5	5%
Volunteer	1	1%
Other	1	1%

<sup>a</sup> Occupational types categorized by Wilder Research according to the Occupational Classification Codes for Detailed Occupational Categories (US Census, 1980).

<sup>b</sup> Some Scholars reported multiple jobs, so percentages do not sum to 100 percent.

**Note.** Includes only alumni Scholars who are currently employed.

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**A34. For what company or organization do you work?**

Organization type <sup>a</sup> N=97	Number	Percent <sup>b</sup>
Business	34	35%
Education	17	18%
Government	14	14%
Health	11	11%
Media	11	11%
Legal	9	9%
Service	5	5%

<sup>a</sup> Categories developed Wilder Research based on Scholars' responses.

<sup>b</sup> Some Scholars reported multiple jobs and some organizations fall into multiple types, so percentages do not sum to 100 percent.

**Notes.** 1) Includes only alumni Scholars who are currently employed.

2) Other types of organizations include: advocacy, arts, athletic, cultural, college, and spiritual (1-2 each).

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**A35. Please describe the venture or project very briefly**

Type of project <sup>a</sup> N=56	Number	Percent <sup>b</sup>
Arts	16	29%
Entrepreneurial	14	25%
Education	8	14%
Health	6	11%

<sup>a</sup> Categories developed Wilder Research based on Scholars' responses.

<sup>b</sup> Some projects fall into multiple types, so percentages do not sum to 100 percent.

**Notes.** 1) Includes only alumni Scholars who indicated they have other business ventures or projects that they are currently pursuing.

2) Other types of projects include: non-profit, research and policy, minority outreach, physical labor, and political activism (2-4 each).

## *Current motivating factors for Scholars*

### **A36. What motivates or inspires you now to continue to achieve and reach your full potential? (Briefly list up to 3 factors)**

<b>Factor response theme<sup>a</sup> N=218</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>Percent<sup>b</sup></b>
<b>Personal characteristics</b>		
Desire for material and social success	44	20%
Personal commitment to success	37	17%
Faith, religion or spirituality	30	14%
Belief in myself to reach my full potential	28	13%
Motivation from (competition with) others who are achieving	25	12%
Passion for my work	24	11%
Goal-oriented	20	9%
Intellectual ability and curiosity	17	8%
Other <sup>c</sup>	30	14%
<b>Background and people</b>		
Family	74	34%
High expectations	19	9%
Support, love, and encouragement	18	8%
Friends	18	8%
My community	3	1%
Obstacles faced growing up such as being low-income	8	4%
Mentor or unspecified person	6	3%
<b>Service</b>		
Desire to serve and impact others	63	29%
Sense of responsibility: to whom much is given, much is expected	42	19%
Heightened social awareness and ethical response	19	9%
<b>Opportunities and experiences<sup>d</sup></b>	9	4%
<b>Ron Brown Scholar Program</b>	23	11%

<sup>a</sup> Categories developed by Wilder Research based on Scholars' responses.

<sup>b</sup> Each response included up to three factors and each factor could be categorized into multiple themes, so percentages do not sum to 100 percent.

<sup>c</sup> Other personal characteristics include: desire for personal fulfillment (7); sense of purpose (4); and belief in humanity (2).

<sup>d</sup> Opportunities and experiences include: books (2), high quality education (2), and job (2).

**Note.** Includes all Scholars.

## *Importance and helpfulness of Program elements and activities*

**A37. How important have the following aspects of the Ron Brown Scholar Program been to your personal, educational or career development and progress to date?**

Program element	Current Scholars N=78			Alumni Scholars N=143			Total N=221		
	Extremely important	Very important	Total (extremely & very)	Extremely important	Very important	Total (extremely & very)	Extremely important	Very important	Total (extremely & very)
The scholarship funds	81%	11%	92%	81%	15%	96%	81%	14%	95%
Help, support, or guidance from the Ron Brown Scholar Program staff	45%	38%	83%	57%	27%	84%	53%	31%	84%
Relationships with other Ron Brown Scholars	51%	33%	85%	48%	28%	76%	49%	30%	79%
Triennial leadership conferences	39%	37%	76%	29%	39%	68%	33%	38%	71%
Help with obtaining internships or other pre-professional experiences	27%	32%	59%	27%	24%	51%	27%	27%	54%
Other Program-sponsored events	10%	21%	31%	17%	35%	52%	14%	30%	44%
The Ron Brown Scholar Alumni Association <sup>a</sup>	-	-	-	18%	23%	41%	18%	23%	41%
Stipends or funding for community service work	13%	17%	30%	18%	18%	36%	16%	18%	34%
Other Program element	3%	3%	5%	6%	6%	11%	4%	4%	8%

<sup>a</sup> Includes only alumni Scholars' ratings (N=143).

**Notes.** 1) Response options include extremely important, very important, somewhat important, not important, don't know, or not applicable.

2) Includes all Scholars.

**A38. How important have the following aspects of the Ron Brown Scholars Program been to your personal, educational, or career development and progress to date? (Current Scholars by award year)**

Program element	Extremely important Award year		Very important Award year		Total (extremely & very) Award year	
	2007 & 2008 N=40	2005 & 2006 N=38	2007 & 2008 N=40	2005 & 2006 N=38	2007 & 2008 N=40	2005 & 2006 N=38
Scholarship funds	80%	82%	15%	8%	95%	90%
Help, support, or guidance from the Ron Brown Scholar Program staff	50%	40%	38%	39%	88%	79%
Relationships with other Ron Brown Scholars	58%	45%	32%	34%	90%	79%
Triennial leadership conferences	43%	34%	30%	45%	73%	79%
Help obtaining pre-professional internships	35%	18%	25%	40%	60%	58%
Funding for community service	10%	16%	13%	21%	23%	37%
Other Program-sponsored events	13%	8%	15%	26%	28%	34%
The Ron Brown Scholar Alumni Association	-	-	-	-	-	-
Other Program element	5%	0%	5%	0%	5%	0%

**Notes.** 1) Response options include extremely important, very important, somewhat important, not important, don't know, or not applicable.

2) Includes all Scholars.



**A39. Has the Ron Brown Scholar Program (staff, scholars, steering committee, friends, or others associated with the Program) helped you in any of the following areas?**

Type of help from the Program	Current Scholars N=29-76			Alumni Scholars N=81-142			Total N=113-218		
	Yes, a lot	Yes, some	Total (A lot & some)	Yes, a lot	Yes, some	Total (A lot & some)	Yes, a lot	Yes, some	Total (A lot & some)
Connecting with other Ron Brown Scholars	87%	12%	99%	87%	11%	99%	87%	12%	99%
Finding/obtaining pre-professional internship opportunities or other such experiences	56%	40%	96%	61%	31%	91%	59%	34%	93%
Finding/obtaining leadership opportunities	61%	32%	93%	52%	41%	93%	55%	37%	93%
Education planning or decision-making during or after college	45%	49%	94%	35%	56%	91%	39%	54%	92%
Career planning or decision-making	46%	43%	88%	43%	47%	89%	44%	45%	89%
Job search	38%	51%	89%	37%	44%	81%	37%	46%	83%
Personal or family issues	44%	44%	88%	42%	39%	80%	42%	40%	82%
Providing a stipend for community service work or funding for your community service project	66%	9%	74%	61%	14%	74%	62%	12%	74%
Providing letters of recommendation for graduate or professional school applications or job applications	52%	21%	72%	55%	17%	71%	54%	18%	72%
Connecting with professors and other college personnel	29%	31%	59%	19%	49%	68%	22%	43%	65%
Academic help	27%	38%	64%	19%	27%	46%	22%	31%	52%
Other	69%	23%	92%	59%	22%	82%	61%	23%	84%

**Notes.** 1) Response options include yes, a lot; yes, some; no; don't know; or not applicable/no help needed.

2) Excludes Scholars who indicated not applicable/no help needed or don't know on an individual help item.

**A40. Has the Ron Brown Scholar Program (staff, scholars, steering committee, friends, or others associated with the Program) helped you in any of the following areas? (Current Scholars by award year)**

Type of help from the Program	Percent responding "Yes, a lot" Award year		Percent responding "Yes, some" Award year		Total (Yes, a lot and yes, some) Award year	
	2007 & 2008 N=12-39	2005 & 2006 N=17-37	2007 & 2008 N=12-39	2005 & 2006 N=17-37	2007 & 2008 N=12-39	2005 & 2006 N=17-37
Connecting with other Scholars	87%	87%	13%	11%	100%	97%
Finding pre-professional internships	61%	51%	40%	40%	100%	91%
Finding leadership opportunities	66%	55%	32%	32%	97%	87%
Education planning	44%	46%	53%	46%	97%	91%
Career planning	57%	36%	43%	42%	100%	77%
Job search	50%	30%	45%	56%	95%	85%
Personal or family issues	57%	35%	43%	45%	100%	80%
Funding for community service work	75%	58%	6%	11%	81%	68%
Letters of recommendation	67%	41%	33%	12%	100%	53%
Connecting with professors	32%	25%	28%	33%	60%	58%
Academic help	36%	15%	36%	40%	72%	55%
Other	67%	71%	33%	14%	100%	86%

**Notes.** 1) Response options include yes, a lot; yes, some; no; don't know; or not applicable/no help needed.

2) Excludes Scholars who indicated not applicable/no help needed or don't know on an individual help item.

## *Scholars' perspectives and participation in Program elements and activities*

**A41. Are you satisfied with the way the Program staff handle things regarding your scholarship (for example, the forms you need to complete, the information they provide, responses to your questions, etc.)?**

	Award year 2007 & 2008 N=40	Award year 2005 & 2006 N=38	Total current Scholars N=78
Always or usually	90%	82%	86%
Sometimes	10%	18%	14%
Rarely	-	-	-
Total	100%	100%	100%

**Note.** This question was asked only of current Scholars.

**A42. Have you formed close friendships with other Ron Brown Scholars?**

	N	Yes, 3 or more <sup>a</sup>	Yes, 1-2 <sup>a</sup>	No <sup>a</sup>
All Scholars	221	67%	26%	7%
Alumni Scholars	143	66%	26%	8%
Current Scholars	78	68%	26%	6%

<sup>a</sup> Percent of Scholars responding "yes." Respondents could check only one response.

**Note.** Includes all Scholars.

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**A43. How often are you in contact with other Ron Brown Scholars?**

	N	Daily or almost every day <sup>a</sup>	At least once a week <sup>a</sup>	1-2 times a month <sup>a</sup>	Several times a year <sup>a</sup>	Very rarely or never <sup>a</sup>
All Scholars	221	20%	24%	31%	22%	4%
Alumni Scholars	143	18%	15%	34%	29%	5%
Current Scholars	78	24%	40%	26%	9%	1%
Award year 2007 & 2008	40	23%	45%	20%	13%	-
Award year 2005 & 2006	38	26%	34%	32%	5%	3%

<sup>a</sup> Percent of Scholars responding "yes." Respondents could check only one response.

**Note.** Includes all Scholars.

---

**A44. Have you received mentoring from another Ron Brown Scholar(s) or Friend(s) of Ron Brown Scholars (i.e., personal, education or career guidance or advice)? Check all that apply.**

	N	Yes, alumni Scholar <sup>a</sup>	Yes, current Scholar <sup>a</sup>	Yes, Friend of RBS <sup>a</sup>	No <sup>a</sup>
All Scholars	220	68%	33%	47%	13%
Alumni Scholars	142	71%	17%	55%	13%
Current Scholars	78	63%	63%	32%	13%
Award year 2007 & 2008	40	65%	75%	30%	8%
Award year 2005 & 2006	38	61%	50%	34%	18%

<sup>a</sup> Percent of Scholars responding "yes." Respondents could check more than one response.

**Note.** Includes all Scholars.

---

**A45. (If you have not received mentoring,) would you be interested in receiving mentoring from a Ron Brown Scholar or Friend of Ron Brown Scholars in the near future?**

	<b>N</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>
All Scholars	27	85%	15%
Alumni Scholars	18	89%	11%
Current Scholars	9	78%	22%
Award year 2007 & 2008	3	100%	-
Award year 2005 & 2006	6	67%	33%

**Note.** Includes only Scholars who indicated they have not received mentoring from another Ron Brown Scholar or Friend of Ron Brown Scholars.

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**A46. During the past 12 months, have you mentored or provided guidance/ advice to one or more Ron Brown Scholars?**

	<b>N</b>	<b>Yes, two or more<sup>a</sup></b>	<b>Yes, one<sup>a</sup></b>	<b>No<sup>a</sup></b>
All Scholars	212	36%	26%	38%
Alumni Scholars	137	42%	27%	31%
Current Scholars	75	24%	25%	50%
Award year 2007 & 2008	38	11%	29%	61%
Award year 2005 & 2006	37	38%	22%	41%

<sup>a</sup> Percent of Scholars responding "yes." Respondents could check only one response.

**Note.** Includes all Scholars.

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**A47. How important has this mentoring been for you?**

	<b>N</b>	<b>Extremely important<sup>a</sup></b>	<b>Very important<sup>a</sup></b>	<b>Somewhat important<sup>a</sup></b>	<b>Not important<sup>a</sup></b>
All Scholars	191	37%	35%	26%	2%
Alumni Scholars	123	39%	31%	29%	2%
Current Scholars	68	34%	43%	22%	2%
Award year 2007 & 2008	37	38%	43%	19%	-
Award year 2005 & 2006	31	29%	42%	26%	3%

<sup>a</sup> Percent of Scholars responding “yes.” Respondents could check only one response.

**Note.** Includes only Scholars who indicated they have received mentoring from another Ron Brown Scholar or Friend of Ron Brown Scholars.

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**A48. For what types of issues have you received their (mentor’s) guidance or assistance?**

<b>Type of help from mentors</b>	<b>Percent responding “yes” to each item</b>		
	<b>Current Scholars N=46-67</b>	<b>Alumni Scholars N=90-123</b>	<b>Total Scholars N=136-189</b>
Career planning or decision-making	80%	90%	87%
Pre-professional internship opportunities or decisions	65%	77%	72%
Help with exploring or deciding about graduate or professional school	58%	77%	70%
Leadership opportunities	60%	66%	64%
Community service opportunities or decisions	57%	57%	57%
Job search	40%	59%	52%
Academic help	68%	41%	51%
Personal or family issues	49%	46%	47%
Other <sup>a</sup>	13%	13%	13%

<sup>a</sup> Other types of help include: creating community, transition help, entrepreneurship, and spirituality.

**Note.** Includes only Scholars who indicated they have received mentoring from another Ron Brown Scholar or Friend of Ron Brown Scholars.

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**A49. For what types of issues have you received their (mentor's) guidance or assistance? (By award year for current Scholars)**

Type of help from mentors	Percent responding "yes" to each item		
	Award year 2007 & 2008 N=23-36	Award year 2005 & 2006 N=23-31	Total current Scholars N=46-67
Career planning or decision-making	77%	84%	80%
Academic help	75%	60%	68%
Pre-professional internship opportunities or decisions	63%	68%	65%
Leadership opportunities	64%	55%	60%
Help with exploring or deciding about graduate or professional school	50%	68%	58%
Community service opportunities or decisions	60%	54%	57%
Personal or family issues	41%	59%	49%
Job search	36%	43%	40%
Other <sup>a</sup>	13%	13%	13%

<sup>a</sup> Other types of help include: creating community and transition help.

**Note.** Includes only current Scholars who indicated they have received mentoring from another Ron Brown Scholar or Friend of Ron Brown Scholars.

**A50. Do you have any suggestions for improving mentoring or other ways the Program could do more to strengthen connections among Ron Brown Scholars?**

<b>Response theme<sup>a</sup> N=216</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>Percent<sup>b</sup></b>
<b>No or it's fine as is</b>	<b>77</b>	<b>36%</b>
<b>More formal mentoring component</b>	<b>70</b>	<b>32%</b>
Alternate mentoring formats (online, telephone or pod structure)	11	5%
Stronger mentoring program	10	5%
Clearer mentor-mentee expectations	9	4%
Higher mentor-mentee expectations	7	3%
More formal mentor-mentee events	7	3%
More inspirational stories and ideas of things to do together	7	3%
Emulate Big Brother Big Sisters model	6	3%
Greater mentor-mentee accountability	5	2%
Create a mentoring point person	3	1%
Other <sup>c</sup>	5	2%
<b>More events</b>	<b>57</b>	<b>26%</b>
More events in general	25	11%
More active regional groups	23	11%
More active affinity groups	9	4%
<b>Other</b>	<b>51</b>	<b>24%</b>
Online database	27	13%
Match mentor-mentee by geography	7	3%
Match mentor-mentee by interest or affinity	7	3%
Other	10	5%

<sup>a</sup> Categories developed by Wilder Research based on Scholars' responses.

<sup>b</sup> Responses could be categorized into more than one theme, so percentages do not sum to 100 percent.

<sup>c</sup> Other themes include: provided trainings for mentors (2) and expand the mentor pool (3).

**Note.** Includes all Scholars.



**A51. How often are you in contact with this Scholar (that you mentored)? (If you mentored more than one Scholar, respond for the Scholar with whom you have the most contact)**

	N	Daily or almost daily <sup>a</sup>	At least once a week <sup>a</sup>	1-2 times a month <sup>a</sup>	Several times a year or less <sup>a</sup>
All Scholars	125	7%	16%	29%	48%
Alumni Scholars	92	8%	12%	22%	59%
Current Scholars	33	6%	27%	49%	18%
Award year 2007 & 2008	11	9%	36%	46%	9%
Award year 2005 & 2006	22	5%	23%	50%	23%

<sup>a</sup> Percent of Scholars responding "yes." Respondents could check only one response.

**Note.** Includes only Scholars who have mentored or provided guidance/advice to one or more Ron Brown Scholars during the past 12 months.

**A52. Suggestions for improving Program events**

Suggestions for improving Program events or meetings <sup>a</sup> (N=116)	Number	Percent
More time for interaction, networking, and discussion; less structured time and speakers	49	42%
More Program-sponsored events, including regional events	24	21%
Vary the location of the conference and other meetings	11	9%
Make conferences more appealing to alumni Scholars	10	9%
Offer more diverse programming at conference for various interests	10	9%

<sup>a</sup> Categories developed by Wilder Research based on Scholars' responses. Scholars' responses could be placed in multiple categories.

**Note.** Other suggestions offered include the following: encourage better attendance, have a longer conference, hold the conference at different times of the year, provide more financial support to attend the conference, include session on practical topics (e.g., money management), and have a more focused theme for the conference (2-8 Scholars suggested each).

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### A53. Suggestions for Community Service Foundation

**What suggestions do you have for how to make this Foundation as successful as possible?<sup>a</sup> (N=138)**

	<b>Number</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Increase publicity and visibility of Foundation	43	31%
Help Scholars collaborate with others	30	22%
Strengthen accountability system and guidelines for grants	26	19%
More information and updates on funded projects	22	16%
Provide technical assistance	11	8%
Provide more funding for projects	10	7%
Encourage participation, especially among younger Scholars	9	7%
Provide examples of problems that need solutions	8	6%

<sup>a</sup> Categories developed by Wilder Research based on Scholars' responses. Scholars' responses could be placed in multiple categories.

---

### A54. Have you ever collaborated with other Ron Brown Scholar(s) on a community service initiative or project? If yes, are you doing so now?

	<b>N<sup>a</sup></b>	<b>Scholars who have ever collaborated<sup>a</sup></b>		<b>Scholars who are currently collaborating<sup>b</sup></b>	
		<b>N</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>%</b>
All Scholars	217	51	24%	11	22%
Alumni Scholars	140	40	29%	7	18%
Current Scholars	77	11	14%	4	36%
Award year 2007 & 2008	40	4	10%	2	50%
Award year 2005 & 2006	37	7	19%	2	29%

<sup>a</sup> Includes all Scholars.

<sup>b</sup> Includes only Scholars who answered "yes" to having ever collaborated with other Ron Brown Scholar(s) on a community service initiative or project.

---

**A55. Briefly, what is/was the nature of the (service) initiative or project (that you collaborated with other Scholars on)?**

Type of service project <sup>a</sup> N=47	Number	Percent <sup>b</sup>
Education	15	32%
Research & policy	7	15%
Mentoring	5	11%
Event planning	4	9%
Physical labor	4	9%

<sup>a</sup> Categories developed by Wilder Research based on Scholars' responses.

<sup>b</sup> Service initiatives or projects could be categorized into multiple types, so percentages do not sum to 100 percent.

**Notes.** 1) Includes only those Scholars who have ever collaborated with other Ron Brown Scholar(s) on a community service initiative or project.

2) Other types of service initiatives or project include: health, minority outreach, supply collection, community development, and arts (2-3 each).

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**A56. Examples of collaborative community service projects (past and current)****Examples**

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[Created] a film for universal healthcare through the AARP. Received a grant from [Ron Brown Scholar Program] towards production funds and the film has been completed and won awards for its impact on the issue.

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Led Read to Lead events with other Scholars and facilitated leadership development among middle school and high school students.

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The Birthday Project puts together birthday parties for refugee children.

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Raised money for a program called FACE AIDS.

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Designed and implemented a service initiative that aims to maximize rebuilding efforts in post-Katrina New Orleans by innovatively integrating skilled personnel and the city's populace into the ongoing reconstruction process. Our overarching goal is to advance the city's post-Katrina revitalization by creating a construction work force.

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Hands on Gulf Coast, Habitat for Humanity. Building homes on the Gulf Coast.

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Ron Brown Scholar Alumni Association Book Drive-provided books, supplies, and computers to underprivileged schools.

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Tutoring public school students in impoverished areas.

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[Initiated study of] access to healthcare among low-income communities in Boston (as part of the Council on African American Affairs).

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Minorities in Medicine Movement project which is aimed at providing minority youth with the knowledge, means, and exposure to the healthcare field with the long-term goal of increasing diversity in health professions.

---

Started a community mentoring program for aspiring engineers. Students were taught engineering skills by fixing an old golf cart.

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[Ron Brown Scholars] were involved in POWER NOW!, where we acted as mentors for adolescents in the New Haven public school system.

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Started a program that teaches leadership traits in youth like self motivation and persistence.

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[Worked on a] Braille project for children's books with Alpha Kappa Alpha.

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[Taught] business skills at a middle school.

**Note.** Includes only those Scholars who reported they have collaborated with another Ron Brown Scholar on a community service initiative or project.

---

**A57. (If you have not collaborated before,) would you be interested in collaborating (on a community service project in the future)?**

	N	Yes	No	Don't know
All Scholars	166	83%	2%	15%
Alumni Scholars	100	81%	3%	16%
Current Scholars	66	86%	-	14%

**Note.** Includes only those Scholars who reported they have never collaborated with another Ron Brown Scholar on a community service initiative or project.

## *Survey instruments*

## Ron Brown Alumni Scholar Survey

### Introduction

An independent outside evaluation is being conducted of the Ron Brown Scholar Program. Wilder Research of Saint Paul, Minnesota, is working with Ron Brown Scholar Program staff to conduct a survey to gather information needed for this evaluation. It is essential to the success of this evaluation that we obtain the full participation of current and alumni Ron Brown Scholars in the survey. The purpose of the evaluation is to obtain sound information on the benefits of the Program, Scholar accomplishments to date, and areas where the Program could be improved. This evaluation is being done at the request of a major funding source for the program. Your candid responses to the survey questions are needed for the success of this effort.

Please take a few minutes to answer the survey questions. The survey is confidential. Your answers to the questions will not be linked to your name, or anything else that would identify you, in the report of the survey results without obtaining your permission. A report on the results of the survey will be available to you.

For purposes of this survey, the following terms are defined below:

**Current Scholars:** undergraduate Ron Brown Scholars who haven't completed college yet (2005-2008 entering classes)

**Alumni Scholars:** Ron Brown Scholars who have graduated from college (1997-2004 entering classes)

**Scholars:** both current and alumni Ron Brown Scholars

1. Has the Ron Brown Scholar Program (staff, scholars, steering committee, friends, or others associated with the program) helped you in any of the following areas?

	Yes, a lot	Yes, some	No	Not applicable/no help needed
a. Education planning or decision-making during or after college	1	2	3	9
b. Connecting with professors and other college personnel	1	2	3	9
c. Academic help	1	2	3	9
d. Connecting with other Ron Brown Scholars	1	2	3	9
e. Finding/obtaining leadership opportunities	1	2	3	9
f. Finding/obtaining pre-professional internship opportunities or other such experiences	1	2	3	9
g. Providing a stipend for community service work or funding for your community service project.	1	2	3	9
h. Career planning or decision-making	1	2	3	9
i. Providing letters of recommendation for graduate or professional school applications or job applications	1	2	3	9
j. Job search	1	2	3	9
k. Personal or family issues	1	2	3	9
l. Other (Specify: _____)	1	2	3	9

2. Did the Ron Brown scholarship funds you received make it possible for you to attend your first-choice college or university?

1. Yes, it made it possible for me to attend my first choice
2. No, I would have been able to attend my first choice without the Ron Brown Scholarship
3. No, I was unable to attend my first choice even with the Ron Brown Scholarship
8. Don't know

3. Have you formed close friendships with other Ron Brown Scholars?

1. Yes, 3 or more
2. Yes, 1-2
3. No

4. How often are you in contact with other Ron Brown Scholars?

1. Daily or almost every day
2. At least once a week
3. 1-2 times a month
4. Several times a year
5. Very rarely or never

5. Have you received mentoring from another Ron Brown Scholar(s) or Friend(s) of Ron Brown Scholars (i.e., personal, educational or career guidance or advice)? **(CHECK ALL THAT APPLY)**

1. Yes, alumni Scholar
2. Yes, current Scholar
3. Yes, Friend of Ron Brown Scholars
4. No **(SKIP TO QUESTION 8)**

6. For what types of issues have you received their guidance or assistance?

	Yes	No
a. Academic help	1	2
b. Leadership opportunities	1	2
c. Pre-professional internship opportunities or decisions	1	2
d. Community service opportunities or decisions	1	2
e. Career planning or decision-making	1	2
f. Help with exploring or deciding about graduate or professional school	1	2
g. Job search	1	2
h. Personal or family issues	1	2
i. Other (Specify: _____)	1	2

7. How important has this mentoring been for you?

1. Extremely important
  2. Very important
  3. Somewhat important
  4. Not important
- } **(SKIP TO QUESTION 9)**

8. Would you be interested in receiving mentoring from a Ron Brown Scholar or Friend of Ron Brown Scholars in the near future?

1. Yes
2. No

9. During the past 12 months, have you mentored or provided guidance/advice to one or more Ron Brown Scholars?

1. Yes, two or more
2. Yes, one
3. No **(SKIP TO QUESTION 11)**

10. How often are you in contact with this scholar?

**(IF YOU MENTORED MORE THAN ONE SCHOLAR, RESPOND FOR THE SCHOLAR WITH WHOM YOU HAVE THE MOST CONTACT)**

1. Daily or almost daily
2. At least once a week
3. 1-2 times a month
4. Several times a year or less



11. Do you have any suggestions for improving mentoring or other ways the program could do more to strengthen connections among Ron Brown Scholars?
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12. How often have you attended Ron Brown Scholar Program events or meetings (college events, regional meetings, conferences, Alumni Association events, etc.)?
1. Several times a year
  2. Once a year
  3. Once every 2-3 years
  4. Very infrequently or never
13. Have you attended meetings or other functions of the Ron Brown Scholar Alumni Association?
1. Yes
  2. No **(SKIP TO QUESTION 15)**
14. Why do you participate in the Alumni Association? **(CHECK ALL THAT APPLY)**
1. To stay connected to other alumni/ae
  2. To support philanthropic and social causes
  3. To support or mentor Ron Brown Scholars
  4. Other (Specify: \_\_\_\_\_)
15. Did you attend the 2008 triennial leadership conference in Charlottesville, Virginia, this past August?
1. Yes
  2. No
16. What do you find most valuable about attending Ron Brown Scholar Program events or meetings (conferences, Alumni Association events, college events, regional meetings, etc.)?
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17. Do you have any suggestions for how such meetings or events could be improved in the future?
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18. About how frequently have you had contact with Ron Brown Scholar Program staff since graduating from college?
1. Several times a week
  2. Once every 1-2 weeks
  3. Once a month
  4. Several times a year
  5. Once a year or less
19. What things have Program staff done that have been especially helpful to you?
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20. What other things might Program staff do to help Scholars?
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21. Did you have an internship, summer job, or volunteer position while in college or shortly thereafter that was helpful to your personal or career development?
1. Yes
  2. No **(SKIP TO QUESTION 27)**
22. Was the Ron Brown Scholar Program helpful in making this opportunity possible (or at least one such opportunity if you had several)?
1. Yes
  2. No **(SKIP TO QUESTION 27)**
23. In what ways? **(CHECK ALL THAT APPLY)**
1. Helped you find the opportunity
  2. Helped you to be selected for the internship, job or position (e.g., wrote a letter of recommendation)
  3. Provided financial help
  4. Other assistance (Specify: \_\_\_\_\_)
24. For what type(s) of opportunity was the Ron Brown Scholar Program helpful? **(CHECK ALL THAT APPLY)**
1. Pre-professional internship
  2. Summer job
  3. Volunteer position
  4. Other (Specify: \_\_\_\_\_)

25. What is the name of the organization(s) where you worked or volunteered where the Ron Brown Scholar Program was helpful? (list up to 6)
- |          |          |
|----------|----------|
| 1. _____ | 4. _____ |
| 2. _____ | 5. _____ |
| 3. _____ | 6. _____ |
26. Briefly explain how this opportunity was (these opportunities were) helpful to you.
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
27. Did you have the opportunity to study, serve, or travel abroad while in college or shortly thereafter?
1. Yes
  2. No **(SKIP TO QUESTION 35)**
28. Was the Ron Brown Scholar Program helpful in making this opportunity possible (or at least one such opportunity if you had several)?
1. Yes
  2. No **(SKIP TO QUESTION 35)**
29. In what ways was the Ron Brown Scholar Program helpful? **(CHECK ALL THAT APPLY)**
1. Helped you to find the opportunity
  2. Helped you to be selected to go (e.g., letter of recommendation)
  3. Provided financial help
  4. Other assistance (Specify: \_\_\_\_\_)
30. For the opportunity where you were helped by the Program, to which country did you travel?  
**(IF MORE THAN ONE, ANSWER FOR THE MOST RECENT)**
- \_\_\_\_\_
31. For what period of time? \_\_\_\_\_ Number of months
32. What did you study or accomplish while abroad on this trip?
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
33. Was it helpful to your personal or career development?
1. Yes
  2. No **(SKIP TO QUESTION 35)**

34. In what way was it helpful?

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35. Have you done community service work during the past 12 months – i.e., volunteering or working for minimal pay on community/social issues, needs or concerns?

1. Yes

2. No **(SKIP TO QUESTION 39)**

36. For what organization(s) or group(s) did you do/are you doing community service work?

Name of organization: 1) \_\_\_\_\_

2) \_\_\_\_\_

3) \_\_\_\_\_

37. Very briefly, what is the nature of the community service work you did in the past 12 months?

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38. Approximately how many hours did you spend on community service work during the past 12 months? \_\_\_\_\_

39. Have you ever collaborated with other Ron Brown Scholar(s) on a community service initiative or project?

1. Yes

2. No **(SKIP TO QUESTION 42)**

40. Are you doing so now?

1. Yes

2. No

41. Briefly, what is/was the nature of the initiative or project?

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**SKIP TO QUESTION 43**

42. Would you be interested in such a collaboration?

1. Yes

2. No

8. Don't know

43. As you know, the Community Service Foundation was launched this past year and began awarding grants to Ron Brown Scholars for service projects that “demonstrate visionary solutions to problems of social importance.” What suggestions do you have for how to make this Foundation as effective as possible?

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44. **Since becoming a Ron Brown Scholar**, have you held a leadership position on the college campus, at your job, or in the community?

1. Yes
2. No **(SKIP TO QUESTION 48)**

45. Have you had a notable accomplishment as a leader during that time that you would like to mention?

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46. Have you held any leadership positions **during the past 12 months** as part of your job, graduate or professional education, community service, or other activities?

1. Yes
2. No **(SKIP TO QUESTION 48)**

47. For each, indicate the title or nature of the leadership position held, the name of the organization, and the type of organization.

Leadership position	Name of organization	Type of organization (1. business, 2. nonprofit, 3. education, 4. government, 5. religious, 6. political or advocacy group, 7. other) [drop down menu]

48. How important have the following aspects of the Ron Brown Scholar Program been to your personal, educational or career development and progress to date?

Program element	Extremely important	Very important	Somewhat important	Not important	Not applicable
a. The scholarship funds	4	3	2	1	9
b. Help, support, or guidance from the Ron Brown Scholar Program staff	4	3	2	1	9
c. Relationships with other Ron Brown Scholars	4	3	2	1	9
d. Help with obtaining internships or other pre-professional experiences	4	3	2	1	9
e. Stipends or funding for community service work	4	3	2	1	9
f. Triennial leadership conferences	4	3	2	1	9
g. Other program-sponsored events	4	3	2	1	9
h. The Ron Brown Scholar Alumni Association	4	3	2	1	9
i. Other program element (Specify: _____)	4	3	2	1	9

49. What were the primary factors that helped you succeed up until the time you became a Ron Brown Scholar? This could include people, events, programs or services, a job, other experiences, personal characteristics, financial help, books, etc. (Please be brief but specific; list up to 3 primary factors.)

1) \_\_\_\_\_  
 2) \_\_\_\_\_  
 3) \_\_\_\_\_

50. What motivates or inspires you now to continue to achieve and reach your full potential? (Briefly list up to 3 factors)

1) \_\_\_\_\_  
 2) \_\_\_\_\_  
 3) \_\_\_\_\_

51. Has being a Ron Brown Scholar influenced or shaped what you are doing now or what you plan to do?

1. Yes, a lot
2. Yes, some
3. No **(SKIP TO QUESTION 53)**

52. In what way(s) has being a Ron Brown Scholar influenced your current activities or future plans?

\_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

53. Do you have any final thoughts about the Ron Brown Scholar Program?

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Finally, a few questions about your education and employment activities...

54. Have you attended graduate or professional school since graduating from college?

1. Yes **(SKIP TO QUESTION 58)**
2. No

55. Do you intend to enroll in graduate or professional school within the next two years?

1. Yes
2. No **(SKIP TO QUESTION 66)**

56. What degree do you plan to pursue?

1. Masters
2. Ph.D.
3. M.D. **(SKIP TO QUESTION 66)**
4. Law degree **(SKIP TO QUESTION 66)**
5. Other (Specify: \_\_\_\_\_)

57. In what field of study?

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**(SKIP TO QUESTION 66)**

58. What is/was your field of study? \_\_\_\_\_

59. Have you obtained a professional degree (e.g., masters, doctorate)?

1. Yes
2. No **(SKIP TO QUESTION 62)**

60. What degree did you obtain? \_\_\_\_\_

61. From what institution did you obtain this advanced degree? \_\_\_\_\_  
**(SKIP TO QUESTION 66)**

62. Are you currently enrolled?

1. Yes
2. No **(SKIP TO QUESTION 66)**

63. What degree are you currently working toward? \_\_\_\_\_
64. What is your field of study? \_\_\_\_\_
65. In what institution are you enrolled? \_\_\_\_\_
66. Are you currently employed?
1. Yes **(SKIP TO QUESTION 68)**
  2. No
67. Are you currently seeking employment?
1. Yes **(SKIP TO QUESTION 73)**
  2. No **(SKIP TO QUESTION 73)**
68. Are you employed:
1. Full-time
  2. Part-time
  3. Both full-time and part-time
69. What is your main occupation? \_\_\_\_\_
70. What are the main activities that you do on the job?
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
71. For what company or organization do you work?
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
72. Would you say that your current occupation is related to your college or post-graduate degree?
1. Yes
  2. No
73. Besides employment, do you have other business ventures or projects that you are currently pursuing?
1. Yes
  2. No **(SKIP TO END)**
74. Please describe the venture or project very briefly.
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
75. Are you collaborating with another Ron Brown Scholar(s) on the venture/project?
1. Yes
  2. No

**THANK YOU!**



## Ron Brown Current Scholar Survey

### Introduction

An independent outside evaluation is being conducted of the Ron Brown Scholar Program. Wilder Research of Saint Paul, Minnesota, is working with Ron Brown Scholar Program staff to conduct a survey to gather information needed for this evaluation. It is essential to the success of this evaluation that we obtain the full participation of current and alumni Ron Brown Scholars in the survey. The purpose of the evaluation is to obtain sound information on the benefits of the Program, Scholar accomplishments to date, and areas where the Program could be improved. This evaluation is being done at the request of a major funding source for the program. Your candid responses to the survey questions are needed for the success of this effort.

Please take a few minutes to answer the survey questions. The survey is confidential. Your answers to the questions will not be linked to your name, or anything else that would identify you, in the report of the survey results without obtaining your permission. A report on the results of the survey will be available to you.

Note. We understand that those of you who became Ron Brown Scholars recently may not have a lot to report for some of the survey questions. That's fine – just answer the questions as fully as you can. Thank you.

For purposes of this survey, the following terms are defined below:

**Current scholars:** undergraduate Ron Brown Scholars (2005-2008 entering classes)

**Alumni scholars:** Ron Brown Scholars in the 1997-2004 entering classes

**Scholars:** both current and alumni Ron Brown Scholars

1. Has the Ron Brown Scholar Program (staff, scholars, steering committee, friends, or others associated with the program) helped you in any of the following areas?

	Yes, a lot	Yes, some	No	Not applicable/no help needed
a. Education planning or decision-making during college	1	2	3	9
b. Connecting with professors and other college personnel	1	2	3	9
c. Academic help	1	2	3	9
d. Connecting with other Ron Brown Scholars	1	2	3	9
e. Finding/obtaining leadership opportunities	1	2	3	9
f. Finding/obtaining pre-professional internship opportunities or other such experiences	1	2	3	9
g. Providing a stipend for community service work or funding for your community service project.	1	2	3	9
h. Career planning or decision-making	1	2	3	9
i. Providing letters of recommendation for graduate or professional school applications or job applications	1	2	3	9
j. Job search	1	2	3	9
k. Personal or family issues	1	2	3	9
l. Other (Specify: _____)	1	2	3	9

2. Did the Ron Brown scholarship funds you received make it possible for you to attend your first-choice college or university?

1. Yes, it made it possible for me to attend my first choice
2. No, I would have been able to attend my first choice without the Ron Brown Scholarship
3. No, I was unable to attend my first choice even with the Ron Brown Scholarship
8. Don't know

3. Have you received any other college scholarships besides the Ron Brown scholarship?

1. Yes
2. No **(SKIP TO QUESTION 5)**

4. Please indicate the name(s) of the scholarship(s) that you have received.

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5. Have you formed close friendships with other Ron Brown Scholars?

1. Yes, 3 or more
2. Yes, 1-2
3. No

6. How often are you in contact with other Ron Brown Scholars?
1. Daily or almost every day
  2. At least once a week
  3. 1-2 times a month
  4. Several times a year
  5. Very rarely or never
7. Have you received mentoring from another Ron Brown Scholar(s) or Friend(s) of Ron Brown Scholars (i.e., personal, educational or career guidance or advice)? **(CHECK ALL THAT APPLY)**
1. Yes, alumni Scholar
  2. Yes, current Scholar
  3. Yes, Friend of Ron Brown Scholars
  4. No **(SKIP TO QUESTION 10)**

8. For what types of issues have you received their guidance or assistance?

	Yes	No
a. Academic help	1	2
b. Leadership opportunities	1	2
c. Pre-professional internship opportunities or decisions	1	2
d. Community service opportunities or decisions	1	2
e. Career planning or decision-making	1	2
f. Help with exploring or deciding about graduate or professional school	1	2
g. Job search	1	2
h. Personal or family issues	1	2
i. Other (Specify: _____)	1	2

9. How important has this mentoring been for you?

1. Extremely important
  2. Very important
  3. Somewhat important
  4. Not important
- (SKIP TO QUESTION 11)**

10. Would you be interested in receiving mentoring from a Ron Brown Scholar or Friend of Ron Brown Scholars in the near future?

1. Yes
2. No

11. During the past 12 months, have you mentored or provided guidance/advice to one or more Ron Brown Scholars?

1. Yes, two or more
2. Yes, one
3. No **(SKIP TO QUESTION 13)**

12. How often are you in contact with this scholar?  
**(IF YOU MENTORED MORE THAN ONE SCHOLAR, RESPOND FOR THE SCHOLAR WITH WHOM YOU HAVE THE MOST CONTACT)**
1. Daily or almost daily
  2. At least once a week
  3. 1-2 times a month
  4. Several times a year or less
13. Do you have any suggestions for improving mentoring or other ways the program could do more to strengthen connections among Ron Brown Scholars?
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14. How often have you attended Ron Brown Scholar Program events or meetings (college events, regional meetings, conferences, Alumni Association events, etc.)?
1. Several times a year
  2. Once a year
  3. Very infrequently or never
15. Did you attend the 2008 triennial leadership conference in Charlottesville, Virginia, this past August?
1. Yes
  2. No
16. What do you find most valuable about attending Ron Brown Scholar Program events or meetings (conferences, Alumni Association events, college events, regional meetings, etc.)?
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17. Do you have any suggestions for how such meetings or events could be improved in the future?
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18. How often have you had contact with Ron Brown Scholar Program staff?
1. Several times a week
  2. Once every 1-2 weeks
  3. Once a month
  4. Several times a year
  5. Once a year or less

19. What things have Program staff done that have been especially helpful to you?

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20. Are you satisfied with the way the Program staff handle things regarding your scholarship (for example, the forms you needed to complete, the information they provide, responses to your questions, etc.)?

1. Always/usually **(SKIP TO QUESTION 22)**
2. Sometimes
3. Rarely

21. What things could they handle better?

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22. What other things might Program staff do to help Scholars?

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23. Have you had an internship, summer job, or volunteer position while in college that was helpful to your personal or career development?

1. Yes
2. No **(SKIP TO QUESTION 29)**

24. Was the Ron Brown Scholar Program helpful in making this opportunity possible (or at least one such opportunity if you had several)?

1. Yes
2. No **(SKIP TO QUESTION 29)**

25. In what ways? **(CHECK ALL THAT APPLY)**

1. Helped you find the opportunity
2. Helped you to be selected for the internship, job or position (e.g., wrote a letter of recommendation)
3. Provided financial help
4. Other assistance (Specify: \_\_\_\_\_)

26. For what type(s) of opportunity was the Ron Brown Scholar Program helpful? **(CHECK ALL THAT APPLY)**

1. Pre-professional internship
2. Summer job
3. Volunteer position
4. Other (Specify: \_\_\_\_\_)

27. What is the name of the organization(s) where you worked or volunteered where the Ron Brown Scholar Program was helpful? (list up to 6)
- |          |          |
|----------|----------|
| 1. _____ | 4. _____ |
| 2. _____ | 5. _____ |
| 3. _____ | 6. _____ |
28. Briefly explain how this opportunity was (these opportunities were) helpful to you.
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
29. Have you had the opportunity to study, serve, or travel abroad while in college?
1. Yes
2. No **(SKIP TO QUESTION 37)**
30. Was the Ron Brown Scholar Program helpful in making this opportunity possible (or at least one such opportunity if you had several)?
1. Yes
2. No **(SKIP TO QUESTION 37)**
31. In what ways was the Ron Brown Scholar Program helpful? **(CHECK ALL THAT APPLY)**
1. Helped you to find the opportunity
2. Helped you to be selected to go (e.g., letter of recommendation)
3. Provided financial help
4. Other assistance (Specify: \_\_\_\_\_)
32. For the opportunity where you were helped by the Program, to which country did you travel?  
**(IF MORE THAN ONE, ANSWER FOR THE MOST RECENT)**
- \_\_\_\_\_
33. For what period of time? \_\_\_\_\_ Number of months
34. What did you study or accomplish while abroad on this trip?
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
35. Was it helpful to your personal or career development?
1. Yes
2. No **(SKIP TO QUESTION 37)**

36. In what way was it helpful?

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37. Have you done community service work during the past 12 months – i.e., volunteering or working for minimal pay on community/social issues, needs or concerns?

1. Yes

2. No **(SKIP TO QUESTION 41)**

38. For what organization(s) or group(s) did you do/are you doing community service work?

Name of organization: 1) \_\_\_\_\_

2) \_\_\_\_\_

3) \_\_\_\_\_

39. Very briefly, what is the nature of the community service work you did in the past 12 months?

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40. Approximately how many hours did you spend on community service work during the past 12 months? \_\_\_\_\_

41. Have you **ever** collaborated with other Ron Brown Scholar(s) on a community service initiative or project?

1. Yes

2. No **(SKIP TO QUESTION 44)**

42. Are you doing so now?

1. Yes

2. No

43. Briefly, what is/was the nature of the initiative or project?

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**SKIP TO QUESTION 45**

44. Would you be interested in such a collaboration?

1. Yes

2. No

8. Don't know

45. As you know, the Community Service Foundation was launched this past year and began awarding grants to Ron Brown Scholars for service projects that “demonstrate visionary solutions to problems of social importance.” What suggestions do you have for how to make this Foundation as effective as possible?

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46. What activities have you been involved in on campus during the current school year?

	Yes	No
a. Student government	1	2
b. Athletics	1	2
c. Choir or band	1	2
d. Residence hall group	1	2
e. Fraternity or sorority	1	2
f. Other student group or Club (Specify: _____)		
_____)	1	2
g. Other (Specify: _____)	1	2

47. While in college, have you held a leadership position on campus in a group, club or organization?

1. Yes
2. No **(SKIP TO QUESTION 49)**

48. For each, indicate the title or nature of the leadership position and the name of the organization or group.

Leadership position	Name of organization or group



49. Since becoming a Ron Brown Scholar, have you held a leadership position off campus (that is, related to your community service, job, or other activities)?
1. Yes
  2. No **(SKIP TO QUESTION 51)**
50. For each, indicate the title or nature of the leadership position held, the name of the organization, and the type of organization.

Leadership position	Name of organization	Type of organization (1. business, 2. nonprofit, 3. education, 4. government, 5. religious, 6. political or advocacy group, 7. other) [drop down menu]

51. Since becoming a Ron Brown Scholar, have you had a notable accomplishment as a leader on or off campus that you would like to mention?

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52. How important have the following aspects of the Ron Brown Scholar Program been to your personal, educational or career development and progress to date?

Program element	Extremely important	Very important	Somewhat important	Not important	Not applicable
a. The scholarship funds	4	3	2	1	9
b. Help, support, or guidance from the Ron Brown Scholar Program staff	4	3	2	1	9
c. Relationships with other Ron Brown Scholars	4	3	2	1	9
d. Help with obtaining internships or other pre-professional experiences	4	3	2	1	9
e. Stipends or funding for community service work	4	3	2	1	9
f. Triennial leadership conferences	4	3	2	1	9
g. Other program-sponsored events	4	3	2	1	9
i. Other program element (Specify: _____)	4	3	2	1	9

53. What were the primary factors that helped you succeed up until the time you became a Ron Brown Scholar? This could include people, events, programs or services, a job, other experiences, personal characteristics, financial help, books, etc. (Please be brief but specific; list up to 3 primary factors.)
- 1) \_\_\_\_\_
- 2) \_\_\_\_\_
- 3) \_\_\_\_\_
54. What motivates or inspires you now to continue to achieve and reach your full potential? (Briefly list up to 3 factors)
- 1) \_\_\_\_\_
- 2) \_\_\_\_\_
- 3) \_\_\_\_\_
55. Has being a Ron Brown Scholar influenced or shaped what you are doing now or what you plan to do?
1. Yes, a lot
2. Yes, some
3. No **(SKIP TO QUESTION 57)**
56. In what way(s) has being a Ron Brown Scholar influenced your current activities or future plans?
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
57. Do you have any final thoughts about the Ron Brown Scholar Program?
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

**THANK YOU!**