



ANNUAL LETTER

JANUARY 2018

We have often mentioned that the students we meet as part of our work inspire great optimism for the future. This year is no exception: in our fourth year of awarding scholarships we're anticipating a new milestone — the first of our recipients are graduating! They are obtaining degrees in various disciplines including human biology, social work, computer science, textile management and marketing and communications. Half of graduates will join the workforce and the others plan to attend graduate school.

In his foundation's annual letter this year, Bill Gates said, "being an optimist isn't about knowing that life used to be worse. It's about knowing how life can get better." By 2020, two-thirds of American jobs will require post-high school education or training. Considering just 30% of Americans attend college, there's a growing skills gap in our work force. This fact drives our work — however small in scope — to help people attain degrees so that they are marketable and competitive in their chosen fields.

2017 By the Numbers	
9	Number of 2017/2018 graduates
37	Total number of scholarships awarded in 2017/2018
\$4,221	Average annual scholarship amount
70%	Percent of tuition students raise through savings, merit scholarships, grants and work
1.1%	Operating expenses as a percent of assets
\$5,400	2017 Donations
100%	Percent of donations granted directly to students
592	Hours of scholarship recipients' volunteer service this year
\$0	Salaries paid to the GMFF Board of Directors

With nine students graduating this year, we'll be able to start building a longitudinal view of our key success metric: that our recipients graduate at the same rate, or better, than the graduation rate at their universities. We share this desired success metric with our partners (NCSU Student Services, Appalachian State ACCESS and,

NCSU and ASU Trio Programs), all of whom have long-standing track records helping students get into and graduate college. Once again, our partners came through in 2017 with a strong cohort of bright and capable student applicants. In the end, we awarded 16 new scholarships to rising college freshman totaling \$58,800. On average, our scholarships represent 30% of recipients' total college expense. They raise the rest through savings, merit scholarships, grants and work.

Again this year, I have to say that all of you have been invaluable to us through your advice and council, partnership, encouragement and/or donations. We appreciate the role you've played in our story and hope you are as excited as we are in writing the next chapter with graduating Goodwin Meissner Scholars.

Best Regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Laura Meissner". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "L" and "M".

Laura Dean Meissner
President, Goodwin Meissner Family Foundation