

10th Anniversary Issue

2015-2025



274 STUDENTS
55 UNIVERSITIES



\$2.4M SCHOLARSHIPS
\$500K GRANTS



128 DEGREES
91% GRAD RATE

ANNUAL LETTER

Chipping Away At It

We set out 10 years ago focused on one thing: reduce the burden of college expense for low income students. As we talked with experts in financial aid, education, student support and student development back then, we were overwhelmed: there are too many bright, capable young people missing out on the promise of higher education because of circumstances beyond their control. That's a waste of talent for our communities at best, at worst it's the tragic and retold story of so many conveyed by the simple phrase, "cycle of poverty." Our founder and chairman — known to me as "dad" and most of you as, "Goody" — approached this as he does most problems, "we're not going to solve it for the country, but let's roll up our sleeves and chip away at it." Ten years gives us the benefit of a little perspective, we have not in fact 'solved it' but we certainly have chipped away at it.

128 Graduates

So, are we awarding scholarships to quality students who take advantage of their college opportunity? For this we look at GPAs, volume and quality of students' volunteerism and graduation rates.

THE GMFF SCHOLAR METRICS ARE:

3.46 average GPA. Some say GMFF Scholars are the kids that have fought through their circumstances and won. We think this A/B average represents their commitment to education and to improving their career prospects.

1600+ hours of volunteerism. The activities are very diverse, here are a few broad categories: student mentors & tutors, campus ministry organizations, parks and recreation, support for refugees, 4H, community beautification projects, boys and girls clubs, food pantries, animal shelters, hospital and nursing homes, and on and on.

91% graduation rate. Our hope is that our students are graduating at or ahead of the 66% national average for a 6 year degree (the graduation rate among low income students is 26%) . We have of course stacked the deck on this metric by targeting students who are members of organizations that provide mentors and academic support. In doing so, we've ensured that scholarships are going to students who have the support they need to not just get through the

**"That turtle didn't
get to the top of
the fencepost by
himself"**

academic rigors of college, but also deal with the inevitable curveballs life throws them along the way.

Ultimately what we're hoping for is that students move on to jobs or to graduate programs to better position themselves for employment. Among our graduates, about 25% move on to graduate school in the sciences, business or law while the rest are either employed or seeking employment.

When we started in 2015, we tested our process with just a few students (6, to be exact). We've now grown to 100 students/year. And, on average, students receive \$14,000 from GMFF during their college career.

Looking Forward

Over the next five years, we've aligned our goals against our 2 operating principals. Aligned with the 'turtle' principle', which is at the heart of helping individuals reduce the cost burden of college, our goal is to grow the number of students we help each year from 100 to 125.

In keeping with our principle that 'education is life's most valuable asset', our goal is to increase grant making from \$100,000 to \$125,000 per year. Grants empower our partner organizations that mentor and advise students with the goal of getting them into and through college. This ensures that more than just the students we help directly with scholarships have the support they need to obtain a degree and reap the long term benefits of a college education. For example, organizations that have received grants from us in the past are currently helping more than 1,000 students/year in North Carolina.

To support these near term goals and thus our enduring impact on the community - we've added a third generation of family to the board. Harrison and Pierce Meissner started serving as voting members in early 2024, participating in all phases of our scholarship and grant making cycles. As recent college graduates themselves, they not only add a valuable perspective to our decision making, but also connect very well with students.

If you're reading this letter, we count you as part of our story. You've been on this journey with us through active support of students, personal encouragement, being part of our operational backbone, and/or financial donations. As we say, "everyone needs a little help along the way"... and we're no exception. Thank you for the help you've given these last 10 years, we look forward to sharing another ten years with you, chipping away at it one student at a time.

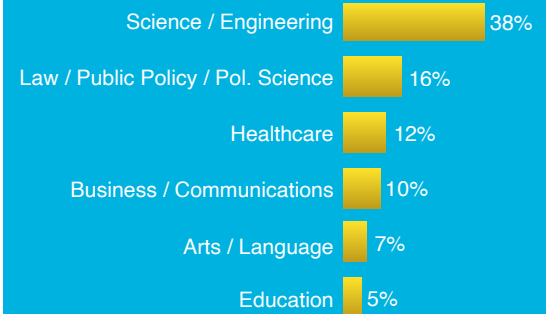
Warmest Regards,



Laura Dean Meissner

President, Goodwin Meissner Family Foundation

Graduates earn degrees primarily in high growth fields, most from public universities in North Carolina



5 Year Goals

