



## 2019 Student Advising Program Report

*The 2019 Student Advising Program Report was in final edits as The Scholarship Foundation began responding quickly to students and their needs due to COVID-19 and the economic impacts. Our team is rightly proud of the work completed in 2019, but recognizes that students' education, goals and dreams are at stake right now. Student Advisors are working to rapidly respond to immediate needs for Scholarship Foundation funded students ([read more here](#)); Advisors have canceled all in-person commitments and have transitioned all work to video calls, as well as other digital communications. We are grateful for the opportunity to respond to our students in these challenging times and our organization's capacity to adjust quickly, all the while supporting students on the path to and through college.*

*-Teresa Steinkamp, Advising Director  
April 15, 2020*

A review of 2019 documents a remarkable year for the Student Advising Program. It was a year full of growth and opportunity.

- Student Advisors provided **162 workshops and webinars**, and visited campuses for persistence<sup>1</sup> visits 10 times, reaching a total of **5,446 individuals**.
- Student Advisors provided individual guidance to **1,453 students and their family members**. These meetings are facilitated through visits at partner high schools and programs and are either one-on-one or program classes<sup>2</sup>. In addition, Student Advisors met with students and their family members at community locations and in Scholarship Foundation offices.
- ***In total, in workshops and individual advising, Student Advisors provided objective information, counsel, and resources to 6,899<sup>3</sup> people in 2019.***

The Student Advising Program provides free, public workshops at the Foundation and in partnership with high schools, community organizations, and other partners. The goal of these workshops is to ensure that students and their families have objective, timely, and accurate information to support informed decision-making. This three-part series includes *Financial Aid Basics*, *FAFSA: Free Application for Federal Student Aid*, and *Decision-Making: Using Financial Aid Offers to Assess Affordability*. In addition, Student Advisors support FAFSA completion events.

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<sup>1</sup> Persistence visits are in-person visits on college campuses that support students' academic, financial, and emotional/mental/physical health to support their academic journey.

<sup>2</sup> Program classes are conducted at Grandview, Hillsboro, and Northwest high schools; groups of students meet with the Advisor for pre-determined tasks in the first half the year, such as creating an FSA ID or filing a FAFSA. Work moves to one-on-one over the winter and into the spring.

<sup>3</sup> This number undoubtedly includes duplication, since it is possible that individuals both attended a workshop and met with an advisor one-on-one.

Student Advisors may present on The Scholarship Foundation’s interest-free loan and/or grant programs, including programs emphasizing a grant, such as BJC Scholars Fund, Centennial Collaboration Scholarship, or rootEd. Finally, Student Advisors are content experts on a range of financial aid-related topics and are routinely asked to share that expertise with schools, districts, state-wide organizations, and, increasingly, nationally.

<b>Workshop/Event Type</b>	<b>Number of Workshops/Events</b>	<b>Participants</b>
Decision-Making: Using Financial Aid Offers to Assess Affordability	11	88
Financial Aid Basics or Financial Aid Basics 2.0	39	1,588
FAFSA: Workshops & Completion	35	835
Content Experts/Professional Development	11	641
College Fairs	6	387
Scholarship Foundation Informational Presentations <sup>4</sup>	16	564
Hybrid Workshops <sup>5</sup>	33	926
Community Outreach <sup>6</sup>	11	299
Campus Visits	10	118

Through workshops and presentations, Student Advisors engaged with students, families, and direct service practitioners through 162 workshops, presentations, and other outreach efforts. That is compared to 127 in 2017 a 28% increase over the past two years. This increase was possible due to the addition of the Partner Program Student Advisor and the part-time Jefferson County Student Advisor. Demand has continued to outpace staff capacity; requests are reviewed on a priority basis and may be turned down as necessary to ensure that staff are reaching students and families with great financial need.

### **Partner Sites and Programs**

In 2018, The Scholarship Foundation added the Partner Program Student Advisor. This position blossomed out of a past effort to connect students in various partner organizations to ScholarShop clothing for educational and professional opportunities. Over the past year, Partner Program Student Advisor Robert Sagastume worked with students in five partner programs: Beyond Housing, De La Salle, Epworth Children and Family Services, LifeWise (formerly Kingdom House), and Marian Middle School Graduate Support.

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<sup>4</sup> These are presentations that provide an overview of Scholarship Foundation programs and services or are presentations to a group of students eligible for one (or more) specific grant opportunities, such as BJC Scholars Fund, Centennial Collaboration Scholarship, or rootEd.

<sup>5</sup> Hybrid workshops are any that are a mixture of two or more other workshops. So, for example, part of the *Financial Aid Basics* and part of the *FAFSA* curriculum.

<sup>6</sup> These events are a wide range of public engagement with students, families, and the broader public that are not necessarily a workshop, presentation, or other category, but were important outreach opportunities in 2019.

Student Advisors continue to partner with high schools throughout the metro-area, working with students on critical tasks related to navigating the path to college. In 2019, The Scholarship Foundation worked with the following high schools:

Collinsville High School  
De Soto High School  
Fox High School  
Grandview High School  
Hillsboro High School  
Madison Senior High School  
North Tech High School

Northwest High School  
Pattonville High School  
Ritenour High School  
Seckman Senior High School  
SIUE East. St. Louis Charter High School  
Windsor High School

### **Persistence Advising**

The work Student Advisors do with students funded through The Scholarship Foundation's interest-free loan and grant programs is more crucial than ever. In 2019, Advisors continued to support students on academic and financial matters, seeking to ensure persistence to graduation. However, there is an evolving and growing need to support students on psycho/social/emotional matters, health (physical, mental, and emotional), safety concerns, and other necessities such as housing, food, etc.

All students awarded by the Foundation need funding to afford their educations; not all students require Student Advising services. Every relationship between an Advisor and student is different, based upon the needs of that specific student. Because the Foundation understands that relationship is a critical component to persistence support, Advisors can focus on relationship-building and rapport as foundational elements to supporting a student's academic success, financial well-being, and emotional/mental/physical health.<sup>7</sup>

The need for advising services may change over the course of a student's relationship with the Foundation. As a result, Student Advisors connect with students during campus visits and in several other strategic ways. All first-year students receive a phone call in the fall semester, to check-in on the first few weeks of college. Additionally, each student receives a personalized renewal reminder call or text from a Student Advisor. Student Advisors also: offer academic counseling to students who experience a semester with a less than 2.0 GPA; provide student loan counseling to students who have borrowed federally (against Foundation policy) in a prior academic year; and, advise students whose records reflect credit hours earned that may delay graduation.

In 2019, Student Advisors followed up with 20 students related to an academic concern, 57 students due to federal borrowing, and, 232 students related to credit hours.

As the Advising Program begins 2020 with 4.5 Advisors, the program continues to respond to community need with:

- More Advisors to meet with students;
- Opportunity to work in new areas and in different ways;

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<sup>7</sup> These needs have increased as a result of COVID-19 and the economic peril associated. The Foundation has trauma training planned for our staff, especially advisors.

- New efforts to bolster support of school counselors, advisors, and other direct-service practitioners; and,
- An eye toward how to increase our reach through technology.

In The Scholarship Foundation's centennial anniversary year, the Student Advising Program will continue a history of responding with just in-time, honest, and objective advising and information to support students on the path to and through college.