BERKELEY COMMUNITY SCHOLARS

Support · Equity · Success

Impact Report 2022

Dear Friends,

What a year! Or, in my case, 4 years, since June 30 marked the end of my tenure as president of the board of Berkeley Community Scholars (BCS). Janet Tam and Gwyneth Galbraith began their term as co-presidents in July 2022 and lead a board that reflects the rich diversity of people who live and work in our community, including two former scholars. The organization is on solid footing, despite the challenges of the pandemic and the economy, thanks to careful stewardship by our board, executive director, and staff.

BCS is unique in that it was founded with individual contributions from people from throughout the entire community, unlike many of the organizations providing services in the greater Bay Area. Our grassroots support continues to this day and reflects its origins—a shared desire to narrow inequities within our community, to create hope and opportunity for Berkeley youth, and to enhance the cultural and intellectual diversity in Berkeley.

I took on the president's role shortly after BCS developed its strategic plan in 2018. The plan focused on five key priorities:

1. Expanding impact by adding a program for Berkeley High graduates starting their college journey at community college;
2. Strengthening our existing college success and mentoring programs;
3. Enhancing career-readiness assistance;
4. Increasing community engagement; and
5. Building long-term financial sustainability.

We have made good progress across all these priorities.

On expanding our impact by serving community college students, I'm thrilled by how this program has evolved. The Community College High Hopes Program provides customized guidance—on financial literacy, career development, and the transfer process—and personalized, one-on-one support to our scholars who choose to start their college journey at community college.

Our goal is to provide the support needed to help at least 75% of our community college scholars transfer to a bachelor degree-granting institution within 3 years (compared to the transfer rate of 24% of students attending local community colleges today). Once a student has been admitted to a bachelor's degree-awarding school, they can apply to join the Bachelor Degree High Hopes Program and receive our four tiers of support; an additional $8,000 transfer scholarship; individualized advising and mentoring; career-readiness preparation; and other compelling programs that lead them to the completion of their degree.

Our college success and mentoring services have been strengthened. BCS now has four college success advisors serving 140 scholars and mentors year-round. We have expanded scholar workshops and added virtual study halls. Most notably, in response to strong need and demand, we have brought on a licensed therapist to help staff better address mental health needs. Mentor training workshops and meet-ups have expanded via remote meeting tools, building community among geographically dispersed mentors.

We made great strides in enhancing career-readiness assistance by making the Level Up career-readiness workshop series available to all scholars. This professional development program augments the informal connections and guidance provided by mentors and "friends of BCS," and gives scholars a toolkit for the transition from college to career. It is now the third tier of services that we provide for our scholars.

Despite the pandemic, community engagement increased through partnerships with local corporations, such as Wareham Development, Bayer, Lawrence Berkeley Labs, and Voleon Group. These companies provide generous financial support and a wonderful new source of mentors.

BCS continues our commitment to sound strategies for long-term financial sustainability, which are critical to continuing our mission. Thanks to responsible financial stewardship, we have a healthy operating reserve. Despite the challenges of the pandemic, we continue to find new ways for the community to give and engage with our organization.

Thank you for helping us make a difference. Together we are seeing our time, talent, and treasure working to make a vibrant and enriching Berkeley community.



Warmly,



Ann Smulka
Board President, FY2019- FY2022

FY22 BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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A Time of Reflection

Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful committed citizens can change the world; indeed it's the only thing that ever has. - Margaret Mead

After three years of serving as the leader of Berkeley Community Scholars (BCS), I remain in complete awe of the ability of a small group of people to make a difference in the trajectory of the next generation of leaders. Working with scholars, we are regularly reminded of the array of challenges they must overcome as they learn to find their place and space in the adult world. Unfortunately, this includes living in a society that does not always acknowledge, appreciate, and welcome their beauty, wisdom, and ability to help us solve our most challenging problems. Fortunately, many in the community have joined with BCS to make sure that our scholars have the chance to turn their dreams into degrees.

We celebrate our 2022 graduates! Through our four-tiered approach of advising, mentoring, career readiness, and scholarships, BCS provided the tools and support to help these scholars achieve their bachelor's degrees. You will learn more about those scholars on the back page. We are so proud and grateful for each one of them.

This year, we were able to achieve the optimum case management load of 45 scholars per advisor. We began the year with three full-time advisors and one half-time advisor serving 140 scholars as they make their way through the college journey. We also fine-tuned our advising approach so that each scholar would have support in academic preparation, social and emotional well-being, financial literacy, and career readiness. These are areas that students who have more educational and financial resources are able to leverage to stay "ahead of the curve" as they venture into adulthood. Through BCS, our community comes together to close these opportunity gaps.

As we continue to grow and grapple with the array of pandemics that are present in our lives—health, economic, racial reckoning, and climate—we know that it is a marathon and not a sprint to get things truly right. We continue to work towards listening to all voices, being patient, and having grace with one another.

Over the past year, we all learned that even as we crave to get back to "normal," we crave a "new normal," one that allows us to be present for everyone and learn the skills to navigate a more and more complicated world. We missed seeing and being with people. While material things can hold us and bring comfort for a moment, it was the connection to people that really was our most prized possession—not owning them or controlling them, but just being with them—hearing them and sharing experiences. How do we make sure we don't lose that again when life throws wrenches in the way?

We need to "level the playing field" and perhaps even make waves to create the changes necessary. Berkeley Community College, Classroom Matters, and RepresentED are organizations that work with us to meet our scholars' needs. Thank you for helping us to be part of that circle making a difference in our community. We hope that you will continue or consider being a part of the BCS community—we would love to have you—and in fact need you!



With gratitude,

Sherry A. Smith

Sherry A. Smith
Executive Director

Mission Statement

BCS bridges the opportunity divide for Berkeley youth by providing scholarships, connections, and other support instrumental in college and beyond. We believe that a healthy community is a diverse and caring community in which all share the responsibility of supporting the success of our youth.

Our Vision

We envision a more equitable future in which our scholars, who embody the diversity, spirit, and values of our community, achieve their aspirations and become economically secure.

Racial Equity Statement

The BCS board commits to advocating for racial equity, cultivating a sense of belonging, and dismantling the white supremacy that is inherent in the structures in which we operate. By intentionally placing racial equity and inclusion at the center of our mission, we will actively work to dismantle the racist structures, attitudes, behavior, and biases that cause harm to our scholars and community.

STAFF

SaVannah Hudson, Operations & Programs Manager

Linda Osuorji, College Success Manager

Terrance Powell, College Success Advisor

Sherry Smith, Executive Director

Colleen Sparks, Communications Coordinator & College Success Advisor

Lynn Walker, College Success Manager

The BCS Way:
A Four-Tiered Approach to College Success



Since 2008, Berkeley Community Scholars (BCS) has asked an essential question: "What are the most crucial strategies for supporting a student who begins college with multiple hurdles to overcome as they work toward earning a degree?" Beyond personal grit, desire, and talent, we know that students who have a network of support are the ones that are more likely to cross the "finish line."

Our four-tier approach—college success advising, community volunteer mentors, career readiness, and scholarships—can make the difference in a young person's journey to earning a degree and finding success in the workforce.

What follows is a snapshot of each of our four program tiers. Through this comprehensive set of services and supports, BCS scholars graduate at more than six times the national average for college students with similar demographics. Together, our scholars turn dreams into degrees—a truly humbling and exhilarating journey.

COLLEGE SUCCESS ADVISING

Our college advisors meet with scholars one-on-one throughout their college journey. Their time together recognizes where students are and works toward a manageable progression. Scholars and advisors focus on the following areas:

Academic Growth and Success

- ❑ Do they need to choose a major or change their major?
- ❑ Do they need to review their student education plan to determine if they are staying on track toward their desired degree?
- ❑ Do they need to find a study group, meet with a professor, or find a tutor?

Social and Emotional Well-Being

- ❑ Are they sleeping? Eating? Finding time for self-care?
- ❑ What is their self-care regimen?
- ❑ Do they know where they can get help when it's needed?
- ❑ Are they connected with family and friends from home or high school?
- ❑ Are they regulating their social life and study needs?
- ❑ Have they made new friends? Are they exploring new friend groups?

Support From Community Volunteer Mentor

- ❑ Are they reaching out to their mentor?
- ❑ Do they know how to use the time and support their mentor can provide?
- ❑ Do they know how to find a mentor who can support them in meeting their goals?
- ❑ Do they know how to actively listen to mentors, colleagues, and peers?

Use of Workshops

- ❑ Are they attending the workshops held every quarter?
- ❑ Is there a topic or interest they would like to know more about?
- ❑ Are they taking advantage of the opportunity to network with the panelists and their advisor after the workshops?
- ❑ Have they attended a career panel?

Financial Literacy

- ❑ Have they reviewed their financial aid package? Do they understand it?
- ❑ Have they attended the promissory webinar required for their student loans? Do they know how much they owe to date?
- ❑ Do they have an individual bank account?
- ❑ Have they attended the financial literacy workshop?
- ❑ Have they completed their financial plan for the year and the remainder of their college journey?
- ❑ Do they have a financial plan for after college?

Career Readiness

- ❑ Have they participated in Level Up?
- ❑ Have they applied for an internship?
- ❑ Have they completed their resume? Are they keeping it up-to-date?
- ❑ Have they created a LinkedIn profile?
- ❑ Have they participated in informational interviews?
- ❑ Have they attended a networking function?
- ❑ How can they make themselves more attractive to prospective employers?
- ❑ Would they be able to bring "their full self" to the careers/positions they are considering?

CAREER READINESS AND WORKSHOPS

BCS offers three workshops a year, which our community college scholars are required to attend to support their ability to transfer to a bachelor's degree-conferring institution. Because these workshops have been so successful and sought after, we have shifted to a virtual format so all scholars, including those attending colleges and universities around the country, can easily attend. The major topics covered are:

Career-Readiness Program: Level Up
Level Up is a partnership with the team at RepresentED, an organization in the East Bay that prepares high-potential historically underrepresented students and early-stage professionals for leadership roles in internships and jobs. BCS and RepresentED have created an 8-week series to prepare scholars for their entry into the professional work world. Through Level Up, they learn about:

- Resume Writing
- Giving Presentations
- Interviewing
- Creating a LinkedIn Profile
- Human-Centered Design Thinking
- Networking
- Researching Career Options
- Growing Their Self-Esteem

Academic Preparation: Course and Major Selection

- Class Selection
- Major Choice
- Getting the Most Out of Your College Journey
- Utilizing Campus Services
- Transfer Opportunities and Processes

Job and Career Search

- Understanding the Role of Internships
- Recognizing the Need to Network
- Learning How to Interview
- Deepening Knowledge of Career Options

Financial Literacy

- Reviewing of Application for Student Financial Aid and College Board's CSS Profile
- Creating Budgets
- Understanding Loans
- Understanding Delayed Financial Gratification
- Living Within Our Means
- Understanding Bank Accounts, Stocks, and Bonds

COMMUNITY VOLUNTEER MENTORS

Each scholar is matched with a community volunteer mentor when they enter a bachelor's degree-awarding institution. Over 100 volunteer community mentors work with our scholars each year, supporting them through phone calls, video chats, coffee shop meet-ups, hikes, attending performances together, and more. Every 4 to 6 weeks mentors reach out to their scholars and lend a voice, an ear, or a hand. Mentors represent a diverse group of working adults who advise a scholar as they undertake their college journey. Before meeting their scholar, mentors participate in a training led by members of the BCS college advising team. The mentor-scholar relationships can last 2 to 4 years, depending on the interest and time of the scholar and mentor.

To ensure a cohesive support system, mentors coordinate with their scholar's advisor. Through regular check-ins, advisors are able to support mentors and answer questions. In addition, BCS holds quarterly meetings for all mentors, where they can share, ask questions, and be part of a community of caring adults who have made the choice to be vital in a young adult's life.

SCHOLARSHIPS

In addition to the web of supports provided, BCS also provides each scholar with cash payments to take care of educational expenses, including:

- Tuition and Fees
- Room and Board
- Books and Supplies
- Technology
- Transportation
- Personal Needs

Scholars receive between $500 and $2,000 per term, depending on whether they are attending a community college or a bachelor's degree-awarding institution. In order to receive the funds each term, a scholar must provide a current transcript, a schedule of courses for the upcoming term, their student education plan (a listing of all classes taken and to be taken to complete their degree), and their financial aid package and updated financial aid paperwork. Scholars must also be progressing toward their degree with at least a 2.0 grade point average (GPA). BCS encourages students to achieve a 3.0 GPA, which improves their options for jobs and graduate school.

In addition, BCS offers two additional funds to support scholars. The Finish Line Fund enables scholars to extend their college journey an extra term or participate in a worthwhile program or experience. The Emergency Fund is available throughout the year and provides scholars access to additional resources in as little as 7 to 10 days to address unexpected financial needs and emergencies. These resources can be used to pay for class supplies, health care, repair or purchase of technology, or to fill a gap after losing a job. BCS increased the size of this fund significantly during the pandemic, when nearly all scholars had their work reduced or eliminated. Fortunately, most scholars are back working as they also attend college.

The Brandon and Bubacarr Effect Will Go On

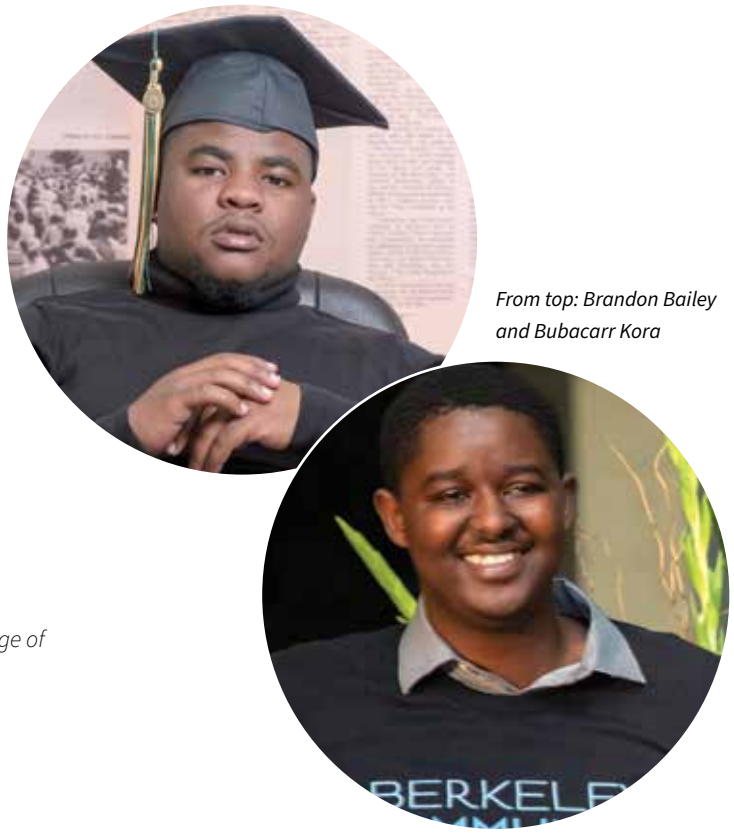
IN MEMORIAM

Even with all the goodness and compassion that lives within our community, we still experience sorrow when we fall short. This July, the lives of two of our promising new leaders were cut short. After years of supporting these young men through the trials and tribulations of their journey, the passing of Brandon and Bubacarr have been hard for all of us to bear. Having mental health support in place for staff and scholars has been critical to enabling all of us to find a way to heal and keep going as we cope with this tragedy. We all grapple with loss in our lives, big and small. Each loss can exacerbate the pain, grief, and instability already felt. We thank you for your compassion and willingness to hold all of us in your hearts as we continue to fight for the scholars who dream of a new and better future for all.

On July 14, 2022 the BCS community gathered to celebrate the lives of Brandon and Bubacarr, two scholars whose lives were cut short. What follows are the collected sentiments of everyone who gathered.

When things get rough, keep pushing through
Make time for yourself and give yourself a pat on the back
Comforting and motivating others is important
We never get over a loss
But it opens the possibility of being a deeper human being
We can gain a purpose for self and leave a legacy for others
Bring a friend along
Expressing love through actions
Do you feel me?
Soft moments
Coming together is important
Being in solidarity
Love people a little harder
I'm sorry to all of us
Solid men with integrity
Wearing the most comfortable clothes
Taking people under their wings
Doing ordinary things like: crashing at houses, being late, hanging out
Going to In-N-Out Burger
Always have a limit when you are giving to avoid being taken advantage of
But look out for others
Representing ourselves in real ways
Appreciating voices and how they are used
Sharing spirit and wisdom
Praying for his mom-she is in good hands
A punch to the stomach, a blow to the back
Hone in on the light, don't let the light get dim or die out
Share the burden of your pain-hold it together
Glad to know them and experience their greatness
Talking about the future and then it's taken
It helps to be here, it helps with the healing process
They were loved, they were magnets

The Brandon and Bubacarr effect will go on.



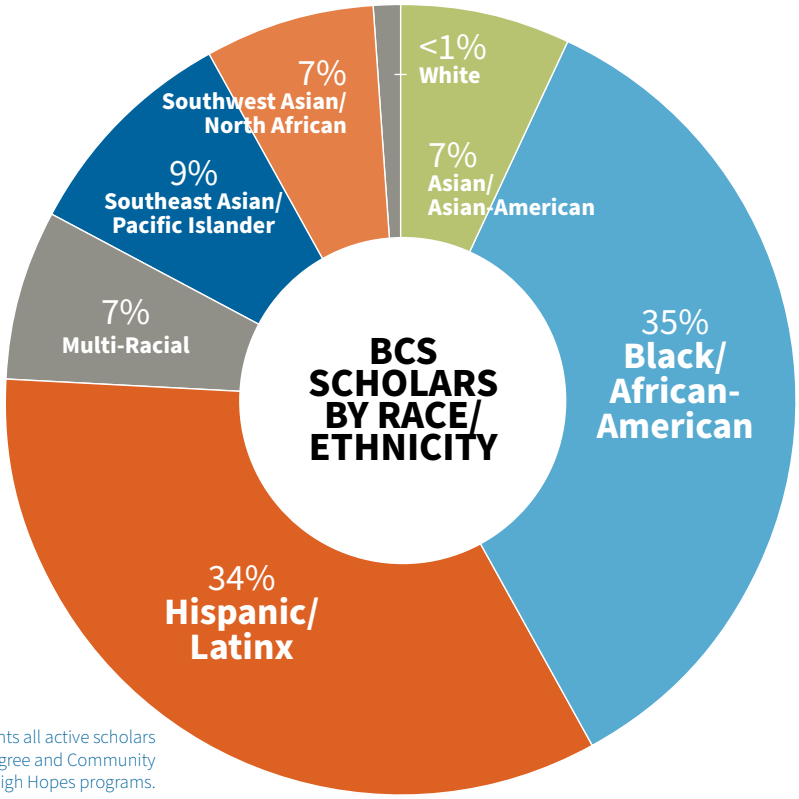
From top: Brandon Bailey and Bubacarr Kora

Special thanks to Sharon Hawkins Leyden for shepherding us through these challenging times and capturing our words.

BCS By The Numbers

DID YOU KNOW?

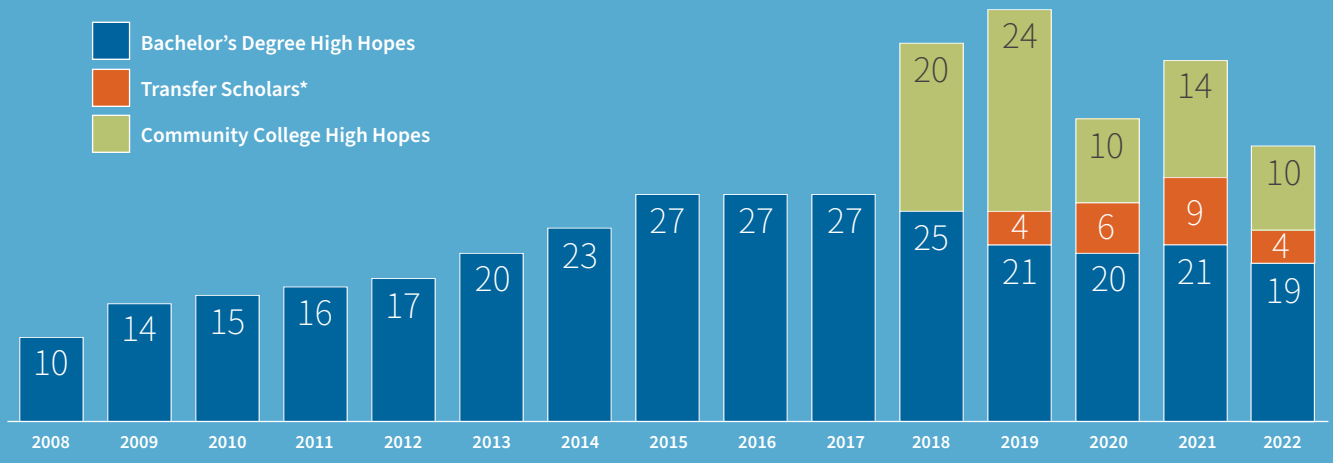
84% of BCS scholars are the first in their family to attend college.



Information represents all active scholars in the Bachelor's Degree and Community College High Hopes programs.

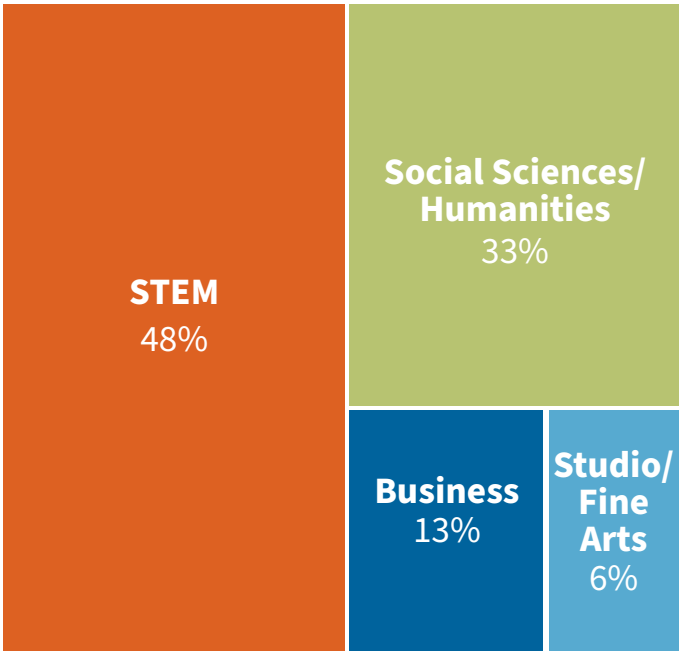
SCHOLARSHIPS AWARDED, 2008-2022

The BCS college success program started in 2008 with the organization's support of 10 scholars. As of the 2022-23 school year, the program has supported **403** scholars on their path towards earning a bachelor's degree, including students attending community college and those attending four-year colleges and universities.



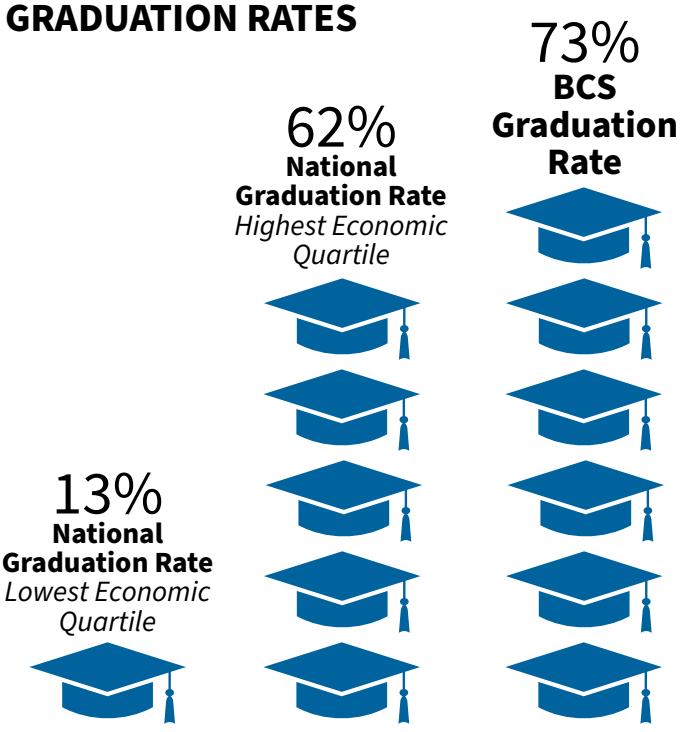
* From Community College High Hopes to Bachelor's Degree High Hopes

A Snapshot of Scholars in College



Note: Data is for active scholars who have declared a major.

GRADUATION RATES



According to the Pell Institute, between 1970 and 2019 13% of college students whose family income is in the lowest quartile earned a bachelor's degree by age 24. Sixty-two percent of students from the highest-earning quartile graduated in the same time frame. In comparison, since our founding in 2008, 73% of BCS scholars, whose families are all in the lowest-earning bracket, have earned their degree.

Most Frequently Attended Colleges and Universities

Berkeley UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA
UCLA
BERKELEY CITY COLLEGE
UC SANTA CRUZ
UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA MERCED
SAN FRANCISCO STATE UNIVERSITY

All Other Colleges and Universities Attended

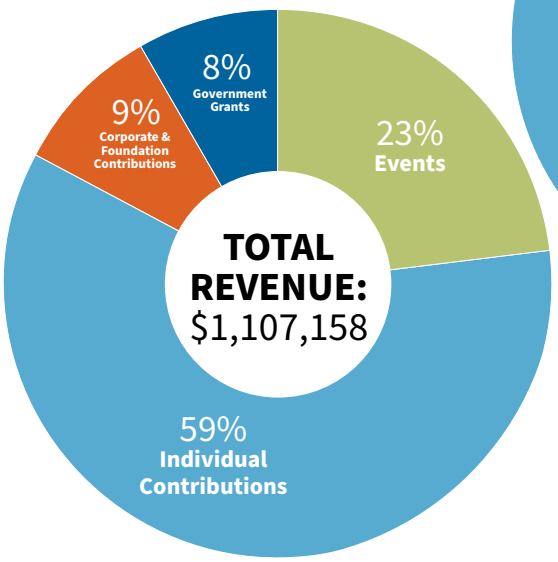
- American University
- Barnard College
- California State University East Bay
- California State University Fresno
- California State University Long Beach
- California State University Los Angeles
- California State University Monterey Bay
- California State University Northridge
- Claremont McKenna College
- Clark Atlanta University
- Contra Costa Community College
- Diablo Valley College
- Holy Names University
- Howard University
- Humboldt State University
- Louisiana State University
- Merritt College
- Middlebury College
- Mills College
- Occidental College
- Parsons School of Design
- Sacramento State University
- Samuel Merritt University
- San Jose State University
- Sonoma State University
- Stanford University
- Texas Southern University
- The University of Chicago
- University of California Davis
- University of California Irvine
- University of California Riverside
- University of California San Diego
- University of California Santa Barbara
- University of Denver
- University of La Verne
- University of San Diego
- University of San Francisco
- University of Southern California
- Wesleyan University
- Xavier University

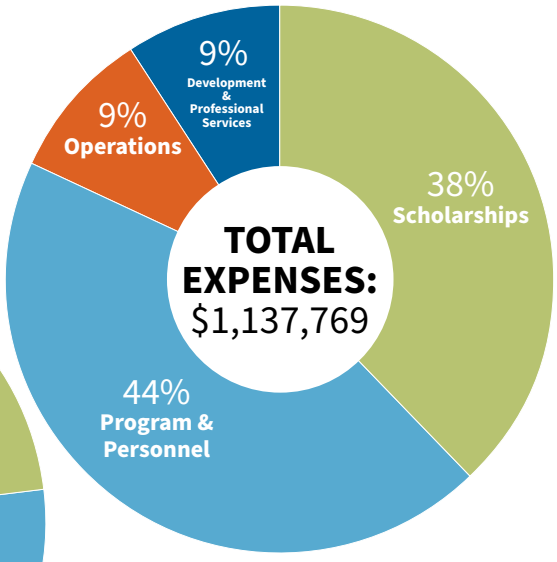
FY2022 Donors

We are grateful for those in the community who supported our scholars' access to our four-tiered approach of advising, mentoring, career readiness, and scholarships. **The following community members ensured funding for the entire journey of a scholar in either our bachelor's or community college programs for the 2022 scholarship cohort:**

Deborah Arthur & Jeffrey Soller
Battle Family Foundation
The Bayer Foundation
Berkeley Rotary Club
Carol Brosgart, MD & Joseph Gross
Louise & Jacob Epstein
Debra Farb & Eric Sippel
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Susie & Rob Goodin
Melinda Haag & Chuck Fanning
Frances Hellman & Warren Breslau
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Dina Honda
Dr. Sucheta Jawalkar & Oseyi Ikuenobe
Deborah Lewis & Martin Myers
Stephanie McKown & John Brennan
Karen & Michael Meryash
The Nancy P. & Richard K. Robbins Family Foundation
Beth Sawi (In Memoriam David Sawi)
Patricia & Merrill Shanks
The Hearts
Ann Smulka & Bob Blackburn
Marcia Tanner
Susan Taylor & Robert Fabry
Ama Torrance
The Voleon Group
Wareham Development Corporation

Jane Adams & Crystal Brunzell
Andrea Alfano & Charles Friedberg
Lisa Aliferis & John Storella
Paolo Alonso
Donald & Margaret Alter
Lisa & Mike Alvarez-Cohen
Jane Andersen & Michael Timpane
Nanette Andrews
Anonymous
Darius Ansari
Margaret Anstrand & Edward Claire
Arbor Family Fund
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Marcia & George Argyris
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Karen & Warren Bird
Priscilla Birge
Azar Bolandgray
Ragna Boynton
Todd & Helena Brantley
Julia Brennan
Sara Brody & Robert Gailey
Jessica Broitman & Gibor Basri
Diana Burden & Alan Levy
Jennifer Burroughs & Michael Rowe
Jerome & MD Buttrick
Laurie Capitelli
Indu Chandrasekhar
Cindy Chang & Christopher Hudson
Kelly Chang & Hans Kellner
Helen & Paul Chapman
Paul Churchill & Shelly Ross
Thomas & Laura Clydesdale
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Dennis Cohen & Deborah Robison
Joan & Frederick Collignon
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Lieza Dagher
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Kyle Davy
Donna DeDiemar & Chris Hamilton
Mike & Yvonne Deggelman
Reed Dillingham
Direct Line Tele Response
Richard & Tamara Dishnica
District Homes
Linda Dow & James Morgenstern
Edward Dowling
Eugene A. Drew
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Maria Echaveste & Christopher Edley
Edward M Dua & Nicole A Wong Family Fund
Miriam Eisenhardt & Edward Murphy
Marilee Enge & George Frost
Allison Ewing





For every year since 2019, BCS had the good fortune to end the year with a surplus (% over budget). In 2022, we planned on utilizing surplus funds to increase scholarships and services to our scholars. The 2% variance between revenue and expenses in 2022 demonstrates the planned use of our surplus funds. The CPA's FY22 general review has not been completed as of the printing of this report.

MENTORS

José Alfaro
Paola Alonso
Natnael Amare
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Todd Brantley
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Stephen Walrod
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KEY CONSULTANTS AND VOLUNTEERS

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Breath of Fresh Air, Frankie Rogers - Events
Classroom Matters, Workshops
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Janelle Ng, Design
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Sharon Hawkins Leyden, Mental Health
Aimee Little, Non Profit Intelligent Partners, Finance
Michael Myers, TECHsperience, Technology
Paul O'Leary, Unconventional Investments, Investments

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Meri Issel & Patricia Reedy
Locke & Charles Jaeger
Juliette Jardim
Tu & Marisita Jarvis
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Lawrence Berkeley National Laboratory
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Gillian Leslie & Patrick Leaper
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Hammad Zahid
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This list represents our key resource partners from July 1, 2021 to June 30, 2022. Under an equity framework, we have chosen to omit giving levels in this Impact Report. We make every attempt to recognize names accurately.

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From top: Asha, UC Santa Cruz; Ernesto, CSU San Jose; Kyra and Kaysha, UCLA; and Ty'Jah, UC Merced.

2022 College Graduates

Batul, UC Berkeley, Ethnic Studies

Brandon, CSU Sacramento, Journalism

Kendra, Tuskegee University, Nursing

Kaysha, UCLA, African American Studies

Kyra, UCLA, African American Studies

Farah, UC Davis, Biological Sciences

Francesca, UC Irvine, Business Economics/ Management

Marshatta, CSU San Francisco, Cinematography

Ray, UC Berkeley, Business Major, Public Policy Minor

Emara, UC Davis, Environmental Science and Management

Tara, UC Berkeley, French and Anthropology

Jahlil, Howard University, Film and Television

Ariadna, University of Southern California, Latin American and Iberian Cultures, Media and Politics

Ty'Jah, UC Merced, Chemistry

Asha, UC Santa Cruz, Business Management Economics

Ernesto, CSU San Jose, Television and Film Production

Leandro, CSU San Francisco, Philosophy and Criminal Justice

Opal, UC Santa Cruz, Latin American and Latino Studies and Psychology

Lisette, UC Santa Cruz, Politics

Alexis, CSU San Francisco, Mechanical Engineering

Jannya, CSU San Diego, Business Administration

Lulani, UC Santa Cruz, Critical Race and Ethnic Studies/Education