

PREPARING DISADVANTAGED STUDENTS FOR SUCCESS IN COLLEGE AND IN LIFE



**SIMON SCHOLARS**  
FROM ADVERSITY TO ACCOMPLISHMENT

[www.simonscholars.org](http://www.simonscholars.org)

A PARTNERSHIP WITH AMERICA'S PROMISE ALLIANCE



Ron Simon, Simon Founding Chair; Alma Powell, America's Promise Alliance Chair; and General Colin Powell, America's Promise Alliance Founding Chair.

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“High school dropout rates devastate potentially bright futures and cost our nation dearly. Had all the students graduated who would have been part of the class of 2009, our economy would have benefited from \$350 billion in additional wages, tax revenues and productivity. The Simon Scholars program is a great example of how we can turn the tide to end the dropout crisis and graduate more students from college.”

General Colin L. Powell, USA (Ret.)

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“We have long believed that proper resources and wraparound student support will change the dropout crisis and lead more students to college. That’s why America’s Promise Alliance is sponsoring a Simon Scholars chapter at Cesar Chavez High School in Washington, D.C. Students like these, who stay in school and succeed in spite of life’s challenges, provide the foundation we critically need for the next generation of America’s leaders.”

Alma J. Powell, Chair

America's Promise Alliance

THE SIMON FOUNDATION FOR EDUCATION  
AND HOUSING, WHICH SPONSORS THE  
SIMON SCHOLARS PROGRAM, HELPS  
DESERVING BUT DISADVANTAGED YOUTH  
TURN THEIR DREAMS INTO REALITY  
THROUGH EDUCATION — EXTENDING  
OPPORTUNITY IN TRANSFORMATIVE WAYS.



## Why We Must Be a Grad Nation — and Why We Need Simon Scholars

A dropout epidemic is stalking America's young people and threatening our common future. Ending this crisis must become an urgent national priority.

That's why the partners of America's Promise Alliance have launched the Grad Nation campaign to mobilize Americans to help end the dropout crisis.

The Simon Scholars program — a partnership with America's Promise Alliance — embodies what Grad Nation is all about. This unique and highly successful program offers much more than tuition for college. It reaches into the lives of promising high schoolers most in need of support and equips them to succeed, inside the classroom and out, in high school, college and beyond.

THE MAJORITY OF STUDENTS WHO DROP OUT ARE NOT FAILING IN SCHOOL WHEN THEY DECIDE TO DROP OUT.



## Preparing Students for Success in College, Work and Life

Regardless of their background, when children have enough of the resources that we call the Five Promises in their lives, the odds of success swing greatly in their favor.

Improving education is essential to ending the dropout crisis. But it's not enough. Nor will financial aid alone ensure that students stay in school and earn a college degree. Time and again, studies tell us that what happens outside the classroom — in communities and families — has as much impact on success as what students gain in school.

That's why the Simon Scholars program combines financial support with academic, social and emotional support through mentoring, tutoring, counseling, service, skill-building and more.

In this same way, the Simon Scholars initiative is changing the odds for young people that show talent, leadership potential and a drive to succeed, in spite of their circumstances.

Simon Scholars aren't only prepared for success academically. They develop the social skills, communication skills, teamwork ability and personal confidence to be prepared for college, work and life.

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### THE FIVE PROMISES

- ▶ Caring adults
- ▶ Safe places
- ▶ Healthy start
- ▶ Effective education
- ▶ Opportunities to help others

## COMPONENTS OF THE SIMON SCHOLARS PROGRAM

JUNIOR AND SENIOR YEARS OF HIGH SCHOOL	COLLEGE
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cash stipend</li> <li>• Laptop computer</li> <li>• Pre-SAT testing and SAT- and ACT-prep courses</li> <li>• College prep coaching and college tours</li> <li>• Academic tutoring</li> <li>• Leadership training</li> <li>• Training activities to build life skills and self-confidence, such as learning to trust others, teamwork, etiquette, dressing for success, social skills, communication skills and interviewing techniques</li> <li>• Personal financial management training</li> <li>• Mentoring</li> <li>• Community service activities</li> <li>• Participation in the Simon Scholars awards banquet, which includes opportunities to network with the business community</li> <li>• National Simon Scholars Conference (future)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Preferential admission consideration and financial aid at colleges and universities participating in the Collegiate Partnership Program</li> <li>• \$16,000 need-based scholarship to help fill the gaps between available grants and other scholarships</li> <li>• Access to 24/7 counseling program</li> <li>• Participation in community service activities</li> <li>• Internship opportunities</li> <li>• Support from the Simon Scholar member network across the country</li> <li>• Continued participation in all Simon Scholars activities</li> </ul>



“DESPITE EVERYTHING I HAVE BEEN THROUGH, DESPITE THE PAIN AND SACRIFICES, I HAVE LEARNED TO NEVER GIVE UP. YOU CANNOT LET YOUR PAST DEFINE YOUR FUTURE. THE SIMON SCHOLARS PROGRAM IS ENABLING ME TO ACHIEVE MY DREAMS.”

CINDY VALVERDE  
 UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA AT SAN DIEGO  
 CLASS OF 2010



Grad Nation is the most ambitious undertaking in the history of America's Promise Alliance: a 10-year effort to mobilize the nation to end the dropout crisis. A central focus of the campaign involves building cross-sector community partnerships to help transform the 2,000 low-performing high schools and their surrounding neighborhoods that account for 50% of the nation's dropouts.

"THE BARRIERS THAT I ENCOUNTERED ALONG MY PATH BECAME MY INSPIRATION TO SUCCEED IN LIFE. BECOMING A SIMON SCHOLAR PROVIDED ME WITH THE TOOLS AND RESOURCES I NEED TO EXCEL."

ISELA ARIAS  
UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA AT  
BERKELEY, CLASS OF 2009



## A Proven, Scalable Solution

During its relatively brief history, the Simon Scholars program already has compiled a strong track record of success. The first class of Simon Scholars has not only completed college; they achieved a graduation rate much higher than that of the college student population overall and seven times higher than the graduation rate for minority students.

Now, as part of the Grad Nation campaign, we are working to expand the Simon Scholars Program nationwide. The initiative exemplifies what Grad Nation is all about. It directly addresses the barriers to completing high school and college that prove formidable for so many disadvantaged students. Focusing on strong candidates from minority communities and families living below the poverty level, the program follows proven approaches to address student needs holistically and helps them graduate high school with the academic and life skills to be ready for success in college and beyond.

## Why Colleges and Universities Partner with Simon Scholars

Through the Collegiate Partnership Program, Simon Scholars is recruiting leading colleges and universities to offer special admissions consideration and financial support to students who complete high school as Simon Scholars.

For these forward-looking institutions, partnering through the program is not so much a philanthropic choice as a pragmatic one. They recognize that involvement with Simon Scholars offers them a variety of advantages:

- Candidates for admission whose academic and life-skills preparation help them stand out from their peers
- Students whose demonstrated drive and performance increase their likelihood of success in college from day one — an important factor not only in student retention but in reducing the cost (as much as \$2.9 billion annually) that colleges spend on entering students who need remedial education to handle basic college work
- A means to increase socioeconomic diversity among their students
- Enhanced visibility with Simon Scholars for participating colleges and universities
- Students with enhanced life skills and confidence that make them ready to step into leadership positions in college

"CANDIDATES WHO HAVE COMPLETED THE SIMON SCHOLARS PROGRAM WARRANT OUR SPECIAL CONSIDERATION AND FINANCIAL SUPPORT BECAUSE OF THE COMMITMENT, DEDICATION AND PERSEVERANCE THEY HAVE ALREADY DEMONSTRATED BY SUCCESSFULLY COMPLETING HIGH SCHOOL AS PARTICIPANTS IN THE PROGRAM. WE ARE PROUD THAT CHAPMAN COLLEGE WAS THE FIRST SIMON SCHOLARS COLLEGIATE PARTNER."

JAMES L. DOTI  
PRESIDENT, CHAPMAN UNIVERSITY



"BECOMING A SIMON SCHOLAR IS A DREAM COME TRUE THAT HAS PLACED  
NEW HOPE IN WHAT SEEMED AN ALMOST HOPELESS SITUATION."

VINCENT SHINHOLSTER  
REDAN HIGH SCHOOL, ATLANTA, GA  
CLASS OF 2011





## Join Us in Transforming Young Lives

Building on an established record of success, and in support of the goals of the Grad Nation campaign, we are broadening the reach of the Simon Scholars Program across the country.

Specifically, we seek to engage foundations as well as individual and corporate donors to provide support that will take this proven program to scale.

With your help as Legacy, Chapter or Individual sponsors, we can bring the life-changing benefits of being a Simon Scholar to more low-performing high schools and more young people — creating ripples of positive change that extend far beyond each individual.

By helping break old cycles of poverty and failure, your investment in Simon Scholars is one that can pay not only immediate dividends but ones that extend for generations to come.

If you are interested in investing in the Simon's Scholars Program, please contact the office of Resource Development at [resourcedevelopment@americaspromise.org](mailto:resourcedevelopment@americaspromise.org) (202.657.0638) or the Simon Scholars program at [www.simonscholars.org](http://www.simonscholars.org) (949.270.3644).

"THERE IS NO GREATER SATISFACTION THAN INVESTING IN THE LIVES OF DESERVING YOUNG PEOPLE. IT IS HUMBLING, GRATIFYING AND EXCITING TO BE ABLE TO PERSONALLY WATCH LIVES CHANGE AS A RESULT OF YOUR CONTRIBUTION."

RON SIMON



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## WHAT BEING A SIMON SCHOLAR MEANS

Graduating high school as a Simon Scholar means that a young person has been thoroughly prepared with the academic, social and interpersonal skills to succeed in college and become a leader in business, government and education.

It also signifies that a student has:

- Overcome significant personal hardship
- Demonstrated the determination to set and exceed rigorous goals
- Demonstrated academic achievement
- Displayed strong character
- Shown commitment to giving back to others and the community in meaningful ways



THE SIMON SCHOLARS INITIATIVE BELIEVES:

- RESPECT is earned, not given
- SELF-ESTEEM comes from personal achievement
- EDUCATION creates opportunities, not guarantees
- SUCCESS is measured from within, not on a balance sheet
- OPPORTUNITY denied is tragic; opportunity wasted is inexcusable



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