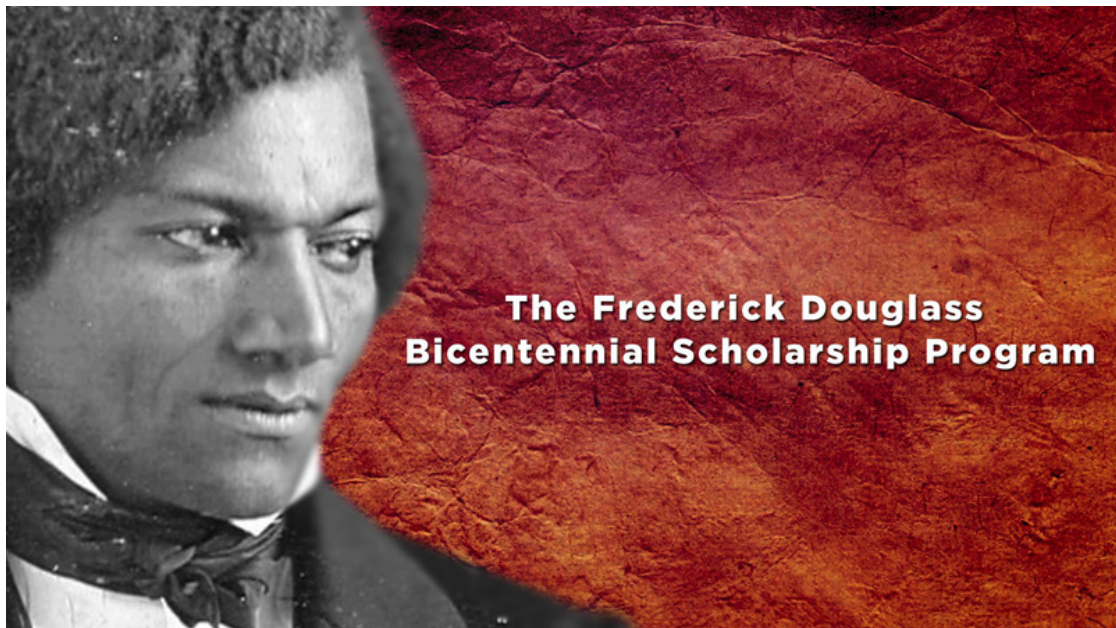


INNOVATE

A Scholarships Scoop: Three New Named Scholarship Programs Add Power to Purpose



U NCF's mission of getting students to and through college successfully is driven through a three-pronged approach: supporting HBCUs; supporting legislative and policy changes that enable access to and proper funding of those schools; and supporting students directly. The last piece, helping students directly, is often what comes to mind when people look to UNCF.

That student support comes through more than 400 scholarships, internships, fellowships and other related academic and mentoring programs that UNCF has created with the help of thousands of donors.

Research has shown that UNCF scholarship recipients have an average graduation rate of 70%, almost double the average rate for all African American students and significantly higher than the rate for students of all races and ethnicities. And, more than 7,200 students each year receive scholarships from UNCF, which are used at more than 1,100 colleges and universities across the United States, including nearly all 100-plus HBCUs.

Those impressive statistics notwithstanding, much more remains to be done: only one out of 10 students who apply for scholarship assistance from UNCF are able to be funded. With a need as great as that, any new funding for scholarships is vital. And, in 2018, UNCF landed three new well-funded programs to help more students of color earn their college credentials.

Boulé Foundation Scholarship

How can an organization like the Boulé Foundation, founded through the work of the historic Sigma Pi Phi Fraternity, carry on a commitment to educating new generations of black leaders, supporting others working to protect and advance the civil rights of Black citizens and improving the quality of life for Black people?

One answer jumps out: By helping African American and other students of color get the college education that they deserve and that today's economy demands. And, by extending that helping hand through the new Boulé Foundation Scholarship. The new program awards \$4,000 merit-based, renewable scholarships to rising college freshmen. The program will conclude in 2029 with an expected total of 84 students awarded.

Panda Cares UNCF Scholars Program

Food diversity often brings an awareness that people from all backgrounds are part of our national fabric. Delicious dishes from national restaurateur Panda Express not only make the U.S. richer for its unique spin on Asian cuisine, but the yen Americans have for great Chinese meals helps The Panda Cares Foundation invest in education. Panda Cares is the philanthropic arm of Panda Restaurant Group, and its mission is to assist with health and education in communities that have Panda Express restaurants.

In June 2018, Panda Cares partnered with UNCF to form the Panda Cares UNCF Scholars Program, worth approximately \$5.14 million. The foundation expanded its mission to include higher education and launch its support of UNCF. The program's \$2,500-per-year scholarship feeds students' academic success, offers professional development services and

helps students enter their chosen career field. The partnership provides 400 students annually with scholarships, support and career navigation services.

Frederick Douglass Bicentennial Scholarship

One of the men recognized as a pioneer for African American rights is the legendary Frederick Douglass, an author, abolitionist, statesman and escaped slave. To honor and commemorate the 2018 bicentennial of the birth of Frederick Douglass, a scholarship program was established in support of students attending accredited HBCUs nationwide.

The Frederick Douglass Bicentennial Scholarship Program was established by Tony Signore, whose knowledge, respect and deep admiration for Douglass was instilled in him more than 35 years ago by the Jesuits at Fordham University. To honor Douglass, the Signore family designed and funded the 20-year program to recognize the historic leader.

“It’s an incredible honor and privilege for our family to celebrate the life of a true American hero,” said Signore, founder and chairman of the Frederick Douglass Bicentennial Scholarship. “On the 200th anniversary of his birth, it is with great reverence that we reflect upon the legacy of a great man and leader, who had such a profound impact on our nation’s history. We also understand the importance and responsibility of supporting HBCU scholars who demonstrate their passion for education.”

New and unique scholarship programs like these three help us all answer the call for workers that can thrive in a 21st century job market and economy. There was a time when a high school diploma and a strong work ethic were enough to qualify for the kinds of jobs that could support families and thriving communities. Not anymore. Today, however, the best-paying and fastest growing jobs and career paths require at least a college degree.

For the students who are awarded a UNCF scholarship, the money is a down payment toward major success. New programs like these are an investment in better futures for Black students and, through their success, for all of us. Graduating students are the return on that investment. They are our dividends.