

HARPER COLLEGE PROMISE SCHOLARSHIP



PROGRAM IMPACT REPORT: FALL 2018

PROMISE SCHOLARSHIP OFFERS HOPE FOR THE SAFAKAS FAMILY

Recent Harper College graduate Niki Safakas knows first-hand the financial burden that a scholarship can alleviate. As last year's recipient of the Foundation's Thomas E. Irwin Scholarship, she was able to shift her focus from her job to classwork, music and leadership development.

The former Harper Student Trustee is hopeful the Promise Scholarship Program will offer similar relief in the future to her parents, who will soon have three daughters in college at the same time. Niki, who's starting at Loyola University this fall to prepare for a career as a chemistry teacher, recently shared the impact that earning free tuition could have on her family:

"As a first-generation college student, both my parents and I were unsure about how college worked or how much debt would be accumulated because of it. Besides saving money, I still wanted to be with my family for a bit longer, as family is very important to me. I did not feel quite ready to leave them just yet, and Harper provided a nice transition for me to start my college education while giving me the chance to mature close to home.



Being at Harper gave me so many opportunities that I would not have had at university. I benefited from small classes with great student peers and teachers who knew me and cared about my education. I also had many leadership opportunities at Harper through the Student Government Association and as Student Trustee. I will take this valuable knowledge with me as I begin my career in education. My dream to become a future educator was truly solidified at Harper College.

When I first heard that I had received the Thomas E. Irwin Scholarship, it changed my life as a student. On paper, my family seems well-off but we live paycheck to paycheck, so I am not eligible for financial aid. We were worried about how we'd cover the cost of Harper, but the scholarship helped alleviate some of that burden.

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I was able to resign from my stressful job working retail 20-plus hours a week. Instead, I was able to work eight hours a week at Harper's admissions office and focus more on balancing academics, extracurriculars and giving back to the college.

My youngest sister, Christina, is in the first cohort of Promise Scholars. Having three kids in college all at the same time will not only be a burden on each of us individually, but on our parents as well. The Promise Scholarship provides hope and relief for my parents, who I know are eternally grateful. It's an opportunity my family could have never dreamed of."

“ I signed up for the Promise Scholarship so I won't have to worry about my debt when I'm done and the hassle of applying to a bunch of competitive scholarships that probably won't cover my entire tuition. I want to go into veterinary science because I want to help animals, and for what I am going into, the Promise Scholarship will pay for a lot of the education I will need. ”

— Christina Safakas,
Schaumburg High School senior

FUNDRAISING UPDATE

When the Harper College Promise Program was launched in the 2015, an original fundraising goal of \$10M was established. Thanks to the generosity of the community — donors, alumni, corporate partners, faculty and staff, the \$10M goal was achieved in November 2017. Given that 10,447 high school students are currently enrolled in the Promise program, the Harper College Board of Trustees challenged the

Harper College Educational Foundation Board of Directors to raise an additional \$1M in donations. For each dollar donated, Harper College would match the donation, up to \$1M additional dollars. Again, the community demonstrated their generosity and invested an additional \$1M to the Promise Program. With the match, over \$12M has been raised to date for Promise Scholarship students.

HARPER COLLEGE PROMISE PROGRAM DONORS (AS OF JULY 2018)

The Harper College Educational Foundation is grateful to the many community leaders, businesses, faculty, staff, alumni and friends who have pledged their support of the Harper College Promise Program.

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THE GROWTH OF COLLEGE PROMISE PROGRAMS

Long before the Promise Scholarship Program's launch in 2015, Harper College — along with its educational and business partners — diligently researched and developed the program's concept, criteria and intended goals. We were not alone. Over the last several years, "Promise" programs have sprung up in almost every state. In fact, there are more than 240 Promise programs to date across the country.

A research team from the University of Pennsylvania Graduate School of Education has been examining these programs. Their research focuses on Promise programs

that seek to increase college enrollment, provide financial assistance and benefit students who live in a particular state, community or school district.

While the number of college Promise programs continues to expand, the initiatives vary greatly in the nature of the promise, target population, eligibility requirements and other characteristics. The Harper College Promise Scholarship Program remains unique due to its academic achievement, attendance and community service requirements, as well as its support from private donors.

To see an interactive map of Promise programs across the nation, visit ahead-penn.org/creating-knowledge/college-promise.

SPRING 2018 UPDATE

CLASS OF 2019

Freshman sign up

4,607 (65%) of total class

Sophomore continuing

2,576 (36%) of total class continuing on

Junior continuing

2,000 (28%) of total class continuing on

CLASS OF 2020

Freshman sign up

5,558 (83%) of total class

Sophomore continuing

2,852 (43%) of total class continuing on

CLASS OF 2021

Freshman sign up

5,595 (86 %) of total class

Total Promise
Enrollment

10,447