



**LINK  
Unlimited  
Scholars**



**BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

**Opportunity Guide**



**LINK  
Unlimited  
Scholars**

## **CLOSING THE COLLEGE COMPLETION GAP**

***Looking to make a difference by linking students to opportunities so they can take a new path—one that leads to economic mobility and our city's vibrant future? If so, consider joining the LINK Unlimited Scholars Board.***

***For Black students to become tomorrow's leaders they must have access to educational resources and tools today.***





## MISSION

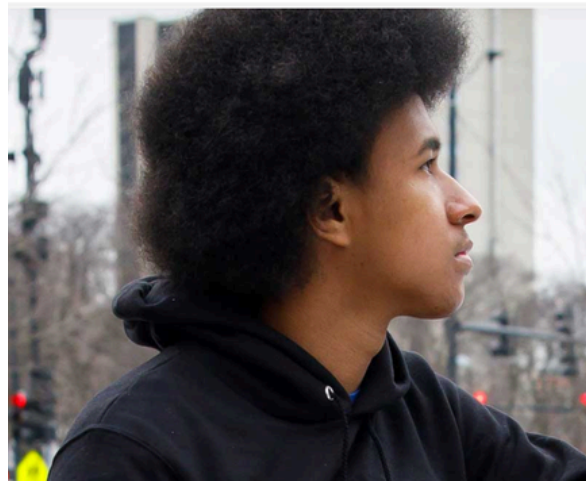
*The mission of LINK Unlimited Scholars is to connect Black students with resources and opportunities that strengthen the necessary skills to succeed as they advance to, through and beyond college. Since our founding in 1966, LINK has been driven by a mission to confront and close the racial gaps in education and access to opportunity for Black students. That commitment remains at the heart of our mission. Today, our Scholar community continues to reflect this legacy, with the vast majority of students identifying as Black while others identify with more than one racial background, including Latino/a, White, Asian, and Other.*

## HISTORY

*In 1966, Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. visited Chicago, where he inspired John and Carolyn Parmer to fulfill his dream in the city they called home. LINK Unlimited Scholars was born when they made a decision to mentor and support a single Black student through four years of high school—and they asked their friends to do the same. Since those humble beginnings, LINK Unlimited has successfully supported more than 3,500 Scholars through the financial support of our partners.*

# THE CHALLENGE

***As a result of hundreds of years of systemic racism, one of the biggest challenges facing Chicago is an educational system that magnifies debilitating and lifelong gaps for Black students. Education is the key for students to reach their full potential, both for themselves and for Chicago. Thus, it is critically imperative that youth have opportunities to cultivate their potential, which hinges on quality education.***



***However, many Black and lower-income students lack access to key educational opportunities that are available to their White, suburban and/or middle/upper-income peers. This inequity is demonstrated in college success data where White students complete four-year college programs at 52% LatinX students at 38%, and Black students 28%. Such inequities, amongst others, ultimately limits the academic, leadership, career, and economic mobility for Black students.***



# A SOLUTION

***LINK's goal is to mitigate the effects of systemic and structural forces impeding Black students by improving and increasing educational opportunities and access and eliminating the college completion gap.***

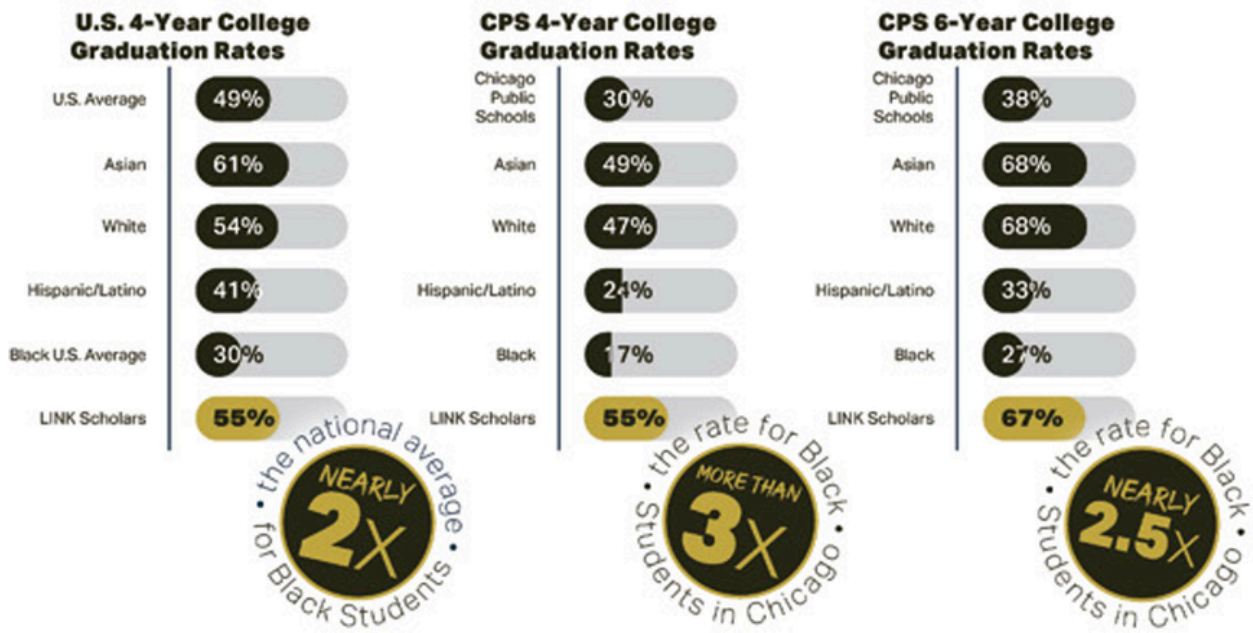
***For nearly 60 years, we have provided Black students with the support and resources to move to, through, and beyond college. We offer a 6-year fellowship from middle to high school. Via a cohort model, our programming is focused on academic enrichment, scholarships, college access, leadership development, career exposure, and mentoring.***

***We aim to provide Scholars with tools and resources to increase their academic profiles, attend college with the smallest debt load possible, graduate college in four years, and be employed or enrolled in graduate school six months after college graduation.***

***By equipping our Scholars with the knowledge, skills, resources, and social equity that further college completion and career placement, LINK is increasing the number of Black college graduates from under-resourced Chicago communities, ensuring the economic mobility and stability of Black students, and cultivating a diverse leadership pipeline for our city.***

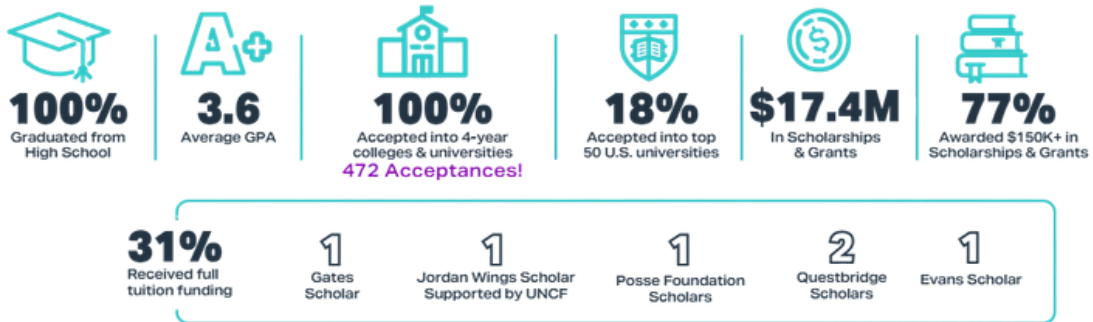


# OUR IMPACT



## CLASS OF 2025

### LINK Scholars By-the-Numbers



N=60

***Our Scholars are future community leaders, business experts, out-of-the-box thinking entrepreneurs, and problem solvers.***

[See our 2024-2025 Impact Report](#)

# THE OPPORTUNITY

## Board Overview

*Members of LINK Unlimited Scholars Board of Directors are committed to the mission of the organization, are actively involved in shared board responsibilities and assume individual duties and obligations. In all actions, decisions and activities, members of the Board of Directors support the mission of LINK Unlimited Scholars and work for its growth and success.*

## Core Responsibilities

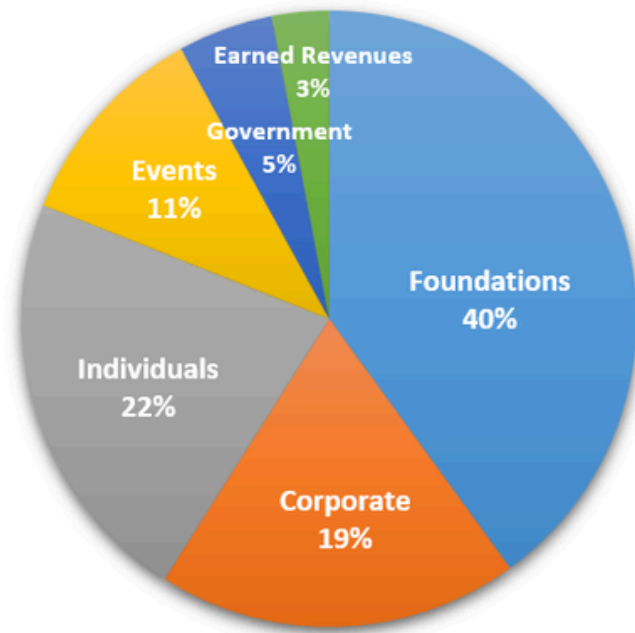
- *Determine and articulate the organization's vision and mission.*
- *Select, support, and evaluate the Chief Executive Officer ensuring that s/he has the assistance needed to further the goals of the organization.*
- *Ensure effective organizational planning.*
- *Monitor and strengthen the organization's programs and services.*
- *Ensure adequate financial resources through fund development activities.*
- *Protect assets and provide financial oversight.*
- *Recruit prospective Board members to build a competent and diverse board.*
- *Ensure the Board of Directors has the necessary skills, competencies and connections to ensure the organization's success and sustainability.*
- *Ensure legal and ethical integrity.*
- *Articulate and enhance the organization's public image.*
- *Assess its own performance as the governing body of LINK Unlimited Scholars.*

# BOARD MEMBER REQUIREMENTS

- *Commitment to the LINK Unlimited Scholars mission.*
- *Understanding of the roles and responsibilities of serving on the Board.*
- *Familiarize self with programs and services in order to articulate them to the community.*
- *Contribute skills, expertise, knowledge and experience.*
- *Actively serve on at least one committee.*
- *Actively support the fundraising activities of the organization, specifically with a personal donation included as a part of a Give/Get of \$10,000.*
- *Leverage connections, networks, and resources to develop collective action to fully achieve LINK Unlimited Scholars' mission.*
- *Prepare for, attend and actively participate in all quarterly board meetings and applicable committee meetings.*
- *Attend at least two LINK Unlimited Scholars events each year (other than Board and committee meetings).*
- *Identify individuals as prospects for service on the Board or its committees.*
- *Maintain confidentiality about all internal matters related to the LINK Unlimited Scholars.*
- *Be accessible, in person, by phone or by email, to the Board, its Chair, committee members and the President & CEO.*
- *Sign a conflict of interest statement annually and to avoid all conflicts and the appearance of conflicts.*
- *Fulfill commitments within agreed-upon deadlines.*

# FY26 BUDGET

## FY26 Revenue Overview \$2.53MM



■ Foundations ■ Corporate ■ Individuals ■ Events ■ Government ■ Earned Revenues

[SEE OUR FY24 AUDIT & 990](#)



# FY24 & FY25 FUNDING PARTNERS

*Arthur J. Schmitt Foundation*  
*Enterprise Holdings Foundation*  
*Finnegan Family Foundation*  
*Gerry & Bill Cowlin Foundation*  
*Gies Foundation*  
*Golder Family Foundation*  
*Grand Victoria Foundation*  
*John J. Hartman Charitable Giving Fund*

*Lloyd A. Fry Foundation*  
*Manaaki Foundation*  
*MIGMIR Fund*  
*Monarch Awards Foundation Inc.*  
*Out of the Box Foundation*  
*Schiff Hardin Foundation*  
*Scott Family Foundation*  
*Steans Family Foundation*  
*Team Brown Foundation*  
*The Chicago Woman's Club Fund at the  
Chicago Community Foundation*  
*The John & Kathleen Schreiber Foundation*  
*The Sampson Family Charitable Fund*  
*Wilson Garling Foundation*



Not an exhaustive list of funders

# FY26 BOARD OF DIRECTORS

*Kenneth Johnson*  
*Chairman*  
*Johnson, Blumberg & Associates, LLC*

*Anthony Ashe*  
*Vice Chairman*  
*ZRG*

*Edward Bourelly*  
*8tivLabs*

*Kimberly Cook*  
*Schiller, DuCanto, & Fleck, LLP*

*Terrence J. Dee*  
*Winston & Strawn*

*Craig Dunham*  
*Voltron Data*

*Stephen Hackney*  
*Retired - Kirkland & Ellis LLP*

*Thomas Hynes*  
*Advancement Committee Chair*  
*Mesirow*

*Yolanda Knight\**  
*Steans Family Foundation*

*Aisha Lavinier*  
*Kirkland & Ellis LLP*

*Gilda Livingston Spencer*  
*Secretary*  
*Loyola Law School*

*Gregory Mathurin*  
*Ferrara Candy Company*

*Angela Miller-May\**  
*Illinois Municipal*  
*Retirement Fund*

*Torrence Moore\**  
*US Bank*

*Steven Napolitano*  
*Kirkland & Ellis, LLP*

*Eric Patton*  
*Civic Committee of the*  
*Commercial Club of Chicago*

*Franklin Reynolds\**  
*Amazon Web Services*

*Craig Richey*  
*Accenture*

*Thomas Sampson*  
*Retired - Peacock Foods*

*Mark Williams*  
*Bank of America*





**“I am thankful for the opportunity to be apart this program and be surrounded by these exceptional students.”**

*—Joseph, LINK Scholar*

## **TO APPLY**

***Interested candidates should submit a Letter of Interest to President & CEO, Dr. Toinette Gunn at [tgunn@linkunlimited.org](mailto:tgunn@linkunlimited.org). Additional application information will be provided at that time.***



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