



Stanford

The promise of opportunity

UNDERGRADUATE FINANCIAL AID

ALLISE THURMAN, '25
Stanford undergraduate student



“My education is the reason I dream. The things I’ve read and the things I’ve seen that have taught me that the sky is truly the limit, and that our lives can be whatever we make them, and that happiness and peace are not only possible, but also necessary.”

—Excerpt from Liyah Ernest’s letter to the donor of her scholarship fund

LIYAH ERNEST, '26, is a storyteller, creator, podcaster, and aspiring world traveler from New Orleans. She debuted as an assistant director for Stanford’s BLACKstage Theater Company in winter 2023 with the company’s production of Dominique Morisseau’s *Pipeline*. Ernest is a recipient of the Karr Family Scholarship and the Brown Family Undergraduate Scholarship.





**LIYAH
ERNEST**



“If you want students to make the world a better place through public service, you have to start with the cost of their education, especially for those who need it most.”

—MICHAEL McFAUL, '86, MA '86, DIRECTOR OF STANFORD'S FREEMAN SPOGLI INSTITUTE FOR INTERNATIONAL STUDIES, THE KEN OLIVIER AND ANGELA NOMELLINI PROFESSOR OF INTERNATIONAL STUDIES, AND THE PETER AND HELEN BING SENIOR FELLOW AT THE HOOVER INSTITUTION



“To our talented students, scholarship funds are tangible gestures of support—assurance that it is not only faculty and staff who care deeply about their educational journey, but also members of the greater Stanford community. The generous donors who make these funds possible are true partners in our students' success, helping to ensure that where there is talent and potential, there will continue to be the resources to nurture it fully.”

—KAREN COOPER, ASSOCIATE DEAN AND DIRECTOR OF FINANCIAL AID





(MESSAGE FROM THE PROVOST)

THE PROMISE OF OPPORTUNITY

**JENNY
MARTINEZ**

STANFORD HAS A VISION OF A MORE EQUITABLE, VIBRANT FUTURE—FOR OUR UNIVERSITY AND FOR THE WORLD.

One of the most impactful ways we can realize this vision is by removing barriers to higher education, drawing the brightest, most driven individuals to Stanford, regardless of their economic background.

Financial aid makes it possible for thousands of students to attend Stanford each year. It connects Stanford's talented and increasingly diverse student body with opportunities for self-discovery, academic exploration, and deep and meaningful relationships. It is a bridge that spans socioeconomic divides, geographical boundaries, and differences in perspective and experience.

Jane Stanford laid the foundation for such support shortly after the university's founding, when she established the first scholarship fund using her deceased son's childhood savings.

Now, with your help, we can expand financial aid for future generations of students who—like the scholarship recipients highlighted on these pages—bring the passion, focus, and determination to create a more just and sustainable world that will benefit us all.

We hope you will join us. This is a vision that can only be achieved together.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature of Jenny Martinez in red ink. The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

JENNY MARTINEZ

*Provost
Professor of Law*



THE SKY IS

STAY THE LIMIT

THE WORLD NEEDS COLLABORATIVE THINKERS AND PROBLEM SOLVERS WITH A VARIETY OF PERSPECTIVES TO TACKLE OUR MOST COMPLEX CHALLENGES.

Preparing undergraduates to live, work, and serve as meaningful contributors to society is central to our mission—and achieving this means keeping the Stanford experience both accessible and affordable to all.



**JUAN
CAMARA**

(STUDENT SPOTLIGHT)

A VETERAN'S CALL TO SERVICE

“The folks who are contributing to my dreams, to my aspirations for receiving a higher education, working on all these goals and passions that I have, they are helping me so much, beyond imagination. It’s something that, one day, I truly hope to be able to do—help others pursue their dreams.”

A STANFORD STUDENT SHARES HOW SCHOLARSHIP SUPPORT INSPIRES HIM TO KEEP GIVING BACK.

Juan Camara, '25, describes his path to Stanford as the “scenic route.” Others might call it a “service road.”

“One of the things that I really care about is being useful to others,” he says. “It led me to join the military because I wanted to do something that was bigger than myself, and I’ve carried that throughout my life.”

After completing his military commitment, Camara set his sights on higher education. While working two jobs and attending community college, he realized his true academic talent and potential. Of the multiple options he had upon graduating, he chose Stanford.

“Being a first-generation immigrant from Mexico, being raised by a single mother and working class, having served in the military—not choosing Stanford would’ve been a disservice to those who came before me to allow for me to be here,” he says.

Camara hopes to continue being of service by pursuing a career in law or holding government office and eventually supporting other students.

JUAN CAMARA, '25, of Novato, California, is a U.S. Army veteran and a student staff member at Stanford’s El Centro Chicano y Latino. He is passionate about marine biology and hopes to attend law school and advocate for government policies to protect the environment. Camara is a recipient of the Alex Chen and Kate Kerkering Undergraduate Scholarship and the Victoria and James Maroulis Undergraduate Scholarship.





◀ CHAMPIONING ACADEMIC AND ATHLETIC EXCELLENCE

“Because of the opportunity my athletic scholarship presents to me, I can wake up every morning and see how proud my father is of me, and most importantly, how proud I am of myself.”

*Stanford women’s tennis standout **ALEXANDRA YEFIFANOVA, ’25**, was raised by her father in Hollywood, Florida. She is a Pac-12 Tournament champion and an ITA Scholar-Athlete, and she has received both All-Pac-12 Second Team and Pac-12 Player of the Week honors. She had the most wins of her entire team in 2021–22 and was named Pac-12 Singles Player of the Year in 2023. Yepifanova’s passion for finance, data analytics, and psychology has made majoring in science, technology, and society the perfect fit. She completed a program management internship with Apple after her sophomore year. Yepifanova is a recipient of the Ormond Family Athletic Scholarship, the E. Eric and Elizabeth D. Johnson Scholarship, and the Thomas W. Ford Family Scholarship.*

▶ GETTING TO THE ROOT OF KNOWLEDGE

“Because I am intensely interested in intellectual history, it is imperative that I understand the British intellectual movements that gave rise to early American ones. To this end, I will focus on John Locke’s relationship to the New World while studying at Oxford through the Bing Overseas Studies Program. This would not be possible without the financial aid I receive.”

—Excerpt from Baird Johnson’s letter to the donor of his scholarship fund

BAIRD JOHNSON, ’24, is a history major from New York. He is managing editor of *Herodotus* (a student-run publication founded in 1986 by the History Undergraduate Student Association), a member of *Stanford in Government*, and an undergraduate fellow at the *Stanford Constitutional Law Center* at Stanford Law School. Following graduation, he hopes to attend law school. Johnson is a recipient of the *Anonymous Family Foundation Undergraduate Scholarship*.



A photograph of students in a classroom. In the foreground, a Black woman with braided hair and glasses is writing in a notebook. Behind her, a woman with long curly hair is looking at a laptop. The laptop has a sticker that says "team humbio!".

PREPARING



GOING TO COLLEGE

TODAY, ABOUT 20 PERCENT OF UNDERGRADUATES ARE THE FIRST IN THEIR FAMILIES TO GO TO COLLEGE—UP FROM ALMOST 14 PERCENT IN 2008.

Expanding our financial aid program is essential to giving students from all backgrounds the opportunity to explore broadly, learn experientially, wrestle with alternative perspectives, and develop their own framework for understanding.

We strive to provide students with a firm foundation from which to navigate life's big questions. Through programs such as Civic, Liberal, and Global Education ("COLLEGE") and Cardinal Service, as well as a variety of options for research and overseas learning, Stanford students gain the knowledge, skills, and empathy to become better citizens in their communities—and act for the good of the world.

(STUDENT SPOTLIGHT)

A HEALTH HERO'S JOURNEY

THIS ASPIRING PRE-MED STUDENT WANTS TO IMPROVE PUBLIC HEALTH IN RURAL AND RESERVATION COMMUNITIES.

Larissa Scott, '25, may be on the Farm, but her heart remains about 1,000 miles to the east. "We're all family in that area," she says. "Even if we're not really related, we're still family."

A proud member of the Navajo and Winnebago Nations, Scott is committed to improving public health conditions on the Navajo reservation near her small hometown in New Mexico.

"Where I'm from, there's limited access to water and sanitation," she says. "That's not widely known."

Scott plans to pursue a degree in human biology and then attend medical school, focusing on rural health care. She chose Stanford for her undergraduate studies because she felt that the programs, classes, and mentors available at the university could best guide her through her academic journey.

"Stanford does a really good job of giving you the option to explore different paths, and I really enjoy that," she says.

Scott is especially motivated after having seen Navajo reservation community members struggle to get access to vaccines and food during the COVID-19 pandemic.

LARISSA SCOTT, '25, is a member of the Stanford Powwow Planning Committee, Diné Club (a Navajo community student group), Stanford Women in Medicine, and the Stanford intramural volleyball program. She completed a fellowship through the Native American Cultural Center, where she researched the impact of K-12 public school education on Native American students. Scott is a recipient of the Sarah Hotchkis Ketterer Undergraduate Scholarship and the Class of 1966 Undergraduate Scholarship.

"I really want to bring awareness to those issues and find ways that I can help. For example, during the pandemic I started a donation fund, and we brought out necessities like toilet paper and food and delivered them to some of the different communities and families. Bringing health care, bringing aid—that's what I'm interested in."



**LARISSA
SCOTT**



◀ WHERE CLIMATE CHANGE GETS PERSONAL

“Coming from Hawai‘i, I have spent a lot of time in nature and have had first-person experience with the effects of climate change. It’s personal to me. The idea of creating something novel, useful, and important—such as a startup in ocean energy or marine renewable energy—sounds like a fulfilling challenge. These passions of mine meant that Stanford was the perfect match.”

KAI MOTTLEY, '26, is from the island of Kaua‘i. He is involved with the Business Association of Stanford Entrepreneurial Students, Stanford Energy Club, Stanford Social Entrepreneurial Students Association, and the surf club. Mottley is a recipient of the Carol Belknap Williams Scholarship and the Lawrence Foundation Scholarship in Honor of Hubert and Elizabeth Troth.

▶ SUPPORTING MY FAMILY AND PURSUING MY GOALS

“Not having to worry about food or shelter allows me to focus more of my time on supporting my family and pursuing my goals, and not having to worry about tuition allows me to strengthen my skills and meet incredible classmates.”

—Excerpt from Jack Mao’s letter to the donor of his scholarship fund

JACK MAO, '25, spends his time outside of academia as one of the youngest credentialed tax professionals in the country and has been a longtime volunteer with the IRS’s Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) program. While at Stanford, Mao established a VITA site to support low-income students and taxpayers. He is the CFO of Friends & Family, a group that supports entrepreneurial builders at Stanford. He was one of the 35 Garage '23 Fellows at Pear VC, comprising entrepreneurial engineering students who are working together to identify meaningful problems and build solutions. Mao is majoring in computer science and is currently launching a startup that combines his expertise in tax and tech to positively transform the tax industry. He is a recipient of the James and Lisa Sun Scholarship, the David Zhu and Michelle Tung Undergraduate Scholarship, and the Philip Yoh and Louise Hui Undergraduate Scholarship.





GROWING A LEGACY ON THE FARM



Scholarship namesakes
BROTHER LARS KYLBERG, '26,
and **BESSIE NELSON**
on their wedding day in 1929.

THE RIPPLES OF ONE GRATEFUL ALUM'S GIFT REACH WIDE.

Richard Kylberg, '56, spent his childhood in a house divided by the Stanford-Cal rivalry. His mother, Bessie Nelson, graduated from Cal in 1920. His father, Brother Lars Kylberg, graduated from Stanford in 1926, and he taught Kylberg and his siblings the Stanford game day “yells” as soon as they could talk. But the two were united in their belief in the power of education.

Kylberg's father passed away when he was only 12, and his mother began working as a librarian at Fresno State to support the family. Several years later, a need-based, full-tuition scholarship from Stanford allowed Kylberg to follow in his father's footsteps to the Farm.

Kylberg remained grateful for this opportunity throughout his lifetime. As an alum, he served as a longtime fundraising volunteer. In 1977, he decided to honor his parents with a gift establishing the Brother Lars and Bessie Nelson Kylberg Undergraduate Scholarship Fund. Kylberg hoped that the endowed fund would inspire future scholarship recipients to repay Stanford for the opportunity they received and sustain the university's tradition of need-blind admission and undergraduate financial aid.

The impact of the Brother Lars and Bessie Nelson Kylberg Undergraduate Scholarship Fund has increased over time. In the nearly 50 years since the fund's establishment, it has grown more than 600 percent* and been awarded more than 85 times. Its recipients have gone on to pursue careers as physicians, lawyers, and professors—and even include an Emmy Award-winning actor.

Richard, '84, and Robert, '88, Kylberg became the stewards of the scholarship fund following their father's passing in 2022. They now enjoy reading the letters from recipients of his scholarship fund and seeing the effect that their father's generosity continues to have on Stanford students today.

“When our father died, we hoped that the central focus of his life might continue in some way. Through the scholarship fund program at Stanford, we needn't worry about that,” the brothers say. “Our father secured our family legacy and impact with this gift, and now it's up to us to take the opportunity and add our part going forward. The ability to give back has to be one of the greatest blessings we have received through our education at Stanford.”

► *Figure includes an additional gift from Kylberg that received Centennial Campaign matching dollars.



IMPACT AMPLIFIED

HOW THE KYLBERG SCHOLARSHIP LED ONE RECIPIENT TO BOTH A CHERISHED FRIENDSHIP AND A REWARDING CAREER.

Brenda Chavez, '99, was introduced to Richard Kylberg, '56, over lunch during her frosh year. She came to thank the donor of her scholarship fund. She left having met someone who would enrich her life for decades to come.

"I feel very blessed and honored to have known Dick," says Chavez. "He became a father figure, a mentor, and a friend."

Chavez is a proud first-generation Mexican American from the Pico-Union area of Los Angeles who was the first in her family to attend college. She received financial support from the Brother Lars and Bessie Nelson Kylberg Undergraduate Scholarship at Stanford and later pursued graduate studies at Columbia.

"Dick supported my decision to go to law school, but I think he would have been just as happy if I had pursued something else," she says. "He had a lot of life experience, and he knew the importance of being happy and pursuing what is satisfying to you."

Now an entertainment and business attorney with her own practice, Chavez finds fulfillment advocating for members of minoritized and marginalized communities in a range of legal matters, from intellectual property acquisition and licensing to start-up representation and employment agreements.

"A lot of my clients are people like me," she says. "They are women, or first-generation Chicano or Latino, or queer. I definitely feel and know that I'm making a positive difference in their lives."

► **CHAVEZ'S** story is one of many that illustrates the ongoing impact of the Brother Lars and Bessie Nelson Kylberg Undergraduate Scholarship.

THE STANFORD COMMUNITY'S HISTORY OF UNDERGRADUATE SUPPORT

Maintaining Stanford's long-standing commitment to accessibility and affordability stands among the university's greatest achievements and its highest priorities for the future.

In response to increasing student need, we have made significant aid enhancements over time that benefit undergraduates from both low- and middle-income families. Our need-blind admission policy guarantees that qualified U.S. applicants will be accepted based strictly on their merits, not on their ability to pay. Students are not required to take out loans, making it possible for all aid recipients to graduate debt free.

When our graduates can focus on making meaningful contributions to society—without the burden of student loan payments—we all benefit.

FINANCIAL AID MILESTONES AT STANFORD

1891

Stanford opens its doors to 555 students and does not charge tuition.

1900

Jane Stanford establishes the university's first scholarship, the Leland Stanford Junior Memorial Scholarship, in memory of her late son. The scholarship is funded by the \$2,236.52 balance left behind in her son's savings account and covers room, board, and fees.

1912

A \$10,000 bequest from the estate of W. J. Dickey establishes the Dickey Scholarship, the university's first scholarship created by someone outside the Stanford family.

1920

Stanford begins charging tuition of \$120 per year.

1935

The George J. Presley Honors Memorial Scholarship becomes the university's first athletic scholarship.

1944

The G.I. Bill passes in Congress and leads to a postwar surge in veteran enrollment.

1958

Stanford establishes the Financial Aid Office, led by former Assistant Dean of Men Robert P. Huff.

1965

The Higher Education Act of 1965 establishes federal student aid programs.

1986

Stanford caps the amount of scholarship support available to international students.

1992

Stanford guarantees four years of on-campus housing to all undergraduates.

1994

The Stanford Fund is established, enabling Stanford alumni, family, and friends to provide annual support for financial aid and undergraduate programming.

2006

In an effort to address affordability for the lowest-income families, the university implements the first “zero parent contribution” threshold for families with incomes below \$45,000. Qualifying families do not pay for tuition, room, or board.

2007

Turning to middle-income families, Stanford reduces student loans as a proportion of financial aid packages and caps the amount of home equity included in the parent contribution calculation.

2008

Stanford commits to greatly expanding financial aid, promising zero parent contribution for families with incomes below \$60,000 and zero tuition for incomes below \$100,000, and eliminating student loans. When economic fallout from the recession strains Stanford’s budget and increases the financial need of families, the university reaffirms its promise, and generous donors step forward to help sustain the enhanced financial aid program.

2015

The family income threshold to qualify for zero parent contribution increases to \$65,000, and the threshold for a full-tuition scholarship increases to \$125,000.

2019

Stanford eliminates home equity from consideration for financial aid.

2020

The family income threshold to qualify for a full-tuition scholarship rises to \$150,000.* Pandemic enhancements, including travel reimbursements and temporary elimination of summer earnings, are enacted.

2021

The family income threshold to qualify for zero parent contribution increases to \$75,000.

2023

The family income threshold to qualify for zero parent contribution increases to \$100,000.

TODAY

87 PERCENT

of students graduate without any student debt.

66 PERCENT

About half of undergraduates receive need-based aid from Stanford, and roughly 66 percent receive some form of financial aid from internal and external sources, including athletic scholarships.

1 IN 5

undergraduates is the first in their family to attend a four-year college or university.

STANFORD

forecasts an ongoing need for new financial aid resources as the number of students qualifying for full tuition, room, and board increases—and more families face economic challenges.


**Students from families with higher incomes (particularly those with more than one child in college) may also qualify for some assistance.*

SCHOLARSHIP DOLLARS AND CHANGE



Financial aid benefits everyone—as this Stanford professor, a scholarship recipient himself, knows firsthand.





Michael McFaul's career has circled the globe—from Moscow, where he served as the U.S. ambassador, to Washington, DC, and roughly 90 countries in between. Today, the Stanford professor has a leading role in international studies on campus and contributes regularly as an NBC News analyst and columnist for the *Washington Post*.

None of it, he points out, would have been possible without the scholarship he received as a high school senior.

“Let's be honest—if not for financial aid, there would've been no kid from Montana at Stanford whose dad was a country western musician playing Ramada Inn bars,” he says.

McFaul is the oldest of five siblings, and he says resources were limited for his family. As a high school senior, he was at his 32-hour-per-week job as a dishwasher when his dad, who for decades toured as a saxophonist and keyboardist, brought him the big envelope from Stanford.

But McFaul's elation at being admitted soon fell flat. “I had this incredibly deflating conversation with my parents saying, ‘There's no way we can afford to send you there.’”

That is, until another letter arrived a few days later. “I remember the financial aid number vividly to this day: My parental contribution that fall of '81 was \$400. I paid that myself,” he says.

Along with a Pell grant and student loans, it was enough to get him to the Farm. McFaul sees financial aid as essential to the university's goal of preparing citizens and leaders who contribute to the common good.

“Without question, you can't burden students with tons of debt and then expect them to go work for an NGO or the government when the private sector is willing to pay them five times as much,” he says.

This can create a quandary for undergraduates, one that McFaul observes especially when advising his first-generation, low-income students, for whom familial expectations can be pragmatic—and direct.

“If you want students to make the world a better place through public service, you have to start with the cost of their education, especially for those who need it most,” he says.

▶ **MICHAEL McFAUL, '86, MA '86**, is director of Stanford's Freeman Spogli Institute for International Studies, the Ken Olivier & Angela Nomellini Professor of International Studies, and the Peter and Helen Bing Senior Fellow at the Hoover Institution.



Stanford

A hand in a brown cable-knit sweater sleeve points to a world map on a table. The background is a library with tall wooden bookshelves filled with books.

JOIN US

Help unlock the Stanford
experience for the
next generation of world
citizens and leaders.



BERMUDA
ATLANTIC OUTPOST

RYAN
WEAR



Stanford