



WHEREVER THEY START WHATEVER THEIR PATH WE ARE COMMITTED

2020-2021 ANNUAL REPORT



PALMER
scholars



A NOTE FROM LEADERSHIP

Upholding our Founders' Commitment

As we reflect on the past year, we're reminded of all that we've continued to endure as a community: COVID-19, political turmoil, demonstrations of anti-blackness and deeply-rooted systemic racism locally and beyond, and much more. We're also reminded, however, of all that there is to be grateful for! We're grateful for our amazing team, which has continued to provide uninterrupted services to the nearly 200 Scholars in our programs. We're grateful for the opportunity to grow our impact substantially by receiving state recognition for our Palmer Pathways Pre-Apprenticeship, and securing critical partnerships and funding to ensure the success of this program. We're grateful that we've been able to launch our Palmer Connections mentoring platform, creating opportunities for youth and young adults in our community to make meaningful connections. We're grateful that we've been able to add 6 new positions, to both grow our work and reduce burnout among our amazing staff. Last but certainly not least, we're grateful for each and every one of you and all that you do to make our work possible! As you read through this year's annual report, we hope that you are as impressed as we are with all that has taken place over the last year. Further, we hope it renews your resolve to invest in and get involved with our work. We can't do this without you!

With much love and gratitude,



Jonathan Jackson, MBA
Executive Director

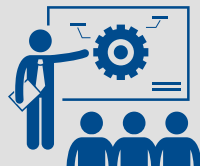


Marissa Rathbone
Board President

WHATEVER IT TAKES

Exceeding Goals Throughout COVID-19

SCHOLARS SERVED



195

190 IN LEGACY, 5 IN PATHWAYS

STUDENT LOANS

90%

OF SCHOLAR TOOK \$5,000
OR LESS IN STUDENT LOANS

GROWTH IN SCHOLARS SERVED



+8%

FROM FYE2020 TO FYE2022

SCHOLARSHIP FUNDING



\$322,311

AWARDED

GRADUATION RATE

85%

COMPARED TO 11% FOR
STUDENTS IN SIMILAR
DEMOGRAPHICS

INCOME GROWTH



+33%

FROM FYE2021 TO FYE2022



"It has been a big accomplishment of mine to be able to be a part of a community that strives to be the best versions of themselves while valuing the community and culture that raised them. I'm proud to be a Palmer Scholar that not only represents a title but a group of unique individuals that come together as a strong and motivated community building their paths to success." -Jessica H., Harrison Prep '20, University of Washington '24

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Sally Jo Bose

Peggy Palmer*

Willie Stewart

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Jonathan Jackson, MBA

*Deceased

WITH ALL OF HER MIGHT

Palmer Scholars Names Sally Jo Bose Emeritus Board Member, Establishes Named Scholarship

When Sally Jo Bose joined Palmer Scholars as the Executive Director in 2013, she was the only paid staff member. In her five years of service at Palmer Scholars, Sally took the organization to the next level. The team grew to four full-time staff, a Postsecondary Readiness Training curriculum was developed, and the program model moved to welcoming Scholars in their junior, rather than their senior, year of high school. Through Sally's



leadership, Palmer Scholars also developed key partnerships, including Tacoma Sunrise Rotary Club, for whom Palmer Scholars manages a named scholarship. Sally chose to step away from the Executive Director role to focus on her health in 2018. Since this time, the growth Palmer Scholars has experienced can largely be linked back to the strong foundation Sally built for the organization. To honor her work, the Palmer Scholars Board of Directors named Sally an Emeritus Board Member and established a scholarship in her name, awarded to Scholars who show a dedication for service, just like Sally!



The Inaugural Sally Jo Bose Heart for Service Scholar

Mersaydes B. was named the inaugural Sally Jo Bose Heart for Service Scholar. Mersaydes graduated from Foss High School in 2019 and is currently studying at the University of San Francisco.

WITH A PASSION FOR SERVICE

Palmer Scholars Doubles in Size in 2021



When Executive Director Jonathan Jackson returned to the organization in November 2018, there were just five Palmer Scholars staff members. The team has since doubled, adding six new staff members in the last 12 months. The addition of new staff was necessary to keep up with the growing program offerings and needs of our Scholars, especially throughout the COVID-19 pandemic.



The new staff includes Alicia Guevara Molina and Reece Martin, who serve Scholars in our Legacy program, Mandy Aaberg, Pamila Gant, and Jessie Simmons, who serve Scholars in our Pathways Pre-Apprenticeship program, and Lisa Pipes, who has joined our Development team. Together, the new members of our team have decades worth of experience. More importantly, however, each is committed to continuing the work Rev. Al Davis and Merle Palmer started nearly 40 years ago.



"We've always been a small but mighty team. We're still relatively small, but now we're even mightier! I'm excited for what this growth means for our Scholars and the sustainability of the organization!" Executive Director Jonathan Jackson said of the rapid growth.

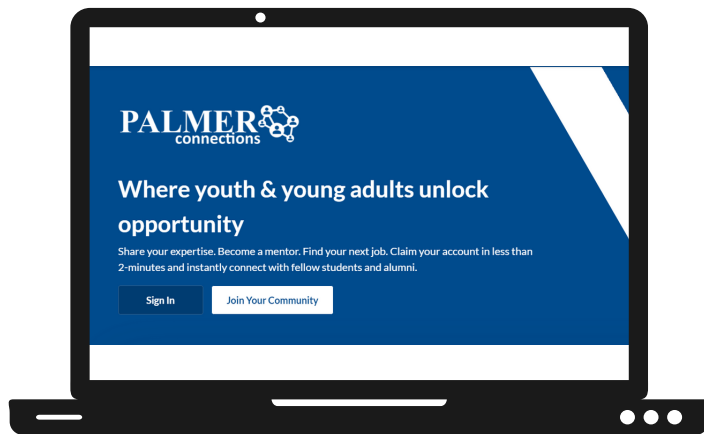
With more than half of the staff joining the team in a fully-remote work environment, the Palmer Scholars team looks forward to meeting each other when the organization returns to in-person work in 2022.

WHEREVER THEY ARE

Palmer Connections Expands Access to Mentoring

For nearly 40 years, Palmer Scholars has served young adults throughout Pierce County, with Scholars mostly residing in the greater Tacoma area. With an office located in Tacoma and many Scholars lacking transportation, it was rare that we received applications from outside the urban core. Similarly, leaders in our community who wanted to join our mentoring program found the time commitment to be a barrier. To open access for youth, young adults, and prospective mentors, we launched the Palmer Connections mentoring platform.

Through Palmer Connections, any Pierce County youth or young adult over the age of 13 can access career-connected learning and mentoring from the comfort of their home. Youth and young adults choose their areas of interest and identify potential educational or career paths, then search for experienced community members to connect with through the platform. Through these "micro-mentoring" arrangements, community-oriented (but busy!) adults in our community can make a difference in the lives of a young person in just a few minutes per month.



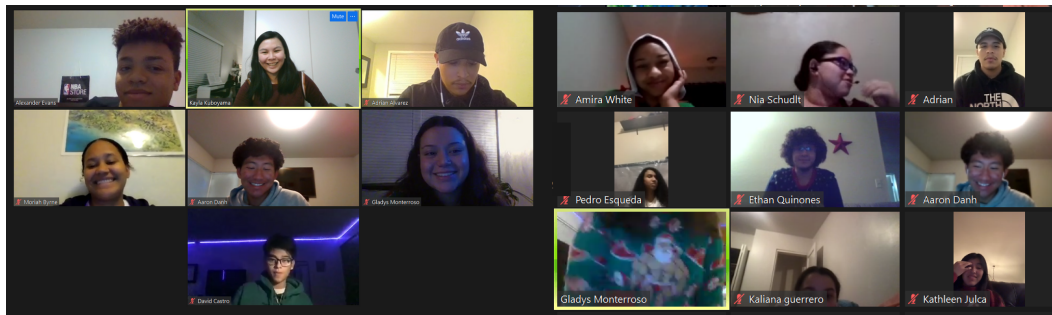
Join Palmer Connections Today!

Want to mentor youth and young adults in your community?

Sign up today at connections.palmerscholars.org

WHATEVER THEY FACE

Mentoring through a Pandemic



For the second year in a row, Palmer Scholars hosted a virtual Mentor Match event. Scholars and mentors met for the first time over Zoom, and began to build a relationship that will span the course of several years.

Our mentoring program continues to provide the integral added layer of support our Scholars need when pursuing their postsecondary goals. We have welcomed 25 new mentors to our program, including three who are alumni of the Palmer Scholars Legacy program. As our Scholars moved through an online learning environment and transitioned back to face-to-face learning, our mentors have been key to ensuring they don't fall through the cracks. Mentors provide academic, professional, and socioemotional guidance to their Scholars. When difficult times arise, our Scholars know that their mentors have their back and are just a phone call or text away!

Interested in becoming a mentor? Email Farrington at fcador@palmerscholars.org.

"Both financially and mentally, the Palmer Scholars program has helped me through this time of COVID. My mentor has helped me in my time of hardship. When my mental health was low, my mentor helped me get through that with weekly conversations."



Erick P.

Mount Tahoma HS '20
University of Washington '24

WE ARE COMMITTED

Standing with Scholars Through it All



Fulfilling Lifelong Dreams During a Global Pandemic

When Palmer Pathways Scholar Shiquan joined the program, he let the team know that it was his lifelong dream to become an urban farmer. In addition to more traditional trades, Palmer Pathways focuses its efforts on guiding young adults into underemphasized career paths. After completing the program, Shiquan completed a term of service with the Washington State Conservation Corps. At his most recent check-in, Shiquan let us know that he made his dreams come true! Shiquan, his wife Angelique, and their daughter Yacoba purchased a home and two acres of land in Georgia! Shiquan will be farming the land and Angelique has dreams of opening a farm-to-table restaurant.



Supporting Scholars When Their Paths Change

When Ellie joined the Legacy program in 2015, she planned to go into nursing. After some time studying at a local four-year university, Ellie decided that nursing wasn't for her. She wanted a different educational experience and left her university in pursuit of something that was more aligned with her skills and interests. While some organizations may have dropped Ellie from their program, at Palmer Scholars, we believe in supporting our Scholars whatever their path may be. Ellie took her time exploring and found a passion for Occupational Therapy. In 2021, she completed the Occupational Therapy program at Bates Technical College and passed the national licensure exam on her first try! She is now gainfully employed and recently purchased a home.

"Palmer's has offered support with their one-on-one meetings, newsletters, as well as notifications for academic and employment listings, providing resources that are available throughout the community that I would not have known about otherwise. I was unsure about my decision to transfer to another college. When I felt conflicted, Palmer Scholars helped me figure out what would be the best decision based on my interests." -Brandon L. Stadium HS '20, Tacoma Community College '22



Building Brighter Futures

The first cohort of the Palmer Pathways program was only able to meet in-person once at their orientation before the pandemic forced all programming to be conducted virtually. The staff worried about the impact this would have on the Scholars, but remained committed to providing the highest level of service possible to ensure all Scholars could build brighter futures for themselves and their families. Azamaia, a Pathways Scholar, did just that! Azamaia went on to work full-time with Concrete Technology Corporation to support his family. Hoping to grow his career, Azamaia recently joined the Northwest Carpenters Institute and will be completing their apprenticeship program!



Letting Them Know They are Never Alone

Pricila, like many of our Scholars, had to make the difficult transition to an online learning environment for the end of the 2019-2020 school year and the entirety of the 2020-2021 school year. As a senior at Clover Park High School, Pricila appreciated the care that the Palmer Scholars Legacy team took in ensuring she made a successful transition into her postsecondary institution. "They have helped mentally throughout the pandemic by having weekly checkups and giving us advice through rough times," Pricila said. "I am proud to be a Palmer Scholar because I am involved with a community that cares about everyone. There is always someone there to help you no matter what happens."

WHATEVER THEIR PATH

Launching Palmer Pathways 2.0

Palmer Pathways 2.0 builds on the foundational pieces of the first iteration of the program. In the past year, Palmer Scholars staff has developed a new program model, earning recognition from the Washington State Apprenticeship and Training Council (Labor and Industries) as an official apprenticeship preparation program. The work Palmer Pathways has done could not have been accomplished without the help of its new Advisory Board, made up of trades leaders representing Sound Transit, LiUNA/NWLETT, WWMT JATC, WA Labor & Industries, the Construction Center of Excellence, Pierce County Building and Construction Council, and Tacoma Power.

Our Model



"Palmer Pathways has given some much needed support, kept opportunities open, and has kept me looking at the future with more optimistic eyes though my circumstances would say otherwise. I recommend anyone eligible join Palmer Pathways because you can take some weight off your shoulders and not only rely on yourself. It's good to be helped at times and you can use what you learn to help others." -Nate N. Pathways Scholar, Plumber Apprentice

WITH A STRONG FOUNDATION

Developing Partnerships in the Trades



The Palmer Pathways Pre-Apprenticeship program could not move forward without the collaboration of the businesses, organizations, and unions that make Pierce County run each day. The partnerships we have developed over the past two years will be pivotal in allowing our Pathways Scholars to launch themselves into family-wage careers and out of poverty. We currently have 16 partners who have agreed to provide direct or preferred entry to apprenticeship or employment for our graduates. The next Palmer Pathways cohort is set to start in January 2022. We want to thank each of our partners for helping our Scholars build their brighter futures!

Interested in becoming a Palmer Pathways partner? Email Christina at crupp@palmerscholars.org.

"Being a Pathways Scholar can not only help you find a career path, but also build your network along the way! The team helped me navigate so many systems that I've never had to before. During COVID-19, the program helped me learn how to be responsible and show up everyday even if something is online or you aren't being constantly checked in on by someone."

Chandler C.

Pathways Scholar, Currently at Bates Technical College



Did You Know?



The Class of 2021 graduated from college with an average of **\$2,726** in student loan debt!

This is significantly lower than the **\$35,521** that the average Washington State student graduates with each year!

We believe in setting our Scholars up for success academically, socially, professionally, and financially!

THEY ARE COMMITTED, TOO!

21 Scholars Attain Their Degree

Vilma Alvarado Garcia	University of Washington
Andrea Carcamo Sanchez	University of Washington
Isaiah Cuadras	University of Washington
Sabrina Ebengho	University of Washington
Shayla Fletcher	Pacific Lutheran University
Anna Ganu	University of Puget Sound
Lucia Ganu	Pacific Lutheran University
Toelau Gasetoto	University of Washington
Eli Gonzalez Perez	University of Washington
Elizabeth Humphrey	Bates Technical College
Victoria Lozano Garcia	University of Washington
Reece Martin	University of Washington
Jennifer Nguyen	University of Washington
Valeria Pinedo Chipana	Washington University St. Louis
Carolina Robles Valencia	University of Washington
Sharae Ratliff	University of Washington
Abranna Romero Rocha	Whitworth University
Damian Sanchez	Whitworth University
Tuan Tran	University of Puget Sound
Shayla Trinh	University of Washington
Tyreke Wilbanks	Western Washington University



Vilma Alvarado Garcia
Clover Park High School '17
University of Washington

While at the University of Washington, Vilma majored in education. She is looking to work in education policy and college access. She is starting off this journey by working as an Outreach and Recruitment Specialist at Palmer Scholars.

WHATEVER THE COST

Four Named Scholarships Established



**Corey T. Pittman
Memorial Scholarship**

This scholarship is awarded to a Scholar from Lincoln High School.



**Sally Jo Bose
"Heart for Service" Scholarship**

This scholarship is awarded to a Scholar who has a history of community service.



**Don Rupp
Craft Scholarship**

This scholarship is awarded to a Scholar who pursues apprenticeship or matriculates into a technical college.



**James Chatman
"Game Changer" Scholarship**

This scholarship is awarded to a Scholar from Lincoln High School.

All Scholarship recipients receive the added benefits of Postsecondary Readiness Training, mentoring, and ongoing socioemotional support through postsecondary or apprenticeship program completion. Want to establish your own named scholarship with Palmer Scholars? Contact us at giving@palmerscholars.org.

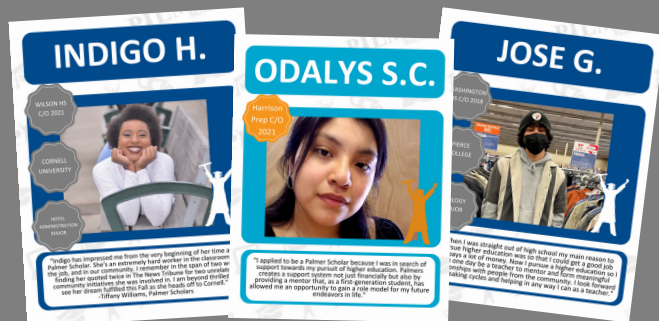


"Without the help of this scholarship, I wouldn't be where I am today. Palmer Scholars has not only helped me to prepare for college. It has given me a family. Their continual financial support and check-ins have helped me persist through the tough times. I promise to continue Mr. Pittman's legacy by giving back to Palmer Scholars once I get into my own career!" -Samaad T. Lincoln High School '18, Central Washington University '22, Corey T. Pittman Memorial Scholarship Recipient

WITH OUR COMMUNITY BY OUR SIDE

Get Involved with Palmer Scholars

Have You Gotten Your Palmer Scholar Impact Card?



We want you to know whom your gift is helping! No matter the size, a donation to Palmer Scholars is an investment in our Scholars' futures. Make a donation and we will send you a Scholar impact card, featuring a Scholar, their "stats," and a thank you note from that Scholar. Want to collect them all? Become a monthly donor and receive a new Scholar Impact Card each month!

We Need Your Help to End Generational Cycles of Poverty!



Become a mentor to one of our Scholars! Through our Palmer Connections platform, mentoring has never been easier! Join today at connections.palmerscholars.org.



Become a sponsor! When you sponsor our Stand Up & Cheer event, we can ensure that all money raised goes directly to our Scholars. We also promote your business before, during, and after the event!



Establish a named scholarship with Palmer Scholars! By creating a scholarship, you can rest assured that the Scholar you support will receive wraparound services through program completion.



Make a donation to support Palmer Scholars! We can't do this work without you! Donate today at palmerscholars.org/donate or scan the QR code with your smartphone!

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Sunrise Rotary Club of Tacoma
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United Way of Pierce County
US Bank Foundation
Voigt Charitable Foundation
Washington Women's Foundation
William Kilworth Foundation
Windows of Hope Foundation
Woodworth Family Foundation
Wells Fargo

"I'm proud to be a Palmer Scholar because it is a great family to be a part of. The dedication they have to help us is great! Someday after graduation I would like to do the same in return and help future Scholars."



Alexis B.

Lincoln HS '19
University of Washington '23
Sunrise Rotary Scholar

YOU'RE INVITED!

STAY IN & CHEER 2022

Virtual Event | April 19th, 2022

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