

# APIA SCHOLARS ANNUAL REPORT

20<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY EDITION



# 2024





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# LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT

Dear Friends, Supporters, and Partners,

This milestone 20th anniversary year has been a momentous one. As we've reflected on the past two decades, we have also kicked off our 3-Year strategic plan. With a renewed focus on lowering financial barriers to higher education for Asian American, Native Hawaiian, and Pacific Islander (AANHPI) students—particularly those most in need—we are re-imagining the way we support scholars and their academic journeys.

Over the past year, we have undertaken significant foundational work to transform our scholarship program, making it more accessible and impactful. We've also launched key Student Success programs aligned with our strategic plan, and our Applied Research and Policy Team initiated the Data Voyage Project, a critical effort to improve data practices in support of Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islander students. At the same time, we've been rigorously evaluating our impact, ensuring that our work continues to drive meaningful change.

We capped off this incredible year with a 20th anniversary celebration that was a roaring success. It brought scholars, alumni, and supporters together to commemorate our legacy and look ahead to an exciting future.

Thank you for standing with us in this pivotal year. We look forward to continuing this important work together and empowering even more AANHPI students to achieve their full potential.

With gratitude,



**Noël S. Harmon, PhD**

President & Executive Director





# MISSION & VISION

## MISSION STATEMENT

Our Mission is to make a difference in the lives of Asian American, Native Hawaiian, and Pacific Islander (AANHPI) students by providing them with resources that increase their access to higher education, which serves as the foundation for their future success and contributions to a more vibrant America.

## VISION STATEMENT

Our Vision is to see that all AANHPI students have access to higher education and resources that cultivate their academic, personal, and professional success regardless of their ethnicity, national origin, or financial means.

## 3-YEAR STRATEGIC PLAN

Asian Pacific Islander American Scholars (APIA Scholars) is committed to reducing financial barriers for Asian American, Native Hawaiian, and Pacific Islander (AANHPI) students, with a focus on those who are most at risk, marginalized, and historically underserved.



# OUR IMPACT

Since 2003, we have awarded over **\$150 million** in scholarships to **8,600 students** representing **more than 50 ethnicities and 300 languages**. On average, 70% of our Scholars are first-generation college students, and 65 to 75% are from low-income households.



**8,600  
Students**



**More Than  
50 Ethnicities**



**\$150 Million in  
Scholarships**



**300 Languages  
Represented**

## APIA SCHOLARS PERSISTENCE RATE STUDY

Key findings from a study of 4,073 APIA Scholars matched with National Student Clearinghouse (NSC) records revealed that their overall persistence rates are higher at over 90% than the national average of 76%. Unlike national trends, where first-generation and first-to-college students typically have lower persistence rates, APIA Scholars showed similar persistence rates between these groups.

However, gaps were observed among ethnic groups, students over 21 versus younger students, and those enrolled at two-year institutions compared to four-year institutions. The study used NSC data, which covers over 97% of U.S. postsecondary enrollment, to analyze student outcomes and identify at-risk groups.

## PWC IMPACT ASSESSMENT & REPORTING PROJECT

This summer, we had the honor of working with 50 undergraduate students who participated in the PricewaterhouseCoopers (PwC) Nonprofit Consulting Externship. These externs worked on an impact assessment and reporting project focused on APIA Scholars.

Their project was to conduct a comparative analysis of the impact measurement and communication strategies of other scholarships, nonprofits, and foundations. We look forward to integrating their feedback into our future work.



# 20<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY EVENT

We are grateful for the incredible support of our community and extend our thanks to everyone who joined us for our 20th Anniversary Celebration at the Japanese American National Museum in Los Angeles on May 23rd. The event marked a significant milestone, honoring two decades of elevating and celebrating Asian American, Native Hawaiian, and Pacific Islander Scholars.

It was a privilege to have 2020 National Book Award Winner Charles Yu as our keynote speaker, and we are deeply appreciative of the honorees who have made lasting contributions to our mission. The evening also celebrated our alumni, including Tammavalis Salanoa, and awarded our first-ever Scholar of the Year, Brian Zhang. Performances by UCLA's Bruin Bhangra and Hui O' Imiloa brought incredible joy and cultural richness to the celebration.

Reflecting on 20 years of progress fills us with excitement for the future. Our commitment to empowering students and working towards a brighter, more inclusive tomorrow is stronger than ever. As we continue this journey, we believe in the vast potential of our scholars and remain dedicated to supporting their academic and personal growth. Here's to many more years of learning, achievement, and success together.

*The APIA Scholars 20th Anniversary Emerald Event was made possible through the generous support of our partners:*



NATIVE FORWARD  
SCHOLARS FUND



# 2023-2024 SCHOLARSHIPS COHORT



As part of our strategic plan, we are re-imagining our scholarship program with a renewed focus on reducing financial barriers to higher education & prioritizing students who need the most support.

In this baseline year of discovery, we laid the foundation for a **revamped scholarship program** that will be more responsive to the evolving needs of our scholars. This effort aims to enhance accessibility, flexibility, and equity in how scholarships are awarded and managed, ensuring resources are more focused on students facing the most significant financial challenges.

As part of this initiative, we're working through several key objectives. We documented the student experience during scholarship applications and gathered insights through surveys and customer service data. We also conducted an **in-depth review of current processes**, including application workflows, evaluation, and technology, to identify key risk areas and areas for improvement.

Additionally, we developed a **scholar data and impact strategy**, which defines student outcome measures and explores innovative pilots such as flexible funds and 529 plans. These steps are crucial in shaping a more effective, student-centered scholarship program that breaks down financial barriers and creates lasting impact for those most in need.

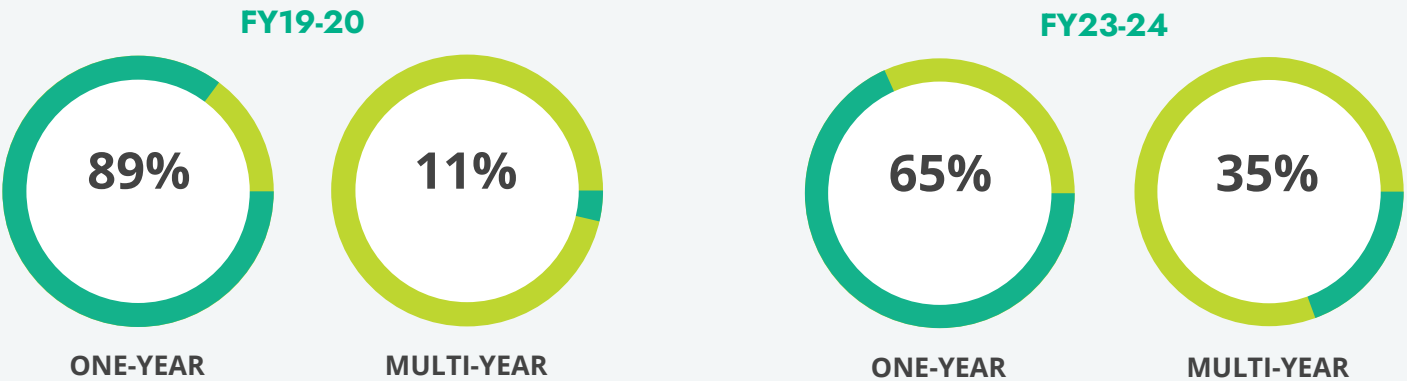


Data from the 2023-2024 cohort of awarded scholars:

	TOTAL DOLLARS AWARDED	TOTAL SCHOLARS SERVED
23-24 COHORT	\$3,553,500	494
RENEWALS	\$1,388,008	375
EMERGENCY FUND	\$28,329	15
TOTALS	\$4,983,837	884

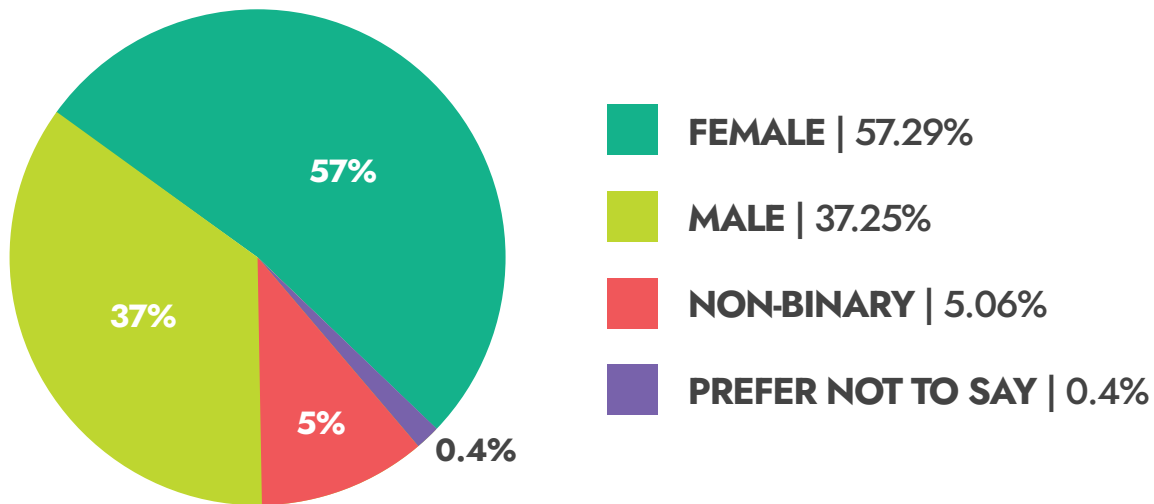
## TYPE OF AWARD

Over the past few academic years, we have made significant strides in offering multi-year scholarships, which directly contributed to improved scholar engagement and higher persistence rates. Multi-year scholarships have grown from 11% of our scholarships in FY19-20 to over 65% in FY23-24. By expanding this approach further, we can continue to bolster the long-term academic success of our Scholars.

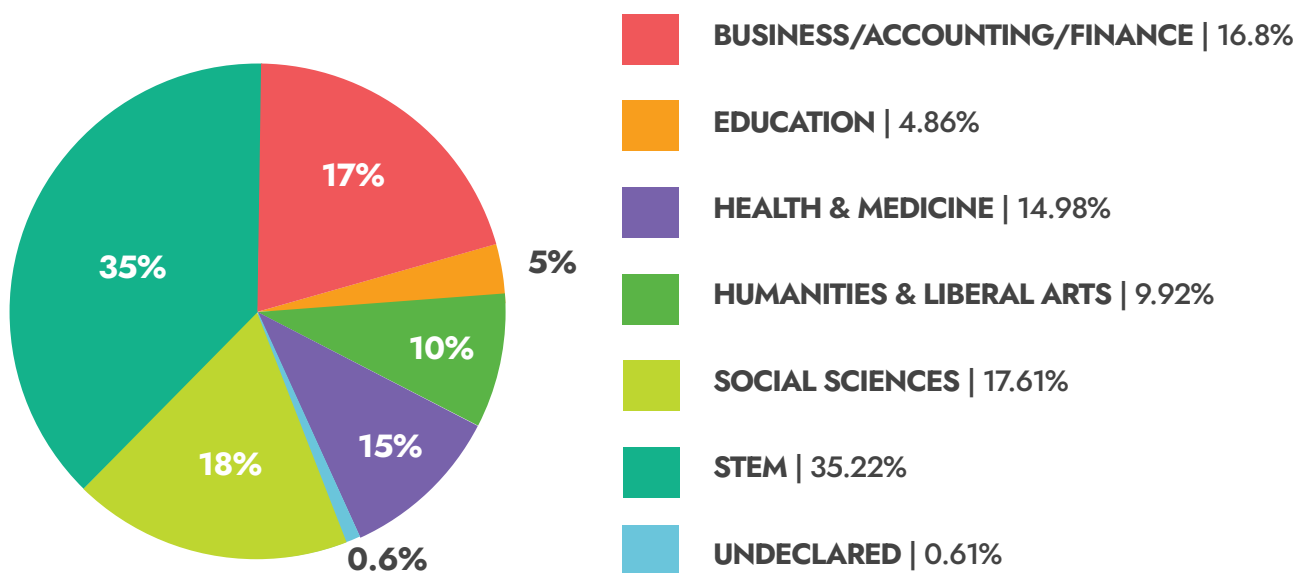


# 2023-2024 SCHOLARSHIPS COHORT

## GENDER ID

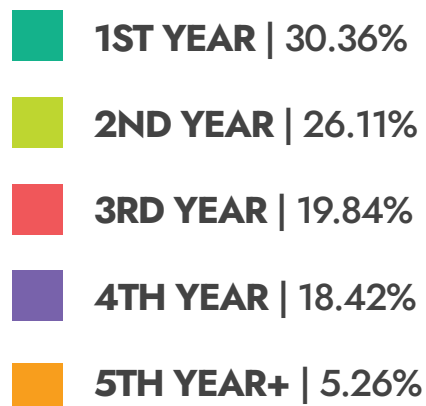
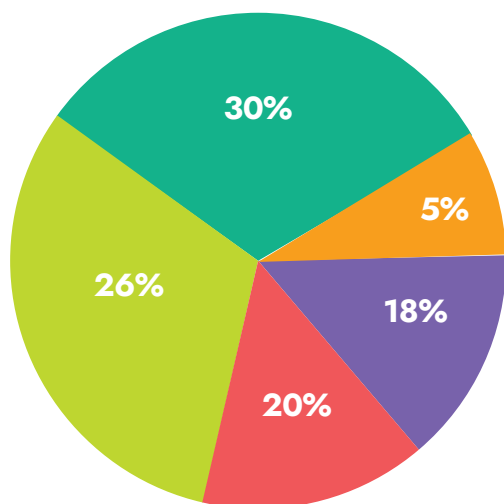


## MAJOR OF STUDY





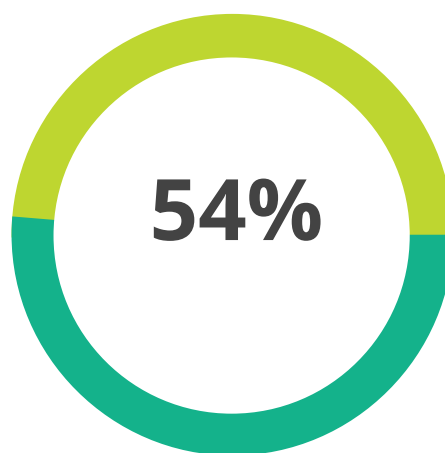
## YEAR IN SCHOOL



## FAMILY BACKGROUND



**FIRST-GENERATION**



**AT/BELOW POVERTY**

# ETHNICITY

APIA Scholars' FY23-24 cohort represented a wide diversity of AANHPI students, with over 50 ethnicities represented.



## SOUTH ASIA

Afghani  
Bangladeshi  
Bhutanese  
Indian  
Indo-Chinese  
Nepalese  
Pakistani  
Punjabi  
Sri Lankan

## SOUTHEAST ASIA

Burmese  
Cambodian  
Carolinian  
Chin  
Filipino  
Hmong  
Indonesian  
Karen  
Karenni  
Laotian  
Malaysian  
Mien  
Mongolian  
Thai  
Vietnamese

## CENTRAL ASIA

Kazakh  
Persian

## EAST ASIA

Chinese  
Hakka  
Japanese  
Korean  
Okinawan  
Taiwanese  
Tibetan  
Uyghur

## PACIFIC ISLANDS (OCEANIA)

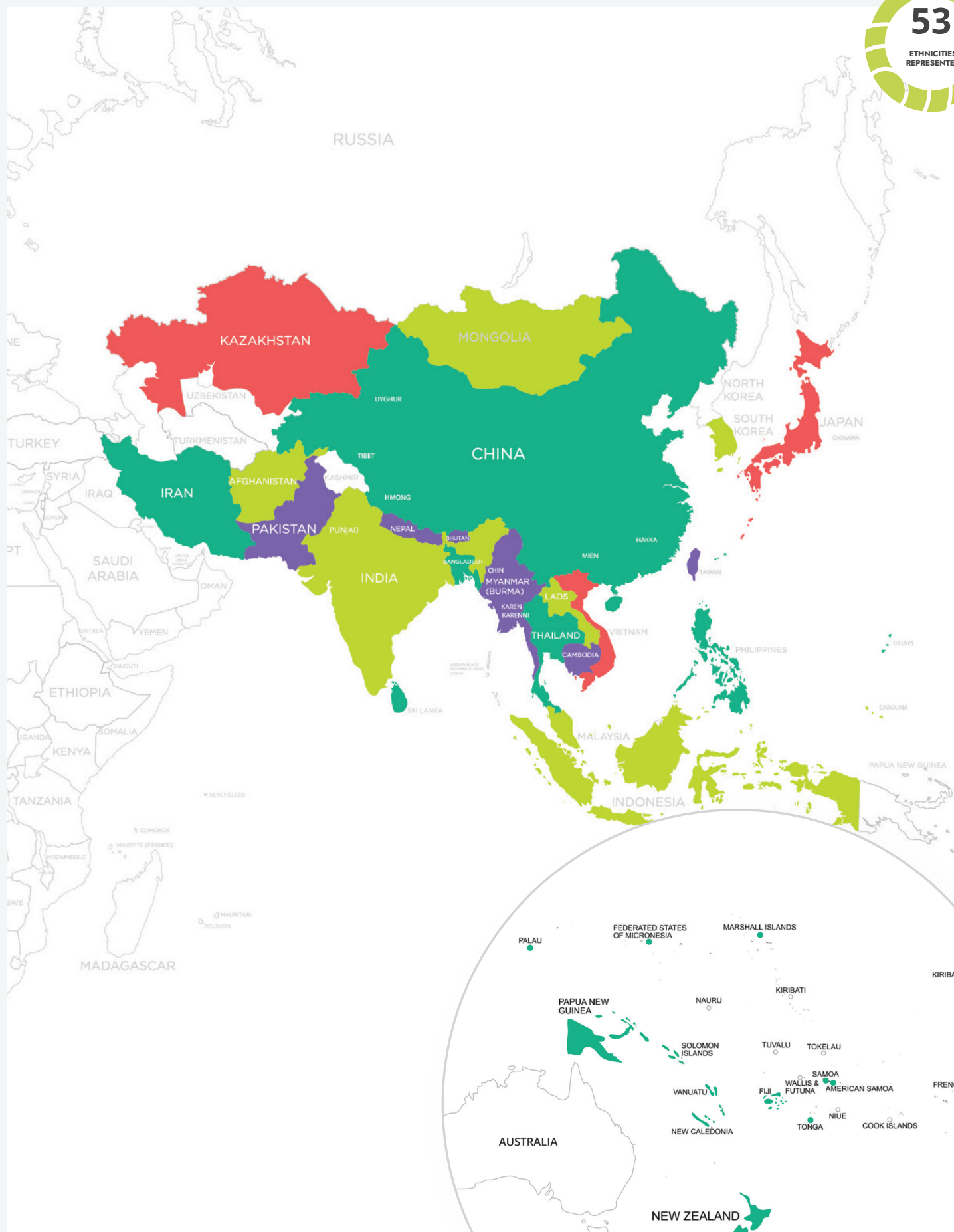
Chamorro  
Chuukese  
Fijian  
I-Kiribati  
Kosraean  
Marshallese  
Native Hawaiian  
Palauan  
Papua New Guinean  
Pohnpeian  
Samoan  
Tahitian  
Tongan  
Yapese

## INDIGENOUS (POLYNESIAN/ MICRONESIAN/ MELANESIAN)

Māori

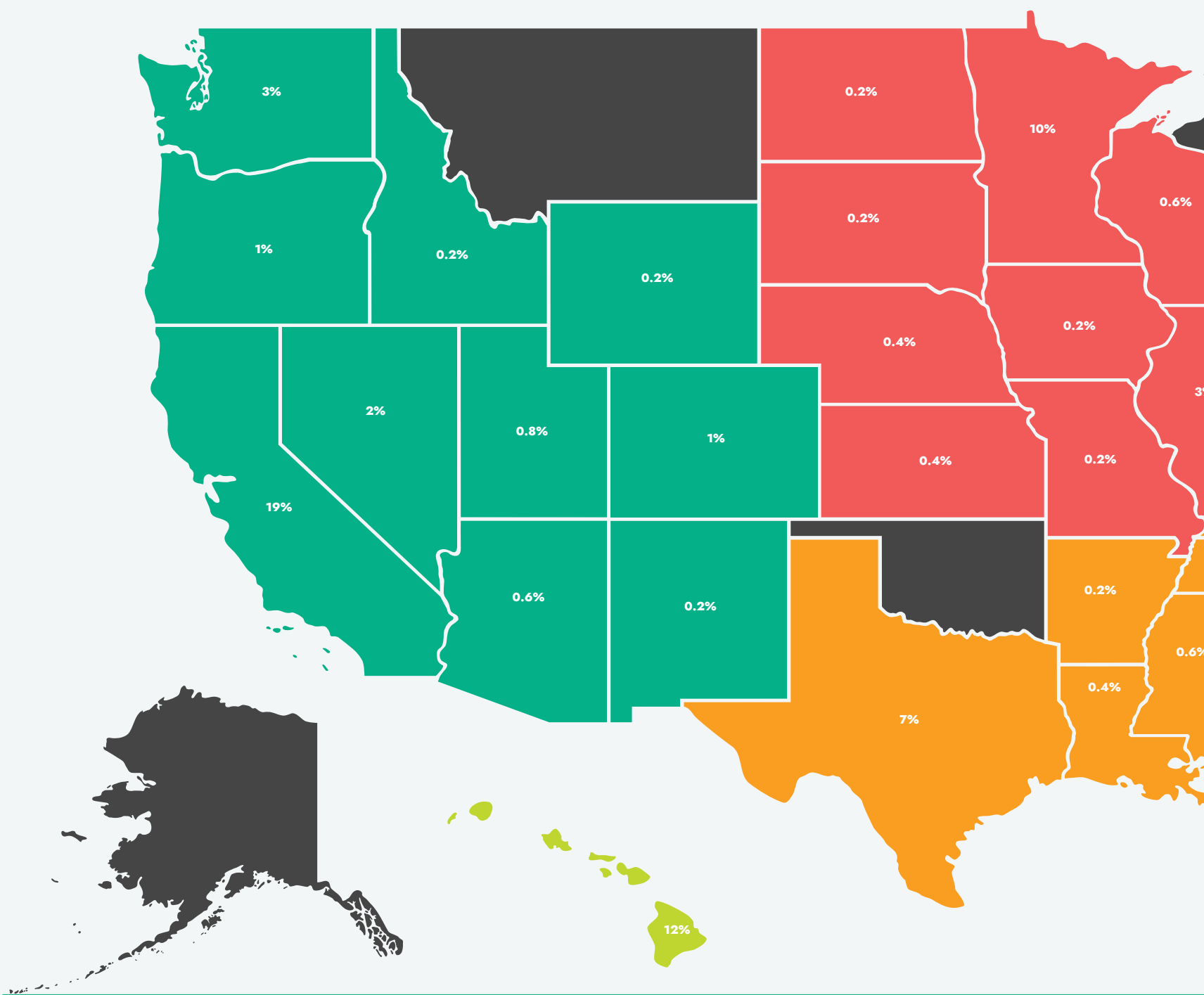


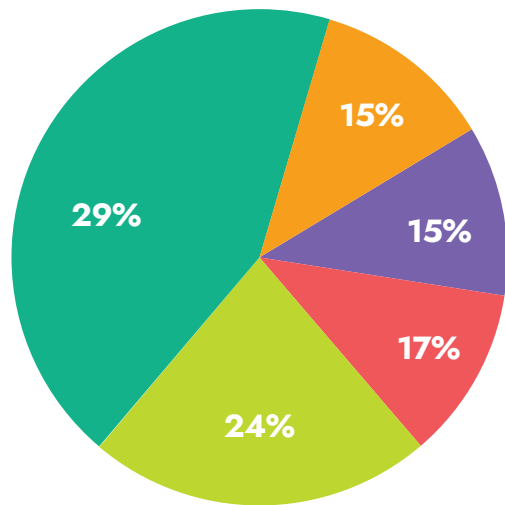




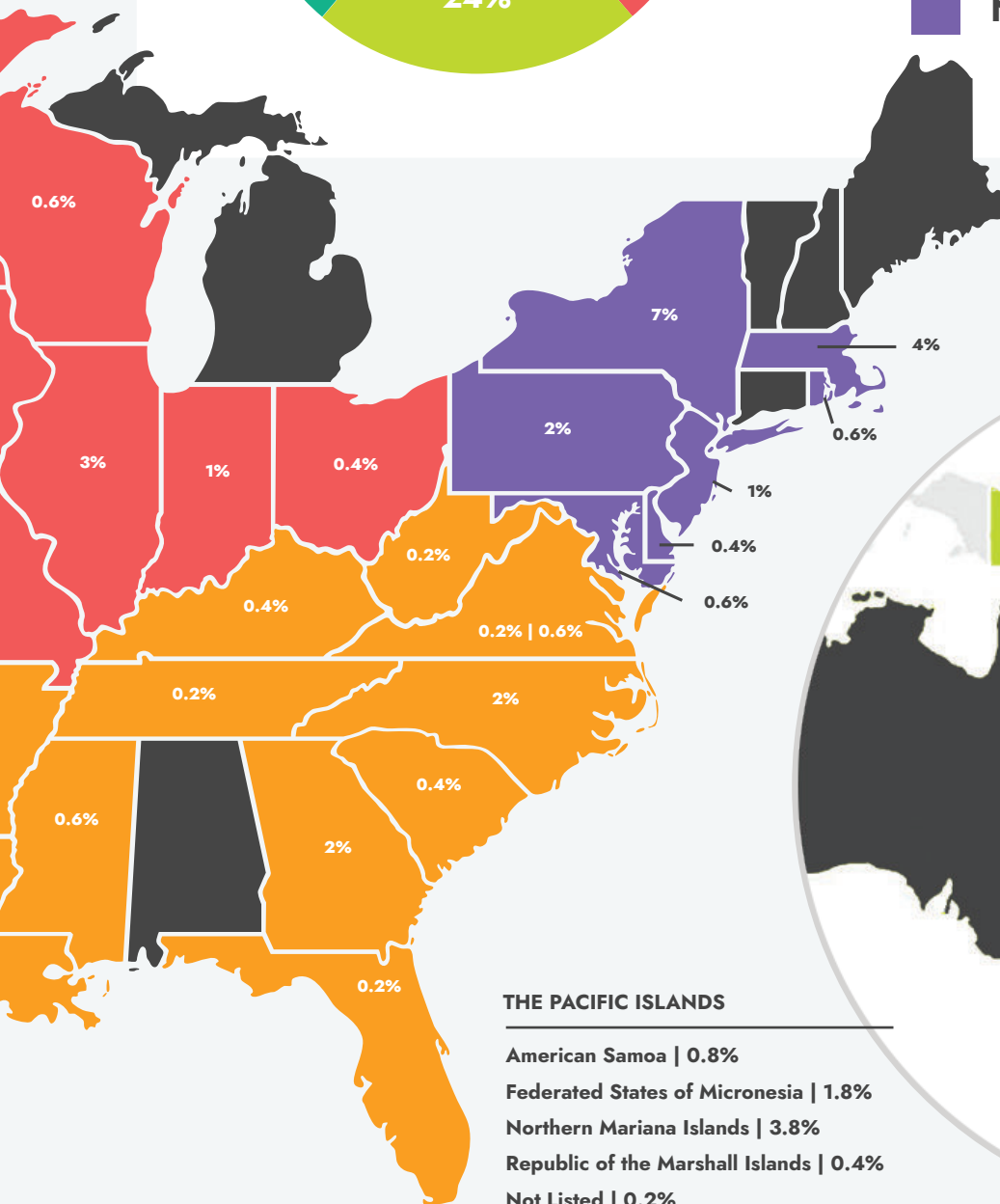
# GEOGRAPHY

Our 2023-2024 Scholarships cohort came from all over the US and the Pacific.



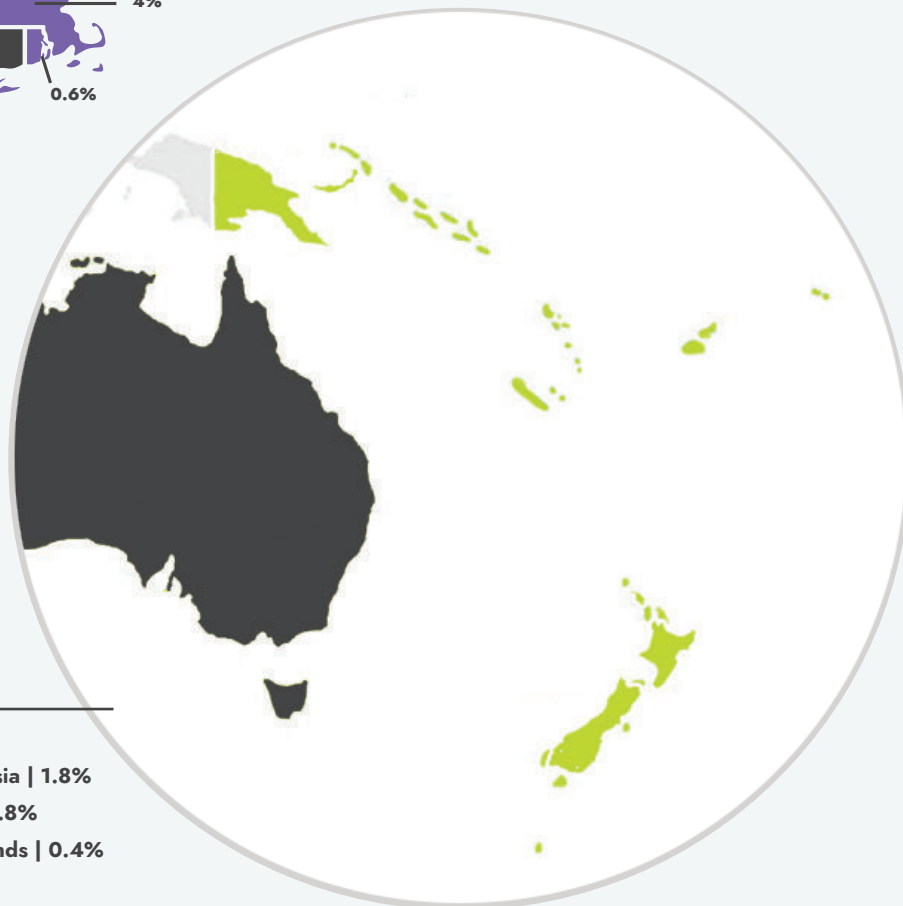


- **MIDWEST** | 17%
- **PACIFIC** | 24%
- **SOUTH** | 15%
- **WEST** | 29%
- **NORTHEAST** | 15%



#### THE PACIFIC ISLANDS


- American Samoa | 0.8%
- Federated States of Micronesia | 1.8%
- Northern Mariana Islands | 3.8%
- Republic of the Marshall Islands | 0.4%
- Not Listed | 0.2%





# STUDENT SUCCESS PROGRAMS





**APIA Scholars remains dedicated to building a supportive community for our scholars, especially first-time recipients. Guided by our strategic plan, we've created a series of events, workshops, and initiatives to engage scholars and offer proactive guidance on navigating college finances, career opportunities, and internships.**



## REGIONAL IN-PERSON SCHOLAR WELCOME EVENTS

This marked the beginning of in-person gatherings and events. The year started with Scholar welcome events in Boston, New York, and San Francisco. These events were pivotal in fostering community and connection within the APIA Scholars network, and they set the tone for the rest of the year's Scholar-centered engagement and focus.

Each gathering allows scholars to meet face-to-face and build relationships with peers, partners, and professionals in their local regions. In today's digital age, these in-person interactions are essential for deepening a sense of belonging and expanding scholars' networks, which can significantly enhance their academic and professional journeys.

## E-PORTFOLIO PROJECT

APIA Scholars participated in summer and winter sessions of our STEM E-Portfolio Project, a workshop series designed to help students build their digital presence and articulate their transferable skills throughout college. Scholars studied curriculum and engaged in hands-on activities focused on critical outcomes.

They explored their current digital presence, identified their primary purpose and target audience, and developed their personal story, iterating and customizing it for various platforms. Additionally, scholars examined Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) components, learning about the complexity of their multifaceted identities and the significance of sharing these identities online in an authentic, empowering way.





## CAREER FEST

In the fall of 2023, we held our inaugural Career Fest at the UCLA Luskin Center, where we offered holistic career development for our Scholars and recent alumni. Scholars from Hawaii, Guam, Southern California, and beyond were invited to join us for programming designed to help ground them in their identities and remove potential barriers as they pursue jobs and careers with support from our generous sponsors.

We were proud to welcome board member Sefa Aina as our keynote speaker, and we were honored to have partners from LEAP, EPIC, and the Asian Mental Health Project lead workshops for our scholars. During the event, APIA Scholars staff met with all attendees in small groups, helping them work on their individual resumes and conducting mock interviews. Scholars then had a chance to meet with additional partners at our resource fair.

**88%** learned about a new career path/opportunity  
**92%** wanted to follow up with organizations & partners at the event  
**100%** would attend Career Fest again



*Partners for the 2023 Career Fest Included:*



# Morgan Stanley



# Deloitte.





## **BETTER FAFSA SERIES**

In 2024, FAFSA underwent significant changes. The strategic changes were designed to simplify the application process by reducing questions and adding new features like a streamlined Student Aid Index. However, some of the delays have caused confusion for students and families seeking clarity on how the new form and timeline will affect financial aid eligibility.

APIA Scholar's Student Success Team offered a series of programs to inform Scholars about the changes. Our programs included virtual informational sessions, webinars, Instagram Live sessions, and in-person gatherings with uAspire and our staff.

## **SCHOLAR ADVISORY COMMITTEE**


After a pause during COVID, APIA Scholars resumed its search for a Scholar Advisory Committee. This marked an exciting step in strengthening scholar engagement. This 12-member committee will serve three key functions: representing the student voice within APIA Scholars, advising staff on student engagement strategies, and collaborating on programming and resource development. The committee's input will help shape organizational initiatives and ensure Scholar perspectives are incorporated into decision-making.

# APPLIED RESEARCH AND POLICY

## DATA VOYAGE PROJECT

This year marked the launch of our two-year commitment to the **Data Voyage Project**, an initiative to enhance data collection, usage, and implementation practices to better support Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islander students. Through a series of learning labs, campus partners engaged in individual and cross-campus discussions on how data can be leveraged to improve outcomes for these student populations. These labs facilitated meaningful dialogue on the future of data management and offered ideas for how institutions can refine their practices to better serve students in the region.

As the project progresses, campus partners will continue conducting campus-level research and preparing reports that capture lessons learned and offer recommendations for improvement.



The ultimate goal of the Data Voyage Project is to use these insights to influence federal policy and data practices that ensure Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islander students receive the targeted support they need to thrive in higher education.







# INDIVIDUAL DONORS | FY24

## PRESIDENTS GIFTS OF \$2,500 +

Gregory & Shu Chee	Graham Lee Family Fund
Chia Trust	Stanley Silver & Patricia G. Silver
William Cho	Mina Takayanagi
Wai-Ling and Steve Eng	The Tan & Balladon Family Charitable Fund
Robert Ho	
Don Joe	

## GIFTS OF \$100 - \$2,499

Usha Bhandari	Michelle Kim	Wally Suphap
Gianna Biagg	Kimo Kippen	Justice Thomas
Juliet Butterfield	Marie Lanzalotti	Lawrence Tom
Edythe Chan	Nanny Lorberbaum	The Honorable Dr. Robert Underwood
Pauline Chen	Scott Loretan	Julia Wada
Vivian Cheng	Jeff Luong	Mary S Warren
Michelle Cohenour	Andrew McDaniel	Glen Wolff
Zach Cross	Vicky Miyamoto	Derrick Wong
Erin Daily	Daphne Mon	Wendy Wong
Jessie-Kay Weili Cheng & Brad Dobeck	Anne Chow and Robert Moore	Reed and Carol Worden
Lee Doud	William F. L. "Bill" Moses	Hans Yang
Jimmy Ferguson	Elizabeth Park	Tiffany Yang
Jennifer Peru Gary	Monic Price	Cecilia Yu
Jackie Gifford	Kenneth Redd	Gordon Yuen
Aimée Meher-Homji	Tetchjan Simpson	Rong Zhao

## IN HONOR OF

Honoring employee William Moses  
after 25 years of dedicated service.

Patricia "Patti" G. Silver

Hoa Nguyen

Celeste Chin

Harry and Lily Chan

Neelesh Aggarwal

Hans Yang



# CORPORATE PARTNERS

## LEGACY

macy's inc

UNITED HEALTH FOUNDATION®  
Diverse Scholars Initiative



## PREMIER



## CHAMPION



## LEADERSHIP



Morgan Stanley





## COMMUNITY



## INTRODUCTORY



## IN-KIND



# FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

## INCOME STATEMENT

### SUPPORT & REVENUE

Grants and Contributions	\$13,701,261.79
Programmatic Events	\$665,758.89
<b>Total Support &amp; Revenue</b>	<b>\$14,367,020.68</b>

### EXPENSES & LOSSES

Total Program Services	\$8,521,105
Management & General	\$2,928,888
Fundraising	\$1,695,643
<b>Total Expenses and Losses</b>	<b>\$13,145,636</b>
<b>Change in Net Assets</b>	<b>\$1,388,865</b>





## BALANCE SHEET

### ASSETS

#### CURRENT ASSETS

Cash and Cash Equivalents	\$2,597,462.98
Investments	\$30,824,253.31
Contributions Receivable	\$4,736,402.94
Prepaid Expenses	\$59,493.39

**Total Current Assets** **\$38,217,612.62**

Net Property and Equipment  
(Fixed Assets) \$255,643.23

Other Assets \$1,976,910.33

**Total Assets** **\$40,450,166.18**

### LIABILITIES

#### CURRENT LIABILITIES

Accounts Payable	\$3,176,719.04
Accrued Scholarships	\$94,708.10
Other Liabilities	\$409,683.99

**Total Current Liabilities** **\$3,681,111.13**

Long Term Liability \$2,112,378.71

**Total Liabilities** **\$5,793,489.84**

**Net Assets** **\$34,656,676.34**

**Total Liabilities & Net Assets** **\$40,450,166.18**



# ALUMNI SPOTLIGHT



## TAMMALIVIS SALANOA

**2019 APIA Coca-Cola Scholar  
University of Alaska Anchorage**

Tammalivis Salanoa is a multi-disciplinary storyteller and humanitarian with a keen interest in the intersection of advocacy, civic engagement, and policy. Recognized as a leader in the Pacific Islander community, Tammalivis has been involved in numerous educational projects and has selflessly devoted her time to improving postsecondary educational opportunities for those in the Pasifika diaspora. She is a recipient of the Presidential Youth Services award in recognition of her ongoing effort to serve her community. She has been working on both the local and national levels on issues related to digital equity, diversity, and healthcare and ultimately strives to empower the younger generations because they are the key to this nation's future.



*I am not a statistic of dropout rates. The donations generously given to APIA Scholars are not merely financial contributions. They are investments into the future of students who are defying the odds and who refuse to let circumstances dictate their destiny*





At a young age, my mother let me know that if I wanted to go to college, I needed to figure it out myself. In the midst of uncertainty,

**APIA Scholars emerged as a beacon of hope.**

They offered unwavering support and guidance. It was more than monetary aid; it was a lifeline and catalyst that propelled me closer to my dream. With their support, I was able to pursue education without financial strain weighing me down.

*Tammalvis Salanoa*



[APIAScholars.org](https://APIAScholars.org)

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