



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Oakland Promise (OP) Awards Record-Setting 730 College and Career Program Scholarships to the Class of 2022 High School Seniors *

During the third year of the pandemic and contrary to national trends, Oakland high school (HS) seniors, especially from Black and Latinx communities, demonstrate a strong commitment to attend college and career programs with record numbers of applications and scholarship acceptances.

Over 1,000 Oakland students applied for Oakland Promise scholarships from the HS Class of 2022 compared to 750 applications in 2021. Oakland Promise announced awards of over \$3 million in 2-year, 4-year and Career Technical Education (\$2,000 - \$4,000 each) scholarships to 730 graduating public high school students compared to 514 scholarships granted in 2020, representing a 42% increase. Of the awarded students, 43 went through a rigorous selection process and were each awarded OP's Great Expectation Scholarships in the amount of \$8,000 - \$16,000. Approximately 48% and 19% of all scholarship recipients are Latinx and Black students, respectively. The number of Black OP Scholars increased from 90 to 133, representing an increase of 48% from last year while Latinx OP Scholars increased from 254 to 357, a 41% increase. This is an indication that even after another year of distance learning, adversity, and disruptions caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, there is renewed interest by BIPOC students to pursue college and career programs for the Fall of 2022. (See Chart below for a more detailed breakdown).

Sandra Ernst, CEO of Oakland Promise states, *"At Oakland Promise, we are encouraged that even in another very tough year for students, we experienced a record number of Black, Latinx and first-generation college students in Oakland who applied for and accepted their scholarships to attend a postsecondary program. This is a step in a long road to creating educational equity that requires more financial, partnership and community support for our young people"*.

Nationwide, there were 5.1% fewer students enrolled in fall 2021 than fall 2019, according to estimates from the National Student Clearinghouse Research Center. And between fall 2019 and fall 2020, the percentage of students who re-enrolled fell the most since 2009. With the pandemic rapidly spreading across the U.S. since the spring of 2020, with distance learning, there were nationwide concerns that once again, students could curtail their plans to apply to college entirely. According to a recent study by UCLA Latino Policy and Politics Initiative, before vaccines became available, almost 11 percent of Latino students and 10 percent of Black students canceled their postsecondary education plans for the fall of 2021, compared to only 6.4 percent of the total student population. White students were least likely to cancel postsecondary plans, at 5.4 percent. The study used data from the U.S. Census Bureau's Household Pulse Survey, which was used to measure the social and economic effects of the coronavirus pandemic on American households.

In the Fall of 2021, however, it was encouraging that there were large increases in underrepresented minority and first-generation applicants nationwide. Underrepresented minority applicants increased by 17 percent over 2019–20, while first-gen applicants increased 21 percent. The number of first-generation applicants increased at nearly twice the rate of other applicants over the same period.

Delaying going to college, however, affects income in future years. Those with no college education see median lifetime earnings of \$1.6 million, according to the Georgetown University Center on Education and the Workforce. That's \$1.2 million less than the \$2.8 million of median lifetime earnings for those with a bachelor's degree. The median associate degree holder sees lifetime earnings of \$2 million. The longer a person waits to go back, the less likely they are to attain a degree, according to the National Student Clearinghouse Research Center. And for those who have delayed going to college, it comes with a cost: The Federal Reserve Bank of New York estimates that postponing college for a year results in a potential \$90,000 loss in lifetime earnings. (Source: NerdWallet and Associated Press)

Oakland Promise's mission is to eliminate those inequities in Oakland through financial and guidance support to students and families. 23% of newly minted "OP Scholars" identified having no current connections with adults with postsecondary experience. One scholar who is a first-generation college student is Imahni Cheeks, a graduate of Oakland Tech High School, 2021's OP scholarship recipient, and now a thriving freshman at the University of San Francisco. She says: *"I'm so happy to have received this scholarship since it will help me to pursue my eventual career as a lawyer. Honestly, I could not have done it without Oakland Promise supporting me financially and through mentorship"*. Isaiah Smiley, a senior at McClymonds High School and this year's scholarship recipient adds: *"With this scholarship, I was able to choose the best college for me rather than attending a less expensive institution. Being less stressed out about college fees will allow me to focus my attention on my studies and career by opening up doors for myself through internship opportunities."*

OP Senior Manager Alitta Boyd and her College Access team have been working diligently with hundreds of Oakland's high school students, such as Isaiah, on their college and career preparation throughout this challenging year. *"Watching our scholars thrive and excel at their dreams is incredibly inspiring. It's so fulfilling to connect them with opportunities and financial resources that will help them flourish in college and their future careers,"* says Ms. Boyd.

These 2022 graduating high school scholars are welcomed to the newest class in Oakland Promise's College Completion program. Ms. Ernst states, *"Our support for our Scholars go beyond providing scholarships. When they pursue their journey in a postsecondary program, we have an array of support and resources awaiting them to help them persist and achieve their career aspirations"*. They will be equipped with potential college peer mentors (CREWS) and paired with volunteer mentors if they so choose. Also, OP has advisors that help new college students persist through college so they can complete their programs.

The annual awarding of scholarships to high school seniors is just one major facet of Oakland Promise's commitment to supporting Oakland's young people's educational journey for ages 0 to 25. OP's partnerships with the Oakland Unified School District (OUSD), City of Oakland and public/private organizations enable this support for young people to come to fruition. More information about our scholarships and resources for students can be found on Oakland Promise's website at www.oaklandpromise.com. OP's annual events to celebrate the scholarship awards and community partnership are also listed below.

2022 Oakland Promise HS Scholarships (Chart)*

Indicators *	2-year college	% of Total	4-year college	% of Total	College Technical Education (CTE)	% of Total	Total	% of Total
OP Scholars (Awarded & Accepted)	140	19%	581	80%	9	1%	730	100%
Ethnicity of students by Postsecondary Type	2-year college	% of 2-yr	4-year college	% of 4-yr	College Technical Education (CTE)	% of CTE	Total	% of Total
African American or Black	22	15.7%	110	18.9%	1	11.1%	133	18.2%
American Indian or Alaska Native		0.0%	1	0.2%		0.0%	1	0.1%
Asian (non-Filipino)	11	7.9%	168	28.9%		0.0%	179	24.5%
Filipino	1	0.7%	5	0.9%		0.0%	6	0.8%
Hispanic or Latinx	98	70.0%	251	43.2%	8	88.9%	357	48.9%
Middle Eastern/North African	4	2.9%	10	1.7%		0.0%	14	1.9%
Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander		0.0%	3	0.5%		0.0%	3	0.4%
White	2	1.4%	6	1.0%		0.0%	8	1.1%
Multi-Race	2	1.4%	27	4.6%		0.0%	29	4.0%

* All reported data in this release are approximations at this juncture due to shifts in student confirmations and extenuating circumstances. Final numbers tallied are expected in October 2022.

2022 Annual Events Celebrating This Year's Scholarship Awards and Community Partnership

Oakland Promise Party for the Promise (Gala)

Date: Thursday, May 19, 2022, 5 - 9pm

Place: Lake Chalet, 1520 Lakeside Dr, Oakland, CA 94612

[Impact and Sponsorship Overview Brochure](#) - Digital

Tickets needed for In-Person Event: Select "Media and Press" and add Promo Code: "P4P22Press" to be comped. Please wear black evening wear, and have your proof of vaccination or a negative test from within 48 hours of the event start time available when you arrive at Lake Chalet.

Oakland Promise Scholars Awards Ceremony

[Program Brochure - Digital](#)

Date: Friday, May 20, 2022, 6 - 9pm

Place: Temple Hill - 4780 Lincoln Ave, Oakland, CA 94602

For [In-Person Registration](#), Select "Media" (Required and respond to wallace@oaklandpromise.org)

Alternate attendance through Virtual Zoom: [RSVP needed](#)

About [Oakland Promise](#)

Oakland Promise (OP) is available to young learners (from newborns to college students) and their families who reside in Oakland. OP offers every child the financial resources, support, mentorship and incentives they need from birth and throughout their school years to empower them to seek out and thrive in the higher education and career of their choosing. OP provides services through four core cradle-to-college and career programs at each stage of a young person's development from ages 0 to 25: Brilliant Baby, Kindergarten to College, College Access and College Completion. Through these programs, OP offers college savings accounts (529s), college scholarship funding in elementary school years, 2-4 year college/CTE scholarships, financial guidance for parents and students, college building culture programs and critical resources to empower students to develop their college and vocational bound identity and persistence.

Since 2016, Oakland Promise has awarded over 1,100 \$500 college savings accounts (CSAs) to Oakland babies, about 30,000 in \$100 in scholarship funding to kindergarteners and over 2,500 in high school senior scholarships.

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