

Booker Promise Foundation, Inc.



Booker Promise Scholarship Program

Booker Promise Foundation's mission is to provide students with the essential skills and resources needed to earn a college degree or technical certification. Their Booker Promise Scholarship Program provides the financial support and tools for Booker High School students to rise above their economic circumstances and reach their fullest academic and personal potential in a partnership that provides scholarships for a two-year associate degree (60 credits) at a Florida public college or technical school. Additionally, they provide students in the Scholarship Program with the skills and support necessary to connect their strengths and interests with a personalized life plan for success including comprehensive mentoring services, career and life planning guidance, academic and behavioral monitoring, college and career success counseling, and individualized interventions.

This initiative will allow for program expansion of an additional 31 scholarships in May, 2023. A key resource is Booker Promise's partnership with the Stanley G. Tate Florida Prepaid College Foundation, which provides dollar-for-dollar matching funds for all monies raised by Booker Promise, so the \$110,500 Impact100 SRQ grant will become \$221,000. The cost of 31 scholarships is \$227,106, and the initiative also includes a \$500 stipend for incidental expenses for each scholarship recipient. The Booker Promise Board of Directors has committed the additional funds necessary for this initiative. These 31 additional scholarships will be purchased in December, 2022 and assigned to high school juniors in the spring of 2023, for post-secondary study beginning in the fall of 2024.

Seventy-two percent of the Booker High School student body is economically disadvantaged, living at or below the poverty level. This program motivates students to graduate high school and pursue post-secondary education that would otherwise be unattainable, potentially ending generational poverty for a population of youth while creating broad public awareness that college and technical training is an investment in the community's future and a necessary continuation of education leading to higher wages and better health, a buffer against unemployment and decreases incarceration and homelessness.

The success of the Booker Promise Scholarship Program will be measured through Booker High School graduation rates, college enrollment, college graduation rates, and updates on career success. Scholarship recipients receive a debit card with credit hours. If a student's credit hours go unused, they revert to Booker Promise Foundation, ensuring all credit hours will be used.

The Booker Promise Scholarship Program began with 9th grade students in 2019 and currently has approximately 700 student participants. The first round of scholarships was awarded to 53 students in May, 2022 for use in the fall of 2023. Though a young program, it is already exemplifying a sustainable model, having raised \$528,000 during its second year. This third year is proving to be equally successful through their collaborations in fundraising with community partners, additional grant funding, school fundraisers, and the generosity of private donors. The Booker Promise vision has made Booker High School one of the only schools in our nation to offer such a promising future through higher education to so many.