What were the experiences and outcomes of students who participated in the Kessler Scholars Program?

The Kessler Scholars Collaborative | 2022-23 Evidence Brief

Kessler Scholars Program Outcomes

Participation in the program provides students with opportunities to grow and develop in three core outcomes areas: navigating collegiate structures and succeeding academically, increasing sense of connection and promoting professional development to both the program and the broader campus.

Program Outcomes

- Sense of belonging and mattering
- College navigation and academic self-efficacy
- Leadership and Professional Development

Sense of Belonging and Mattering

Students’ sense of belonging and feelings of mattering are higher at the program-level, a testament to the great work being done by the Kessler Scholars Program on inaugural campuses. The lower rates of sense of belonging and mattering at the institution-level presents an opportunity for program staff to encourage their institutions to consider how to create a more inclusive climate for First-generation low-income students.

Most scholars feel cared for and supported by the program and that they belong within these small, tight-knit communities designed for first-generation students.

The Kessler Scholars helped provide exposure to new opportunities that I was not even sure existed. Additionally, I believe that the Kessler Scholars fosters a strong sense of community that cannot be found anywhere else on campus.

- Kessler Scholar

Program Satisfaction

Students report high levels of satisfaction with the program, and with their program experience.

92 percent of scholars are satisfied with their program experience.

94 percent of students say that the support they have received from the program has met or exceeded their expectations.

The Kessler Scholars Program goes above and beyond any other scholarship program I have encountered. They are there for their students physically, emotionally, and mentally along with substantial, financial support. They care about the student’s health and well-being and their family members... It is truly such a privilege to have been granted this scholarship...

- Kessler Scholar

High-Impact Practices

The program also supports scholars to engage in community service and high-impact practices such as study abroad programs, internships and undergraduate research, which have been linked to improved student engagement and success, particularly for historically underserved students.

70 percent of scholars have participated (or plan to participate in) in a high impact practice during their time in college.

Funded by the Judy and Fred Wilpon Family Foundation and Bloomberg Philanthropies, the Kessler Scholars Program is a comprehensive, cohort-based program designed to support first-generation, low-income college students through a combination of financial aid and robust, evidence-informed support programming, with the goal of advancing outcomes and closing equity gaps for participants.

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