

Hiker

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Project: Key Messaging 2020 - HNWI V3

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KEY MESSAGING: HIGH-NET-WORTH INDIVIDUALS

Busy, successful, and ambitious community and business leaders, they want to make a difference in their city, and may be impatient with seeing the kind of high-impact, quality results they demand in their own lives and businesses. Our messaging should allow these individuals to connect deeply and personally with the mission of SCS Noonan Scholars and see it as the best return on investment for making an impact at the local level. HNWI's often want one-on-one access and connection with scholars, founders, and organization leaders. Engaging with our messaging and assets should convince them that SCS Noonan Scholars is an authentic community-building platform and powerful and rewarding way to give back.

Our nation is failing high-achieving low-income students of color.

The brightest, most talented students of color from low-income families don't succeed in college like their higher-income peers. They have top GPAs. Some of the highest test scores in the nation. Yet when they get to college, even these exceptional high-achievers hit walls. 50% never graduate. The reason is opportunity. Stuck in high schools that are unequipped to prepare them for the rigorous academics of top universities, our students just don't get the same support, attention, and preparation as their opportunity-rich peers. That's why we invest six years preparing our scholars for success, demystifying the college admission process, reinforcing academics, and exposing the unwritten rules and norms of the corporate world to which they've had limited exposure. We provide over 200 hours of college-level instruction, mentoring, hard and soft skills development, one-on-one career coaching, and the professional network building that opens doors. All so each scholar gets the lift off they need to thrive -- in college, career, and reaching their own life goals.

Questions this answers:

What's the problem you're trying to solve?

Aren't high-achieving students succeeding no matter what?

Why are these high-achievers struggling?

How can I tell this audience a more personal, emotional story in describing the program?

How is your program making a difference? Why does it work?

Our program dramatically changes the outcomes for high-achieving, low-income students of color.

The students we recruit aren't just smart, they're exceptional, earning the highest scores and GPAs in high schools around the country. Yet when we look at the career and educational outcomes for these incredible young people, we see how economic and other systemic challenges hold them back. Less than 50% will go to college. Fewer than half of those will apply to a top college. And when high-achieving students of color graduate -- they aren't thriving in their careers in the ways they should expect given their talents and education. In fact, only about 5% will ever earn a six-figure income. But, by providing our scholars with the same key opportunities during high school, college, and career as their more privileged peers -- we're changing this narrative. And it's working. 98% of our scholars graduate. One third attend an Ivy league school. 80% are in a Top 50 school. 75% graduate with a B average or better. And if they enter school hoping to major in STEM, a full 65% graduate with a STEM degree -- 15% more than their privileged peers. In fact, our scholars are not only outperforming students with similar backgrounds, they're significantly outperforming their more privileged peers at the same elite schools.

Questions this answers:

What's the data? How do you know it works?

Aren't high-achieving students already doing OK?

What are the outcomes for these high-achieving students without your program?

How can I tell this audience a data/outcome story and describe the program?

What's the problem you're trying to solve? And what are you doing about it?

Our serious, rigorous approach to data allows us to innovate faster and deliver exactly what our scholars need to thrive.

We invest six years of support across the college application process, college success, and career development at a breadth and depth that is unmatched by any other organization. Our approach goes deep at every level, providing exactly what's needed for success in what's next -- college and career. And it's not by chance. It comes from having a serious and rigorous approach to data. And by demanding proven, repeatable outcomes for our scholars. This obsessive focus on data is what sets us apart. It's why we know better than to be content with student graduation rates -- even though our scholar graduation rates have hit an impressive 98%. We never stop looking at ways to improve, analyzing the data from thousands of scholars to determine exactly what students need to thrive in college and their careers. And we develop and refine programs to meet those precise findings. That's why our Summer Academies are taught by professors from Amherst, MIT, USC, and other elite colleges. It's why these six-week academic boot camps target high-level math, writing, and critical thinking. And it's why we combine intense academic preparation with things like career counseling, soft skills, network building, and resume writing through high-touch coaching and support. It's never just about getting a job. It's about thriving in that job.

Questions this answers:

What makes you different?

How do you know it works?

How do you determine what to include in your program?

What do you do for the scholars? What do they get?

If you're just looking at graduation rates, you're part of the problem.

Too many universities and “college success” programs celebrate graduation rates. We have that. Over 98%. But we learned years ago that -- despite high graduation rates -- our high-achieving students of color weren't persisting in their pursuit of a challenging course load in college. They weren't graduating in a field they loved. And they weren't finding career success. The reason? The educational system was failing them. They weren't being prepared in high school for the academic rigor. Nor were they given the same opportunities as their more privileged peers. Now, because we took an honest look at the data, we design our programs for, and measure against, whether a scholar is prepared to “thrive” in their career. That means we look at acceptance at the best-fit top schools, GPAs, persistence in a chosen major no matter how rigorous, graduation rates, and career fulfillment. And we know this attention to these details yields success. Our work is cultivating minds who are making an important contribution to society. The number of doctors, lawyers, engineers, business consultants, computer scientists and PhDs are all substantially higher than similar students who are not SCS Noonan Scholars.

Questions this answers:

I already give to an organization that has great graduation rates. Isn't that enough?

What are your results?

What's the most important metric you see?

Why does your program work?

Target your dollars to bring real change to your community.

It's great to support causes you believe in. But if you're just funding scholarships, college access programs, or mentoring programs -- you're probably not having the impact you intend. The best low-income students of color usually don't need to pay to go to the best colleges. If we want lasting, impactful change, the question we have to ask is whether students are thriving? Are they sticking to their dreams? Or are they having to settle for less than their full potential? Are they dropping a challenging major that they love in order to maintain grades or keep a scholarship? Because when the best and brightest of the next generation have to settle for less, we all lose. When the sharpest, most talented minds from diverse, low-income families in your community have to settle for less than what they can achieve -- your community loses. If you want to see more diversity in your civic institutions, in the professional and academic communities, and in the corporate offices of your area, SCS Noonan is a great way to ensure that happens. Our data-driven program targets exactly the academic and socio-emotional support high-achieving students of color need to thrive in the top colleges in America and graduate prepared to contribute to a more vibrant economy in their communities. You can help grow this essential talent pipeline for ensuring resilience and innovation in your area by targeting funding for scholars from your community. Along the way, you'll have the opportunity to meet some of these phenomenal individuals, an experience that's sure to transform your sense of why your investment is so crucial.

Questions this answers:

I already give to scholarship programs. Why should I give to you?

But I want to make a difference in my area. Can your program help do that?

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Our program delivers a higher ROI for your financial investment.

Our organization provides an amazing return on investment. Not only does our high-touch, depth of programming yield field-leading outcomes, it's highly efficient in doing so. A recent study found that to get a student into an elite college, the average wealthy family will spend \$1.3 million on education, tutors, coaching, cultural experiences, and other extracurriculars during the student's school years. The average middle class family will spend \$500,000 for those same privileges. But over a comprehensive, 6-year engagement, our program costs less than \$40,000 per scholar. We achieve this by looking at the data, making an analysis, and targeting our investments into the most impactful programming possible. That's why a significant portion of our investment is in academic success. It's also why we offer two intensive summer academies and push STEM persistence. By focusing our investment -- in time and money -- on key inflection points, we are able to close the opportunity gap between our scholars and their more privileged peers. And we know it works. Our scholars outperform their higher-income peers at the same Top 100 colleges. They are 10% more likely to graduate and 15% more likely to persist in STEM. Post grad, 28% go on to earn advanced degrees, and our alumni are being hired at the most innovative and successful companies in finance, technology, engineering, media, and more.

Questions this answers:

What is your ROI with your scholars? Do you measure that?

How do you say your program is efficient? How so?

Our exceptional alumni will bring high-impact, positive change to America.

When we look at our competitors -- and many are doing wonderful work -- we see immediately that the depth and quality of our programming is far beyond anyone else. Our high-touch process is creating better outcomes. Our scholars are thriving. And our alumni are moving into civic, professional, and corporate leadership roles across the country. As a result, we are delivering a bigger impact. With just over 100 scholars a year in our program and a limited marketing budget, we know our work is cut out for us. Fortunately, our organization is ambitious as it is efficient. Over the next 3 years our Strategic Plan calls for us to triple the number of students we serve and boost our investment in research, marketing, and critical outreach to college, civic, and corporate partners. By 2023, we'll have 1200 scholars moving through college at any given time. Add to that our more than two thousand alumni, and we soon begin to see numbers that put us into the conversations where national-level impact becomes possible. Will major donors or the National Institute of Science be interested in a program that produces 70% STEM majors with a 3.3 average GPA from the finest institutions in the country? We think so. And as we grow and replicate our success in new markets, we will build critical relationships faster and deeper, working with colleges, corporate partners, and other nonprofits to drive positive change, even as they help reinforce, strengthen, and improve elements of our own program.

Questions this answers:

What problem are you solving, and how can you be big enough to solve it?

I'm looking for a big impact -- can your program deliver that?

ELEVATOR PITCH

[Challenge]

Imagine the top performing student in a high school. She's ambitious. She's got the best GPA, and among the highest test scores in the nation. And yet, if she's from a low income family she has less than a 50% chance of ever graduating from college. And that number is even lower if she's a student of color. Unless we make a change, we'll continue to lose generations of the smartest, most innovative leaders of color that our country desperately needs.

[Solution]

That's why we recruit the most ambitious, high-achieving students of color from low-income families, and make absolutely sure they get the same opportunities, support, and preparation as their more privileged peers. Our rigorous, six-year program, prepares these exceptional individuals for success. At top colleges. In their careers. And wherever their life goals take them. We provide 210 hours of intensive college-level instruction, one-to-one counseling and mentoring, soft skills development, and a professional network that leads to internships and top-tier jobs. The depth and breadth of our engagement is unmatched.

[Outcomes/CTA]

And it works. Over 90% of our scholars attend a Top 100 college and 98% graduate. Not only do our scholars outperform students with similar backgrounds, but they outperform their higher income peers at these same elite schools. The data is clear. Our personalized, high-touch model works. But it requires dedicated partners willing to step up and support us through mentoring, guidance, and financial support.