

ANNUAL REPORT 2023

How we did



RESULTS SNAPSHOT

OUR CLUBS

Bridgewater College

Dubuque Senior High

Donnellon High School

Hempstead High School

La Follette High School

Lake Anna Vista High School

WRAP UP

RESULTS

20 years of SSF

This year, we celebrate the 20th anniversary of the Student Support Foundation (SSF). To say the world was different in 2003 would be an understatement.

In 2003, Apple launched its iTunes Music Store and the first iPhone was still four years away. Most people paid about 15 cents to send a text message. MySpace had just been invented and there was no such thing as Facebook.

Today, there is virtual reality, new artificial intelligence tools like ChatGPT, and countless social media options, including TikTok, Instagram and Snapchat. We use these tools—and so many others—with the intention of influencing good behavior and sharing positive news.

While SSF has grown and adapted to the changing world, our core tenets and mission remain the same: **to inspire and empower the next generation of great American philanthropists.** Over two decades and \$890,434 granted to SSF chapters by the Morgridge Family Foundation to date, we have seen students accomplish more than we ever imagined. We are grateful for each and every student, and every chapter sponsor, for their time, ideas and dedication.

It hasn't always been easy. From the economic recession of 2008 to the

It hasn't always been easy. From the economic recession of 2008 to the COVID-19 pandemic, we have witnessed students support their peers and communities during difficult times. Students have consistently demonstrated resilience and empathy, and given us hope for a bright future.

We are honored to shepherd the next generation of philanthropists and to share the joy of giving with new classes of students. To all SSF members past, present and future: Thank you for joining us on this journey.



With gratitude,
Carrie and John Morgridge



\$890,434

directly invested into SSF communities
since 2003

through clubs across



7
states

impacting



120,724

people

by

1

empowered community

17

SCHOOLS, AT THE HIGH SCHOOL AND COLLEGE LEVEL, WITH 186 TOTAL MEMBERS. HERE'S WHAT SOME STUDENTS SAID THEY LEARNED THIS YEAR:

"It doesn't take millions of dollars to make a difference."

- ◉ **"Philanthropy doesn't need to be exclusive to adults, anyone can get involved."**
- ◉ **"There are people right in my own community that need assistance."**

"It's sometimes hard to accept that you can't help everyone but that doesn't mean that what you are doing is any less important."

- ◉ **"I've learned what it means to be a person capable of giving without receiving."**
- ◉ **"It only takes one small action to make a direct positive impact."**



Bridgewater College

Bridgewater, VA

Vice President
Hannah M.

Founded
2015

The Bridgewater College SSF chapter made 57 total grants this year—more than most chapters. Their hard work was noticed by the students, professors and community members directly impacted by their grants and by the Bridgewater College administration.

After watching a presentation about SSF's impact on campus, the president of Bridgewater College, David Bushman, pledged an additional \$1,000 on top of his previous \$4,000 grant.



BRIDGEWATER STATE UNIVERSITY

The Office of Financial Aid gifted the chapter 10 gift cards—worth \$5,000 in total—to be redeemed at Akademos, the college’s online bookstore, and given to students in need.



The SSF chapter continued to push boundaries and expand their impact. They met with the director of freshman experience to learn how to better serve the needs of the incoming class of students and to more quickly inform them about the resources and opportunities that SSF offers. In the spring, they volunteered at a club and organization fair for admitted students. They engaged with potential new members and encouraged the visiting students to commit.

As the chapter grows and expands, they hope to one day have an official space on campus. In the meantime, they continue to go above and beyond in serving their community.



SSF taught me that philanthropy can be more than just financial donations to others, it can be a state of mind.

- Bridgewater SSF student



Dubuque Senior High

Dubuque, IA

President
Maggie S.

Founded
2019



With 17 members, Dubuque High School has one of the largest SSF chapters, second only to its sister school, Hempstead High School. Dubuque SSF members supported their peers, teachers and community through numerous events and grants throughout the year but especially through the school’s “Giving Room.”

The Giving Room at Dubuque High School precedes the SSF chapter but SSF took over its management in the 2021-2022 school year. The Giving Room provides students access to clothing, food, hygiene products, school supplies and more, free of charge. When SSF took it over, members remodeled and organized the room and ensured it contained all the items students might need. The chapter manages both donated items and a designated fund to restock. This school year, the chapter created a QR code that students could use to list what they needed and then the club would—to the best of its ability—purchase those items and deliver them to the counseling office where students could



anonymously pick them up.

This year, the Dubuque High School class of 1980 pledged to donate \$500 to the Giving Room if the SSF chapter could raise that sum as well. SSF ran a Facebook campaign and shared its mission and stories with family and friends. The campaign was a success, raising a total of \$830.

In addition to managing the Giving Room, the Dubuque SSF chapter began providing free menstruation products in school bathrooms that were either donated or purchased through the Giving Room fund. Each SSF member signed up for a two-week shift to ensure bathrooms were properly stocked. On several occasions, members reported hearing from their peers how appreciative they were to have the items available for free.



Philanthropy does not have to mean giving a million-dollar donation to an organization or signing a petition. Through SSF, I've learned that philanthropy is about helping those with what you are able to give.

- Dubuque Senior SSF student



Dunnellon High School

Dunnellon, FL

President
Hunter M.

Founded
2015



Dunnellon High School is located in a small, rural community where 71 percent of students receive free or reduced-cost lunch. Dunnellon's SSF chapter has learned that even the smallest of actions can make a big difference. Members have adapted their giving and fundraising activities to best serve their community's needs.

The majority of their funding went toward helping Dunnellon students and teachers afford necessities like new textbooks and opportunities like traveling to state competitions for clubs and sports teams. But their impact goes far beyond those grants. The Dunnellon SSF chapter brings the school together every Wednesday through its hugely successful donut fundraiser.

"Our chapter hosts 'Donut Wednesday' every week, where we sell donuts to students, teachers and anyone looking to support our chapter," an SSF member explained. "My favorite memory this year is the combination of all of these mornings, having fun as a group and coming together to raise money to help our school. We always make each other laugh and have a great time selling sweet treats to all."

The club purchases the donuts from a local donut shop for \$10.25/dozen, along with all the necessary equipment like gloves, napkins and bags. Members sell the donuts at an affordable cost—\$2 each, meaning they make a bit more than \$1 per donut. It's clear Donut Wednesdays are special to Dunnellon teachers and students alike. Teachers have the option to purchase tickets to gift donuts to students, which helps build excitement. The school's art teacher and her 3D art class created a 3D-printed donut to hang in the school's Main



Commons to celebrate Donut Days.

The fundraiser is a great representation of the Dunnellon SSF chapter's biggest strength: Members truly understand their school community and its needs, and they rise to meet them through creative solutions and effective grantmaking.



The greatest experience I can take from SSF is that everyone needs a little help sometimes, but it can be hard to ask for it.

- Dunnellon SSF student



Hempstead High School

Dubuque, IA

Co-President

Tanner D.

Co-President

Justin P.

Founded

2019



With 30 members, Hempstead High School had the largest SSF chapter in 2022-2023. In fact, it was almost double the size of the next largest chapter, which is located at its sister school, Dubuque High School. Members credited their new, very active, teacher-sponsor with being a big help in recruiting.

The Hempstead SSF chapter members put their numbers and resources to good use this year. They didn't shy away from big issues, instead they used their funds to address concerns like mental health, loneliness and food insecurity.

Perhaps their most impactful grant funded the "Brain Health Retreat Rooms" on Hempstead's campus. The rooms are open to all high school students and provide dedicated space and counseling to help students process difficult emotions during the school day. First implemented last school year, the rooms already proved effective: 80.5 percent of students reported feeling worried, anxious or overwhelmed when entering the rooms and, after engaging with the services, 84 percent reported feeling content, focused and energetic.



The chapter's volunteer projects were just as meaningful. For Thanksgiving, the Hempstead SSF chapter hosted a food drive to help feed their peers who are food insecure. Before winter break, the chapter wrote holiday cards to elderly residents at Sunnycrest Manor, a local nursing home, to cheer up residents who may not have family to visit and who may struggle with loneliness during the holidays. The chapter received very positive feedback from the nursing home staff on behalf of the residents.



We are very appreciative to be part of SSF. The skills we are learning are valuable and the funding is truly making a difference in our school community.

- Hempstead SSF chapter



La Follette High School

Madison, WI

President
Isabella T.

Founded
2008

La Follette High School's SSF chapter spent this year growing the club's membership and establishing three new areas of funding: supporting the La Follette community, supporting student learning and supporting equity. It found that these funding areas clearly showed students, teachers and staff that they have "a group of people looking out for them when they need help."

The chapter's grants and activities this year included supporting student learning by bringing a local professional to campus to teach a semester-long workshop on playwriting. It purchased microphones and headphones to help students learn about audio engineering. The chapter supported equity by helping to hire a part-time staff member to support language learners and increasing access to birth control and menstruation products in the school bathrooms. It supported the La Follette community by purchasing winter clothing for students whose families struggle financially.



Lake Buena Vista High School

Orlando, FL

President
Samantha L.

Founded
2021

This was Lake Buena Vista High School's second year with an SSF chapter and the school itself is brand new. The chapter intentionally recruited students representing diverse genders, races and socioeconomic backgrounds. Together, members discovered that their peers face more hardships than they imagined. Thanks to SSF, there was a system in place to help.

When the SSF chapter learned that the school has a population of about 40 homeless students, it ran a food drive to start a food pantry. Members were able to help a number of students feed themselves and their families in the first year and are excited to keep making a difference as they continue this project into the next school year.

Because many students at Lake Buena Vista High School will be the first in their family to attend college, the chapter made another particularly memorable grant to the school's college and career specialist. SSF members felt strongly about providing these students with the tools and advice they need but might not have access to at home. Their grant to the



college and career specialist will be impactful not only for future first-generation college students, but every student at the school.



The Lake Buena Vista SSF chapter held an impressive fundraiser this year. Using the online donation platform [Vertical Raise](#), members launched coordinated email, text and social media campaigns to raise a total of \$752.



Madison West High School

Madison, WI

Co-President
Erosya M.

Co-President
Joel C.

Founded
2007



Madison West High School's SSF chapter provided comprehensive support for its school community in 2022-2023. As a long-standing SSF chapter, members built on their past successes while trying new things and discovering new ways to help.

They provided funding to help the school's Sifting and Winnowing Club organize a debate for local school board members and mayoral candidates. Madison West High School was the only high school in the area to hold such an event, allowing students to hear about the candidates before the election and proving that student voices matter in the democratic process.

The chapter focused its volunteer project on conservation, a longtime priority, by helping with the school's Earth Day pickup. The event was particularly meaningful to the community because the school and its surroundings collect trash when students eat lunch outside. In May, SSF helped to weed, mulch and clean up a local community garden called Prospect Gardens. Located on the local bike path, the garden acts as an important harbor for biodiversity.

The Madison West SSF chapter hosted several concession sales. The chapter believes the sales were so successful because they respond to the needs of its community. An event on one of the coldest days of the year provided warmth through hot chocolate and hot food items. Through three concession sales, the chapter raised over \$500.



Philanthropy can make a big difference to a community. Public schools especially tend to be low on funds and SSF has allowed our school to become stronger and more equal.

- Madison West SSF student



Mesa Community College

Mesa, Arizona

President
Rosalee M.

Founded
2020

Mesa Community College's SSF chapter members play a critical role in their school community by supporting their peers during their worst emergencies. So many of their grants this school year were instrumental in allowing students to continue their studies. For example, one student was experiencing homelessness after the sudden death of her mother. She applied for, and was awarded, an SSF grant to help her focus on her classes and academic success.

In the future, the SSF chapter members hope to do even more to help their peers through crises. They are working on plans to provide more follow-up with past grantees who received emergency funding, including connecting them to wraparound services or additional support.



The experience I will take with me after graduation is knowing I can help others and be kind no matter where I go.



- Mesa SSF student



Northeast Iowa Community College - Calmar

Calmar, IA

President
William K.

Founded
2020

This story about one student's precarious and unexpected economic misfortune sums up 2022-2023 for the SSF chapter at Northeast Iowa Community College's Calmar campus.

The chapter received an application from a student who asked for help with several school-related and non-school-related expenses, including purchasing a new computer. She was facing a particularly difficult situation because her dad had recently died in a car accident and he had been helping with her expenses. She was not only coping with the loss of her father but with a drastically different financial

situation.

To the SSF members, it was a reminder that people can be thrown into unexpected situations. This became the chapter's guiding light throughout the year: to serve as a lifeline for students who found themselves in difficult, unexpected situations that threatened their ability to continue in school.

The Calmar SSF members helped students cover everything from unexpected car repairs to rent payments, tuition and groceries. Thanks to the chapter's assistance, many of their grants helped students successfully navigate the challenges they faced. For example, they helped a mom with two kids at home to pay her mortgage so she could finish her last semester of nursing school. With SSF's help, she successfully graduated.



Northeast Iowa Community College - Dubuque/Peosta

Peosta, IA

President
Grace P.

Founded
2020

Like their sister chapter on the Calmar campus, SSF on Northeast Iowa Community College's Peosta campus served as a lifeline for students facing difficult, unanticipated expenses. The chapter provided assistance with rent and living expenses, childcare costs, textbook purchases, new clothes for interviews and school club membership fees. SSF members said their main goal was making sure these expenses didn't get in the way of student success.

Two particularly memorable grants from this year illustrate the ups and downs that SSF, and the entire student population, faced.

The chapter helped a single mom, who needed to complete 240 hours of practicum to stay in school, graduate and pay her bills. She successfully stayed in school. It helped another student who needed rent assistance because her family faced eviction. Unfortunately, despite receiving an SSF grant, the student ultimately became too overwhelmed by her situation and dropped out of school. Through this experience, SSF members learned that sometimes, despite their best efforts, systemic pressures may be so great that a one-time grant cannot fully solve an individual's problems.

Members of this SSF chapter volunteered their time with the school's Advancement Office to write thank-you notes to donors to the student aid fund. The fund provides similar support as SSF by assisting students with external or unknown expenses. The chapter enjoyed meeting faculty and staff and witnessing firsthand "how many people are invested in seeing students succeed."



SSF has taught me that I should not be scared to put myself out there when it comes to lending a helping hand.



- Dubuque/Peosta SSF student



Northglenn High School

Northglenn, CO

President
Jeff D.

Founded
2012

Northglenn High School's SSF chapter focused its giving this year on educational opportunities for fellow students. The chapter grants reflected its commitment to supporting academics and open pathways to success.

Northglenn High School has a diverse student population and the SSF chapter was proud to report that its members are a reflection of that diversity. This helped members feel confident when they reviewed grant requests because they could relate firsthand to their peers. They felt confident that all voices were being heard in the decision-making process.

In one memorable grant, the chapter partially funded the cost for members of the school's Family, Career and Community Leaders of America (FCCLA) club to attend the state conference. FCCLA helps students and teachers address a wide variety of youth concerns, including parenting, family relationships, substance abuse, peer pressure, sustainability, nutrition and fitness, teen violence and career preparation. The Northglenn FCCLA club received several awards at the state conference, including being recognized as one of the top programs in Colorado. Without SSF, none of the FCCLA club members would have been able to afford the conference fees.



Olympia High School

Orlando, FL

President
Ava B.

Founding Club, Founded
2003



The Olympia High School SSF chapter has a clear vision and mission for its chapter. As members described, "Olympia High School has thousands of students with unique interests. As a club, we offer support to those who don't have the means to pursue their passions."

The chapter achieves this mission by helping clubs, sports teams and individual students with any fees they may not be able to afford, such as funding the school orchestra so they could travel to and perform at a local music festival.

A particularly special grant this year went to the Olympia women's softball team. In recent years, the team had averaged three wins per season, but this year the team had 15 wins and



was headed to the playoffs. The coach told SSF that new uniforms would lead to higher morale heading into the playoffs. After receiving the grant and the new uniforms, the coach reported that they "provided team unity and high spirits among the girls." The team made it to the playoffs, which hasn't happened in a long time, and built a strong culture as a tight-knit team.



Plymouth State University

Plymouth, NH

President
Alyssa G.

Founded
2004



Since its founding in 2004, Plymouth State University's SSF chapter has proven to be a vital resource for students on campus. The chapter's impact was acknowledged this year when the university's Class of 2023 selected SSF as the philanthropic cause of the year. Members of the class as well as family, friends and alumni were encouraged to donate to the Senior Class Gift Fund, which raised more than \$2,000.



SSF partnered with the Greek Alumni's "Greeks Give Back" homecoming initiative, which raised more than \$1,300 for the SSF-managed campus food pantry. In total, the chapter raised more than \$12,000 this year and distributed an impressive \$10,175. SSF members put those funds to good use and lived up to their positive reputation by further expanding their impact.



At the beginning of the year, the chapter gave 17 classroom presentations to advertise the services SSF provides and how students can join. After giving presentations across seven different majors and including freshmen to upperclassmen, a student who was struggling with a recent bipolar disorder diagnosis requested a grant and cited the presentations for introducing him to SSF.

This was particularly special to SSF members because it showed that their efforts to reach new students paid off and because it was the first of many grants in 2022-2023 in which a student opened up about their personal life and mental health struggles.

As the chapter described, "Grants have mentioned mental health conditions and struggles more than ever before. We believe that there is a societal expectation that we are back to 'normal' post-COVID, when in reality people are still struggling mentally, socially and financially."

In response to the heightened need, the chapter awarded 54 emergency financial grants totaling over \$7,000 this year. An additional 85 students signed up for access to the food pantry.

Members continue to brainstorm about how they can grow and share more resources with their peers. In the 2022-2023 school year, they launched meal kits and a resource board that are both offered through the food pantry. The meal kits include a recipe card and all food items needed to make a nutritious and affordable meal, while the resource board connects students to local and state resources that can provide additional assistance.



The seriousness of the situations we encountered reminded us of the importance of our work and how we are trusted by our peers with some of their most personal struggles.

- Plymouth SSF chapter



Rollins College

Winter Park, FL

Co-President
Jordan M.

Co-President
Kayla P.

Founded
2012



Rollins College is a liberal arts institution that prides itself on "developing students into global citizens and responsible leaders who are well equipped to live meaningful lives and lead productive careers." By supporting academic, personal and community needs, the Rollins SSF chapter strives to offer students the resources they need to get the most out of their Rollins experience.

Since the COVID-19 pandemic, food insecurity has increased on campus and about 96 percent of Rollins students are on some form of financial aid. SSF plays a central role in supporting the Rollins community through grantmaking and facilitating the school food pantry. SSF supports graduate and nontraditional students on campus and hopes to expand that support even further in the future.



This year, the chapter reported several particularly memorable grants. Rollins College is located in Winter Park, Fla., and, in the fall, the area experienced several major hurricanes and storms. In response to increased need from students in the aftermath of the storms, the SSF chapter partnered with the school's Student and Family Care Team to provide additional support beyond what SSF can supply.

One SSF grant went to a first-generation college student who was struggling to balance their academics while financially supporting their family after their home was damaged in a hurricane. SSF not only provided a grant but connected them to additional resources to alleviate more of their financial burden.



Stetson University

DeLand, FL

President
Neehal A.

Founded
2017



This year, Stetson University's SSF chapter updated its three areas of funding to better reflect its community's needs. Members found, through their growing philanthropic experience, that personal, professional and educational needs are the most pressing issues facing students on their campus. By funding course materials to medical bills to graduate school applications, they decided they could best support student's overall success and well-being.



One grant stood out to SSF members; it was given to a senior international student who fled from a war in their home country and requested help to cover graduate school application fees. The student hoped to continue their dream of pursuing higher education in the United States and SSF was proud to help.

In the spring, the chapter learned that the student was accepted into their top-choice program. It was a reminder of the impact that SSF can have on students' lives. As the chapter explained, "These encouraging stories continue to motivate us and shape our philanthropic goals."



For their volunteer project, the Stetson SSF chapter did a community cleanup of DeLand, Fla., where Stetson's campus is located. SSF partnered with other student groups for the cleanup, held in the aftermath of Hurricane Ian and tropical storm Nicole, which hit the area particularly hard. The storms knocked down trees and infrastructure and brought a lot of trash to the area.

Together, the students cleaned up over 100 pounds of trash from downtown DeLand's public spaces, including parks, parking lots and surrounding forests, bettering Stetson's





University of Central Florida

Orlando, FL

President
Isabeau T.

Founded
2016



The University of Central Florida SSF chapter supports a community of more than 72,000 students, plus professors and community members—the largest population of all SSF chapters. Fittingly, the chapter made 86 grants this year, which was the highest number of any chapter.



Overall, the chapter's grants supported students with expenses outside of school. In the wake of rising inflation last year, the chapter saw increased requests for funds to purchase groceries, pay rent and cover medical expenses. As the chapter noted, all of these areas are critical not only to students' education, but to their survival. The chapter focused on the university's large population of international students, who do not qualify for financial aid or food assistance and cannot work outside of the university.



This thank-you letter that the chapter received perfectly showcases the impact that these grants had on students.

"The \$200 worth of aid I received from SSF provided tremendous financial and mental relief. It helped me cover expenses that are crucial for me to get to and from school. I was also able to cover three health insurance payments. I'm a first-generation, low-income student with parents who have an expected family contribution of zero and with an elderly father with severe medical conditions—it's hard on everyone financially. This grant provided us with money that will allow me to better focus on my classes and not let money have a negative or stressful impact on my semester."



We learned a lot from these grants and witnessed the dedication of the UCF community to continue their education, which was very inspiring.



Vel Phillips Memorial High School

Madison, Wis.

Co-President
Lavenia V.

Co-President
Elling L.



The Vel Phillips Memorial High School SSF chapter took a hiatus during the COVID-19 pandemic from 2019 through the end of last year, so the 2022–2023 school year marked its return to the program. Members worked extremely hard to start over and rebuild their club.

They used word of mouth and social media marketing among students, staff and the larger community to raise awareness of SSF and the opportunities it offers. They were able to recruit “a great group of students” and they hope to add even more next year.

One of their most successful ventures this year was a boba tea fundraiser. The chapter partnered with a local store, Le C’s Patisserie & Tea House, to sell boba tea at the school over the course of two days. They successfully navigated restrictions around food service on school property and set up a system to take pre-orders before lunch. SSF members drove to the partner store to pick up supplies twice each day. The fundraiser was a huge success, earning \$872 in total while raising awareness of SSF.



The chapter used its volunteer activity to gain even more visibility for SSF and build relationships with other clubs at the school. Members helped to decorate the school’s planetarium for an annual fundraiser called “Romance Under the Stars.” The fundraiser allows the planetarium to show low-cost and no-cost programs to other schools and groups in the community. The school’s planetarium director operates the facility by himself and had little time to prepare for the event.



SSF members reported that they had fun working with other student groups—there were about 20 volunteers in total—and they all enjoyed seeing the planetarium director’s excitement when he saw the space fully decorated.

SSF has taught me that donating to a good cause will stay with you forever.



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