



# Information BRIEF

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## Johnson Scholarship Program

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The Theodore and Vivian Johnson Scholarship Foundation has provided scholarship funds since the early 1990s that are specifically targeted to assist disadvantaged individuals, particularly people with disabilities, to obtain education and employment. The groups that are nationally supported by the Foundation include the economically disadvantaged, physically disabled, blind, deaf and hearing impaired students, as well as American Indians.

In the State University System (SUS), the Foundation provides scholarship funds for qualified students with disabilities who have an unmet financial need and wish to pursue and complete a baccalaureate degree. The scholarships are designed to be matched at the 50 percent rate by the State of Florida as funds are annually appropriated. Since 1996, the Johnson Foundation has been steadfast in support of the SUS Scholarship program through an annual allocation of scholarship funds, even in years when a legislative appropriation did not occur. The display below provides a 10 year summary of Foundation donations and state matching dollars.

<b>JOHNSON SCHOLARSHIP FOUNDATION</b>			
<b>Funding Support: 2006-2015</b>			
<b>YEAR</b>	<b>Scholarship Donation</b>	<b>State Match</b>	<b>Scholarship Total</b>
2006	\$450,000	\$225,000	\$675,000
2007	\$475,000	\$228,000	\$484,500
2008	\$500,000	\$9,500	\$509,500
2009	\$455,000	0	\$455,000
2010	\$500,000	0	\$500,000
2011	\$540,000	0	\$540,000
2012	\$550,000	0	\$550,000
2013	\$550,000	0	\$550,000
2014	\$450,000	0	\$450,000
2015	\$475,000	\$772,500	\$1,247,500
<b>10 Year TOTAL</b>	<b>\$4,945,000</b>	<b>\$1,235,000</b>	<b>\$5,961,500</b>

Annual surveys of scholarship recipients confirm that the Johnson Scholarship provides students who otherwise could not afford to attend a state university the opportunity to do so via the scholarship. In addition, scholarship support enables students with existing academic challenges

to focus on achieving a baccalaureate degree without also having to obtain outside employment to pay education bills. For many students, the Scholarship also reduces the prospects of leaving the university with excessive debt. Importantly, successful scholarship recipients tend to raise their ambitions and many choose to pursue a graduate or professional education.

### 2015 Update

#### Enrollment

- During fall 2015, 298 students in the State University System participated in the Johnson Scholarship Program, a 12 percent increase from the previous year. Participation ranged from 43 students at FAU to 5 students at NCF.
- Award recipients include 109 senior, 75 junior, 50 sophomore, and 64 freshman students.
- Since 2010, the number of scholarships awarded has increased 52 percent.
- The disability categories with the largest number of Johnson Scholars represented are Specific Learning Disabilities (SLD) and Attention Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD). This semester, 58 recipients identified the SLD category as their only disability. An additional 21 students identified a SLD and another disability.

#### Graduates

- Seventy-five Johnson Scholarship recipients graduated during spring/summer 2015, a 42% increase from the previous year. Graduates included 21 FAU, 17 FSU, and 11 FIU scholars.
- Twenty-eight percent of the scholarship graduates had more than one disability and one graduate had disabilities from four different categories. Nine students who are blind or who have low vision graduated, and four hard of hearing/deaf students graduated.
- Johnson scholarship students graduated with degrees in a wide variety of majors, including Nutrition, Food, and Exercise Science; Computer Science; Nursing; and Music. Eighteen students (24%) graduated in one of the Board of Governors recognized STEM (i.e., science, technology, engineering, mathematics) areas. An additional six students (8%) graduated in health majors.

#### Financial Update

During 2015, over 250 students with disabilities attending state universities applied for a Johnson Foundation Scholarship. These applicants were identified as having a total of \$3,877,590 in unmet need. For the 2015 year, the Johnson Scholarship Foundation donated \$475,000 to the Board of Governors Foundation for SUS Scholarships. The Florida Legislature and the Governor also recognized the financial burden for students with disabilities attending state universities and appropriated \$772,500 in state funding for 2015-16 to be used for Johnson Scholarship matching funds. The Board of Governors, the Johnson Scholarship Foundation, and university representatives agreed to disburse all of the 2015-16 allocation due to the significant unmet financial need of student applicants in the SUS.

For the 2016 legislative session, the Board of Governors is requesting \$1.2 million in state appropriations to be used to match Johnson Foundation scholarship funds for the 2016-17 year.