Organizational Profile

Founded in 1995 by a group of recent college graduates, Education First is a nonprofit organization that provides college scholarships to low income youth. The founders of Education First believe that higher education can assist in breaking generational poverty. To promote our mission, we provide both financial and mentoring support to students. Education First targets students who have overcome significant life challenges and are seldom recognized for their achievements.

11th – 2012 Education First Board of Directors

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Education First is dedicated to providing need-based college scholarships to exceptional seniors attending high schools with historically low percentages of college applicants.

By rewarding students with strength of character, a commitment to learning, and a vision for their future, our aim is to invest in individuals who will positively affect their communities.

Letter from the Executive Director

In 2010, Education First lowered its scholarship awards, something we have never had to do in our fifteen year history. Although we saw an increase in individual donations in five of the six cities we serve, corporate giving has not yet restored from pre-recession levels.

To counteract this trend, we held an increased number of regional fundraising events that not only proved successful, but also offered guests a new way to give. Look for creative events in your area and encourage others to attend. Our board and volunteers are currently working on new efforts to increase corporate relationships and we welcome your support.

During the Spring, our volunteers reviewed a record 268 applications from 18 schools and conducted over 75 interviews to select our remarkable scholars for 2010. A total of $78,000 (down from $90,000 in 2009) was granted to high school seniors that demonstrated immense character, educational excellence, and commitment to their community.

Providing competitive and impactful scholarships is only possible with the help of our amazing donors. Therefore, we thank all of you for your continued support of Education First.

Sincerely,

Nathan D. Smith, Executive Director

2011 – 2012 Participating High Schools

Seattle

Chief South

Seattle

Northern Light

Kitsap

San Francisco

Salinas

Northwest

Austin

Houston

Los Angeles

Guadalupe

Merced

Portland

Benson Polytechnic

Madison

Austwell

Seattle

Gardiner

Manuel Arts

Portland

Newberg

San Francisco

Mission

South

North

Austen

Excelle</ref>
"While I will be the first to graduate High School in my family, the road was not easy. With no father at home, I have held down a part-time job to help pay our bills because my disabled mother cannot work. While I realize college will be hard, I am determined to pursue an education. I want to become a veterinarian because my internship at Animal Critical Care & Emergency Services has confirmed my passion for working with animals."