

In Support of HF1409/SF1585

Comments from Teacher Candidates Who Are of Color or American Indian on the Difference Scholarships and Student Teaching Grants Would Make in their Pursuit of Becoming a Teacher

First Name	Last Name	College/University	What difference would the scholarship and/or student teaching grant make for you as a college student, or what difference would this financial support have made for you?
Thomas	McLaurin	Augsburg College	<p>I am currently in the midst of a career change, and paying to return to school to earn my teaching license through loans and part-time subbing. Due to having a career previously, I only qualify for loans. A scholarship or grant would greatly reduce the financial burden on my family and when student teaching begins the financial blow of being a single income family could be reduced. I believe good teachers are a necessity to all communities. As I substitute teach throughout the Rochester Public School district, I am often the only person of color in a teacher role. There are paraprofessionals or interpreters or custodians. I hear young student's excitement to have birth a make and a "brown" person. The statements able excitement are only a portion of what madness me know I am needed. Although I probably will be paying on loans for the duration of my life, I feel this is my call, much like that of a pastor. Creating an opportunity to lighten the load for those who answer the call to teach benefits not only the person who answers the call, but also the schools they will teach at, the students the interact with, the communities the students are a part of and each person this students will interact with.</p>
Ebenezer	Flomo	Augsburg College	<p>A scholarship for me as a beginning teacher will help relieve my great student loan debt that I have accumulated over the years. It will also help supplement my income as a beginning teacher. When I arrived from Liberia in 2005, I decided to pursue my dream of teaching social studies, however, I encountered hurdles that most immigrants face: re-taking some college courses. This led to incurring more student debt and prolonged my opportunity to become licensed and providing more income for my family at home and back in Liberia.</p>
Marquell	Moorer	Augsburg College	<p>Help me be more confident that I can go into this profession.</p>
Karina	Olivar	Hamline University	<p>I am a first-generation college student. Aside from navigating college without the support from my parents, being that they did not go to college, I paying for tuition by myself too. This grant would be a blessing, since I have to work full time and study full time in order to make monthly payments. Representation, along with diverse backgrounds and mindsets, are needed in the field. However, the cost of higher education is holding back so many aspiring future educators of color. This grand would build a bridge for those student, like myself, that are currently struggling to become teacher, or want to become teachers.</p>

Najma	Abdille	Hamline University	In this state, especially the Twin Cities, the Somali community is growing every day. Somali students, parents, and my community are in desperate need of a Somali Educator. I was 10 years old when I came to America, and not once did my parent attend parent-teacher conference or knew of my behavior, success, etc. in school as she was not someone who understood the school systems in America. I choose to Education because of my past experience and how until today is still a problem with parents not understanding this system. It's about time for parents to be involved in their children's education, more importantly be aware of their children's success. I planned to take a break this upcoming Fall semester to work and save up money for tuition. However, this scholarship will help me tremendously with my Fall Semester tuition as taking a break will not be necessary.
Osob	Mohamed	Metropolitan State University	I am student who does not receive any help from their parents. I work full time as a paraprofessional and uber when I can. Also, a full time student who is trying so hard to finish in the summer. I cannot afford paying for summer classes or student teaching. I have been stressing out because I don't know if I will be eligible for any grants. If I received financial support, not only will I be extremely grateful but so glad that I am one step closer to becoming a teacher. I cannot wait I start making a difference. I am already making small difference at my job and it brings me joy. I do not want to wait another year.
Kia	Yang	Metropolitan State University	As a student, you plan for the next course that you have to take. Student teaching is an important step to becoming a teacher. As we prepare to student teach through all our coursework, we forget about the financial part. As I was getting ready to study teach, I realized that I will be without a source of income for three months. As an individual with a mortgage, I can't afford to be without a source of income. I decided to postpone my student teaching until I can save three months of income to be able to give my all to student teaching and not worry about my finances. A student teaching grant will allow me to get to become a teacher as soon as possible and serve our urban youths.
Gashan	Yusuf	Metropolitan State University	That could me, covering some outstanding loans and balances that I don't have at this time, because I am a dad have a seven kids, and paying mortgage. So that can helped me and support to accomplish my goals.
Antanaya	Ferguson	Minnesota State University-Mankato	This financial support would take the burden, of worrying about how I would pay for my schooling, off me. I could spend more of my time on my studies and student teaching instead of stressing and working multiple jobs to be able to afford college. This financial support would benefit me, and other students, for the greater good and would be greatly appreciated.
Qamar	Abdi	Normandale Community College	I want young boys and girls to know that they have a place in this world. I want them to see representation of themselves. I am a female, black, and Muslim. That alone sends a strong message. Finishing my degree with a scholarship will help me to reach that goal.

Selena	Hernandez	Normandale Community College	Many people would consider themselves busy. Being a student of color and first generation college student, I find that we have to work hard, sometimes harder, for what we want. My mother cannot afford to financially support me for school or life in general. She has other, more important, issues she deals with. Being Hispanic means that I have to be my mother's keeper. Being Hispanic means to occasionally financially support the family. Being Hispanic means I must help my brothers stay on track in school. This scholarship would help equip me to dedicate, much needed, extra time to my education. To reach my goal which is to become a special education teacher that empowers her students to embrace their differences and work toward constant and daily improvement.
Hodan	Ibrahim	Normandale Community College	I am first generation college student and the oldest of eight children, my parents can't help me to achieve my dream and goals so this scholarship would help make my goal possible.
Laki	Omar	Normandale Community College	This financial support would give what I need in order to fulfil what I've always wanted to be. I could take my role as a teacher and empower the multicultural youth. Kids need to be exposed to diversity through multiple ways and being a multicultural teacher would provide kids to the exposure they need. I want to be a teacher to better the view of diverse people in society.
Pearl	Cheng	St. Cloud State University/ Rosemount High School	I was extremely hard financially to do student teaching last year because as an International student, I was not allowed to work on a F1 student Visa but student teaching itself was unpaid full time internship plus thousands of dollars of tuition. My dad only earns \$580 in China. It's enough to live in China but he couldn't support me much so I had to ask my friends for money and house. It was very stressful last year. I was very depressed because student teaching itself was challenging. I was desperately looking for friends to help, looking for carpool people, looking for scholarships. If I could luckily have had scholarships or some stipend as a student teacher, I would have had more hope in my future career. I am one of very few International students who entered into education field simply because lots of people know Technology or Medical field has paid internships.
Jasmine	Bolden	St. Olaf College	This grant would have allowed for me to take on a fifth year of college for student teaching. Currently I have had multiple semesters where I have over loaded in order to fit in requirements for the licensure to graduate on time so I didn't have to worry about how much it would cost to take on a fifth year. I believe this would have helped me further engage in not only my teaching classes, but also other courses that I would have otherwise taken. This would also help relieve debt that I currently have and ease much worry that I have about the return that I will receive from my degree.
Hector	Garcia	University of Minnesota Morris	This grant would've made a huge difference. I am originally from El Paso, Texas. My parents are divorced and neither of them have money. My father graduated high school and my mother didn't even start high school. My siblings have not been able to achieve all of their academic dreams because they have had to help my mother. I was lucky that I was given the blessing to leave home. My family is very close and no one in my family has been away from El Paso, let alone Texas. They don't have money but they have been supportive. I have balanced night shift jobs and in fact, am doing that now. I know it is a huge struggle but my education is really important. I could have benefited from a grant like this, but it is too late. Now I hope that someone, in a similar situation, can receive this amazing grant.

Aarinola	Okelola	University of Minnesota-Twin Cities	<p>Growing up in a low socioeconomic community, I was fully aware of severe racial injustices. However, I was not aware of these injustices' deep roots in education, until I took a service learning course my Freshman year at the University of Minnesota. The coordinator of this organization shared the impacts of 3rd grade literacy skills on incarceration rates, also commonly known as the school-to-prison pipeline. In my analysis of this statistic, I understood that minority populations would be most negatively impacted. This in combination with my Elementary Education major course work, my teaching experiences abroad and domestically, have enhanced my desire to further research the truths of educational disparities. Upon completing my Bachelor's and Master's degree in Education and obtaining my license to teach, I hope to immediately pursue a doctoral degree in Education Policy and Leadership. Not only will these scholarships and grants be a means to fuel my education, but as an aspiring education policy maker, it will act as a pathway for me to alter barriers in education and ensure that disadvantaged communities will have the opportunity to meet and exceed the standards.</p>
Candace	Bunyan	University of Minnesota-Twin Cities	<p>I am a senior majoring in elementary education. I am the 2017-2018 award winner for the social justice pre-service teacher award. My vision as a future social justice elementary education teacher is to give students opportunities to see how to make positive change and how they can be leaders in creating change. Higher education is tied to the beginning of a student's first learning environment. In most cases that is elementary education, as an educator my role is to ensure my scholars get the passion to learn and further pursue higher education. The only way I am capable of doing that is to engage kids so that they will be motivated to learn. My philosophy of being and becoming a social justice teacher is listening to students' voices, inserting missing voices, and constructing agentic voices. As a child, leaving Liberia with my family to be in the United states due to the Civil War. My parents wanted me to be successful in my education, but it has been a challenge financially. I come from a low income and single parent household. Through studying and working hard, scholarships aided in paving the way for me attending college and bringing me closer to my purpose as an educator. I am honored to be a social justice educator recipient because currently I am recognizing oppressions in its multiple forms within the education system. The award would not only complete my dreams of going to grad school, it affirms my purpose as a social justice educator and gives me the tools to really make an impact.</p>
Vanessa	Goodthunder	University of Minnesota-Twin Cities	<p>Finances are no joke. Every cent counts and every cent is felt. For me personally, I was able to make it through my undergraduate degree all on scholarships, but then graduate school hit me. My mother was the first to graduate high school and I became the first to graduate college, so graduate school we were not prepared for. I did not know that we would not get some of the grants or scholarships I would receive before and I did not know how I would pay for it. The program I am in is so intense that we have been asked not to take a job on the side. I don't know how I am supposed to focus completely on my dream of becoming a Dakota language and Social Studies teacher while thinking about how I am going to pay for my schooling, books, travel, food, and other living expenses. This scholarship or teaching grants would really help me through-out my time becoming the teacher I have always wanted to be.</p>