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# Two Feathers Endowment Scholarship Program

*Program evaluation*

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March 2004

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# Summary

## *Background*

The Saint Paul Foundation contracted with the Wilder Research Center to conduct an evaluation of their Two Feathers Scholarship Program. The Two Feathers Scholarship Program is funded through the Two Feathers Endowment, which is one part of the Foundation's SpectrumTrust. SpectrumTrust is a unique partnership between communities of color and The Saint Paul Foundation. The Two Feathers Endowment provides a long-term capital base from which charitable grants are made each year to support the Native American community. The mission of the Two Feathers Endowment is to provide a culturally sensitive, community responsive philanthropic vehicle for addressing the needs within the Indian communities of Minnesota by supporting artistic, educational, social and cultural development activities. The Two Feathers Scholarship Program began in 1997 and since that time has awarded college scholarships to 55 American Indian college students to further their educations. The evaluation was conducted in January and February of 2004.

## *Brief program description*

The Two Feathers Endowment is a permanent endowment fund that provides a long-term capital base from which charitable grants are made each year to support the Native American community. Since 1997, the Two Feathers Fund has awarded college scholarships of three types: The Two Feathers Fund Indian Scholarships with a grant limit of \$1,000; the Two Feathers Fund Health Initiative Scholarships with a grant limit of \$5,000; and the Richard W. Tanner Scholarships for college juniors and seniors with a grant limit of \$500.

## *Highlights of survey results*

- 91 percent of the recipients say that getting information on how to apply for Two Feathers Scholarships was “somewhat easy” or “very easy.”
- Almost half (46%) got information about the scholarships from someone other than a school-based advisor or counselor.
- Most recipients (88%) say that the award process worked “very well” or “somewhat well” for them.
- Over half of the recipients have family members who attended college before them.

- Thirty-three recipients' family members hold a total of 35 college degrees.
- Recipients' major motivation to attend college is to serve their communities. The second most important reason is a desire to be a role model for their own children or other young relatives.
- 67 percent of scholarship recipients say they have completed a degree or professional certificate since receiving their Two Feathers award.
- 33 respondents earned 4 Associate's degrees, 12 Bachelor's degrees, 3 Master's degrees, one Ph.D., and one J.D.
- 42 percent of the recipients say they had to take a break sometime during their educational process. The most common reasons are financial needs, family needs, and an employment opportunity.
- Recipients list a number of barriers to completing their educations, the most common of which are poor support programs for Native students, cultural insensitivity by faculty, and the overall complexity of college and university systems.
- The aspects of college culture that make it easier for Native students to succeed include institutionalized student support, supportive and encouraging faculty, a diversity of people and perspectives, small classes or colleges, and flexible options for classes and resources.
- The aspects of college culture that make it harder for Native students to succeed include isolation and culture shock in a setting where there is a lack of understanding about Indian people, rigid and complicated bureaucratic systems, and academically challenging classes.
- Recipients most often say that they are interested in careers in education, health, policy, management or administration when they complete their education.
- Over half (64%) of the recipients say they are either still in school or starting again soon. Of those 21 individuals, 16 list a Master's degree, a professional degree, a medical degree, or a doctoral degree as their current educational goal.
- 70% of the recipients say that receiving a Two Feathers award helped them "a lot" to feel supported by a larger Indian community.
- 85 percent of the recipients say they are currently working, and 93 percent of those who are working say that the college education they have received so far helped them to get their current jobs.

- Looking five years in the future, the work the recipients say they hope to be doing is most often an extension of what they are currently doing, except at a higher level: social and human services, business and management, education, health, and law and government.
- Serving their community is still a top priority.
- Recipients say that the long-term outcomes of receiving a Two Feathers award are getting an education without so much financial stress or debt; having more opportunities and chances to achieve their goals; increasing their desire to help their communities; and linking them to people and systems that support Indian education.
- When asked how they might like to help the Two Feathers Scholarship Program, two-thirds (67%) say by being a mentor to a current recipient or by writing an article for the newsletter, and over half (55%) say by being a speaker at fund-raising events.



# Background

## *Brief program description*

The mission of the Two Feathers Endowment is to provide a culturally sensitive, community responsive philanthropic vehicle for addressing the needs within the Indian communities of Minnesota by supporting artistic, educational, social and cultural development activities. Involving Indian people in all phases of the philanthropic process is fundamental to the success of the Two Feathers Endowment.

The Two Feathers Endowment is a permanent endowment fund that provides a long-term capital base from which charitable grants are made each year to support the Native American community. Since 1996, the Two Feathers Endowment has awarded grants totaling about \$716,000 to 231 organizations in the Native American community. One effort by the Two Feathers Endowment is the awarding of college scholarships through the Two Feathers Fund.

Since 1997, the Two Feathers Fund has awarded college scholarships to 55 American Indian college students to further their educations. The scholarships are of three types: The Two Feathers Fund Indian Scholarships with a grant limit of \$1,000; the Two Feathers Fund Health Initiative Scholarships with a grant limit of \$5,000; and the Richard W. Tanner Scholarships for college juniors and seniors with a grant limit of \$500.

This evaluation had two purposes: To evaluate whether the scholarships have made a difference in the recipients' educational attainment; and to evaluate whether the scholarships helped those students to feel supported by the larger American Indian community.

## *Methodology*

A telephone survey questionnaire was developed with input from the Two Feathers Fund Advisory Committee. The survey included a combination of closed- and open-ended questions.

The closed-end questions addressed a number of issues: the overall accessibility of information about Two Feathers scholarships; the ease or difficulty of the application and disbursement processes; student motivation for attending college; student experiences while in college; current accomplishments and goals; whether the scholarship helped the student to complete school and feel supported by the American Indian community; and

the scholarship recipients' willingness help the Two Feathers Scholarship Program support other American Indian students.

The open-end questions asked about help received completing applications; family members who preceded the recipient to college; what type of work the recipient hopes to do when finished with his or her degree; some of the ways that being in a college/university culture made it easier or harder to reach educational goals; what type of work the recipient hoped to be doing five years from now; suggestions for improving the application and award processes; and the long-term impact of winning the award. These responses were word-processed and coded to identify themes in responses. In addition, the Two Feathers Scholarship Fund's contact information for each survey respondent was updated.

## *Sample*

The Two Feathers Fund provided a list of all scholarship recipients to date containing their contact information. Interviews were conducted by telephone with Two Feathers Indian Scholarship, Tanner Scholarship, and Health Initiative Scholarship recipients between mid-January and mid-February of 2004. Interviewers attempted telephone contact with every recipient on the list. Though there were 53 recipients on the list we received from the Two Feathers Scholarship Fund, 18 were unreachable due to changed or disconnected numbers; there was one refusal; and one could not be reached in over 30 call attempts. The final response rate among those with working phone numbers was 94.3 percent.

The following list shows the tribal and age distributions of the survey participants.

### **Ojibwe**

Anishinabe.  
Bois Forte Chippewa (4)  
Buffalo Point First Nation Ojibwe  
Chippewa/Ojibwe (2)  
Fond du Lac Band of Ojibwe (2)  
Lac Corte Oreille (LCO) Ojibwe  
Leech Lake Band of Ojibwe (4)  
Minnesota Chippewa Tribe (3)  
Red Cliff in Wisconsin Ojibwe (2)  
Red Lake Nation  
Turtle Mountain Chippewa  
White Earth and Red Lake Ojibwe.  
White Earth Chippewa (4)

### **Lakota/Sioux**

Standing Rock Sioux (2)  
Sisseton-Wahpeton

### **Other tribes**

Hidatsa-Arikara/Three Affiliated Tribes  
Ho-Chunk, Creek and Seminole  
Omaha

Age range: 18 to 59

Average age of respondents: 36

# Findings

## *The application process*

- Almost half (46%) of the scholarship recipients say that they got information about the Two Feathers Scholarships from someone other than a school-based advisor or counselor.
- Slightly over one-fourth (27%) say they learned about the scholarships from a friend or relative.
- About one in five (21%) say that a financial aid advisor at their college or university told them about Two Feathers scholarships.
- Fifteen percent of people responding to the survey say they found information about Two Feathers Scholarships from advertisements or postings on websites and flyers.

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### 1. How recipients learned about the Two Feathers Scholarships

	Number	Percent
A financial aid advisor at my college/university	7	21%
An American Indian student support center at my college/university	3	9%
A high school counselor	0	-
A friend or relative	9	27%
Someone or somewhere else	15	46%
Through the community/word of mouth (specify)	(3)	(9%)
Through an advertisement or posting	(5)	(15%)
Other advisor/resource book	(4)	(12%)
Person/organization connected to the Foundation	(2)	(6%)

\* Totals do not add to 100% because some people marked more than one source

We asked Two Feathers Scholarship recipients for their suggestions on how the scholarship could be advertised better, 24 percent of the respondents say they have no suggestions, that the process is fine as it is. These are some additional comments by those who were happy with the process:

■ You do it very well. I just didn't know I qualified until I sat down and read it.

People who know they are going to make it and they'll find a way to do it. Just what scholarship fund you are probably doing now. Reaching high school counselors and Indian centers.

I don't have any [suggestions] because it was very easy to access through my high school counselor and I did a lot of research for grants available.

The other three-quarters of the recipients have a number of suggestions for ways that more American Indian students could learn about the Two Feathers Scholarships. One particular focus area was high schools. These are a few of the comments about working with high schools:

Kids in high schools need to be informed by high school counselors. Get the information to the high school counselors about the scholarships.

I didn't really find out about it through my high school. That's where most kids learn about scholarships. I had to do quite a bit of research on my own to find out about it. I probably wouldn't have heard about it at all if my mom hadn't known about it.

I don't know how they reach high school seniors. How to make them aware of the scholarship. Be visible at career fairs. Be sure high school counselors get the information and have applications and information. Have a media promotion, "A mind is a terrible thing to waste" type.

Go to high schools. General assemblies or education days.

There were a number of other themes in the suggestions made:

- Advertise in tribal, local and American Indian community newspapers such as *The Circle*.
- Advertise via e-mail listserves and websites on the Internet. Link to popular websites such as AISES (American Indian Science and Engineering Society) and the University of Minnesota.
- Mail information to American Indian students already in university and college systems.
- Mail notices or hang posters at American Indian agencies and educational programs. Make brochures available people who head organizations in the communities, like John Poupart and Gabrielle Strong.
- Work more closely with college counselors and academic advisors, particularly at tribal and community colleges.

- Distribute information at American Indian community events and pow-wows.
- Make brochures available to college and universities' financial aid offices.
- Advertise the Two Feathers Scholarships through the Minnesota State Indian Scholarships office and through the Minnesota Reservation Scholarships offices. There are also a couple of national Indian scholarship offices.
- Advertise at the NIEA (National Indian Education Association) conference every year.

### *Ease or difficulty of steps in the application process*

- Thirty of the 33 people responding to the survey (91%) say that getting information on how to apply was “somewhat easy” or “very easy.”
- For 31 percent of the scholarship recipients, writing their essay or statement of purpose was “somewhat difficult.” Thirty percent of that group say “a lot” and half say “a little” of the difficulty was discomfort with writing about their own individual accomplishments.
- Of those who say it was difficult to get their letters of recommendation, over a third (38%) found it difficult because they were “a little” uncomfortable asking somebody to say good things about them.
- One recipient explained that it was somewhat difficult due to the letter-writers' busy schedules.

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## **2. How easy or difficult was it for you to....**

<b>n=33</b>	<b>Very easy</b>	<b>Somewhat easy</b>	<b>Somewhat difficult</b>	<b>Very difficult</b>
Get the information you needed about how to apply?	70%	21%	6%	3%
Complete the application?	49%	51%	-	-
Fill out the forms?	69%	31%	-	-
Write your essay/statement of purpose?	31%	38%	31%	-
Get the transcripts you needed?	64%	24%	6%	6%
Get your letters of recommendation?	44%	31%	22%	3%

When asked if they had any suggestions for improving the application process, 64 percent of the respondents said “no.” These are some of the comments made by those scholarship recipients:

It was simple, short and sweet.

It wasn't all that hard.

It is the basic steps for scholarships out there. I got a reminder to do my update, a summary of how this scholarship helped me to attain my education.

Of those who do have suggestions, the major themes are:

- Allow multiple awards for one student, such as allowing students to receive the scholarship for multiple years.
- Simplify the language and have us give references' names and phone numbers rather than have them write a letter.
- Get application information out early so that parents and students can be thinking about it all year not just at deadline time.
- Have the application forms available online.

### ***Help with the application***

- Only one-fourth (8) of the scholarship recipients (25%) had anyone help them with their application.
- When asked who helped them, slightly less than half say it was a family member and slightly more than half say it was staff in a college- or community-based student support program.

### ***Award process***

The majority (88%) of recipients feel that the award process worked “very well” or “somewhat well.” These are a few of the additional comments people made:

It was easy. My check was at the school right after I received my letter of acceptance. It went well.

It was pretty good. I liked that. Don't change it.

Actually, you came through faster than my other scholarships did and I am in Hawaii.

### 3. How did the payment process work for you?

	Number	Percent
Very well	23	70%
Somewhat well	6	18%
Somewhat poorly	3	9%
Very poorly	1	3%

Suggestions for improvement follow two main themes. The first is allowing easier access to funds. Here is one recipient's comment:

It's a good idea to distribute to the schools first and then, in the hands of the student a month later, if you need to get a car fixed or pay a babysitter. Students should be able to draw from their account sooner for essential to-go-to-school items.

The second theme is that funds should be paid directly to students. These are some comments:

If the money came to you, the recipient, then the recipient could use the award financially at home. It lessens a lot of burdens, instead of to the U.

[Two Feathers] paid out. It went against my financial aid. I won't have a way to get a job. I don't know about paying through a school. It didn't help me.

I think that the awards should reflect the student's status, because I was just going to finish in one semester and the grant applied to three semesters so I couldn't use it at all.

On the University side, the process is somewhat poor.

As a final suggestion, one student commented:

The Two Feathers Board should consider taking Two Feathers recipients onto the Board. It would give them good insight.

## *College attainment of recipients' families*

Given low college attendance rates for American Indians, a surprising 58 percent of the Two Feathers Scholarship recipients responding to this survey were not the first members of their families to attend college, and 30 percent of the recipients say that multiple members of their families have attended college.

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### **4. Family members of Two Feathers Scholarship recipients who have attended college**

	<b>Number</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Father	5	15%
Mother	8	24%
Sibling	12	36%
Aunt/uncle	2	6%
Grandmother	1	3%
Multiple family members	10	30%

Even more impressive, when asked if those family members had finished a degree, 84 percent of the respondents having college-going family members say “yes.” The following list shows the type and number of degrees and certificates Two Feathers Scholarship recipients say were earned by those family members.

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### **5. Degrees held by recipients' family members**

<b>Bachelor's degrees (23)</b>	<b>Master's degrees (7)</b>	<b>Other (5)</b>
Business (2)	Social work (4)	LLD (Law)
Psychology (2)	Psychology	PhD Medicinal Chemistry
Social work (2)	Educational Psychology	AA Carpentry
Education (13)	Education	AA Forestry (2)
Political Science (2)		
Ministry		
Biology		



## *Encouragement to attend college*

- The major source of encouragement to attend college listed by scholarship recipients is a desire to serve one’s community (94%).
- The second most-listed source of encouragement is a desire to be a role model for one’s children or other young relatives (91%).
- The two third-most-common sources of encouragement are the recipient’s own career goals and better economic opportunities (both 85%).

### **6. What encouraged you to go to college?**

	<b>Number</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Wanting to be a role model	30	91%
Own career goals	28	85%
Better economic opportunities	28	85%
Elder or community leader	15	46%
Parent or parents	14	42%
Someone or something else	13	39%
Another relative	10	30%
Brother or sister	8	24%
Friend or friends	8	24%
High school counselor	6	18%
Recipient’s children	5	15%
Partner or spouse	4	12%

Comments of the recipients who say “something or someone else” encouraged them to go to college fall into two major themes. The first is community and family:

My whole community [encouraged me].

Because I want to go back to work with the elders on the reservation.

Indian children who need education at the other end and are pre-judged, and my own children.

People in the community.

My husband and my family. Very supportive.

I just watched my mom do it and I wanted to do it too.

The second theme is personal growth:

- Having awful jobs encouraged me to learn another field.
- It looked like fun.
- I'm self-motivated.
- To prove to myself that I could do it.

The third theme is encouragement by staff in programs that are focused on education:

- Upward Bound programs.
- Faculty people, instructors or teachers.

### ***Colleges attended by recipients since the award***

We asked Two Feathers Scholarship recipients what schools they have attended since receiving their award. The following list shows the colleges named and if named more than once, the number of recipients saying they have attended those schools.

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#### **7. Colleges/universities attended:**

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| Antioch – The McGregor School            | Johns Hopkins University                        |
| Augsburg College (3)                     | Leech Lake Tribal College                       |
| Bemidji State University (3)             | Metropolitan State University                   |
| Bethel College                           | Minneapolis Community & Technical College (2)   |
| Capella University – On line             | Minnesota State University, Moorhead            |
| Central Michigan                         | Rainey River Community College                  |
| College of St. Scholastica (2)           | Seven Generations Education Institute (Ontario) |
| Concordia University, St. Paul           | St. Mary's College                              |
| Fond du Lac Tribal/Community College (2) | St. Thomas University                           |
| Hamline University Law School (2)        | University of Minnesota – Twin Cities (6)       |
| Hawaii Pacific University                | University of Minnesota – Morris (3)            |
| Itasca Community College                 | University of MN – Duluth (3)                   |

## *Degree completion*

We asked recipients whether they have completed any degrees or professional certificates since receiving their Two Feathers Scholarship awards, and 22 (67%) say they have. Table 8 shows the degrees they have attained (two individuals listed two degrees).

### **8. Degrees earned by Two Feathers Scholarship recipients**

<b>Associate of Arts (4)</b>	<b>Bachelor's degrees (12)</b>	<b>Master's degrees (3)</b>	<b>Other (5)</b>
Licensed Chemical Health Counselor	<u>Business (4):</u> Management Business Management Business Administration Finance	Master's of Social Work	Ph.D. Nursing
Liberal Arts (3)	<u>Education (2):</u> Elementary Education Teaching License	<u>Education (2):</u> Master's of Education Education Specialist	Juris Doctor (J.D. Law)
	<u>Nursing (2):</u> Bachelor's in Nursing Licensed Practical Nurse		
	Health (2): Community Health Ed Health Science		
	Sociology		
	Speech and Communication		

## *Time to finish the degree*

The average time Two Feathers scholarship recipients say it took to finish their most recent degree ranged from 1 to 11 years, and averages just under four years (43 months). Their prediction for finishing their current degree ranges from 2 to 36 months and averages almost 16 months.

## *Changing majors*

Only four of the recipients participating in the survey say they have changed their major since receiving the Two Feathers Award, and one of those changes was to add a second major. Reasons for changing majors involved finding a better fit for one's goals and ideals.

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## 9. Changing majors

From	To
Community Health Education	Tribal Human Services
Business Administration	Double major: Business Administration/Sport Management
Education	Either Business Administration or Public Administration
Psychology	Maybe something like indigenous studies (graduate school)

### *Taking a break*

We asked Two Feathers scholarship recipients whether they had to take breaks in their education, and 42 percent say they did. The major reasons they give are:

#### Financial needs

To support my daughter by working full time.

For employment for funds to continue school, but had to leave school because all the sources were day classes and my job was a day job.

Financial. To earn a living. I needed to feed my family.

The most common reason – financial. I was commuting 119 miles one way. Medical issues as well.

#### Family needs or family problems

This semester I had to concentrate on my kids, right now. My son is graduating from high school and my daughter just entered high school.

Divorce.

Because I was working, had kids and going to school at the same time.

I had family difficulties.

#### Employment

My priorities changed. I took a job and it is going well.

Employment. A job opportunity.

To gain work experience.

## ***Barriers to completing education***

The major barrier recipients list as stopping them from completing their education is a lack of support programs for American Indians at the college or University they attended. Three other common factors are being intimidated by the size and complexity of a large university system, faculty insensitivity to cultural difference, and feeling isolated because the recipient was often the only American Indian in his or her classes.

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### **10. Barriers that stopped recipients from completing their education**

<b>N=14</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Feeling isolated	3	21%
Poor support programs for Native students	6	43%
Campus racism	3	21%
Cultural insensitivity by faculty	4	29%
Faculty/instructors not interesting in helping me succeed	2	14%
Over all complexity of the college/university system	4	29%
Something else (finances, need to provide for family, stress overload)	3	21%

## ***Impact of the college or university culture***

Two Feathers Scholarship recipients listed a number of ways that being in a college or university culture made it easier to reach their educational goals, and an equal number of ways that it made it harder for them to reach their educational goals.

Aspects that made it easier to reach goals

- There was institutional support for American Indian students.
- The staff and faculty were supportive, took American Indian students seriously, and had high expectations.
- The school was a diverse environment, which provided interesting opportunities.
- The campus or classes were relatively small (small colleges).
- There was flexibility in taking classes and resources were available (access to technology, online classes).

Aspects that made it harder to reach goals

- Students experience isolation and culture shock (being the only Indian, misinformation and lack of understanding about native people, value conflicts).
- Systems are complicated and rigid (financial aid, changing rules, transferring credits, huge bureaucracies).
- The classes were academically challenging (students did not feel prepared, had to work twice as hard, dealing with distractions, learning good study skills).

### *Future plans*

We asked what the Two Feathers Scholarship recipients hope to do when they are finished with their education. Their responses fell into three main areas: a career in an education-related field, a career in a health-related field, and a career in policy, management or administration. These are some of the responses within those categories:

#### Career in education-related field

Teach math.

I hope to have my principal's license.

Be a professor in a university.

I want to eventually be a teacher in lower level grades, primary grades. My long term goal is to be a principal.

Superintendent or President of a Tribal College.

I hope to be a high school teacher in Social Studies.

Working in the early childhood area as a teacher.

What I am doing now (President of a college).

Teaching some computer classes.

Higher education administration

#### Career in a health-related field

I got a job in 1998 and it is going well. I work in alcohol and drug prevention in youth.

Public health, like being a public health nurse.

I plan to get into geriatrics in dialysis for the elderly.

I am open to any position or specialty area in occupational therapy.

I would really like to go back to my community and work in a hospital or clinic there.

Work in Indian Health Services as a nurse practitioner.

I'm faculty in the School of Nursing at the University of Minnesota.

I am currently a practicing chemical health counselor.

#### Career in policy, management or administration

Having a directorship in an area where I can help people with their day-to-day lives with their health through herbs and medicinal plants in our culture.

I hope to develop a policy in social work.

More than likely being an administrator for a college or foundation.

Continue in the management position that I currently hold, and enhance my skills.

I hope to have a job in public interest or family law.

### *Continuing education*

Of the 33 people responding to the survey, 17 say they are still in school and four say they are starting again soon. Table 11 shows their current educational goals. Some people listed more than one degree as a goal.

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#### 11. Current educational goals

<b>N=21</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Associates degree	2	10%
Bachelor's degree	9	43%
Certificate	4	19%
Master's degree	8	38%
Professional degree	2	10%
Medical degree	2	10%
Doctoral degree	4	19%
Something else	4	19%

The educational goals of the people who say “something else” are:

- License as a principal and superintendent.
- ABD end of spring. All but dissertation.
- Pre-law also.
- Six week course in Master Gardening with a focus on medicinal uses of plants.
- One more project to finish end of this semester in April is to get degree posted on my transcript and they’ll send my diploma.

### ***Impact of receiving a Two Feathers Scholarship Award***

We asked recipients how much receiving the award helped them to feel supported by a larger American Indian community. Twenty-three of the 33 respondents (70%) say it helped “a lot,” and another 18 percent say it helped “a little.” Only one person says it didn’t help at all, and another three say they didn’t think of it that way.

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#### **12. Extent to which receiving a Two Feathers award helped recipients to feel supported by a larger American Indian community**

N=33	Number	Percent
A lot	23	70%
A little	6	18%
Not at all	1	3%
Didn’t think of it that way	3	9%

Two out of three (67%) Two Feathers Scholarship recipients say they have encouraged other American Indian students to apply for one as well. When asked why they did so, their responses fell into four main themes: That the scholarship is a really helpful form of financial support; that it is accessible and easy to apply for; that it is one of the few scholarships that directly targets American Indians; and that sometimes people don’t have access to the information or need encouragement. The following are a few examples of comments made within each theme.

#### Helpful form of financial support

- When I finished I didn’t have any loans to pay off.
- To help them out, if they are in a bind and are thinking of quitting due to financial reasons.



It's a good scholarship. A student doesn't have to take out a loan to repay it.

Knowing that they have many unmet needs there, financial aid can be hard to get. It can be a life saver until they can get financial aid.

### Accessibility and ease of application

The program is pretty accessible and user friendly.

Two Feathers was always good about responding and responding quickly to any questions or requests for information.

The application process was so easy that I wanted to encourage others to get help.

### Targeted to American Indian students

There are not many scholarship opportunities for our students, so we try to tell our students about them when we hear about them.

### Give people encouragement/access to information

I had asked people that I knew if they had filled their applications because I knew the due dates were approaching.

I gave [a counselor] copies of it to give to students and to keep on file.

About one-third of Two Feathers recipients say they have not encouraged other American Indian students to apply for the award, and their reasons make up four theme areas: Recipients don't know anyone at this time who would be interested or qualified; they don't think about it anymore; they encourage people to go to college, but don't specifically recommend this scholarship; and they don't want to create more competition for Two Feathers funding. These are a few examples of comments within those themes:

### Don't know anyone who would be interested or qualified

I don't know too many people going to school now.

The one I applied for was for the health scholarship and I don't know any other Indians in this field.

I haven't really talked to my friends about that. They don't do school.

Don't think about it any more

I'm not attending school anymore. I haven't seen anything about it in any local newspapers, so if you're not at the U you don't think about it. There's nothing to remind you.

I just haven't thought about it for a while.

Encourage college, not particular scholarships

I've encouraged others to go to Augsburg College but have not specifically mentioned Two Feathers scholarships.

Don't want to create more competition

Not everybody can get grants because there are not enough to go around. When there is competition for what little is available you can feel threatened and act out of survival. If there was more available you wouldn't be so likely to keep it to yourself.

## ***Employment***

The majority (85%) of Two Feathers Scholarship recipients say they are currently working, and 93 percent of those who are working say that the college education they received helped them to get their current job.

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### **13. Current jobs**

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Human services/ Social services	Ain Dah Yung Executive Director Social worker for a non-profit agency My reservation's Director of Human Services Hospital/nursing home Director of Human Services
Business/Real estate	Business analyst Upper management Corporate training Insurance underwriter
Education	Teacher K-12 school administrator Principal of a K-12 tribal school Child care teacher Tribal college President American Indian studies instructor, Augsburg College Administrative Assistant, tribal college Middle/high school Ojibwe language instructor on reservation School typist Assistant professor, School of Nursing, U of MN

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### 13. Current jobs (continued)

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Health	Youth alcohol and drug prevention specialist Head Start nurse on the reservation Health outreach Pharmaceutical care program with the Leech Lake tribe Group home staff, developmentally delayed residents Registered nurse Practicing chemical dependency counselor
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### *Future work: hopes for 5 years from now*

The types of work people say they hope to be doing five years from now are extensions of what they are currently doing, except at a higher level: social and human services, business and management, education, health, and law and government. Two are still unsure, three want to be self-employed, and one plans to be retired. Six of those who responded made specific reference to wanting to be doing work that will serve their communities. These are their comments:

I still hope I'm serving my community, teaching at a college level, get my Ph.D.

I want to be teaching the Ojibwe language, same as now.

I want to do the same work I am doing now in working with the American Indian community in some capacity.

Maybe be self-employed. Doing things health-related with herbs and plants. I love gardening. Then always be helping in my community as well as volunteering.

Hopefully, we will be financially stable enough to be able to start a non-profit to help children in my community to be open to more possibilities other than only those they see right in the community. I think people at home only see a few careers and I want them to see that there are more possibilities.

I hope to be working for my people on the reservation and giving back to them what I received through my education.

### *Long-term outcome of the Two Feathers award*

We asked Two Feathers Scholarship recipients to tell us the present or future long-term outcome of winning a Two Feathers award. Their responses made up four major themes. Each theme is shown below, along with examples of responses the scholarship recipients gave.

## Got an education without so much financial stress or debt

I got to start out not in debt and with an education. The scholarship paid for books, fees, rent; all of that. And Morris waives tuition for American Indian students so I was not burdened by debt when I left school.

I received the scholarship, all support keeps you going to school and it helped. When resources are available, it is supportive, it is encouraging to keep going, to finish.

It may be more paper work but it is worth it to receive the Two Feather Scholarship. I had no loans outstanding when I finished.

It gives you a good opportunity to get an education and helps with the financial aspects.

It will have helped me fund my education so I didn't have to drop out or work more hours.

Because it went right to the school and they made mistakes with my financial aid. It didn't help me but they applied it to the next semester. That helped.

It helped me with the cost of my college education for one semester.

I would say it was a critical financial support that kept me going when I wanted to quit when I thought I would have to quit because of the funding issues. It was heaven sent and I would not have maintained without it.

I was able to absorb more knowledge, focus on learning, instead of rushing off to work.

Right now everything is so expensive in Hawaii. Having this scholarship has helped me to not worry about the finances and has helped me out with my tuition.

It was quite important for me to receive funding to write my thesis, otherwise I would have had to pay for it myself.

Without scholarships like the Two Feathers Fund, I would not have been able to have afforded college and I would not have a degree and would not have what I have now. I would probably just still be at home now, and I don't even want to think about that.

## The award gave me more opportunities/chance to achieve my goals

Winning the scholarship allowed me to achieve my goals.

It was nice to be able to be supported by my Indian community. It opened up more opportunities for me in life.

I got a degree that could help me get a job, a better paying job than if I just had my high school diploma.

I have always had decent income jobs, because of the sociology field. It opened many doors for me.

It is one more stepping stone towards my goal. It was a great relief when I learned about it.

It was very helpful. It helps them reach their goals.

I would say it enabled me to get through college, which is a big accomplishment. It let me know there were people out there to help me. It was nice to know that.

By obtaining my degree, the satisfaction of obtaining my degree and that piece going further. I need a bachelor's degree for licensure on a master's degree.

It's an opportunity to take some classes to improve yourself. Just have to ask around and you'll find them.

That it helped me in having confidence in looking for other granting sources and to further my schooling. I applied for other scholarships and received them. It gave me greater incentive to finish school and realize my dreams as a nurse practitioner.

It opened a door and gave me an opportunity to have a career that I have been interested in for decades. Broadened my horizons being in a different culture. I can provide better for my family and my community, American Indian community that I am a part of.

It's going to give me a higher self-esteem. I have more options in my life, give my kids a better quality of life than I had. I feel better about myself. It breaks the cycle of dysfunction in my family.

That if you set your goals at attaining a grant or scholarship you can attain them. You may have to do a lot of research, but you can be successful at this. When you set goals it may improve your self-esteem. It enhanced me to attain my bachelor's degree.

### Increased my desire to help the Indian community

Overall it taught me how to serve my community better and continued my development as a community leader.

That it helped me reach my educational goals and that it has helped me better myself. I teach at the school I grew up in and want to encourage kids that they can also get an education and bring it back to the reservation to keep the positivity of life going.

I think it was good that they offered it to me, that's what I wanted to do, that it was important to our community.

I would say being a good role model and giving back to the community.

It did a lot towards letting me feel supported by my community and it reinforced our community values, i.e. education.

Linked me to people and systems that support Indian education

That it's part of an overall support system of many programs that help support Indian education. It helped pay for my tuition.

Identifying with a group of people who are supportive of my education that is lacking in other places.

I made some contacts, they know your name and you don't have to repay it. Start out from a better position.

***Ways that recipients would like to help the program***

Two Feathers Scholarship recipients were asked about a number of ways they might be willing to help the Scholarship Program.

**14. Ways recipients would like to help the Two Feathers Scholarship Program**

<b>N=33</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>Maybe</b>	<b>No</b>
Being a donor	46%	-	52%
Being a speaker at fund-raising events	55%	6%	39%
Writing an article for the newsletter	67%	9%	24%
Participating in a letter-writing campaign to raise funds	52%	6%	42%
Being a mentor to a current recipient	67%	-	27%
Some other way	39%	-	61%

## Conclusions

The feedback of these recipients of Two Feathers Scholarships awards indicate that the program is successful in helping American Indian students succeed in college, and that the award helps recipients to feel supported by a larger American Indian community. The feeling of being supported translates into a greater desire to serve that community for many of the scholarship recipients.

The fact that over half of the recipients were preceded in college by family members is notable, since research shows that in general, children of parents who have successfully negotiated college have higher rates of success themselves.

The Two Feathers Scholarship Program Advisory Committee and The Saint Paul Foundation may wish to evaluate whether their target population is American Indian students in general, or American Indian students who are the first in their families to attend college. In any event, in future evaluations, it would be advisable to compare the impact of the scholarship awards on American Indian students who are first in their families to attend college, to the impact on American Indian students who have family members with college degrees.