

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Results of a 2010 survey of the alumni of and applicants for scholarships from the Single Parent Scholarship Fund (SPSF), indicate that 80 percent of the respondents have received a Single Parent (SP) scholarship at some time between 1984 and the present time, and the remaining 20 percent have applied (since 2005), but not received a scholarship. The groups are similar with respect to gender and marital status, but applicants have slightly larger households than recipients do. Nearly all have school-aged children living with them and a large share has adult children in college or not in college living with them.

When they apply, the vast majority of recipients and applicants attend the University of Arkansas or NW Arkansas Community College. Most recipients have completed the program they were attempting when they applied for the scholarship, and are much more likely than applicants to have completed the degree they were attempting when they applied. Scholarship recipients are more likely than applicants to have earned an associate's or bachelor's degree, but applicants are more likely to have earned technical certifications.

Although currently, most apply for the SP Scholarship online, they find the application process to be easy and SPSF's location convenient. Interviews are necessary in order to receive a scholarship from the SPSF, and large majorities of both applicants and recipients view them as beneficial. Scholarship winners also find SPSF's referrals, opportunities for networking with fellow recipients and direct funding to be helpful. Respondents offer ideas about how to improve advertising and communication during the application process as well as during the scholarship period. Word-of-mouth continues to be the most successful advertising medium; colleges and universities rate second.

The Single Parent Scholarship Fund alumni identify direct economic benefits, educational benefits having economic implications, easing of time constraints, and encouragement and/or emotional support as the major contributions of the scholarships. Most of the Fund's alumni also indicate how beneficial receipt of the scholarship has been to their children, other family members and/or friends. While economic benefits are paramount in this respect, the scholarship also spurred development of confidence and hope among family and friends, encouraged their children to improve their educational efforts and motivated other family and/or friends to go to college.

Over time, receipt of the Single Parent Scholarship appears to be related to increased rates of home ownership, higher levels of education and income, higher rates of full-time employment and health insurance for adults, reductions in family, governmental and other types of aid received and increased contributions to community organizations.