How Will You Make the World Better?
Outcome Evaluation of the University of Minnesota Women’s Center Scholarship Programs
Emily Dacquisto & Sheri Hixon

Background & Significance
Women are contributing significantly to postsecondary education throughout the country, however, they continue to experience disproportionate financial burdens in paying for college, much of which can be alleviated through the distribution of scholarships.

While a significant body of research has contributed to the understanding of educational equity for women, no investigation has effectively addressed the impact of receiving scholarships for women students.

Existing literature focuses on the financial benefits of receiving a scholarship, however, we were unable to find any mention of the non-financial benefits of receiving a scholarship.

The purpose of the evaluation is to gauge the financial and non-financial impact and assess the effectiveness of the Barceló and Macpherson scholarships.

Methods
- Sample included women-identified students who currently attend or have previously attended the University of Minnesota and received either the Barceló or Macpherson scholarships during the academic years 2011 – 2016
- Electronic survey sent out via email
- 49 questions total
- 44 closed-ended and 5 open-ended
- Response options included either/or, fill-in-the-blank, multiple choice, and Likert scale
- Forced response
- Survey sections included demographics, marketing, application process, Celebrating University Women Awards Ceremony, financial benefits, and non-financial benefits
- Financial variables included work, loans, supplies, tuition, and life expenses
- Non-financial variables included esteem, confidence, hope, community, empowerment, connection, equity, higher education, outlook, personal development, and resume

Participants
- 67 survey respondents / 50% response rate
- 29 Barceló / 38 Macpherson
- $2,284 average scholarship amount
- 32 years old average age
- 97% cisgender female
- 66% first generation
- 82% heterosexual
- 21% disability

Results
- The Macpherson scholarship recipients reported more than the Barceló scholarship recipients that they identified as first generation college students (p = .006)
- The Barceló scholarship recipients reported more than the Macpherson scholarship recipients that they identify as people of color (p = .000)
- The Barceló scholarship recipients reported more than the Macpherson scholarship recipients that they spent the scholarship money on textbooks and school supplies (p = .027)
- The Macpherson scholarship recipients reported more than the Barceló scholarship recipients that receiving the scholarship changed their outlook on their future for the better (p = .020)

Voices
How has the scholarship helped you change the world or your part of the world?
"The scholarship gave me a huge confidence boost. That belief in my success is one of the factors that gave me the guts to switch to a scientific field. I am now a soil scientist with a job in my field doing rewarding environmental work.”
"I grew up profoundly neglected and abused by an impoverished family. I now use that experience to help urban students face their own challenges as they struggle to build a self-chosen future for themselves.”
"It allowed me to spend some time with my kids instead of working and thinking about finances during an accelerated masters program. The scholarship gave not only me, but my family hope, to strive to work harder, and be the change we want to see.”
"My creative potential was limited by having to work long hours in an unrelated field just to meet basic survival needs. I am now working in the field I am most gifted in and making a better living doing it. The world is always a better place when we can maximize our gifts in life and share them with a larger community.”
"It allowed me to do better in school since I didn’t have to worry about paying for loans and to be able to spend more time volunteering in my community.”

Implications
- Findings suggest that scholarships for women-identified students increase opportunities for educational achievement and impact women’s lives outside the academic environment.

Limitations
- Small sample size
- Self-administered survey

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