Financial aid is a core commitment at Duke. By increasing endowments for scholarships and fellowships, Duke can ensure a premier education for tomorrow’s leaders, thinkers, and decision-makers.

The strength of our great university hinges on our ability to admit students based on their academic ability, motivation, and potential—without regard for their financial circumstances. In doing so, Duke enhances the academic experience for all our students by creating an environment where talented individuals from an array of backgrounds can learn and grow together.

Sustaining Duke’s commitment to need-blind admissions by increasing funds available for undergraduate scholarships is essential to the university’s future and is a central goal of our comprehensive campaign. We must also invest in the potential of elite graduate students who require financial assistance to advance their education and contributions to research. Without adequate support packages, Duke will not be able to recruit leading graduate students, who will respond to more attractive offers from Duke’s competitors.

Private support makes all the difference in bringing outstanding students to Duke. Opportunities to assist our talented students include scholarships, fellowships, and annual giving.
Undergraduate Scholarships

Duke is one of a limited number of schools that makes a twin commitment to all prospective undergraduates who are U.S. citizens or permanent residents. We admit the best applicants without regard for their financial circumstances and then ensure that admitted students are able to pay for a Duke education by meeting 100 percent of their demonstrated financial need. This stance is critical to Duke’s success in building the most talented students possible. Yet the majority of funding to cover the ever-increasing cost of meeting that obligation comes from our limited operating budget.

New endowments established during the Duke Forward campaign will help secure the university’s commitment to support promising students. These permanent funds will provide resources year in and year out, and they will make a lasting, profound difference in the lives of bright young people and their families for generations to come.

YOUR GIFT OF $100,000 OR MORE can create an unrestricted scholarship that helps talented students reach their potential.

YOUR GIFT OF $250,000 OR MORE can create a restricted scholarship endowment, such as a fund that gives preference to students from a particular region or students pursuing a particular field of study.

DUKE’S SPENDING ON UNDERGRADUATE NEED-BASED AID (IN MILLIONS OF DOLLARS)
Graduate Fellowships

Duke graduate students push academic boundaries, offer fresh perspectives on research, and give voice to emerging fields. Doctoral students not only provide an intellectual spark to our community, they also assist with classroom instruction and play a vital role in faculty-led research projects. A university like Duke would have difficulty recruiting and retaining a superb faculty without a strong graduate program.

But to enroll the most sought-after students, we must keep pace with the funding packages offered by peer institutions. That’s why Duke offers its doctoral students a minimum of five years of full support, at a cost of more than $80 million annually. Endowment support is critical to meeting that need and convincing promising graduate students to choose Duke.

FROM SERVICE TO STUDY

As a U.S. Air Force officer deployed in support of Special Forces in Afghanistan, Andrew Bell ’98, M.T.S. ’08, A.M. ’12 soon confronted what years of studying the conduct of war hadn’t prepared him for—the real-world complexities of avoiding civilian casualties during military operations. After 10 years in the service, Bell is determined to understand the way military culture and training affect how militaries treat civilians during war.

Now a doctoral student in political science at Duke, Andrew is exploring that very topic in his dissertation. Summer funding and a competitive international research travel fellowship provided by the Graduate School enabled him to travel to West Point to study its ethics and law of war training program, and to Uganda to interview military officers on avoiding civilian casualties during counterinsurgency operations.

“Duke is really committed to giving its graduate students a chance to conduct cutting-edge research,” says Andrew, former president of the Duke Student Veterans Association, which helps veterans transition to campus life. “This is the reason I chose to come here.”
Summer Support

Duke’s motivated, ambitious students view their summer “break” as a chance to tackle new challenges. They seek out internships, research opportunities, and other experiences that enable them to build and expand their skills. Unfortunately, some of the most valuable opportunities and internships available are unpaid, and many students cannot afford to pursue them without a stipend to cover basic costs of living. Donor gifts directed toward summer support help enrich the education of Duke students and give them the chance to apply and extend their knowledge.

Graduate students, too, benefit from stipends that allow them to spend their summers conducting fieldwork or immersing themselves in an archive—or simply focusing on research and writing in Durham. In many fields, Duke provides graduate students with funding only for the academic year, even as many of our peer institutions provide 12 months of fellowship support. Summer fellowships help fill that gap and keep our graduate programs competitive.

YOUR GIFT OF $100,000 OR MORE can establish an endowment to support student endeavors such as internships and summer research.

Annual Fund Support

Gifts to the Duke Annual Fund are pooled with gifts from other, like-minded donors to create financial aid grants for talented scholars. All Duke schools use a portion of their annual fund gifts to support financial aid grants, and donors to the Duke Annual Fund for Trinity College of Arts & Sciences can even designate their gifts for need-based financial aid.

Your gift to the Duke Annual Fund will fuel our ability to meet the financial needs of Duke students and play an important role in advancing all of our priorities.