

## ***Scholarship America's***

### **Steps for Students**

#### ***Campaign:***

- **Launched Steps for Students walk for education in two weeks covering President Bill Nelsen's walk from Minneapolis to Chicago to raise monies for Scholarship America's operating funds at year-end**
  - **Media Strategy**
    - **Pitched Minneapolis, Iowa and Chicago area media focusing on community press**
  - **Web Strategy**
    - **Created special website and blog so participants could track Bill's progress**
  - **Special Events**
    - **Sponsored special kick-off event in downtown Minneapolis and special closing event in downtown Chicago**
    - **Also held special events at various children's clubs along the walk route**

#### ***Results:***

- **Raised approximately \$250K in a one-month period with additional pledges. Garnered significant media coverage.**





# ScholarshipAmerica<sup>SM</sup>

Dollars for Scholars® • Scholarship Management Services<sup>SM</sup> • ScholarShop®

Phone 800/279-2083 • Fax 952/830-1929 • 7703 Normandale Road, Suite 110, Minneapolis, MN 55435-5314  
[www.scholarshipamerica.org](http://www.scholarshipamerica.org)

June 9, 2003

## Dear Friends of Scholarship America:

On July 1, 2003, I begin my final year as President of Scholarship America. By the time I retire in a year, I will have served almost 18 years as President of this dynamic, rapidly growing organization. To start my final year, I am embarking on a 400-mile "Steps for Students" Walk ultimately benefiting youth from grade school through college via Scholarship America programs. **Why?**



### Tuition Skyrocketing, Access to Higher Education Declining

Just when families are struggling more than ever to make ends meet, and federal and state governments are strapped to balance their budgets...

- Tuition is rising faster than the average family income. *U.S. News & World Report.*
- Six million qualified students may not go to college due to cost. *USA Today.*
- College graduates earn 75 percent more than high school graduates. *Access Denied.*
- By 2028, 19 million jobs unfilled due to uneducated workers. *Business-Higher Education Forum.*

What can we do about this crisis in higher education, which will impact our future workforce?



### Scholarship America: Steps We Are Taking

Scholarship America, the nation's largest private-sector scholarship and educational-support organization, through our programs Dollars for Scholars®, Scholarship Management Services™, and ScholarShop®, is helping students like: **Viola**, a sophomore in nursing at Howard University raised on public aid by her grandmother; **Vlad**, a junior in business at Georgetown University whose family fled Bosnia with just \$11; and **Jameika**, a student at a community college who overcame inner city struggles. Our mission: expand access to education and encourage educational achievement. Since our founding in 1958, we have distributed approximately \$911.5 million in scholarships and reached 850,000 students. **Yet, we can and must do more!**



### Introducing "Steps for Students"

To draw attention to this educational crisis and demonstrate my commitment to this worthy cause, I plan to walk from Minneapolis-St. Paul to Chicago—400 miles—starting June 26. My goals are simple: 1) step up scholarship support for students 2) step up involvement from communities, corporations, organizations and individuals and 3) raise \$1 million or more to support our mission. Along the way, I'll stop at Dollars for Scholars chapters and ScholarShop sites. Our goal: Reaching thousands of additional students.



### Step Up, Set The Pace, Pledge Today

**Help me get started...walk the talk...one step at a time. I am inviting you to join our pace setter campaign for the "Steps for Students" Walk by pledging your support on the enclosed pledge form before June 30, 2003.** When Dr. Irving Fradkin, our founder, and the volunteers of Fall River, Massachusetts, started the first chapter in 1958, they asked every household in the city to give just one dollar for a scholar. In the same spirit, I am asking you to consider pledging at least one dollar per mile or more. And to check my progress, visit [www.scholarshipamerica.org](http://www.scholarshipamerica.org). **Now You Can...make a difference in the lives of students across America. Investing in education truly yields the highest return!**

Walking on,

William C. Nelson  
President, Scholarship America

**Scholarship America's  
"Steps for Students" Walk  
Minneapolis-St. Paul to Chicago**

**June-July, 2003**

*Bill: I am stepping up, setting the pace, and pledging today...  
To help you walk the talk...one step at a time...for students.*



☐ Pledge

☐ Gift

☐ Credit Card: MASTERCARD\_\_ VISA\_\_ Other: \_\_\_\_\_

Credit Card Number: \_\_\_\_\_ Exp. Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

*Pledges need to be made by June 30, 2003, but can be paid over the next 12 months.  
Please send me pledge reminders on ☐ December 1, 2003 and/or ☐ May 15, 2004.*



**Here's my "investment" in Scholarship America's mission....**

\_\_\_\_\_ \$10,000 supporting Scholarship America's mission  
help start a ScholarShop

\_\_\_\_\_ \$5,000 in support of Scholarship America's mission  
help start a Dollars for Scholars Chapter

\_\_\_\_\_ \$5 per mile or \$2,000

\_\_\_\_\_ \$1 per mile or \$400

\_\_\_\_\_ \$.25 per mile or \$100

\_\_\_\_\_ My Special Gift \$ \_\_\_\_\_



**Thank you for being a Pace Setter  
for Scholarship America's "Steps for Students" Walk!**

**PLEASE RETURN THIS FORM BEFORE JUNE 30, 2003 BY MAIL/ FAX:**

"Steps for Students" Walk, c/o Bill Nelsen, President, Scholarship America, 7703  
Normandale Road, Suite 110, Minneapolis, MN 55435-5314. FAX: 952-830-1929.

**SPECIAL NOTE:** For **Corporate Sponsorships**, call Linda Mahoney at 952/830-7305.  
For **Major Gifts and Pledges**, Doug Scott at 952-830-7302 or 800-279-2083.



## Steps for Students Communications Plan

**Target Audiences:** Current and potential donors nationwide and in St. Peter, current and potential corporate sponsors, collegiate partners, friends of Scholarship America, the media, Dollars for Scholars chapters in Minnesota, Iowa and Illinois.

### Key Messages:

- **Bill Nelsen, president of Scholarship America, is embarking on a 400-mile "Steps for Students" walk from Minneapolis-St. Paul to Chicago starting June 26 to draw attention to the crisis in higher education that will potentially impact our future workforce. Why?**
- **Fast Facts**
  - Just when families are struggling more than ever to make ends meet, and federal and state governments are strapped to balance their budgets...
  - Tuition is rising faster than the average family income. *U.S. News & World Report*.
  - Six million qualified students may not go to college due to cost. *USA Today*.
  - College graduates earn 75 percent more than high school graduates. *Access Denied*.
  - By 2028, 19 million jobs unfilled due to uneducated workers. *Business-Higher Education Forum*.
- **Bill's Goals:** to step up scholarship support for students, step up involvement from communities, corporations, organizations and individuals, and raise \$1million or more to support Scholarship America's mission: expand access to education and encourage educational achievement.
- **Scholarship America**, the nation's largest private-sector scholarship and educational-support organization, through our programs **Dollars for Scholars®**, **Scholarship Management Services™**, and **ScholarShop®**, is helping students like: **Viola**, a sophomore in nursing at Howard University raised on public aid by her grandmother; **Vlad**, a junior in business at Georgetown University whose family fled Bosnia with just \$11; and **Jameika**, a student at a community college who overcame inner city struggles. Since our founding in 1958, we have distributed approximately \$911.5 million in scholarships and reached 850,000 students.

### Schedule:

#### Week of June 2: --Direct Mail Campaign to Friends

##### Sponsors:

- Develop sponsor list and start pitching—Linda Mahoney

##### Logistics:

- Draft logistics list—Bill Nelsen

##### Communications:

- Draft communications plan—Mark Malmberg
- Create key messages—Bill and Barbara

- Prepare and do mock media interviews, pros/cons and tough potential questions and meet with Bill to vet—Bill, Barbara, Mark, Janine and Bob

#### **Direct Mail Campaign:**

- Draft cover letter and pledge form for direct mail campaign—PA&C team—Bill, Barbara, et. al and Development—Margot
- Review distribution lists to cull duplicates—Margot

#### **Test Market:**

- Prepare materials for Curt Trygstad for Points of Light Conference board meeting and booth—Barbara, Bill and Curt..

### **Week of June 9:--Direct Mail Campaign to Friends**

#### **Sponsors:**

- Continue to pitch sponsors—Linda
- Go or no go depending on sponsor support by Mon. June 9—Bill
- Note: Bill made decision to proceed without sponsor support by Mon. June 9 and rely on individual donor support first and corporate sponsor support as it comes in.

#### **Logistics:**

- Finalize walk route and all logistics and distribute to all parties—Angie (6/12)

#### **Communications:**

##### **Direct Mail Campaign:**

- Execute direct mail campaign—St. Peter team: Margot, Angie, Terri, et. al.

##### **Chapters Communication:**

- Draft chapter email and distribute to chapters via list serve--Judi Pierick, Iowa DFS
- Email Dick Dystrup from IL DFS and Karin Abel from MN DFS the email Judi drafted to so Dick and Karin can email their chapters—Bill.

**T-shirts, Caps:** Design and submit order—Perrie Garland.

**Webpage:** Determine concept and feasibility—Mark Hurlburt, Barbara, Mark Malmberg.

### **Week of June 16—Teaser Campaign:**

#### **Sponsors:**

- Finalize list of sponsors for communications purposes and provide to PA&C—Linda to Barbara

#### **Logistics:**

- Hone and refine the logistics list, including Kickoff event in downtown Mpls—Angie, Terri

#### **Communications:**

##### **Employee Meeting:**

- Prepare collateral for employee meeting in St. Peter cover letter and pledge forms—P. Garland
- Hand deliver to Angie for employee meeting and attend employee meeting.
- Result of employee meeting:
  - Email Kari Reichel to send out broadcast email on walk with cover letter and pledge form to St. Peter employees—Barbara (Perrie preparing PDFs).
  - Deidra Miller idea: Create swat team for all-year St. Peter High School reunion week of July 4. Deidra to get back to Angie re: reality of this possibility. PA&C will provide 4,000 letters and pledge forms St. Peter version for this St. Peter campaign.



**Public relations/media plan:**

- Finalize media plan and public relations plan.—Mark M., Bob
- Draft news release and media advisory. Start pitching. Create media alert and news release— News release to be general but somewhat adaptable, with info on the walk, Scholarship America, Bill's bio, need for scholarships; media alert to have adaptability for changing "when & where" and other possible local angles. Also create news release template for chapter's use – MM
- Distribute sample story to organizational partners communications vehicles— print and online—(by 6/19)-Bob
- Finalize answers to potential questions – PA&C will draft short, direct answers that can play as sound bites; answers to be built around our mission statement whenever possible, also responses for "only-if-asked" questions. -- JKF, MM
- Create media lists for route through Minnesota, Iowa and Illinois – PA&C – These lists will evolve as more contacts are gathered. -- BL, MM
- News release and media alert distribution will occur via a combination of wire service campaigns: One national at the onset, one for Iowa the day before Bill crosses the border and likewise for Illinois. We will also pitch media along the walk via phone, fax and email. – Mark M and Bob L.
- Pitch media: Minnesota – MM; Iowa –Judy P & BL; Illinois – MM, Bob, Barbara
- Many factors will affect the timing of Bill's pace, thus affecting potential media opportunities. Best to plan interviews for early morning or evening during Bill's rest time while at a given destination.
- Connect with sponsors, such as AmericInn, to get them mentioned in the template depending on community where Bill staying, etc.—MM w/ Linda, Bill, Angie

**Web:**

- Finalize website with homepage, web log, route, see email 6/17. Establish web presence for "blog" web journal on [www.scholarshipamerica.org](http://www.scholarshipamerica.org) – MH
- Arrange for digital camera for Bill to take pictures along the route and mail back to PA&C—MH. MH will then post when received. Bill will write daily journals, etc.

**Signage:**

- Finalize signage based on transportation secured by Linda—Perrie Garland.

**Week of June 23—Walk Kickoff--Minnesota:**

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**Week of June 30:--Minnesota--Iowa****Week of July 7:--Iowa-Illinois****Week of July 14:--Illinois****Communications:**

- Draft media alert and pitching Chicago media—Mark M. Barbara

**Week of July 21:--Walk Conclusion****Communications:****Employee Meeting:**

- Bill shares his walk with employees at staff retreat at Science Museum on Monday, July 21.

**Measures of Success:**

- How much money Bill raises versus how much is spent
- Media coverage
- Relationship building with regions, chapters and sites
- Building donor base, i.e., how many new donors

• 200 page proposal visit

