



# MINDS MATTER

## PORTLAND

Minds Matter connects driven and determined students from low-income families with the people, preparation, and possibilities to succeed in college, create their future, and change the world.

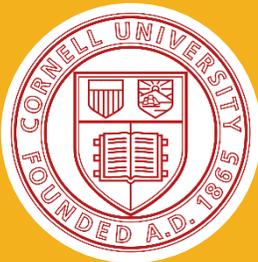
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# Congratulations to our 2021 Graduating class!

These 16 graduates put in an incredible amount of work during the application process and earned numerous financial aid awards and outside scholarships. The average freshman year tuition, room and board was \$63,000 and the average scholarship support received was over \$60,000! Well done class of 2021.



Cornell University



Pacific Lutheran University



Portland State University



Reed College



Skidmore College



Stanford University



Tufts University



Tuskegee University



University of Illinois - Chicago



University of Portland



University of Rochester



Vanderbilt University

## 'Tis the Season! Double your impact by donating through Willamette Week's GiveGuide!

Minds Matter has exciting news: we are a featured non-profit organization in the Willamette Week Give!Guide! As we enter the holiday season, we want to ask for your continued support to meet our student's needs as they achieve their dreams of going to college. Follow us on social media to learn more about the Give!Guide and the fantastic prizes you will be entered to win when donating!

WILLAMETTE WEEK'S

**g!ve**  
**GUIDE**

**Donate!**

**What is the Give!Guide?** [Willamette Week's Give!Guide](#) is Portland's largest annual grassroots fundraising effort that showcases worthy local nonprofits with the goals of raising as much money as possible for the participating nonprofits and creating a culture of giving in the Portland metro area. By creating a platform to showcase nonprofits, the Give!Guide fundraises and fosters philanthropic engagement from Portland's community members.

**Why donate to Minds Matter through the Give!Guide?** There are several reasons! The donations received through the Give!Guide are matched from local business partners. Minds Matter has a \$5,000 matching commitment from PepsiCo, which makes your donation go further. Additionally, by donating \$10 through the Give!Guide, you'll automatically receive some freebies and be entered in a raffle to win prizes if you give on "Big Give Days". Also, we encourage you to use the Give!Guide to discover and donate to other organizations within the Portland-area.

**What are Big Give Days and how do they work?** When you donate at least \$10 on a Big Give Day, you are automatically entered into a drawing for amazing prizes. You will have one entry per donation, so if you give at least \$10 each to four different non-profits, you'll be entered into the raffle four times. [Learn more here.](#)

# Minds Matter Summer Programs

Since Minds Matter Portland started in 2006, our students have attended college summer programs after both their Sophomore and Junior years, usually lasting one to four weeks. Students get a chance to apply to real colleges, take classes with professors, sleep in the dorms, eat in the dining halls, and meet college-bound students from across the country. Our fundraising efforts cover the tuition and transportation costs for these programs, and our students gain the confidence of knowing they can succeed and thrive on a college campus and in the classroom. They also learn a bit about their own preferences around large vs. small colleges, city vs. rural settings, etc.

In the summer of 2021, our students participated in a mix of virtual and in-person summer programs. Even when online, the classes were still academically rigorous and immersive, with some students attending class 2-3 hours a day for 2-4 weeks.

Here's a sampling of our students' 2021 summer program experiences:

- Kana flew to Brown University for a 2 week course - Behind the Breakthroughs: Using Laboratory Microorganisms in Biomedical Research
- Alder attended a 4-week immersive arts program in Vermont at the Putney School
- Samikchhya attended an online course at Brown University - Psychology and Health: Emotions, Behaviors, and Disease
- Ty'J studied Japanese language at Beloit College, online for 3.5 weeks.
- Janice flew to the Michigan Technical University for a 2 week Intro to Computational Physics and Electrical & Computer Engineering course
- Le' Nieyah attended a virtual program at Stanford - Clinical Neuroscience Virtual Experience

We look forward to getting back to 100% in-person summer programs in 2022!

## An alumnus' reflections on a pandemic

Kevin Truong graduated from Minds Matter in 2011 and was awarded a Gates Millennium Scholarship that covered all costs related to undergrad and grad school. He graduated with a B.S. in Biology from the University of Portland, then received his Masters in Public Health at the Milken Institute of Public Health at George Washington University. He is currently pursuing a Ph.D. in Public Health at the University of Oregon, focusing on health disparities for Asian Americans in Oregon and the effectiveness of cancer navigation programs. In addition, Kevin has been a mentor with Minds Matter for the past 4 years! We caught up with Kevin earlier this year to get thoughts on the pandemic through his public health lens. Excerpts from our conversation below:

**Minds Matter:** What has been most predictable to you as we've seen this pandemic unfold?

**Kevin:** The most predictable part has been the refusal of the American public to heed health department requests to wear masks, get vaccinated, and to quarantine in the case of potential exposures. Alternatively, Taiwan created a national tracking system and mandatory quarantines for foreign travelers into their country. The people put their faith into the government and also listened to the health ministry's recommendations.

**Minds Matter:** You were awarded a Gates Millennium scholarship in 2013. What are your thoughts on the Foundation's involvement in fighting this pandemic?

**Kevin:** Bill Gates has been warning about a potential pandemic for at least 10 years now. His [2015 TED Talk](#) detailed different funding models needed to prevent a global pandemic and highlighted the fact that almost no countries were meeting the necessary funding standards. In this pandemic The Gates Foundation invested a lot of money in vaccine research and in the



COVAX program. COVAX was intended to reduce the issue of vaccine nationalism and have the funds available to manufacture and distribute the vaccine to low-income/developing nations. The Pfizer vaccine was approved for emergency use by the FDA almost a year ago, and despite abundant US supply, vaccine access equity is still a major problem globally. The Gates Foundation recognizes that we must treat this, and future pandemics, like a truly global issue.

**Minds Matter:** What were some of the lessons or learnings from your Minds Matter experience that you've found most helpful, either in your college or post-college life?

**Kevin:** Minds Matter taught me how to be resilient through different challenges. I also appreciate how Graham taught us to be assertive and to use the knowledge that we have to defend our viewpoint. This has greatly helped me in my studies and work when I have to go out in the public and defend my research results. It was also helpful in my work persuading the public to vote yes on the 2012 Portland Public Schools bond campaign. During my senior year of high school, I appreciated how the college counselors would push me (at times!) to my breaking point with college/scholarship applications because they saw the potential I had.

**Minds Matter:** Thanks for the comments and for staying involved with Minds Matter! Best of luck with your Ph.D. thesis research and writing!

We met our new Sophomore students and mentors in early November. It was great to see smiling (masked) faces! Thank you again to the St. Andrew Nativity School and Community Center teams for continuing to provide space for our Minds Matter sessions.



"We are excited to be kicking off our 16th year helping Portland-area students achieve their goal of getting into college. We've taken a hybrid approach this fall and are thrilled to be able to meet our students and volunteers face-to-face for some of our sessions. We are honored to have new groups of students and volunteers joining us each Saturday to work hard, learn new things, get to know each other, and hopefully have some fun. Thank you to our students, volunteers and donors for making Minds Matter possible here in Portland."

**Reed Harrison, Executive Director**

## Interested in joining our team?

We are always looking for more volunteers. We have opportunities to work directly with our students on Saturdays as mentors, tutors, college counselors, or by supporting Saturday operations. If you might be interested in volunteering with us please reach out to us at [volunteer@mindsmatterportland.org](mailto:volunteer@mindsmatterportland.org).



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