



Governor's Scholars Program

Quarterly News & Updates

June | 2026

Poll

How are you connected with GSP?

GSP Alum

Parent/Family Member of a Scholar

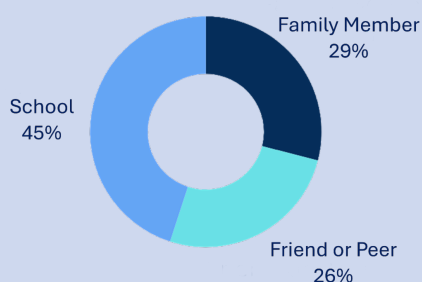
School Official
(Counselor, Teacher, etc.)

Faculty or Staff

More Than One

Q1 Poll Results

How did you first hear about GSP?



The **44th Summer of GSP** is off to a great start!
Click each campus picture to go to the campus website and see what this year's scholars are up to.





**THANK
YOU!**

ALUMNI YEAR

1986

GAVE THE MOST GIFTS

WE RAISED

\$10,231

THANKS TO DONORS LIKE YOU!

WE RECEIVED

76

TOTAL DONATIONS

We had donors
spanning from the
alumni year 1983 to
2025! #kygives26



Did you know? Kentucky County Trivia



Boyle County: The city of Danville in Boyle County is recognized as the City of Firsts with many "firsts" happening there, including being the first capital of Kentucky ([learn more](#)).

Calloway County: Calloway County's eastern border is shaped by the Kentucky Lake, known as "The Great Lake of the South" ([learn more](#)).

Harlan County: The highest point in Kentucky is Black Mountain which is located in Harlan County ([learn more](#)).

Rowan County: Rowan County is home to the town of Sharkey that, although unconfirmed, was named after a rooster fighting champion with that name ([learn more](#)).

Our GSP Community gathered at Keeneland's Spring Meet for a day full of connecting, reminiscing, and enjoying a classic Kentucky tradition. It was a beautiful day at the races!

GSP-Murray 2026



2026 *by the numbers*

For the 44th summer of the GSP, the Statewide Selection Committee reviewed and scored 1701 applications from students across the Commonwealth.

1024

APPLICANTS WERE
ACCEPTED INTO THE
PROGRAM

114

COUNTIES ARE
REPRESENTED ACROSS
OUR THREE CAMPUSES

243

IS THE TOTAL NUMBER
OF HIGH SCHOOLS
REPRESENTED

3.97

IS THE AVERAGE UGPA
SCORE OF ACCEPTED
SCHOLARS



28.87

IS THE AVERAGE
ACT SCORE OF
ACCEPTED SCHOLARS



Save the date for GSP at the Ballpark on Thursday, August 27th at 6:35 p.m. as the Louisville Bats take on the Gwinnett Strippers! More information and a link to purchase tickets will be emailed out in the coming weeks.

Thank you to Keeneland for hosting and to those who were able to join us!



GSP Alums visited all three campuses this month for Alumni Day! They spoke to the 2026 Scholars about their time at GSP, their personal experiences, and their professional journeys. Thank you to the Alums that were able to participate this summer! Be on the lookout next spring to sign up to be a part of this special day in the summer of 2027.



In alphabetical order: Jessica Bailey ('92), Julia Berry ('98), Sarah Clark ('03), Austin Cunningham ('16, not pictured), Thomas Lee Kuchenbrod ('13), Ben Lake ('11), Dorothy Neagle ('99), Ryan Schulte ('04), and Shannan Stamper ('89).



In alphabetical order: Marissa Allen ('16), Phillip Brown ('91), John Darnell ('01), Scott Davis ('96), Liz Matson ('89), Wake Norris ('93), Madeline Peterson ('09), Rebecca Sim ('95), Preston Simmons ('12), and Blair Skidmore ('89).



In alphabetical order: Isaac Bourne ('21), Lucy Burns ('20), J. Foster Cotthoff ('91), Sierra Enlow ('05), Trey Grayson ('89), Caroline Koenig ('21), Emily McDuffee ('11), Dorothy Neagle ('99).

2025 Scholar Reunions

The 2025 Alumni returned to the campuses they called home last summer to reconnect with their GSP community during the GSP Reunions at the beginning of June. It was great to see familiar faces and catch up a year after their GSP experience.



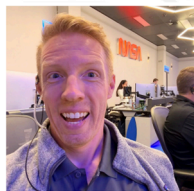


Alumni Updates



Carter A. Hunt (GSP - Centre 1991) is an environmental social scientist who is passionate about the conservation of biodiversity. A Professor at Penn State University, he holds faculty appointments in Recreation, Park, and Tourism Management (RPTM), Anthropology, and Latin American Studies. His recent research on the impacts of tourism and migration in the Galapagos Islands has been supported by a Fulbright Scholar Award and numerous grants from the National Science Foundation.

Will Olmstead (GSP - Centre 1996) is Associate Dean of Libraries for Administration & Operations at Georgia Southern University. He recently completed a Doctor of Education from Louisiana State University in Shreveport.



Ryan Schulte (GSP - EKU 2004) in his role as Project Manager, recently led the team responsible for developing and successfully flying the Orion Flywheel exercise device on NASA's historic Artemis II mission that sent 4 astronauts back to the moon for the first time since 1972. He and his team are currently developing a fleet of additional reusable devices that will be used on all future Artemis missions, enabling crews to maintain their physical fitness while in deep space. After GSP, Ryan graduated from the University of Kentucky with a degree in Mechanical Engineering and has spent 18 years in various technical roles at the NASA Johnson Space Center, including Lunar/Mars surface In-Situ Resource Utilization (ISRU), prosthetics, human research management, and exercise hardware development. Link to Artemis-II-artemis-ryan-schulte/



Sandra Carpenter (GSP - Bellarmine 2007) first came to the Governor's Scholars Program as a Scholar and Commonwealth Scholar at Bellarmine University in 2007. Growing up in the Big Sandy River Valley of eastern Kentucky and southern Ohio, GSP opened a door she did not know existed and confirmed that storytelling, community, and intellectual life could be a vocation. Sandra went on to earn a B.A. in English from Eastern Kentucky University and an M.A. in Women's and Gender Studies from the University of South Florida. In 2018, she had the privilege of returning to GSP as faculty at Morehead State University, which remains one of the most meaningful experiences of her career. She is pleased to share that she recently joined Louisville Youth Group (LYG) as Executive Director (ED). LYG is a Louisville-based nonprofit dedicated to empowering LGBTQIA+ youth through community connection, life-skills education, and social advocacy.

Madeline Peterson (GSP - Bellarmine 2009) has been working education for her fifth year and is now the 8th grade ELA teacher at St. Francis of Assisi School in Louisville, KY! She is excited to bring her ESL and English language teaching experience from JCPFS, Hong Kong and the Archdiocese of Louisville to her new role at SFA.



Lindsey (Anderson) Quigley (GSP - Bellarmine 2008) just started a new position with Fifth Third in Lexington as an Associate Wealth Manager Advisor in the Private Bank supporting both the Louisville and Lexington markets.



Madeline Peterson



Kyle Smith

Kyle Smith (GSP - Bellarmine 2009) was named a 2028 National Academy of Education/Senior Dissertation Fellow. Kyle is currently a PhD candidate in Educational Studies at the University of Michigan with an anticipated graduation date of Spring 2027.



Amanda (Barth) Pennington

Amanda (Barth) Pennington (GSP - Bellarmine 2010) opened a community pottery studio in Indianapolis, Indiana in 2021 named Yellow Door Ceramics Studio. She also celebrated her 15 year dating anniversary and 5 year wedding anniversary in 2025 with fellow 2010 GSP-Bellarmine scholar Evan Pennington. They welcomed their son in 2027.



Evan Pennington



Lindsay Lambert

Lindsay Lambert (GSP - Bellarmine 2012) Since her time as a scholar in 2012, she worked in the GSP summer office in 2015 (Bellarmine), 2016 (NKU), and 2017 (NKU). She graduated from WKU in 2017 (B.S. in Marketing, B.A. in Dance). In 2020, She completed her Masters in Mass Communication Digital Strategy from the University of Florida. After almost 7 years as the Marketing Manager at Pink Lily (another Kentucky founded business) She recently started a new role as the Director of Marketing at Inked Brands in Bowling Green. She also spends spring weekends judging dance competitions all over the U.S. for Kids Artistic Renew, Rainbow Dance Competition, and Inspire National Dance Competition.



Allie Shafer

Allie Shafer (GSP - Bellarmine 2020) started a new career as a Financial Advisor in late 2025 dedicated to serving the greater Lexington area! Her passion is equipping individuals with the knowledge and confidence to make informed financial decisions as it pertains to their personal lives, families, and businesses. Allie's goal is to help others utilize their time, money and life to do what matters most to them. Feel free to look her up at Edward Jones if she can be a resource to you, somebody you know, or another fellow GSP Alum!

[View Alumni Page](#)

[Submit an Update](#)

Visit the GSP website under "Alumni Updates and Highlights" to see what your fellow scholars have been up to.

Share your personal and professional milestones with your GSP Community. Send career changes, promotions, weddings, or milestones to be included in the Quarterly Newsletter!

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governors-scholars-program.myshopify.com

Donor Spotlight

The GSP was designed to be funded and supported through a unique partnership between the Governor and state legislature and the private community – corporations, foundations, organizations, and friends of the Program.

Shannon Rickett Weber, '97 GSP-NKU GSP Board Member

Shannon Rickett Weber, a GSP Class of 1997 alumna, exemplifies the lasting impact of the program. Now a dedicated board member and loyal supporter, she

Matthew Fahrbach, '10, GSP-Centre GSP Donor & Friend of the Program

Matthew Fahrbach, a member of the GSP Class of 2010, has built an impressive career at the cutting edge of technology. Today, he serves as a research scientist

has remained deeply committed to ensuring future scholars have the same transformative experience she once had. Professionally, Shannon has built a career in higher education, with leadership roles connected to the University of Louisville and now the Kentucky Community and Technical College System. Her work reflects a commitment to expanding access to education and strengthening opportunities for students across the Commonwealth.

The GSP is strengthened by alumni like Shannon who choose to stay engaged, give back, and lead with purpose. Her journey from scholar to board member and philanthropist is a powerful reminder of what the program makes possible.

at Google, where he works on designing smarter, faster ways for computers to solve complex problems. His work involves building sophisticated algorithms that enable massive computing systems to analyze data and make complex decisions.

Matthew's journey from Kentucky to one of the world's leading technology companies reflects the type of curiosity and drive that the GSP seeks to inspire. Over the years, Matthew has remained deeply committed to giving back to the GSP. His generosity has helped ensure that future scholars can experience the same transformational program that helped shape his path.

Brown-Forman

Few companies are as deeply woven into the fabric of Louisville and Kentucky as Brown-Forman. Founded in 1870 and still headquartered in Louisville, the company has grown into a global leader while remaining firmly committed to its home state. Over generations, the Brown family and the company have invested more than a billion dollars into the region, supporting arts, healthcare, environmental initiatives, and education.

Through sustained philanthropy and the work of the Brown-Forman Foundation, the company has helped the GSP create life-changing experiences for scholars, opening doors to new ideas and a future filled with possibility for young people across Kentucky.

That connection is embodied by Les Fugate. A GSP alumnus, Board member, and Vice President at Brown-Forman, Les represents the very best of this partnership. His leadership at the company and continued service to the GSP reflect a deep commitment to investing in people and in Kentucky's future.

**CONTACT
INFORMATION
UPDATE**

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