

# President Obama Donates Portion of Nobel Peace Prize Money to Posse



COURTESY WHITE HOUSE

President Obama accepts Nobel Peace Prize last December.  
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On March 11, 2010, The Posse Foundation became one of only 10 organizations selected by President Barack Obama to receive a portion of the president's \$1.4 million Nobel Peace Prize award money, which he elected to donate to charitable causes.

## THE PRESIDENT'S SUPPORT IS A MESSAGE TO THE COUNTRY THAT THESE YOUNG PEOPLE ARE NEEDED AS LEADERS

"These organizations do extraordinary work in the United States and abroad helping students, veterans and countless others in need," said President Obama. "I'm proud to support their work."

The other nine organizations who will receive donations ranging from \$250,000 to \$100,000 are Fisher House, the Clinton-Bush Haiti Fund, College Summit, the United Negro College Fund, the

Hispanic Scholarship Fund, the Appalachian Leadership and Education Foundation, the American Indian College Fund, AfriCare and the Central Asia Institute.

"On behalf of the entire Posse Foundation, I thank President Obama for this incredible acknowledgment and support," says Posse President and Founder Deborah Bial. "For 20 years Posse has been finding outstanding young people and connecting them to the great education they so deserve.

"The president's support is more than financial; it is a message to the country that these young people are not only important, but needed as leaders. We are beyond thrilled."

Within days of sharing the exciting news, Posse received hundreds of letters from Scholars and Alumni expressing their appreciation for the president's remarkable gift and recognition.\*

# First Lady Invites Posse Fdn. to White House

On invitation from Michelle Obama, The Posse Foundation visited the White House on March 13, 2010, to conduct a workshop for students participating in the first lady's mentoring program—a yearlong initiative that aims to broaden the horizons of 20 D.C.-area teenage girls by pairing them with mentors who are members of the White House staff.

## A GOOD MENTOR IS SOMEONE WHO LEADS BY EXAMPLE. THROUGH THIS PROGRAM, THE FIRST LADY IS DOING JUST THAT

Posse President and Founder Deborah Bial along with Posse trainers Yinnette Sano from Posse Boston and Tynesha Wright from Posse New York—both of whom are



COURTESY WHITE HOUSE

First Lady Michelle Obama.  
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also Posse Alumnae—conducted the day's workshop.

Mrs. Obama thanked Deborah and Posse for its work on college access and

stressed to the young people in attendance the importance of attaining a college degree.

The workshop focused on strategies for understanding the higher education landscape and tackling the college application process. Students filled out college "dream cards," talked about educational values, created a personal college expectation map, and explored culture, diversity and academic life on college campuses.

"Being invited to the White House for this project was truly an amazing honor," says Deborah. "It's difficult to overstate the influence a mentor can have on a young person's life. A good mentor is someone who, among other things, leads by example. And through this program, the first lady is doing just that.\*"

# posse mission

Founded in 1989, The Posse Foundation identifies public high school students with extraordinary academic and leadership potential who may be overlooked by traditional college selection processes. The Foundation extends to these students the opportunity to pursue personal and academic excellence by placing them in supportive, multicultural teams—Posses—of 10 students. The Foundation's partner universities award Posse Scholars four-year, full-tuition leadership scholarships.



Penn Posse 1 (Miami)

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## partner colleges + universities

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the  
**POSSE**  
newsletter

# 480 Students Win \$67 Mil in Scholarships

From a pool of more than 12,000 nominees, 480 new Posse Scholars in Atlanta, Boston, Chicago, D.C., Los Angeles, New York and Posse's newest site, Miami, have won nearly \$64 million in four-year, full-tuition leadership scholarships from Posse's 37 partner colleges and universities.

In December and January, each Posse site held an Awards Ceremony to welcome the newest class of Scholars, who were cheered on by their families, teachers and a welcoming Posse community of fellow Scholars, Alumni, staff and partner college administrators.

While Posse Chicago celebrated its 10th annual ceremony, Miami marked its first with appearances by Posse President and Founder Deborah Bial, Posse Chair Jeff Ubben and Chair Emeritus Michael Ainslie. Special guests at other Awards Ceremonies included Lawrence University President Jill Beck, Union College President Stephen Ainlay, First Lady of Massachusetts and Posse National Board member Diane Patrick, Boston Schools Superintendent Dr. Carol Johnson and Miami-Dade Superintendent Alberto Carvalho, an honoree at this year's Posse Gala event.

Several of the ceremonies also received local and national media coverage in such outlets as WJLA News in D.C. and *The Huffington Post*.

In its 21-year history, Posse has identified 3,148 exceptional young leaders who have won \$334 million in four-year, full-tuition scholarships to some of the most selective colleges and universities in the country.✱

## POSSE AWARDS CEREMONIES

(top to bottom from left)

Members of Brandeis Posse 13 (New York).

Reginald Glosson, Dickinson Posse 6 (Los Angeles).

Hamilton Posse 1 (Miami) Scholars Marcela Delgado, Myles Hodges and Morgan Markman.

Members of Lafayette Posse 5, Sewanee Posse 4, Wisconsin Posse 2 and Bucknell Posse 6 (D.C.).

Karla and Erika Carrion, Carleton Posse 10 (Chicago).

Denison Posse 6 (Boston).

Boston University Posse 3 (Atlanta).



PATRICK FARRELL, THE MIAMI HERALD



THE POSSE NEWSLETTER SPRING 2010



# PPRs Ask 'Do We Still Need to Talk About Race?'

This year, nearly 3,000 participants came together at different sites around the country to explore the subject of race at Posse's annual PossePlus Retreats (PPRs). PPRs are off-campus gatherings—of Posse Scholars, fellow college students, administrators and faculty—that address important campus issues identified by Posse Scholars.

## POSSEPLUS RETREATS AIM TO FACILITATE COMMUNITY BUILDING AND PRODUCTIVE DIALOGUE

Newer partner schools such as Bard College, Tulane University and University of California, Berkeley held their first retreats. The University of Wisconsin-Madison, currently partnered with three Posse sites, held its first tri-city retreat, which boasted nearly 200 participants.



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Attendees of the Brandeis PossePlus Retreat participate in a small group discussion.

# Denison Scholars Win International Education Award

In November, four Scholars from Denison Posse 7 (Chicago) traveled to Gottenheim, Germany, to participate in the 2009 International Journal of Arts & Sciences (IJAS) Conference.

## posse highlight

Denison Posse 7 (Chicago)

The four-day event included over 140 participants from 25 countries who presented research in such fields as social science, education, business and technology.

The presentations by Scholars Jasmine McGhee, DiTalliana Patterson, Victoria Roberts and Julian Williams—all rising seniors at Denison University in Granville, Ohio—earned them the coveted IJAS University Award for International Education. They were the only undergraduate presenters among Ph.D. students and professors.

"The conference in Germany was a great academic and cultural experience," says Julian. "It was great to be able to speak



(from left) DiTalliana Patterson, Victoria Roberts, IJAS Conference Coordinator Dr. Joseph Bonnici, Julian Williams and Jasmine McGhee in Gottenheim, Germany last November.

# Renowned Journalist Commits to Posse Success

Frank Sesno is a professor and director of the School of Media and Public Affairs at The George Washington University in Washington, D.C. He also serves as director of the Public Affairs Project at the Center for Innovative Media and is the creator and host of *Planet Forward*, a Web-to-television program on PBS focused on energy, climate change and sustainability.



journalism education for nearly 10 years and higher education for almost 20.

## FRANK SESNO IS RELENTLESS IN HIS QUEST TO EXPAND POSSE'S NETWORK OF SUPPORT

"I went into education because I think this is the place where we can most directly shape the future," Frank says. "I'm inspired by seeing young people strive and excel as students and professionals. And what's most inspiring about Posse is the incredibly imaginative and successful way of reaching out to our Scholars and identifying leadership capacities in each, building Posses that are self-reinforcing and deliver so many talented students to these universities and to the workplace."

Frank is currently hosting a 10-part series at the Newseum in Washington, D.C., called *The Future of News with Frank Sesno*. He is also a member of the Council on Foreign Relations and serves on the board of trustees of the Potomac School in McLean, Virginia. Frank and his wife Kathy, an artist and musician, have two sons, Matthew and Chris, who are also both Middlebury alumni, and a daughter Emily.\*

## board member highlight

Frank Sesno, Chair  
Posse D.C. Advisory Board

Frank became involved with Posse as a trustee of his alma mater, Middlebury College, and was inspired to join the D.C. Advisory Board in 2004 after attending a Posse Awards Ceremony. He recently became chair of the advisory board and thus a member of the Posse National Board of Directors.

"Frank pursued Posse the way he pursues a good story," says Posse President and Founder Deborah Bial. "He is relentless in his quest to expand Posse's network of support, and we are so grateful for his commitment and incredible generosity."

In a distinguished 30-year career in

Frank Sesno, professor and director of the School of Media and Public Affairs at George Washington University and director of Public Affairs Project at Center for Innovative Media.

public affairs journalism, Frank spent 21 years at CNN, where he served as White House correspondent, anchor and ultimately Washington bureau chief. He has interviewed the last four U.S. presidents and several world leaders including Yasser Arafat, Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak and Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu. He has been involved in

# Alumnus Founds Org. to Serve Impoverished Children

Ryan Letada, Wheaton Posse 5, graduated from Wheaton College in Massachusetts in 2008 with a bachelor's degree in economics. Upon graduating he set out for Manila, Philippines, on a Fulbright Fellowship to research the mass eviction of residents of poor urban communities.

## alumnus highlight

Ryan Letada  
Wheaton Posse 5 (New York)



Less than a year later, he is preparing to send 100 laptops to two schools in small, impoverished fishing communities in the municipality of Lubang in Mindoro, Philippines.

In the summer of 2009, Ryan co-founded eKindling, a nonprofit social venture that seeks to enhance educational opportunities for underserved children.

Ryan Letada, Wheaton Posse 5 Alumnus and co-founder of eKindling, addresses group of Filipino students about XO laptop computer.

eKindling, short for education kindling, got its start when Ryan discovered the organization One Laptop Per Child (OLPC) and set a goal to expand its service to the

Philippines. Since then, eKindling has raised more than \$20,000 from donors across the globe and has partnered with OLPC to help provide their low-cost XO laptop to its intended audience: the world's poorest children.

"I want to provide children in the Philippines with the educational opportunities that will allow them to dream bigger," says Ryan.

Ryan and his family immigrated to the United States when he was 11 years old to escape poverty in the Philippines, settling in the Bronx, New York. He credits his parents' sacrifice for the opportunities he's had to travel the world, pursue a Fulbright and receive a first-rate education.

"My experience with Posse and at Wheaton helped me identify my passion for social entrepreneurship and find ways to make positive change in the world through business and creativity," Ryan says.\*

# Hamilton Dean Promotes Diversity and Access

Monica Inzer is vice president and dean of admission and financial aid at Hamilton College in Clinton, New York. She is the first woman to serve in this role and was recently recognized in *The Chronicle of Higher Education* as one of “10 Admissions Deans Who Are Shaping Their Field.”



Monica Inzer, Hamilton College vice president and dean of admission and financial aid.

students for admission regardless of their ability to pay.

“Monica’s leadership with Posse for the past six years has resulted in a phenomenal partnership,” says Matthew Fasciano, Posse’s chief operating officer. “The partnership has been so successful under her stewardship, that this year Hamilton expanded the program to recruit students from a second site, Posse Miami, in addition to its original site, Posse Boston.”

## partner highlight Hamilton College

Monica’s arrival at Hamilton in 2004 was something of a homecoming, as she grew up in Sherrill, New York, just 20 minutes away. As a first-generation college graduate, she is deeply committed to issues of equity and access in higher education.

“I’m so grateful to be at a place where trustees and the president really care about diversity and access and are willing to make sacrifices to make it a priority,” Monica says.

Her many achievements and innovations at Hamilton include helping the college launch First in the Family, a Web-based project that features Hamilton

faculty and administrators who were the first in their family to go to college. It is designed to be a supportive resource for Hamilton’s first-generation students. More significantly, Monica was instrumental in Hamilton’s recent decision to adopt a need-blind admissions policy, pledging to consider

## MONICA’S LEADERSHIP WITH POSSE FOR THE PAST SIX YEARS HAS RESULTED IN A PHENOMENAL PARTNERSHIP

Prior to Hamilton, Monica served as the dean of admissions at Babson College, where she was instrumental in introducing the Posse Program. She was also the director of admissions at Worcester Polytechnic Institute, a post to which she was appointed at the age of 29. She and her husband Steve, who works with at-risk youth in Utica, New York, have two children, 20-year-old Kelsey and 8-year-old Jack.✱

### “DENISON” from Page 4

about my research with people who were just as passionate about their own research. It expanded my worldview and it was also my first time out of the country.”

## IT WAS GREAT TO SPEAK ABOUT MY RESEARCH WITH PEOPLE WHO WERE JUST AS PASSIONATE ABOUT THEIR RESEARCH

Each Scholar presented individual research. Julian’s research looked at available mentoring programs for African American males on the West side of Chicago, while Victoria explored the lessons to be gleaned from Harper Lee’s Pulitzer Prize-winning novel, *To Kill a Mockingbird*.

All four students were also recently selected as Ronald E. McNair Scholars, a program of the U.S. Department of Education that prepares high achieving undergraduate students for doctoral study through involvement in research and other educational activities.

Other members of Denison Posse 7 are equally involved on campus. Cortez Hicks, who is majoring in educational and black

studies, is chapter president of Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity, the Denison chapter of the Pan-Hellenic Council, and is also the minister of finance for the Black Student Union. He also served as a college mentor for elementary and high school students in Chicago and recently started a program with Julian to provide educational seminars for parents and teens on the college admissions process.

## ALL FOUR STUDENTS WERE ALSO RECENTLY SELECTED AS RONALD E. MCNAIR SCHOLARS

Doneyea Moore and Antonio Brown are also active members of the Black Student Union. Doneyea, a student assistant in the university’s Multicultural Affairs Office, is majoring in biology and participates in the Biological and Chemical Societies on campus.

Antonio is studying history and is involved with the Brother to Brother Mentoring Program and Habitat for Humanity.✱

### “POSSEPLUS” from Page 4

Current events such as President Obama’s election, the appointment of U.S. Supreme Court Justice Sonia Sotomayor and the arrest of Harvard professor Henry Louis Gates, Jr., framed the retreat discussions, which considered the question of whether or not we are in a post-racial society.

Some of the workshops led by Posse staff and professional facilitators included Blogosphere, which examines how comments about race differ in virtual forums, and Spaces, which looks at how race plays out in specific locations on campus.

Each PPR opened with a video on race, which, for the first time, featured on-street pedestrian interviews. The retreats closed with an activity in which participants wrote a children’s book about race. Participants also completed a survey on the topic, which will be used to inform a report that will be released by the Posse Institute later this year.

PossePlus Retreats aim to facilitate community building and productive dialogue while exploring a topic on a national, campus and individual level. Past PPR topics have included social responsibility and education.✱

## posse news + events

**ARNE DUNCAN PRAISES POSSE** On April 17, 2010, U.S. Education Secretary Arne Duncan participated in a town hall meeting hosted by CNN called "Fixing America's Schools," where he responded to a question about college persistence from Posse Atlanta Director Charisse Williams. "Like the president, I'm a huge fan of Posse," he said. "You guys have done an unbelievable job and your graduation rates are through the roof. It's a really innovative, thoughtful program, so I just appreciate your commitment so much."

**2010 PRESIDENTS' CONFERENCE** The 2010 Presidents' Conference on the Economy and Higher Education will be held on Tuesday, October 12, 2010 in New York City. This year's gathering of the presidents and chancellors of the nation's top colleges and universities will feature Nobel laureate Joseph Stiglitz and David Thomas, H. Naylor Fitzhugh professor of business administration at Harvard Business School. The event will be hosted by the Blackstone Group and moderated by University of Wisconsin-Madison Chancellor Carolyn "Biddy" Martin.

**POSSE IN THE ROCKIES** On July 7, 2010, Posse President and Founder Deborah Bial will join leaders from around the world at the prestigious Aspen Ideas Festival in Aspen, Colorado. Her presentation will explore some of the ramifications of race in American society.

**LETTERS APPLAUD BUCKNELL SCHOLARS' GOODWILL** Members of Bucknell Posse 1 (Los Angeles), the first Civic Engagement Posse, exhibited tremendous leadership and goodwill when, on a recent visit to Bucknell, they looked after an elderly woman who was traveling alone to the same destination. Posse and Bucknell received letters praising the students' generosity. "They made her feel loved as if she were their own grandmother," wrote Jin Choi, the woman's granddaughter. "I think you made a good decision in giving them all scholarships," wrote Karen McCahey, a fellow passenger.



U.S. Secretary of Education Arne Duncan answers a question posed by Posse Atlanta Director Charisse Williams.



Bucknell Posse 1 (Los Angeles) Scholars arrive at Los Angeles International Airport with a grandmother they assisted from Harrisburg, Pennsylvania.

## new posse board members

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If you would like to support The Posse Foundation, please contact Helen Katz at [helenk@possefoundation.org](mailto:helenk@possefoundation.org) or send your tax-deductible donation to the address above.

Federal employees can now donate to The Posse Foundation through the Combined Federal Campaign. Posse's CFC number is 11529.

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posse

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