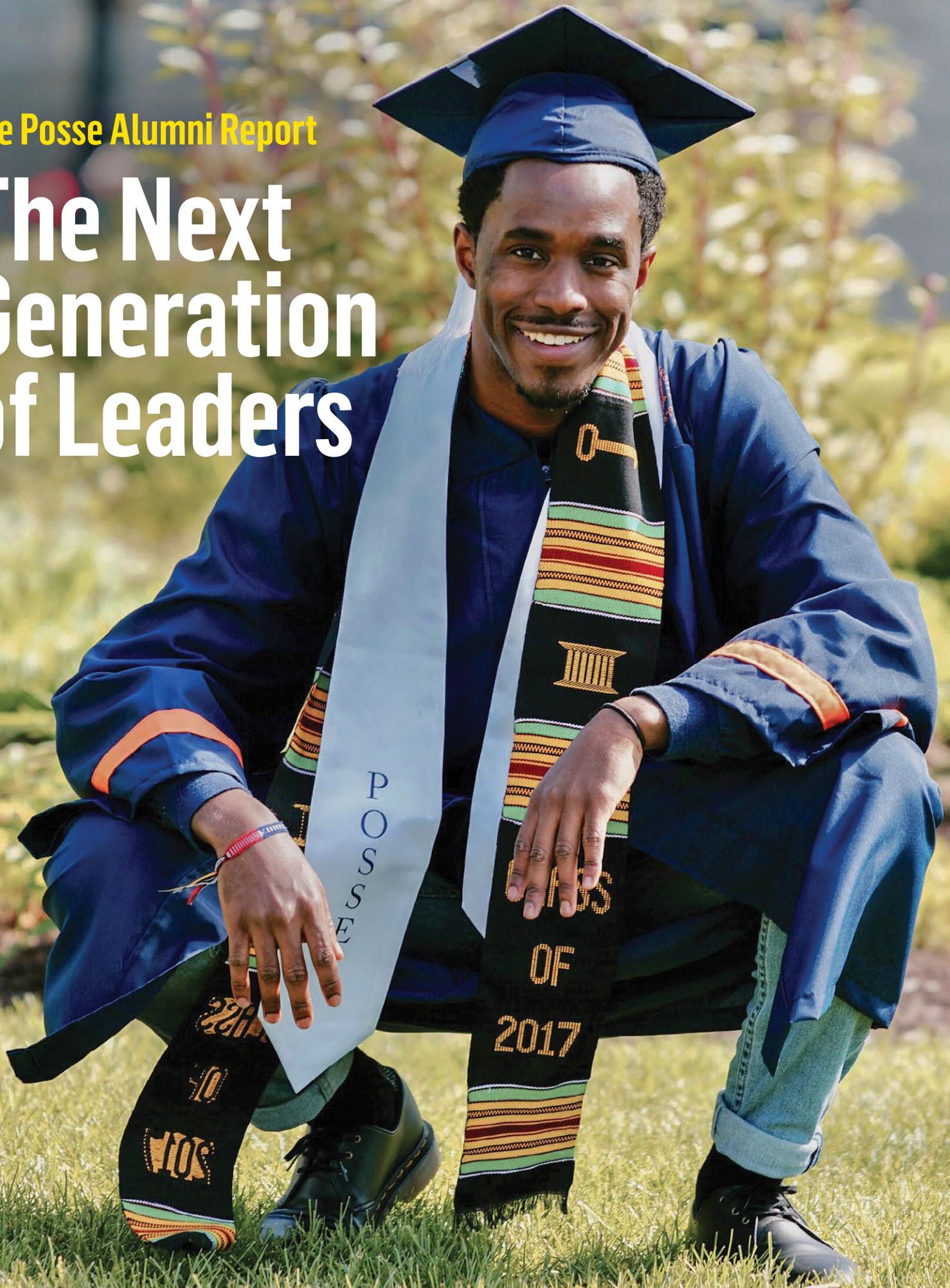


The Posse Alumni Report

# The Next Generation of Leaders



## CONCEPT

Posse started in 1989 because of one student who said,

**“I never would've dropped out of college if I'd had my posse with me.”**

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 colleges and universities (see page 33) award Posse Scholars full-tuition leadership scholarships.

# Program Components

## THE DYNAMIC ASSESSMENT PROCESS

Posse's Dynamic Assessment Process (DAP) is a unique evaluation method that identifies young leaders with great potential. Running from September through December each year, DAP finds students who might be missed by the traditional admissions criteria at highly selective schools but who can excel on campus. DAP uses nontraditional forums to evaluate potential, offering nominated students an opportunity to demonstrate their intrinsic leadership ability, their skill at working in a team setting, and their motivation and drive to succeed. DAP has proven to be an extremely effective tool. Using the three-part process, which includes group and individual interviews, Posse staff and partner college administrators ultimately select a diverse group of 10 students—a Posse—for each institution.

## PRE-COLLEGIATE TRAINING

Posse's Pre-Collegiate Training (PCT) helps Scholars develop as leaders before they matriculate at college. From January to August of their senior year in high school, newly selected Scholars meet weekly with Posse peers and staff for two-hour workshops that address four areas:

- Academic excellence
- Team building and group support
- Cross-cultural communication
- Leadership and becoming an active agent of change

## MISSION

The Posse model works for both students and college campuses and is rooted in the belief that a small, diverse group of talented students—a Posse—carefully selected and trained, can serve as a catalyst for increased individual and community development. As the United States becomes an increasingly multicultural society, Posse believes that the leaders of the 21st century should reflect the country's rich demographic mix. The key to a promising future for our nation rests on the ability of strong leaders from diverse backgrounds to develop consensus solutions to complex social problems. Posse's primary aim is to train these leaders of tomorrow.

## GOALS

- To expand the pool from which top colleges and universities can recruit outstanding young leaders from diverse backgrounds.
- To help these institutions build more interactive campus environments so that they can be more welcoming for people from all backgrounds.
- To ensure that Posse Scholars persist in their academic studies and graduate so they can take on leadership positions in the workforce.

## CAMPUS PROGRAM

The four-year Campus Program works to ensure the retention of Posse Scholars and to increase the impact of the program on campus. Posse staff visit each school four times annually for meetings with Scholars, campus liaisons and mentors. During a Posse's first two years on campus, Scholars meet with their mentor weekly as a group and individually every two weeks. Posse also facilitates a weekend-long PossePlus Retreat for each of its partner schools in the spring. Attended by members of the student body, faculty and administration, PossePlus Retreats explore an important social issue identified by Scholars.

## CAREER PROGRAM

The Career Program connects Posse Scholars and alumni to highly coveted professional development opportunities. By partnering with industry-leading companies and organizations and establishing affiliations with first-tier graduate and professional schools, the Career Program gives Scholars tools to secure competitive internships and leadership-track jobs in a wide range of fields. The Career Program has five components:

- Internships
- Career Development Workshops
- Career Coaching
- Graduate + Fellowship Programs
- The Alumni Network



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# Introduction

*Thirty years ago, The Posse Foundation launched a groundbreaking program aimed at creating a diverse network of leaders in the United States. Starting with five students and one partner school, Vanderbilt University, Posse set out to identify, recruit and train public high school students with extraordinary leadership potential. These young people would hail from the country's largest cities and attend highly selective colleges in teams of 10, or Posses. As alumni, they would enter the workplace well positioned to become leaders in their fields.*

*Today, The Posse Foundation is fulfilling its goal. More than 5,000 Posse alumni are leading in the workplace and over 3,000 Posse Scholars are currently enrolled on campuses across the country. Posse Scholars have collectively won more than \$1.4 billion in full-tuition scholarships from Posse's 58 partner colleges.*

*By connecting dynamic young leaders from urban backgrounds to educational and professional opportunities that match their potential, Posse is building a unique leadership pipeline—one that better represents the voices of all Americans.*

*This report provides a description of the Posse alumni network. The pages that follow highlight the many ways Posse alumni are raising their voices, leading inclusively, and having a positive impact on their families, in the workplace and in society at large.*

Vanderbilt University



The first class of Posse Scholars.

Posse is building  
a unique pipeline that  
better represents the  
voices of all Americans

# Alumni Census

In March 2019, The Posse Foundation conducted an online census of its then 4,868 alumni from nine origin cities: Atlanta, Boston, Chicago, D.C., Houston, Los Angeles, Miami, New Orleans, New York—and from throughout the United States via the Posse Veterans Program.<sup>1</sup> The census remained open for approximately two months and yielded a 59.1 percent response rate.

Demographically, alumni who completed the census constitute a representative sample. Aside from first-generation status and parent education level,<sup>2</sup> group characteristics for census completers are within three percentage points of Posse's overall alumni population. Unless otherwise noted, results throughout this report are from Posse alumni who completed the 2019 census.

# Alumni Profile

The Posse Foundation believes that the leaders of the 21st century should reflect the country's rich demographic mix. To that end, Posse works to expand the pool from which elite colleges recruit students by identifying promising young leaders from the largest public high school systems in the nation—schools with high proportions of students of color and from low-income backgrounds. While Posse Scholars resemble typical college students at highly selective schools in terms of sex and age, they differ greatly along several other dimensions, including race & ethnicity, socioeconomic status, family background, standardized test performance, and high school experience.

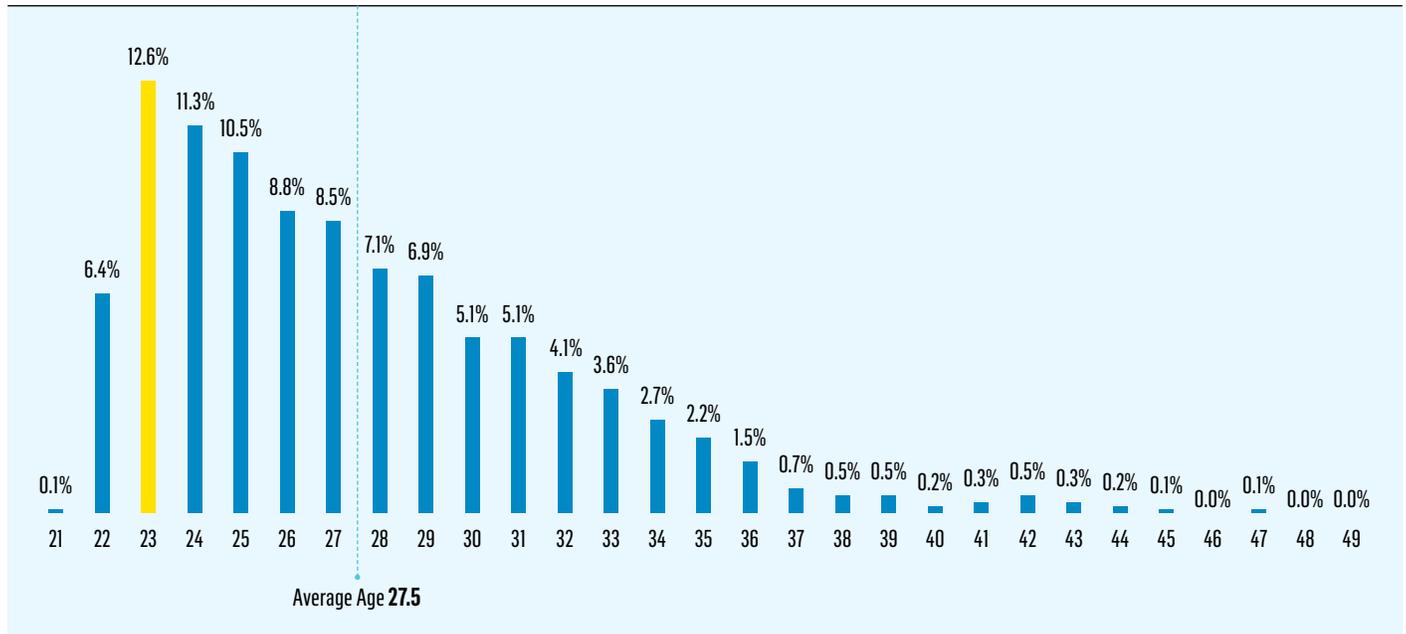
## AGE+SEX

Like typical graduates of selective four-year institutions, most Posse alumni started college at the age of 18. Members of the first Posse cohort—which matriculated at Vanderbilt University in 1989—are in their mid-40s and represent the oldest class of alumni. The average Posse graduate, however, is just 27.5 years old and has been out of college for five to six years (Chart 1). While the number of participating colleges and students grew exponentially from 1999 to the present, resulting in thousands of alumni, the program grew more modestly in its first decade. As a consequence, Posse alumni are, on average, relatively young in their careers.

In 2012, Posse launched the Veterans Program at Vassar College (see spotlight on page 10) to support post-9/11 U.S. veterans interested in pursuing bachelor's degrees at top colleges. Many of the veterans recruited for this program have held meaningful jobs and earned college credits before matriculating at their Posse partner college. As a result, they tend to be older; the average age of Posse Veterans alumni is 33.

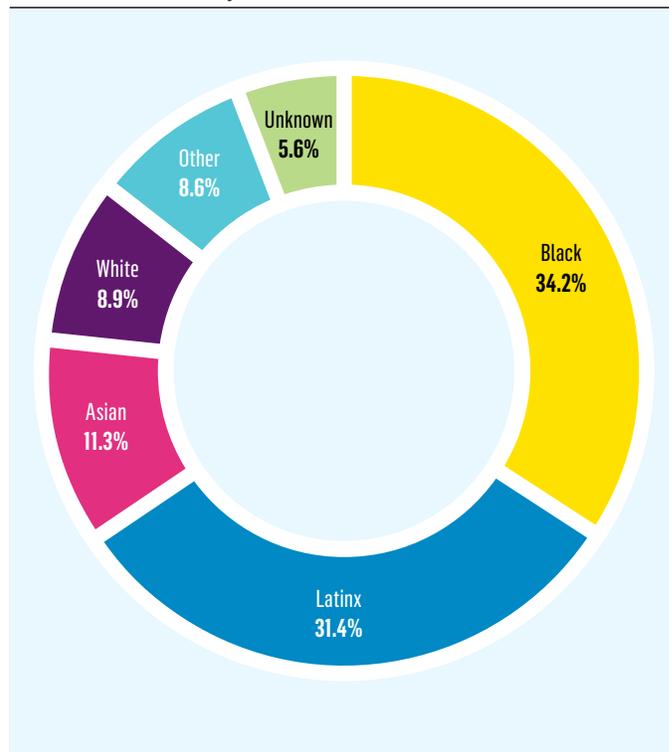
Posse alumni skew female, which accords with current U.S. college student demographics.<sup>3</sup> Posse also partners with five women's colleges—Agnes Scott, Bryn Mawr, Mount Holyoke, Smith, and Wellesley. Consequently, several of Posse's annual Scholar recruitment pools comprise solely female and women-identifying students.

**CHART 1** Posse Alumni by Age





**CHART 2** Posse Alumni by Race

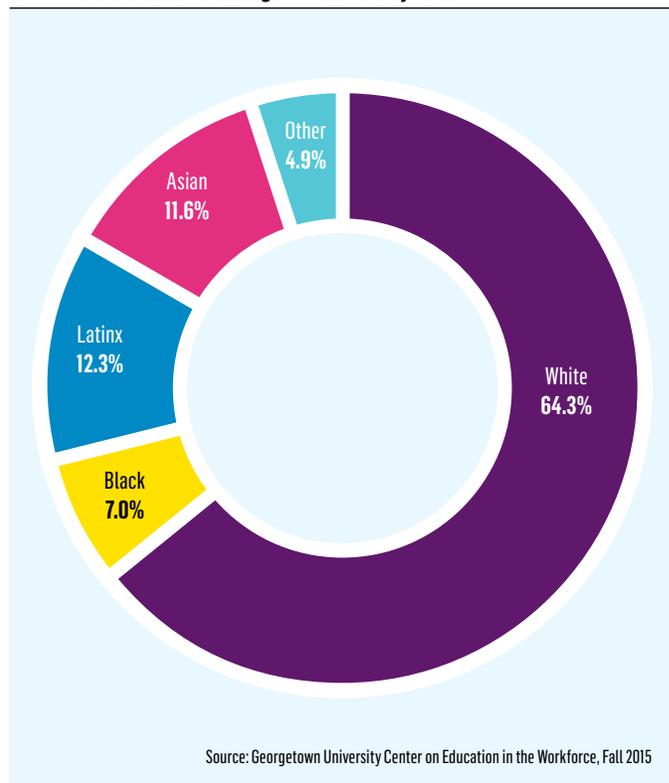


## RACE + ETHNICITY

The majority of Posse alumni belong to an underrepresented racial minority group<sup>4</sup> (Chart 2). In contrast, most alumni of Posse’s partner colleges, and of highly selective schools more generally, are white (Chart 3). According to a 2018 report from Georgetown University, student enrollment at the 468 best-funded and most-selective four-year U.S. institutions is 77 percent white. In addition, Black and Latinx students attend open-access public colleges in disproportionate numbers to their white peers.<sup>5</sup>

Demographers project that by 2045 the U.S. will become “minority white”—a shift that, based on 2017 data, is expected to occur five years earlier than previously thought.<sup>6</sup> This trend, however, is not reflected in leadership positions in the workplace, which remain disproportionately occupied by white men.<sup>7</sup> Eliminating this troubling disparity will require increasing the representation of minority groups at elite schools. Graduates of these institutions often are better positioned to secure top internships, graduate degrees, and, ultimately, leadership-track jobs.<sup>8</sup>

**CHART 3** U.S. Selective College Enrollment by Race



The majority belong to an underrepresented racial minority group

# FAMILY BACKGROUND

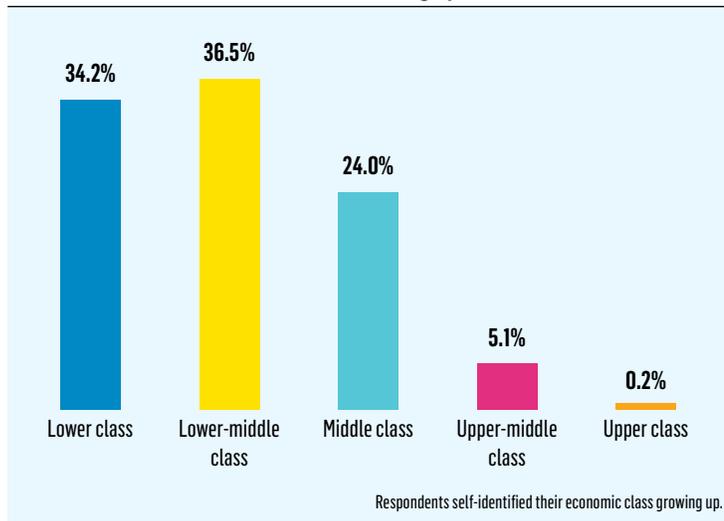
While estimates vary, most studies suggest that between one-quarter and one-third of four-year college students have parents who did not obtain a bachelor's degree.<sup>9</sup> In contrast, more than 60 percent of Posse alumni are first-generation four-year college graduates. Moreover, over 25 percent of these alumni have parents who neither graduated from high school nor earned a GED.

An even greater majority—70 percent—of Posse alumni grew up in lower-class or lower-middle-class households (Chart 4). In comparison, 72 percent of students enrolled at top colleges come from families with incomes in the top quartile<sup>10</sup> (Chart 5).

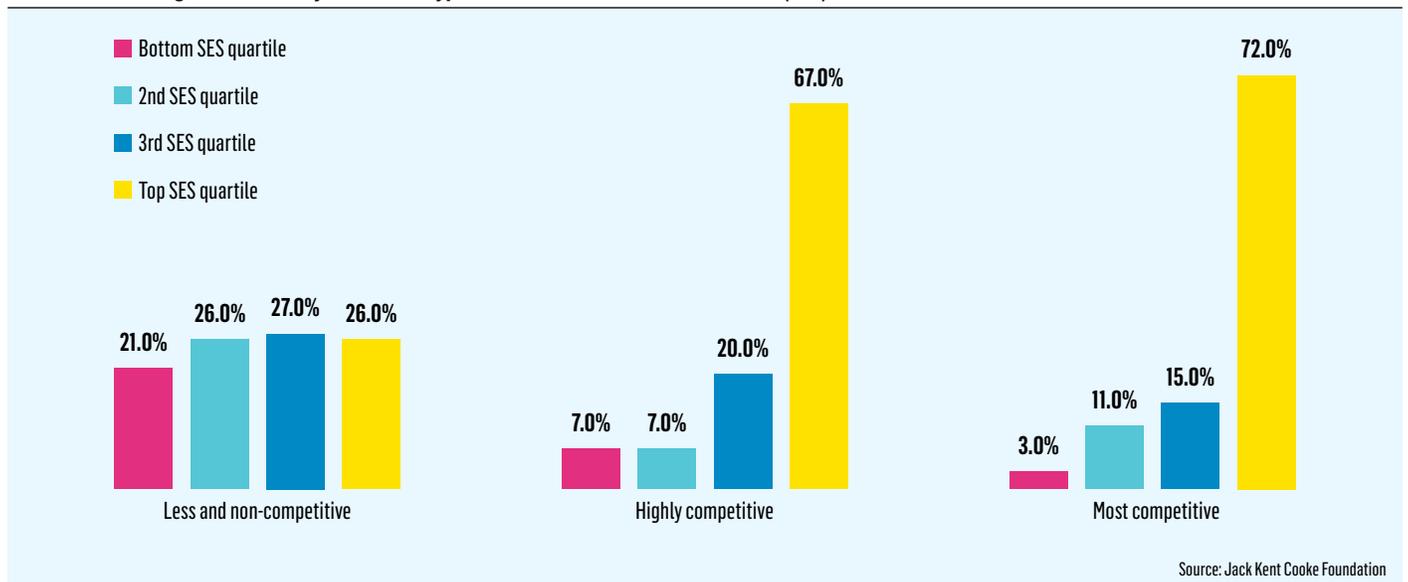
Additionally, upon matriculation nearly 60 percent of Posse alumni were eligible for Pell grant funding, which is typically awarded to undergraduate students who display exceptional financial need. More than three-quarters qualified for full tuition or more financial aid based on their family's FAFSA.

# More than 60% are first-generation four-year college graduates

**CHART 4 Posse Alumni Economic Class Growing Up**



**CHART 5 U.S. College Enrollment by Institution Type and Student Socioeconomic Status (SES)**





Alumni  
graduated  
at a rate of  
approximately  
**90%**

## STANDARDIZED TEST SCORES

The ongoing debate over the value of standardized tests—specifically the SAT and ACT—has led to efforts to limit their influence in admissions. Many colleges today have adopted test-optional policies, and all claim to employ a holistic approach in which test scores are treated as one factor among many.<sup>11</sup>

While such measures and assurances have increased in recent years, standardized tests continue to figure prominently in college admissions. Posse partner institutions, however, select Scholars using Posse's Dynamic Assessment Process (DAP), a tool for evaluating potential that does not rely on standardized test scores. While most Posse partner schools have a median combined reading and math SAT score of 1340 or higher,<sup>12</sup> the median for Posse alumni is 1110, and just 6.1 percent scored 1340 or higher.<sup>†</sup>

Their test scores notwithstanding, Posse alumni persisted in their studies, were highly engaged members of their campus communities, and, most important, graduated at a rate of approximately 90 percent. Their success illustrates well the limitations of standardized testing as a gauge of student potential as well as the effectiveness of DAP.

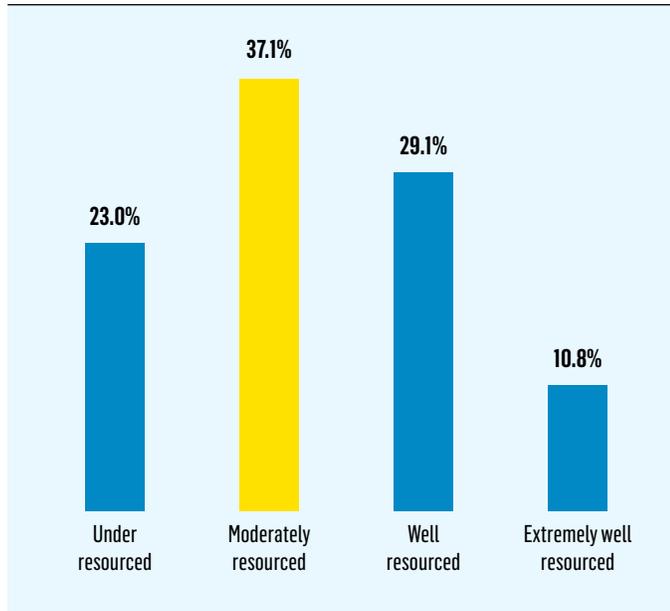


# HIGH SCHOOL EXPERIENCE

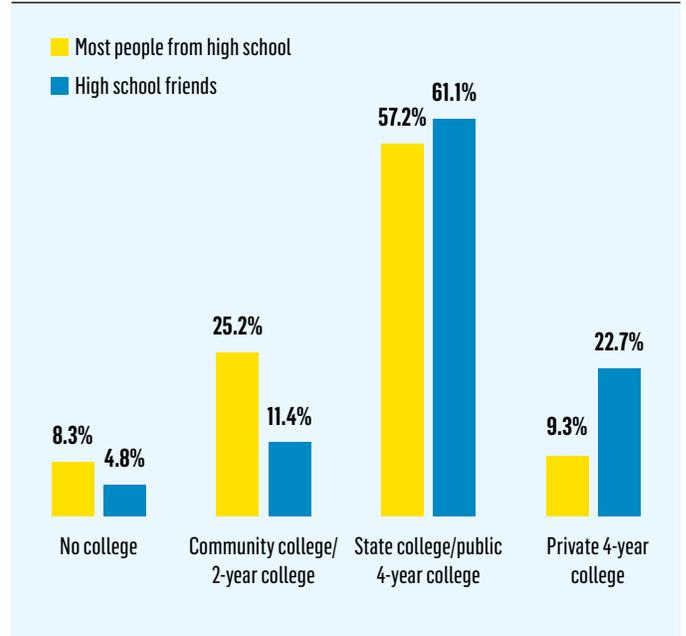
The vast majority of Posse alumni attended an urban public high school. Research suggests that students in urban public schools are less likely to complete college six years after graduating from high school than students who attend suburban and rural public high schools.<sup>13</sup> Additionally, urban public schools tend to receive less government funding than their suburban and rural counterparts, which often results in fewer resources and overcrowded classrooms.<sup>14</sup>

Sixty percent of Posse alumni reported that their high school was either moderately resourced or under-resourced (Chart 6). And just over a quarter believe that their high school prepared them “very well” for the rigors of college.

**CHART 6 What was your high school like?**



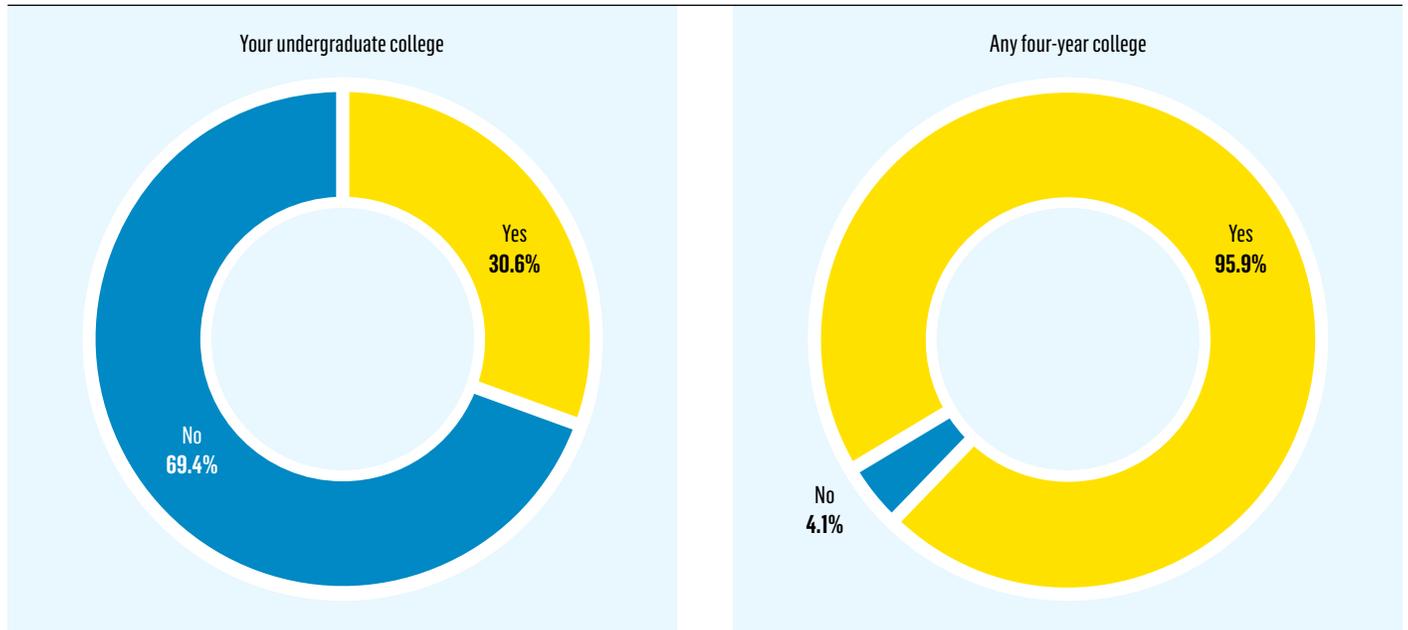
**CHART 7 Where did your peers go to college?**



Posse partners exclusively with four-year institutions of higher education, 90 percent of which are private. Posse alumni reported that their high school peers were much less likely to attend a private four-year institution. More than a third of their peers either did not attend college or went to community or two-year colleges (Chart 7). Approximately 67 percent of Posse alumni also reported attending higher-ranked colleges than most of their high school friends.

While nearly all Posse alumni said they would have attended a four-year college even without Posse, most indicated they would not have applied to the institutions where they matriculated were it not for the program (Chart 8).

**CHART 8 Would you have applied to your undergraduate college or any four-year college without Posse?**



# SPOTLIGHT

## Posse Veterans Program<sup>†</sup>

Launched in 2012, the Posse Veterans Program identifies, trains and supports veterans of the U.S. Armed Forces interested in pursuing bachelor's degrees at top colleges and universities. Those accepted into the program attend college as members of a cohort of veterans. Scholars receive training prior to matriculating on campus and mentoring once enrolled.

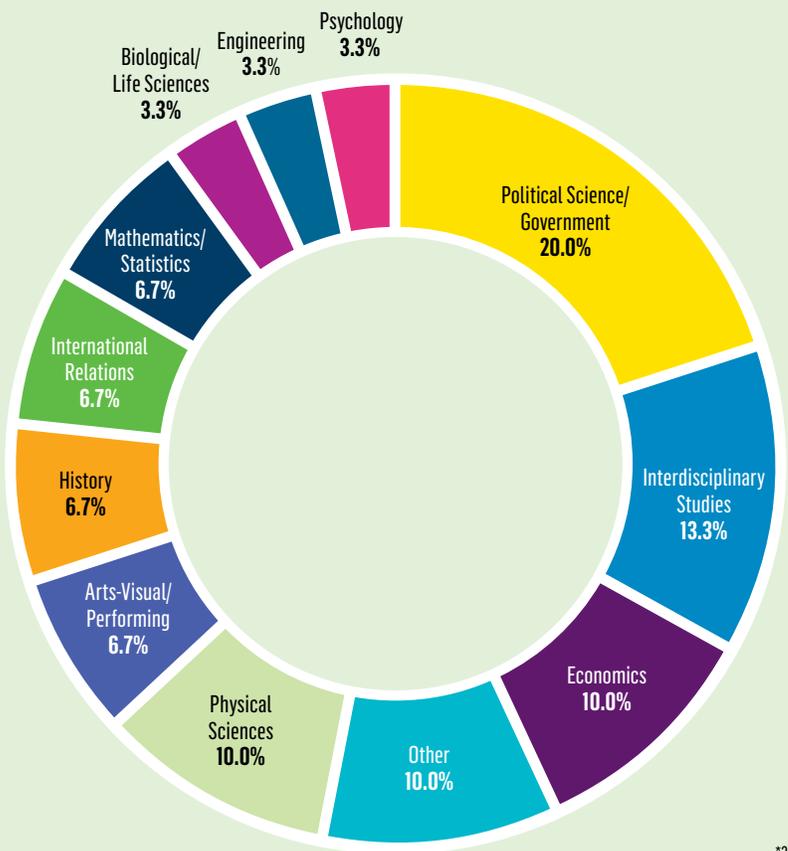
To date, 25 veterans have graduated from the program. Four are currently in graduate school and two have earned master's degrees.

### College + University Partners

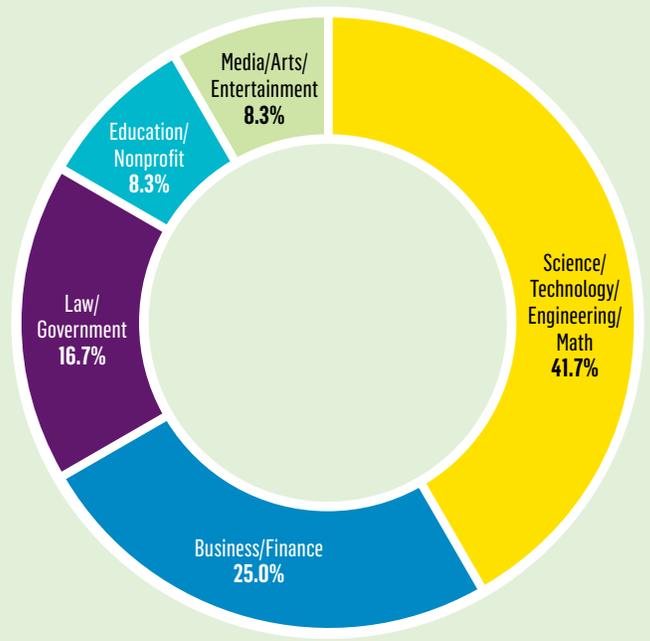
- Dartmouth College
- University of Chicago
- University of Virginia
- Vassar College
- Wesleyan University



**CHART 9 Posse Veterans Alumni Undergraduate Major Fields of Study\***



**CHART 10 Posse Veterans Alumni Career Industries**



\*25 veterans have 30 fields of study.  
<sup>†</sup>Data shown are for all Posse Veterans alumni.

# Undergraduate Experience

Before matriculating on campus, Scholars participate in an intensive pre-collegiate training program focused on academic excellence, cross-cultural communication, team building and dynamic leadership. On campus, Scholars benefit from programming designed to support their persistence and graduation. This includes regular campus visits by Posse staff, meetings with a faculty mentor, annual retreats, and a variety of career-oriented supports.



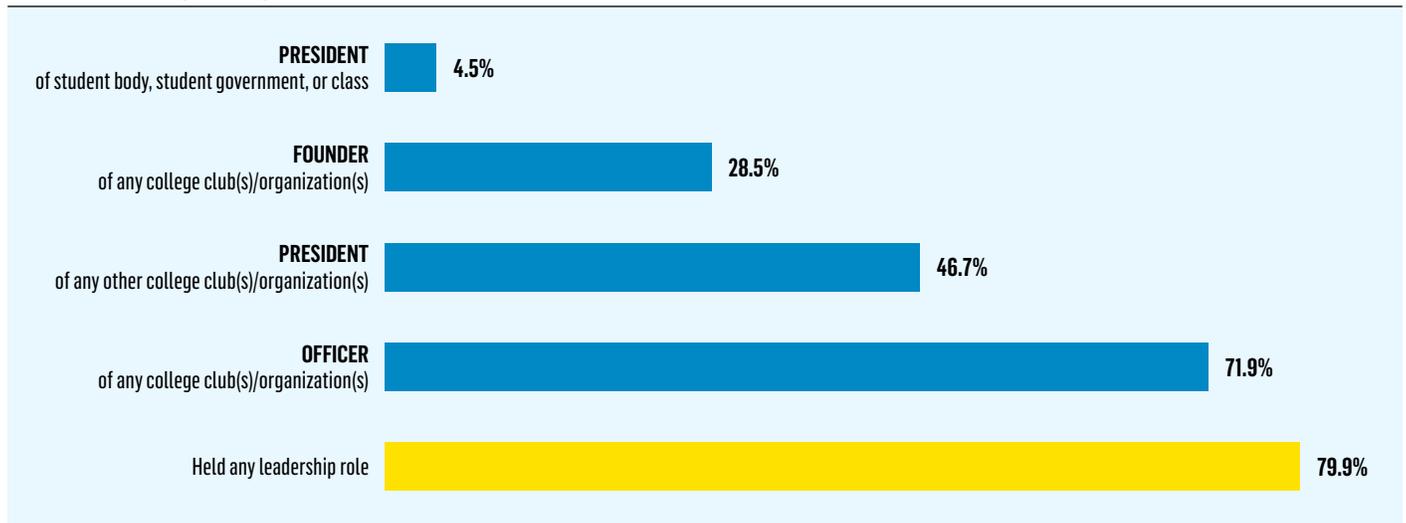
## LEADERSHIP

As a result of the comprehensive support they receive prior to matriculating, Scholars arrive on campus ready to lead. Nearly 80 percent of Posse alumni held a formal leadership role on campus (Chart 11). Approximately five percent were presidents of the student body government, and 50 percent founded or were presidents of other student organizations. Alumni also led in informal ways: tutoring classmates, volunteering on and off campus, and engaging in extracurricular studies within their academic departments.

Each year they were enrolled in college, Posse alumni both led and participated in PossePlus Retreats (PPRs), 3-day convenings of more than 100 members of the campus community. PPRs offer a unique opportunity to explore an important topic related to social justice. Since 2008, Posse has facilitated 500 retreats with more than 46,000 participants.

Nearly **80%** held a formal leadership role on campus

CHART 11 Leadership on Campus



## HONORS + AWARDS

Despite being underrepresented at elite colleges, Posse alumni excelled academically at their alma maters. The average final college GPA of Posse alumni was 3.14,<sup>†</sup> and over a third graduated with honors, including Latin, departmental, and thesis honors (Chart 12). A majority of Posse alumni were on their school's Dean's List at some point during college. Additionally, many exceeded their schools' baseline degree expectations, with nearly a quarter completing more than one college major and 39 percent completing at least one minor.<sup>†</sup>

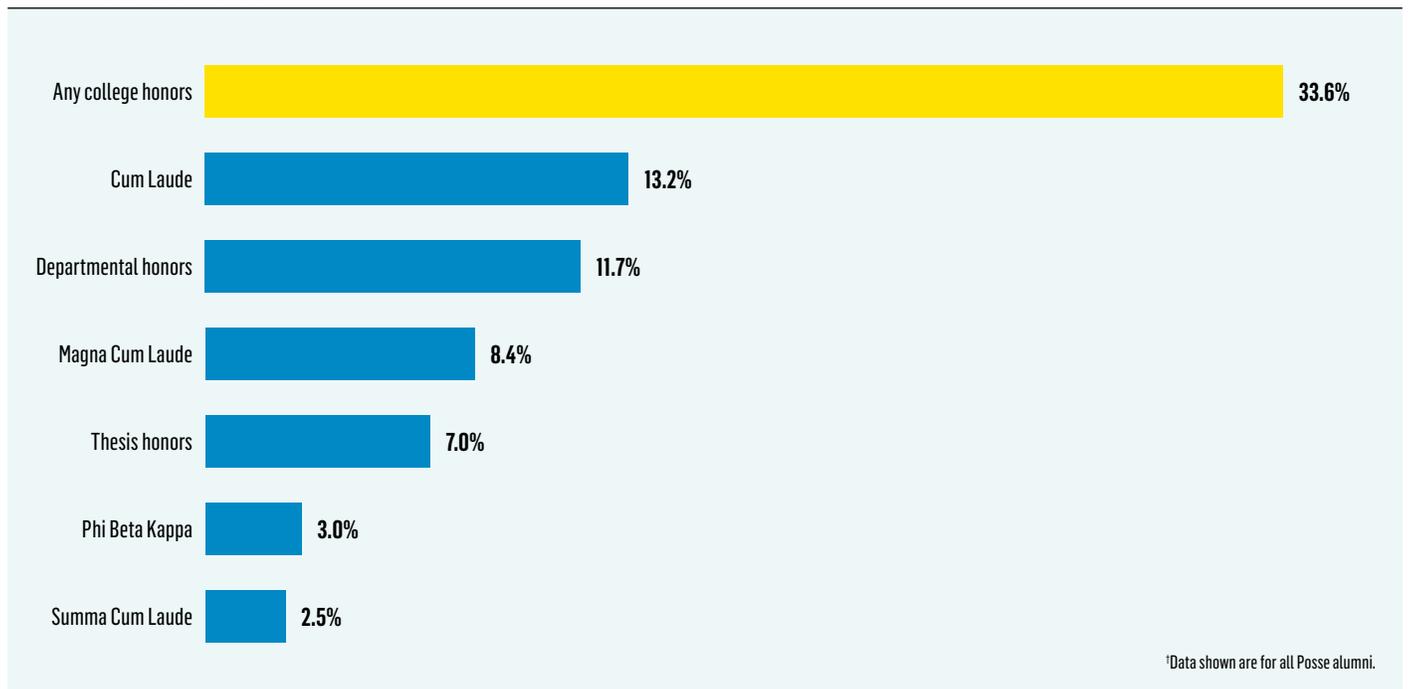
Alumni pursued a wide range of major fields of study (Chart 13). More than half of Posse alumni took advantage of international opportunities for scholarship, typically available only to students in good academic standing. These alumni studied abroad in 114 different countries (Chart 14).

Due to their academic success, many Posse alumni also belong to competitive honor societies and have received numerous scholarships and fellowships for undergraduate and graduate study opportunities (see spotlight on pages 16 and 17).

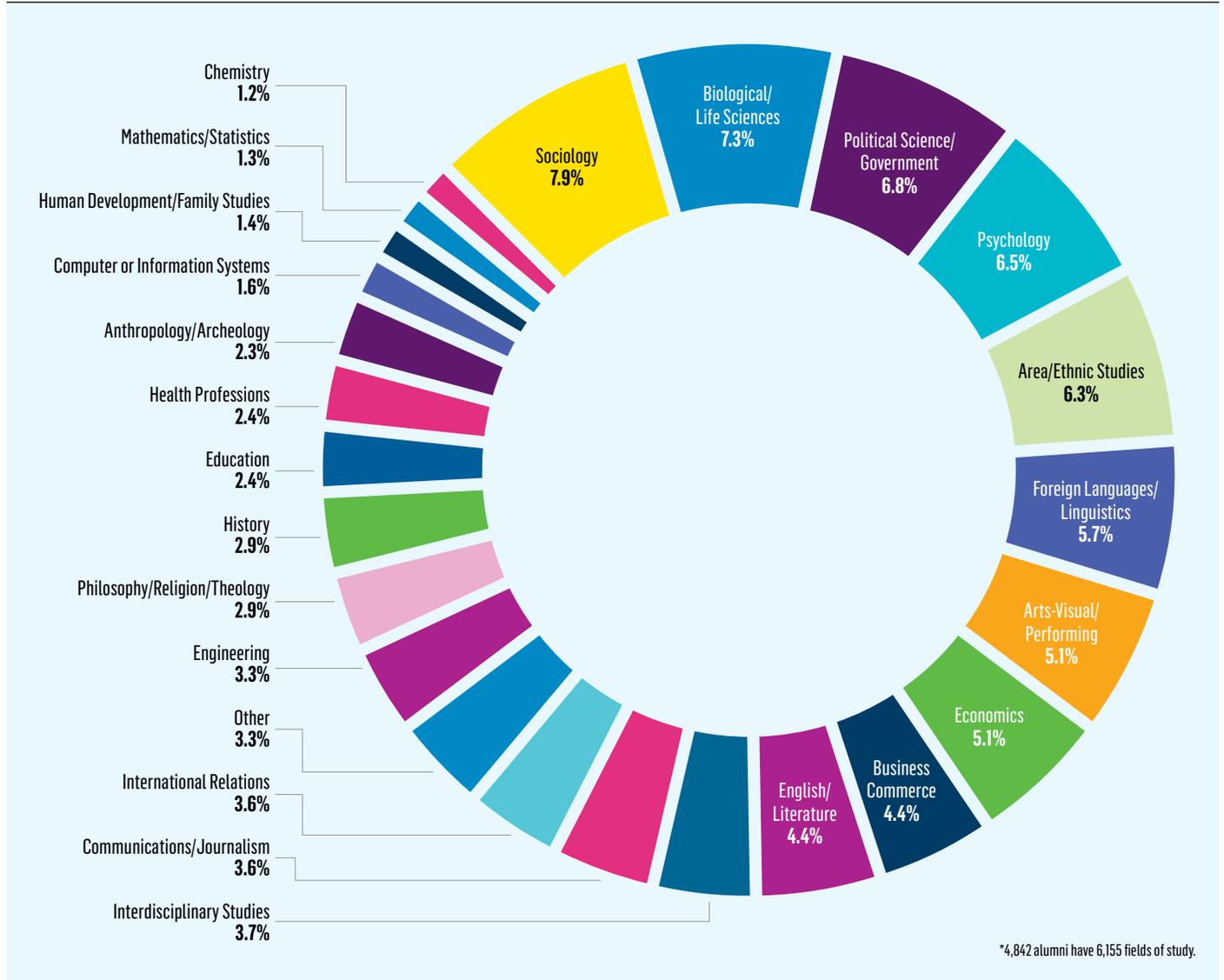


# More than **33%** graduated with honors, including Latin, departmental, and thesis awards

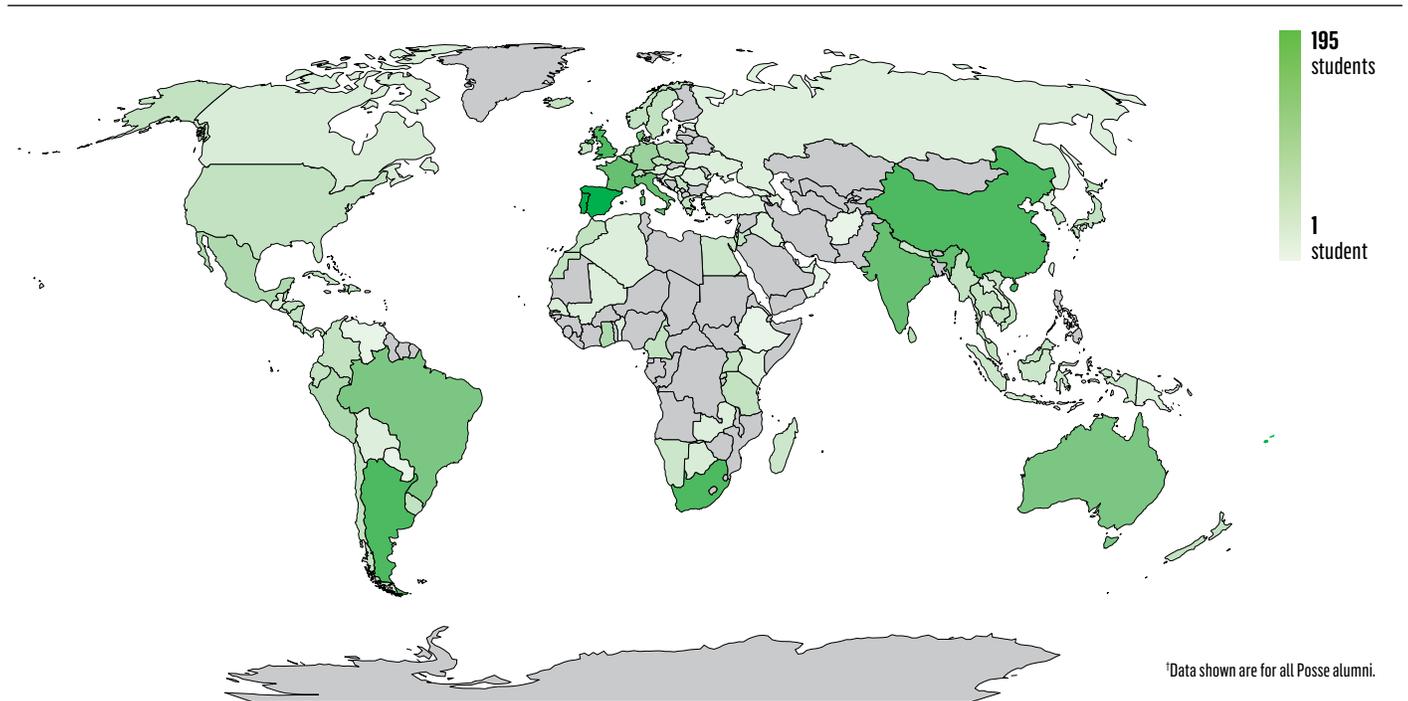
CHART 12 Graduation Honors



**CHART 13 Undergraduate Major Fields of Study<sup>†\*</sup>**



**CHART 14 Study Abroad Countries**





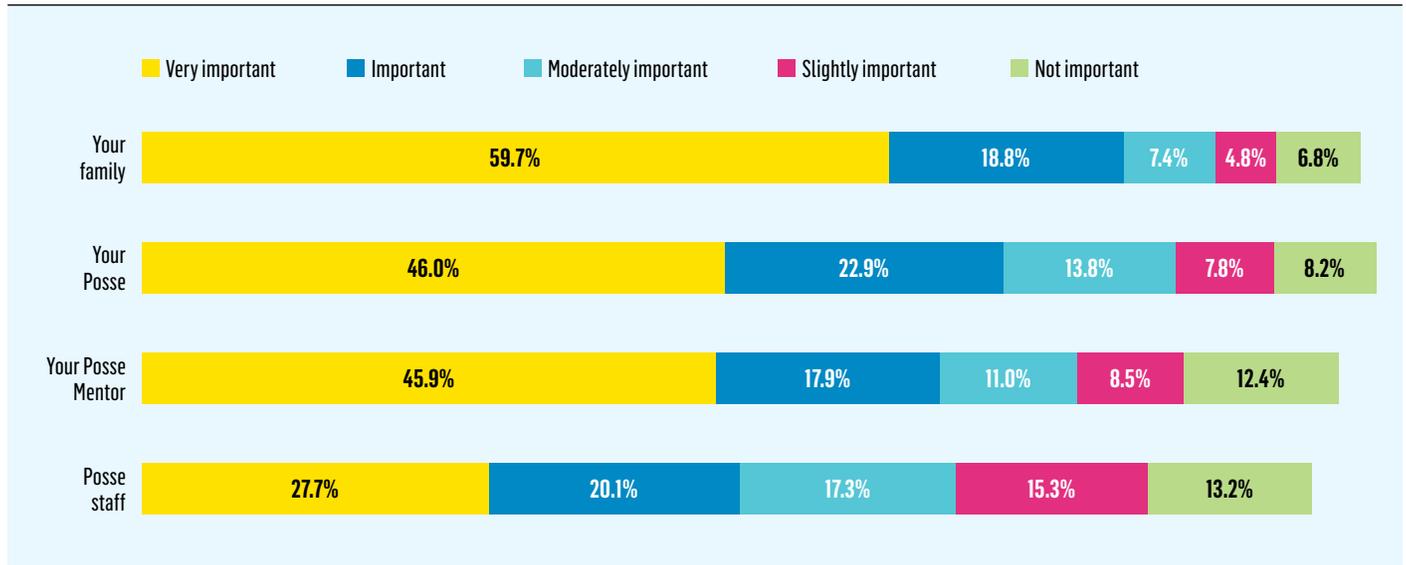
## PERSISTENCE+RETENTION

Posse alumni as a whole excelled on campus and the overwhelming majority (90 percent) went on to graduate. Despite their success, however, many alumni also experienced significant obstacles. For these graduates, the combination of rigorous academics, new social expectations, and emergent adulthood resulted in considerable stress and anxiety during their time on campus. Nearly a third of Posse alumni at some point considered dropping out.

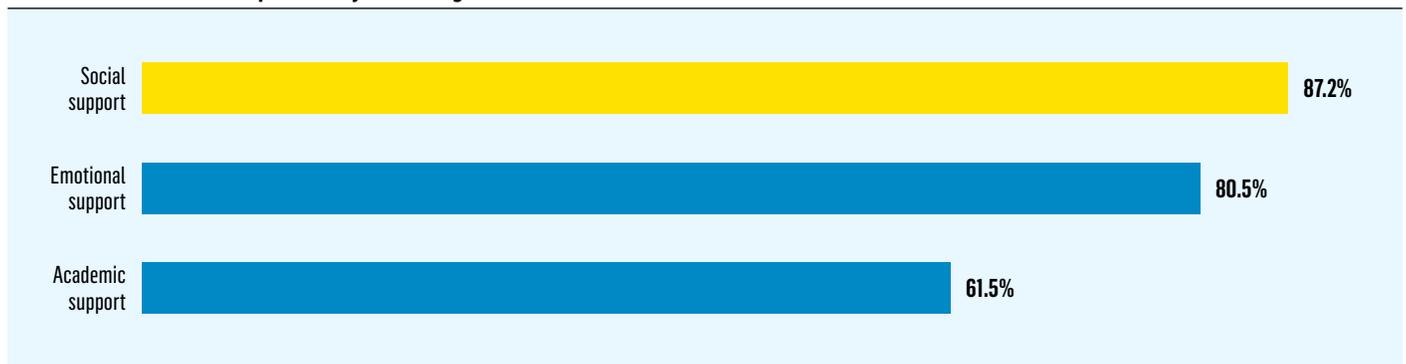
Community support was a key factor in their persistence. Most alumni rated their families, their fellow Posse members, and their Posse mentors as important or very important to keeping them enrolled (Chart 15).

Even if they did not actively consider dropping out, alumni credited Posse for helping them persevere through the normal ups and downs of college. A majority of alumni reported that Posse staff and programming were sources of social, emotional and academic support (Chart 16).

**CHART 15** If you thought about dropping out, how important were the following to keeping you in college?



**CHART 16** How was Posse important to you in college?





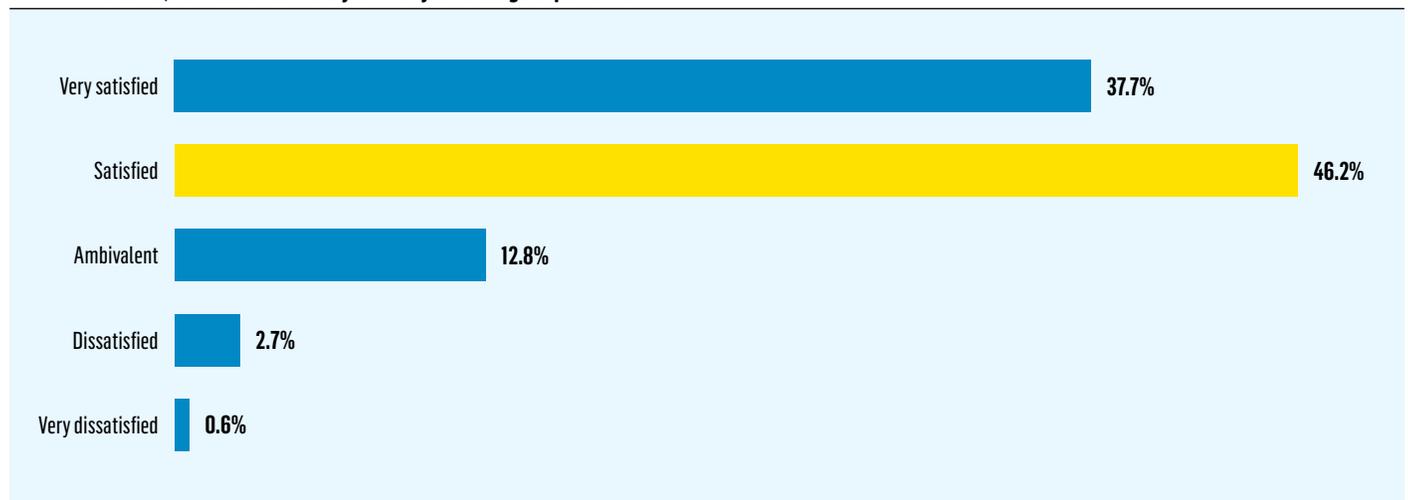
# 94% rated the quality of their undergraduate education highly

The challenges notwithstanding, alumni were overwhelmingly happy with their college experience, with 83.9 percent saying they were satisfied or very satisfied (Chart 17) and 94.2 percent rating the quality of their undergraduate education highly.

Alumni also reported that they value the on-campus college experience. When asked if they could get the same degree online or in person, 93.2 percent said they would prefer to be educated in person. Given the rise of online degree programs and the convenience of new technologies, it is notable that these future leaders strongly prefer an on-campus, in-person experience.

Finally, Posse alumni<sup>†</sup> boast a six-year graduation rate of approximately 90 percent—more than 20 percentage points higher than the average six-year graduation rate for private nonprofit institutions.<sup>15</sup>

**CHART 17** Overall, how satisfied were you with your college experience?



<sup>†</sup>Data shown are for all Posse alumni.

# SPOTLIGHT

## Graduate School + Fellowships†

Post-baccalaureate degrees have become more popular over the past several decades and continue to be important for career advancement.<sup>16</sup> Posse's Graduate + Fellowship Program works to match Posse Scholars' considerable potential with national fellowships and graduate school programs, which offer Scholars and alumni access to influential networks and propel them forward in their careers. As part of these efforts, Posse's Graduate School Affiliates offer Posse Scholars and alumni a limited number of full-tuition fellowships each year.

More than 70 percent of alumni are currently attending, planning to attend, or have already completed graduate or professional school.

### Graduate School Affiliates

- Carnegie Mellon Heinz College of Information Systems and Public Policy
- Cornell Law School
- Duke Fuqua School of Business
- Johns Hopkins University Krieger School of Arts & Sciences
- Northeastern University D'Amore-McKim School of Business
- Northwestern University Kellogg School of Management
- Northwestern University Pritzker School of Law
- Teachers College, Columbia University
- University of Chicago Booth School of Business
- University of Washington School of Social Work
- Yale School of Forestry & Environmental Studies



Since 2001, Posse Scholars and alumni have been awarded over 500 national fellowships, including

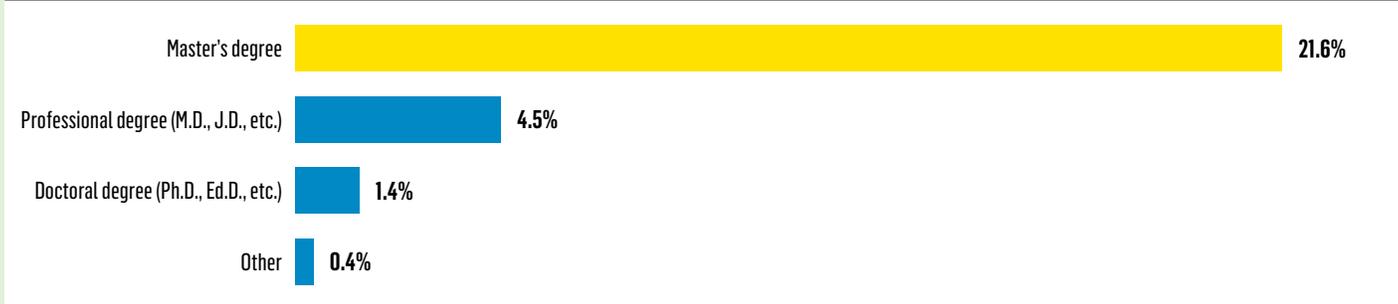
- Beinecke Scholarship Program
- Boren Scholarship
- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention Fellowship
- Critical Language Scholarship
- Davis Projects for Peace
- Ford Foundation Fellowship
- Fulbright U.S. Student Program
- Fulbright UK Summer Institute
- Gates Cambridge Scholarship
- Gilman International Scholarship Program
- Humanity in Action Fellowship
- Luce Scholars Program
- Marshall Scholarship
- McNair Scholarship
- Mellon Mays Undergraduate Fellowship
- National Institutes of Health Undergraduate Scholarship Program
- National Science Foundation Graduate Research Fellowship
- Paul & Daisy Soros Fellowship for New Americans
- Peace Corps
- Presidential Management Fellows Program
- Schwarzman Scholars
- Rangel Fellowships
- Thomas J. Watson Fellowship
- Thomas R. Pickering Foreign Affairs Fellowship
- Truman Scholarship
- Woodrow Wilson Teaching Fellowship



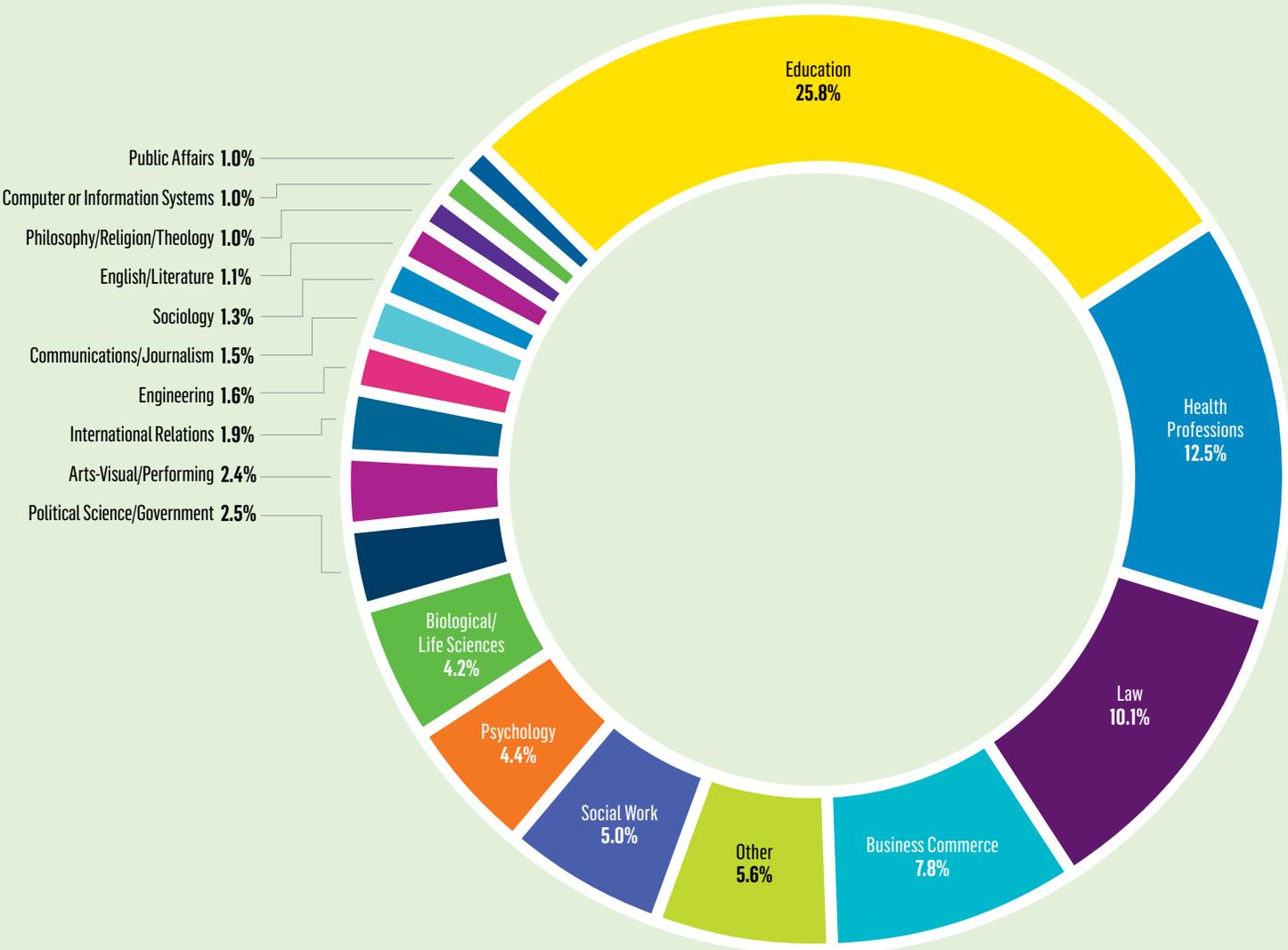
†Data shown are for all Posse alumni.

# Of alumni who have been out of college for five or more years, **40.8%** have obtained an advanced degree

**CHART 18 Highest Graduate Degree Obtained**



**CHART 19 Graduate Degrees by Fields of Study**



# Alumni in the Workforce

*Posse's ultimate goal is to build a powerful network of inclusive leaders who represent our country's rich diversity. Through its Career Program, the Foundation supports Scholars as they transition from leading on campus to leading in the workforce. The program provides workshops on résumé writing and interviewing, an online jobs portal, one-on-one career coaching, and internship opportunities at more than 200 industry-leading companies and organizations.*

*Due in part to these supports, Posse alumni are ascending to positions of leadership in a wide array of professional fields—from business to the arts, academia to government. Their growing presence in the workplace, at the tables where important decisions are made, is proof positive the program works.*

## EMPLOYMENT RATE + FIELDS

Nearly 100 percent of Posse alumni are currently employed or attending graduate school; just 1.7 percent are unemployed (Chart 20). More than two-thirds of alumni said that Posse helped them find a job or internship, a figure that is likely to increase as the Posse alumni network grows and the organization continues to invest in meaningful career development opportunities.

Posse alumni hold a broad range of positions across multiple fields, with many taking on roles in education, nonprofit, and STEM (read about the Posse STEM Program on page 26). On the following page are the industries of alumni who provided information on their current employment (Chart 21).<sup>†</sup>

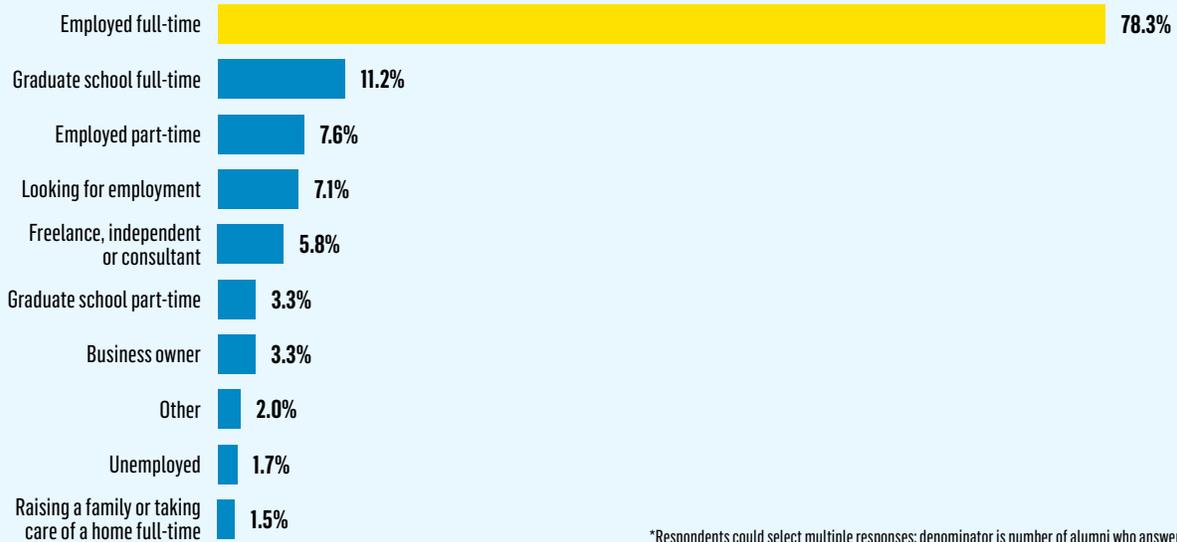


Nearly **100%**  
are currently  
employed or attending  
graduate school



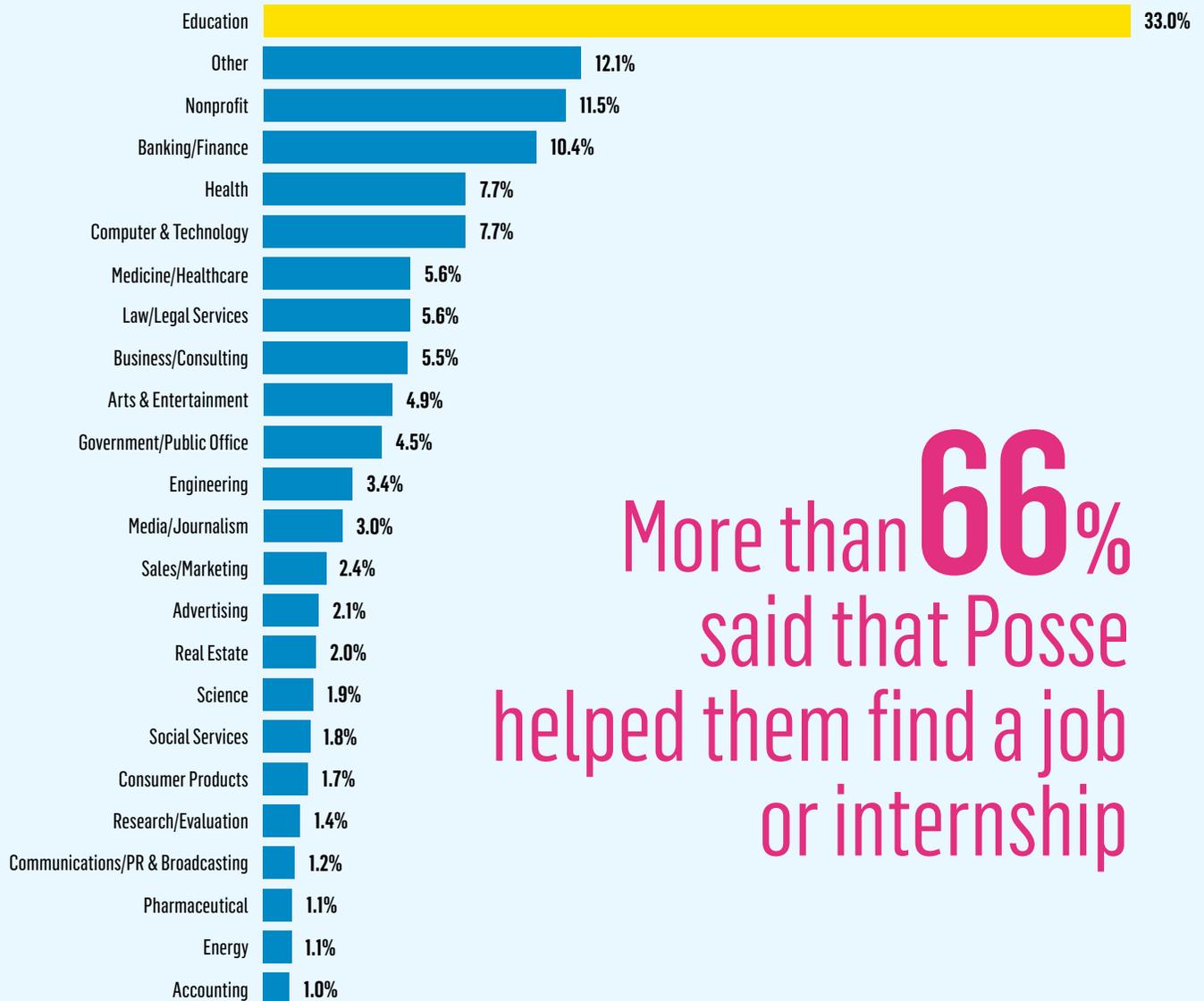
<sup>†</sup>Data shown are for all Posse alumni.

CHART 20 Current Professional Status\*



\*Respondents could select multiple responses; denominator is number of alumni who answered this question.

CHART 21 Alumni Job Industries



More than **66%**  
said that Posse  
helped them find a job  
or internship

# PROFESSIONAL ADVANCEMENT + ECONOMIC MOBILITY

Posse alumni are steadily advancing in the workplace, reaching more senior positions and enjoying higher earnings as their careers progress (Charts 22 and 23).<sup>†</sup> Nearly 10 percent of Posse alumni are in a CEO/president, C-suite, or executive-level role six or more years after graduating from college. Posse alumni also occupy managerial positions at high rates, especially as their careers advance (Chart 24).

In the United States, workers with a bachelor's degree are much less likely to be unemployed and earn 39.3 percent more per week, on average, than employees whose education did not progress past high school.<sup>17</sup> In addition, recent research from the National Center for Education Statistics suggests that earning a bachelor's degree effectively erases the discrepancy between first-generation graduates and their peers in terms of employment status and earnings post-graduation.<sup>18</sup>

Indeed, among Posse alumni who graduated from college more than 10 years ago, over 80 percent are in a higher economic class now than when they were growing up (Chart 25). Of alumni who experienced upward social mobility, 92 percent attribute the change to their undergraduate education.

CHART 22 Current Job Level

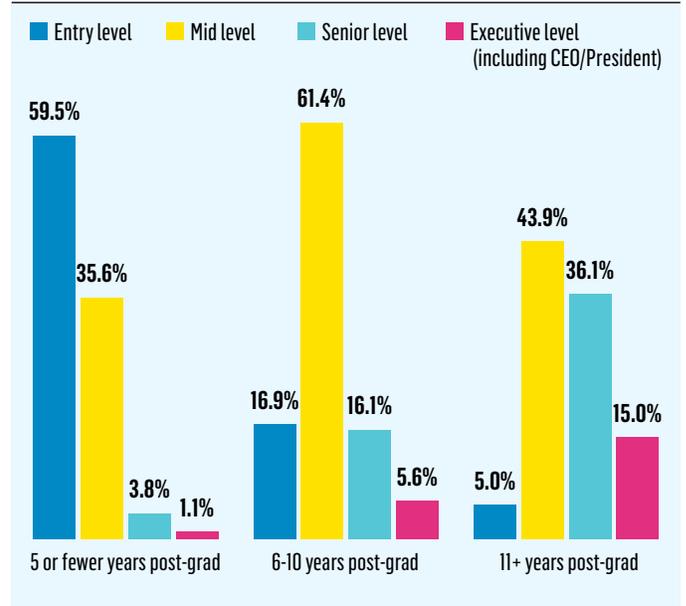
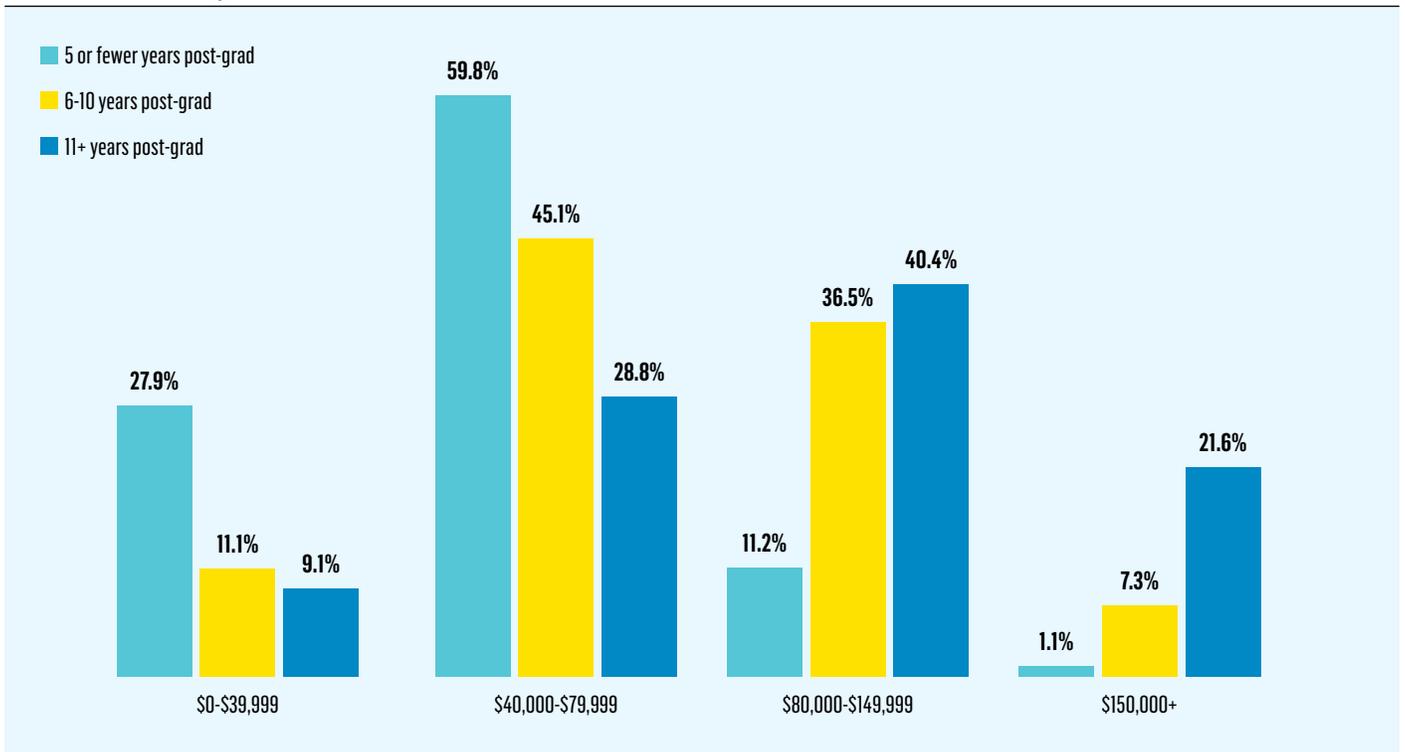
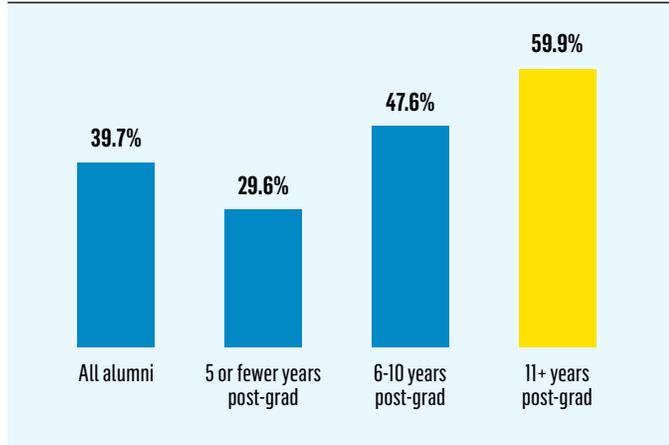


CHART 23 Current Salary

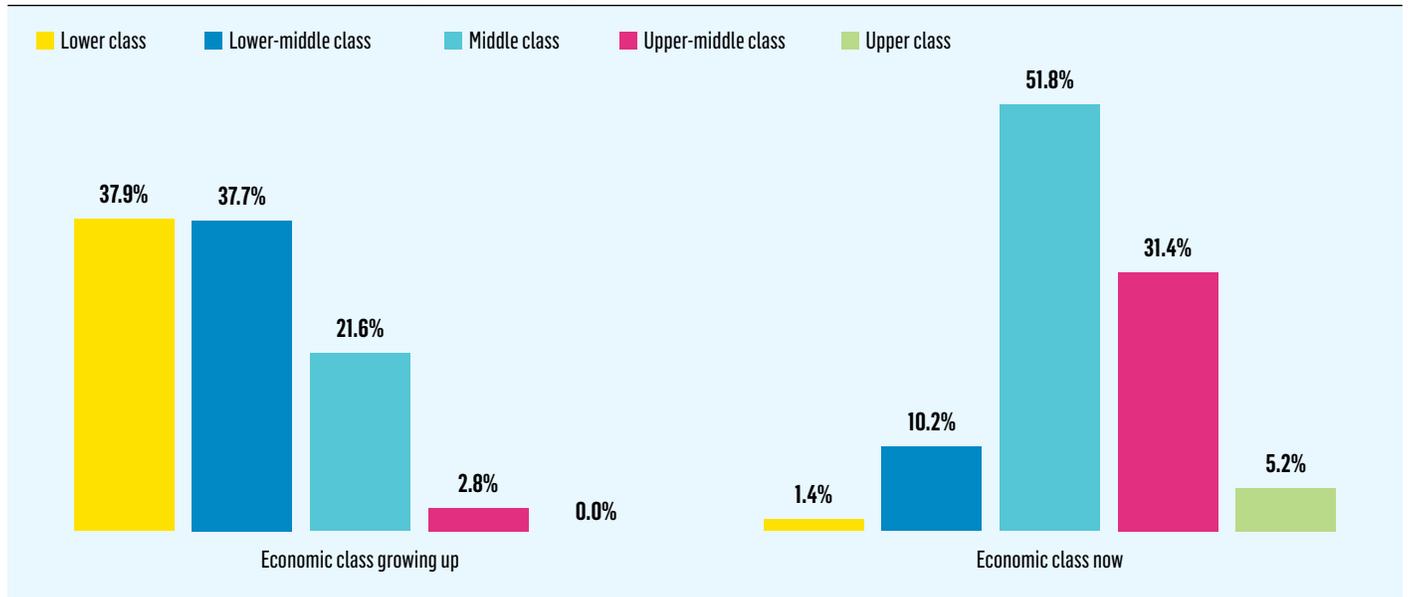


<sup>†</sup>Data shown are for all Posse alumni.

**CHART 24** Posse Alumni in a Management Position



**CHART 25** Posse Alumni Upward Social Mobility (11+ years post-grad)



Of alumni who graduated more than 10 years ago, over **80%** are in a higher economic class today

# Posse alumni are **TRAILBLAZERS** in both the workforce and graduate school

**Below are just some of the many significant professional accomplishments alumni have achieved post graduation.**

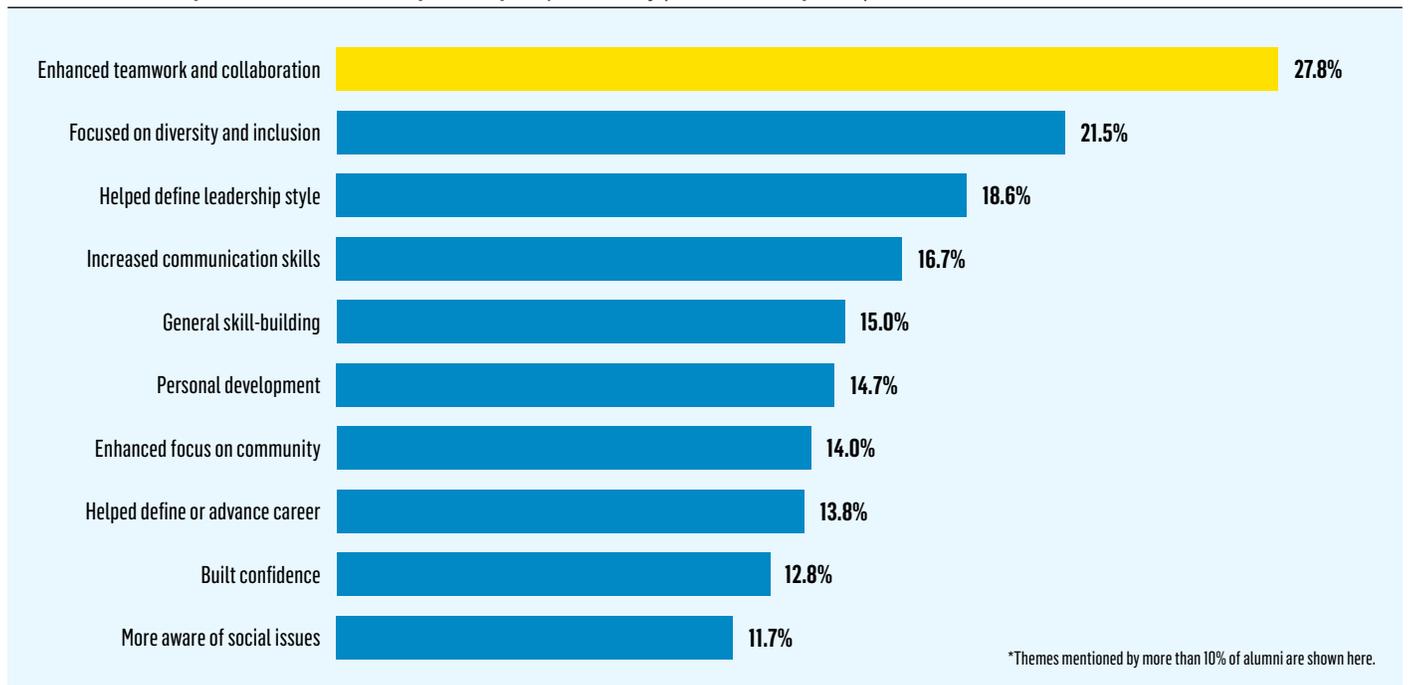
- First author of published paper on the effects of HIV treatment interruption
- First LGBTQ ordained clergy member at Emmanuel Baptist Church
- First black Ph.D. recipient in mathematics from Iowa State University
- Policymaker involved in creating the Fair Chance Housing Law
- Stuart Hall Fellowship recipient at Harvard University
- Two-time National Science Foundation grant recipient
- Co-author and illustrator of book on The New York Times Best Seller list
- Executive Director of a nonprofit bringing mindfulness to young people navigating trauma
- First black Regional Manager at global medical device company
- Patent holder for patient monitoring system
- Director of Official Selection film at Sundance Film Festival
- Inaugural Dean of Diversity & Inclusion at Claremont McKenna College
- Obama Administration Presidential appointee at the U.S. Department of Energy
- Chicago Business Journal Women of Influence honoree
- Developer of rainwater filtration system in Kenya
- Federal agent in major New York City criminal case
- Raised more than \$6 million for The Studio Museum in Harlem
- Director of Official Selection film at Cannes Film Festival
- Principal at a New York City high school; honored for improving graduation rate by over 47% in two years
- Wrote breaking news stories on the Trump presidency
- Chief Technology Officer at a software company
- Chief Resident at University of Connecticut School of Medicine
- Drafted gun violence prevention ordinances
- Performed on *Jimmy Kimmel Live* and *Late Night with Seth Meyers*
- One of 300 certified Orofacial Myologists worldwide
- Research professor at top R1 university
- Graduated in top 10% of Howard University School of Law class
- Co-founder of the African Leadership University
- Ran educational conference for 3,500 students from 60+ countries
- Alzheimer's Association Conference speaker
- Washington Post Engineering Innovation Award winner
- Performed at The Public Theater
- Published research in Journal of Neurophysiology
- Federal Employee of the Year nominee
- First Dominican American four-year college president
- Ulster County Life-Saving Award recipient
- American Heart Association Postdoctoral Fellow
- Out & Equal Workplace Summit presenter
- Created online curriculum for over 30,000 Texas high school students
- Marketing campaign manager for Grand Canyon National Parks 100th Anniversary
- Society of the Silurians Excellence in Journalism Award recipient
- Launched database for Los Angeles County Homeless Services
- Implemented a statewide healthy food initiative for underserved communities
- General Manager of NBA team
- Full-tuition medical school scholarship winner
- Pioneered the launch of a new language for Amazon Alexa
- Partnered with NAACP to rename school named after a Confederate general
- Closed a billion-dollar banking deal
- Emmy Award winner
- Published in the Georgetown Journal of Law
- Published poet
- Reuters Fellow at Oxford University
- Urban planner developing equitable transit in Chicago
- Traveling writer for National Geographic
- Peace Corps Volunteer in Costa Rica



## INCLUSIVE LEADERSHIP

More than half of alumni answered the question, “How has Posse influenced the way you lead in your workplace or community?” Alumni most frequently mentioned Posse’s role in helping them to lead collaboratively and inclusively in team settings. Other common responses included increasing their appreciation for diversity, honing their leadership style, and improving their communication skills. Several respondents also mentioned personal development, increased confidence, and a deeper appreciation for building community (Chart 26).

**CHART 26** Posse’s Impact on Alumni Leadership in Workplace/Community (Qualitative Responses)\*





“Posse has been influential in how I interact with my co-workers and community members and has given me the strength to push boundaries and question as well as effectively strategize solutions to issues that often go unspoken.”

**Nancy Corona**

Community Liaison at the Office of New York City Council Member Carlos Menchaca

LAWRENCE UNIVERSITY

“Posse helped me to polish the way I engage with different types of people with varying perspectives while maintaining my authenticity. Posse also armed me with skills to debate and respectfully challenge someone’s perspective rather than the person. This has been very helpful for my professional career.”

**Brandon Holden**

Enterprise Account Manager at Bloomberg LP

BUCKNELL UNIVERSITY

“My Posse experience created a new trajectory for me as a Scholar and as a person. It proved to me the power of mentors and the power of a network, critical knowledge I’ve taken with me throughout my career, particularly as I’ve moved into leadership spaces that were not created for women or for women of color.”

**Shirley M. Collado, Ph.D.**

President of Ithaca College

VANDERBILT UNIVERSITY

# CAREER SATISFACTION

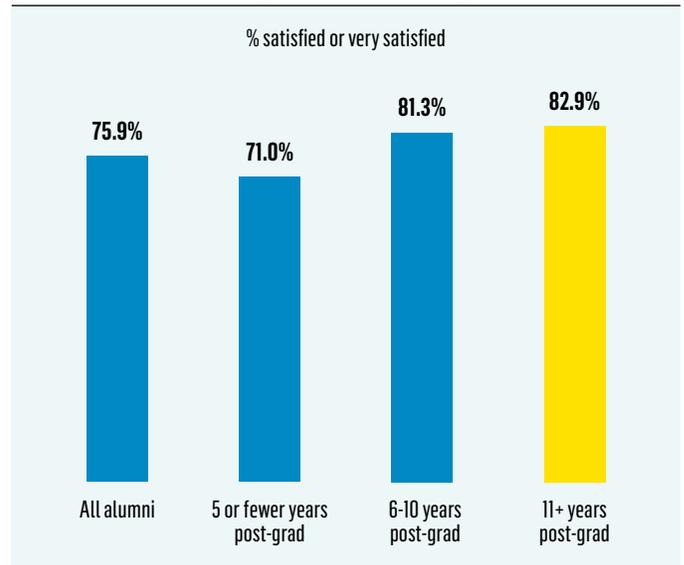
Posse alumni view their careers more positively than the average U.S. worker. More than three-quarters said they were satisfied or very satisfied with their careers (Chart 27), whereas just 54 percent of U.S. workers reported job satisfaction in a recent poll.<sup>19</sup>

Overall, only 8.6 percent of Posse alumni consider their current role as “just a job to get by”; the majority view it as a career or a stepping stone to a career, an outlook that appears to increase with age and job experience (Chart 28). In comparison, a full 30 percent of U.S. workers say they view their current position as just a job to get them by.<sup>20</sup>

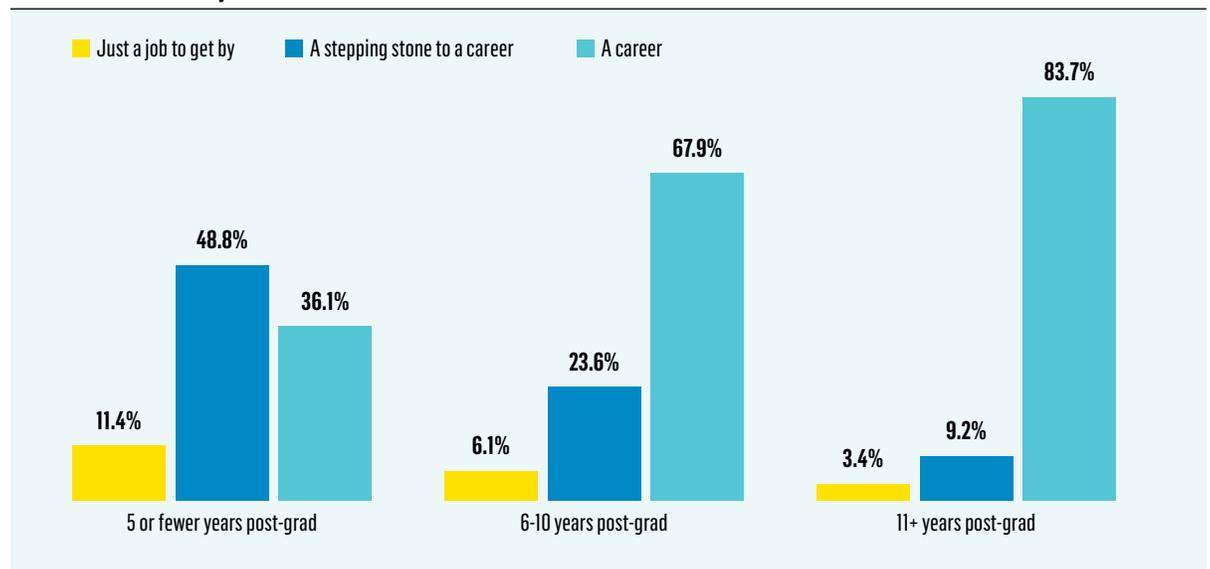
Finally, only 2.6 percent of alumni with full-time jobs are simultaneously looking for employment, suggesting perhaps that most alumni are content in their current roles.



**CHART 27** How satisfied are you with the course of your career thus far?



**CHART 28** Your current job is...



# SPOTLIGHT

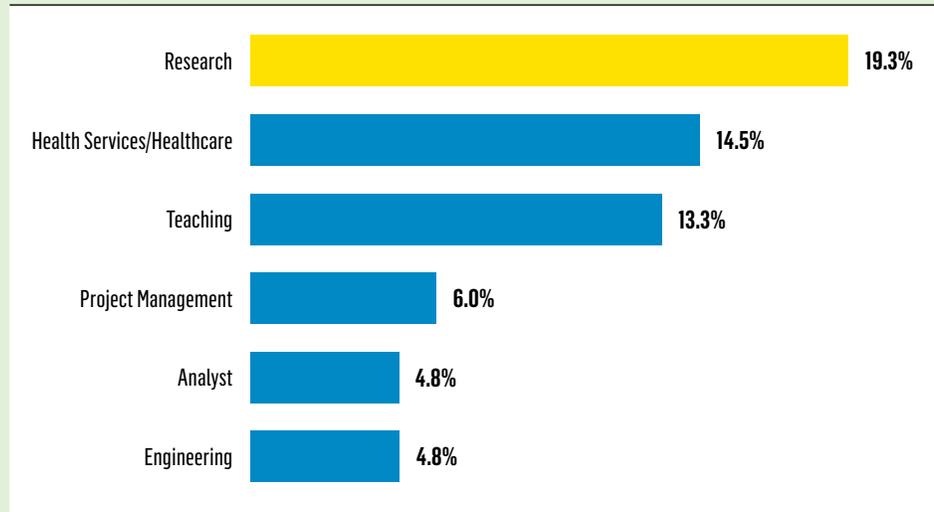
## Posse STEM Program<sup>†</sup>

Launched in 2008, the Posse STEM Program recruits, trains and supports cohorts of students majoring in science, technology, engineering and math. With 11 outstanding STEM partner colleges and universities, Posse helps improve the numbers and performance of underrepresented students majoring in STEM fields while simultaneously helping to develop more welcoming campus communities for students from diverse backgrounds.

More than 157 students have graduated from the program to date. Thirty-seven have earned graduate or professional degrees and 43 are currently enrolled in graduate school.



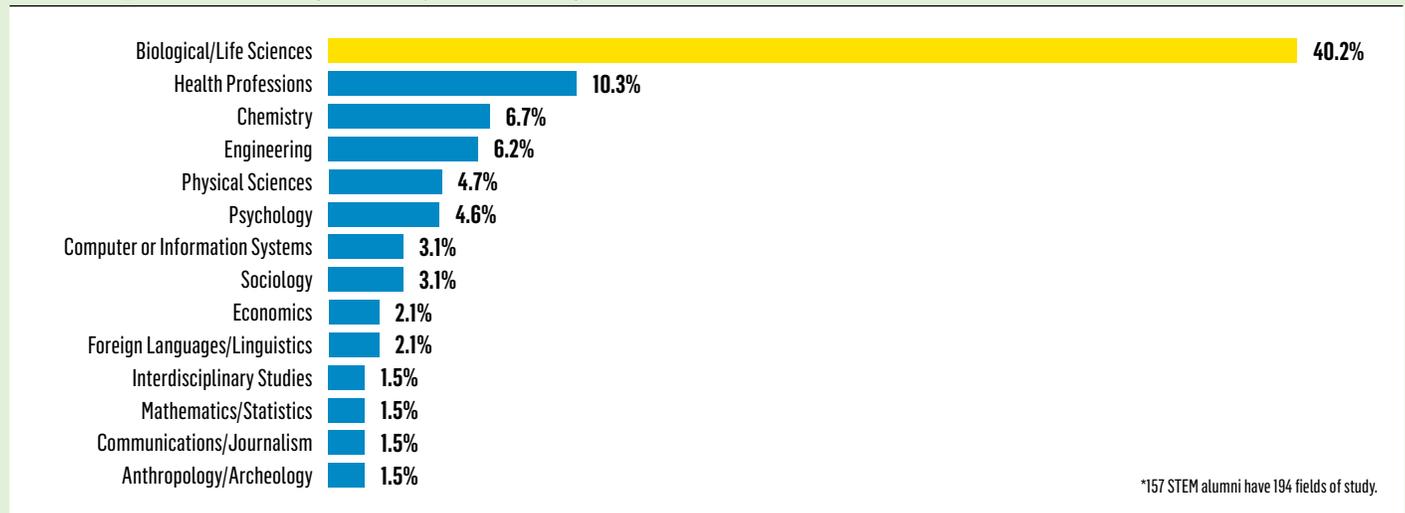
**CHART 29 Top STEM Alumni Job Functions**



### College + University Partners

- Brandeis University
- Bryn Mawr College
- Davidson College
- Franklin & Marshall College
- Middlebury College
- Pomona College
- Smith College
- Texas A&M University
- University of Michigan
- University of Wisconsin-Madison
- Wellesley College

**CHART 30 Top STEM Alumni Undergraduate Major Fields of Study\***



\*157 STEM alumni have 194 fields of study.

<sup>†</sup>Data shown are for all Posse STEM alumni.

# Posse's Impact

*In addition to selecting promising young leaders and supporting them to graduation, Posse's high-touch model works to ensure that Scholars and alumni leave their undergraduate institutions with a wide professional network, a sense of accomplishment, and a deepened commitment to making a difference.*

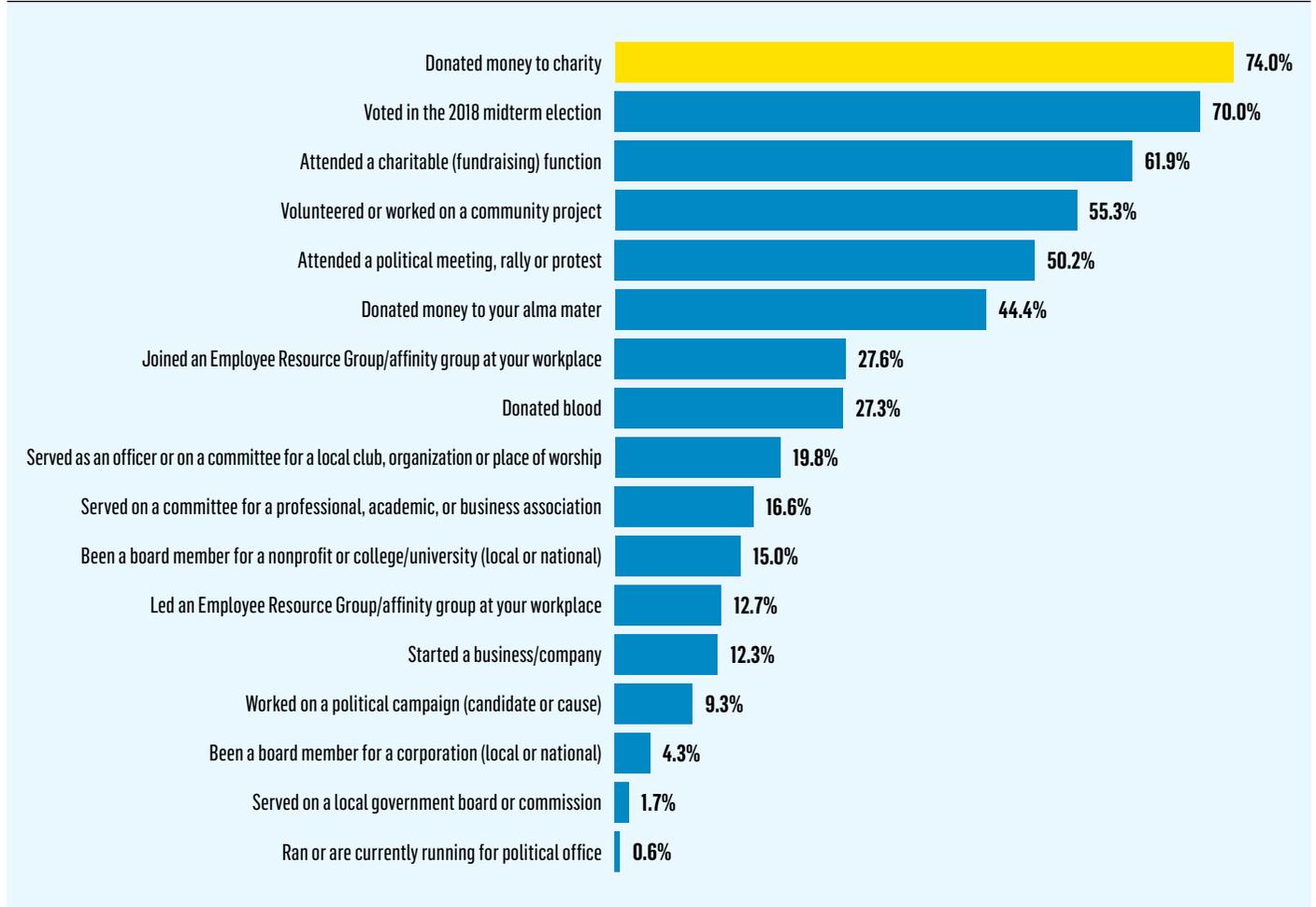
## COMMUNITY

Posse Scholars receive leadership training prior to matriculating and are encouraged to make their voices count while on campus. This helps to explain why nearly 80 percent held a formal leadership position in college. Unsurprisingly, Posse alumni have continued their legacy of engagement and activism in their communities.

More than half have donated money to charity, voted in the 2018 midterm elections, attended a charitable function, volunteered on a community project, or attended a political meeting, rally or protest (Chart 31).



**CHART 31** Posse Alumni Civic Engagement



**Almost 58 percent of Posse alumni have served on a board, committee or commission. Below are some of the organizations at which alumni have held leadership roles.**

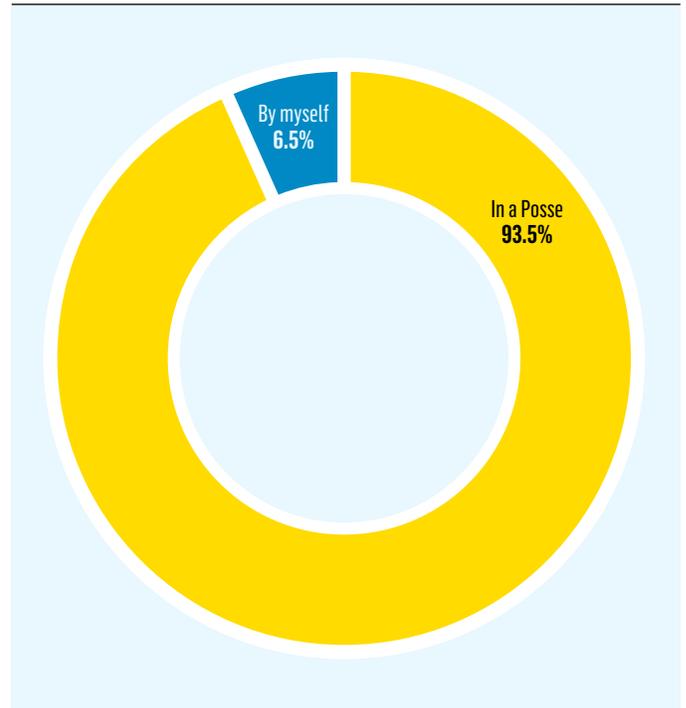
- American Immigration Council Diversity and Inclusion Board
- America's Service Commissions
- Arab American Family Support Center
- Association of American Colleges and Universities
- Association of Student Affairs Professionals
- Babson College Board of Trustees
- Business Network International
- Chicago Votes Action Fund
- Colby College Museum of Art
- Colorado Creative Industries
- Connecticut College Young Alumni Board of Trustees
- DC Bar Communities Committee
- Goodwill of Indiana
- Groundwork Lawrence
- Guyanese American Chamber of Commerce
- Houston Renewable Energy Group
- Kalamazoo College Board of Trustees
- Kanarys, Inc.
- Museum Educators of Southern California
- National Association of Hispanic Nurses-Illinois
- National Black MBA Association Boston Chapter
- National Employment Lawyers Association
- National Sustainable Agriculture Coalition
- New Earth
- NYC Anti-Violence Project
- Open Arms Housing
- Philadelphia Association of Black Journalists
- Presidents' Alliance on Higher Education and Immigration
- Public Interest Law Association
- Shoreline Project of Nation Center for Disaster Preparedness
- Vanderbilt University Board of Trust
- Wheaton College President's Commission
- Women's March New Lenox

## LASTING CONNECTIONS

Posse cohorts consist of students of differing genders, ethnicities, nationalities and socioeconomic backgrounds. During pre-collegiate training and their four years together on campus, Posse Scholars collaborate on projects, offer emotional support, and learn from each other. Many form lasting friendships. Almost all alumni reported they would choose to attend college again in a Posse rather than alone (Chart 32), and over 90 percent are still in contact with someone from their Posse.

Over **90%**  
of alumni are still in  
contact with someone  
from their Posse

**CHART 32**  
**If you could do it over, would you attend college in a Posse or by yourself?**



# LIFE SATISFACTION

While life satisfaction in the United States is generally high, recent polling suggests that those who are young, nonwhite or liberal in their political philosophy—traits that describe most Posse alumni—are less satisfied with their lives.<sup>21</sup> Yet nearly 80 percent of Posse alumni report being satisfied with the quality of their lives, with more than a quarter indicating they are very satisfied (Chart 33).

When alumni were given the option to reflect on how their Posse experience has affected their lives, nearly 70 percent responded. Many mentioned that Posse increased opportunities, helped them build lasting relationships (particularly with their Posse peers), and provided support to persevere through challenges (Chart 34).

Almost **90%** report being satisfied with the quality of their lives

CHART 33

Considering all areas of your life, how satisfied are you with the current quality of your life?

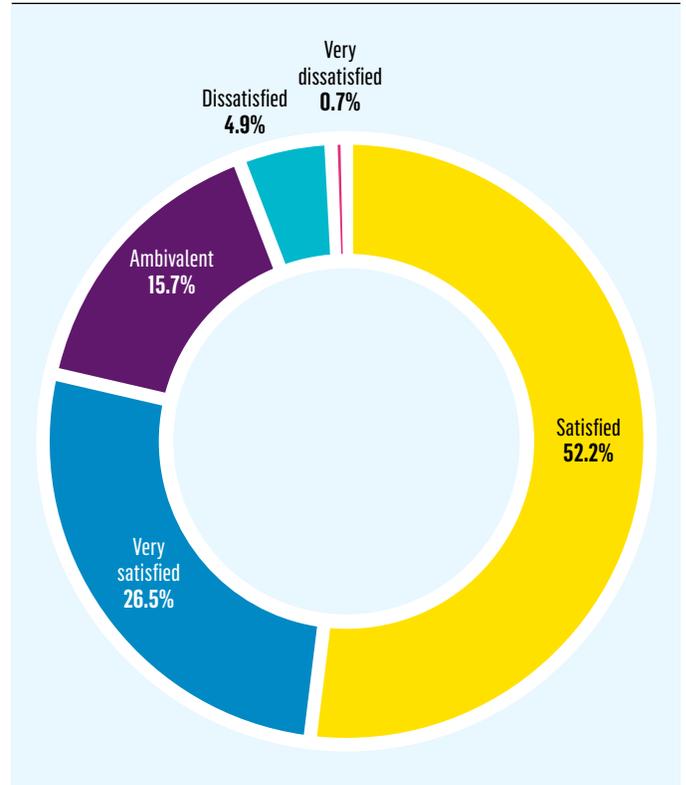
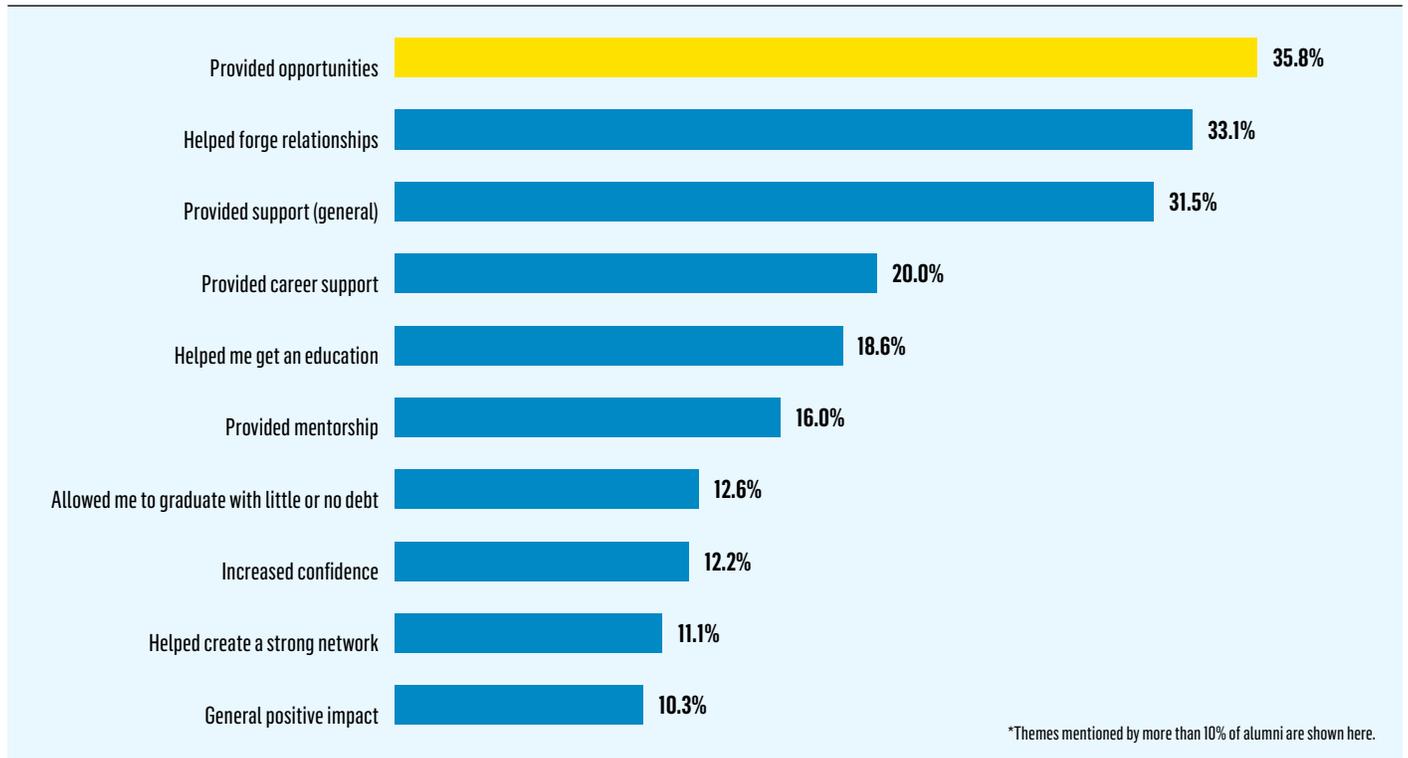


CHART 34 Posse's Impact on Alumni Lives (Qualitative Responses)\*



# CONCLUSION

*The Posse model was founded on the conviction that diverse teams can accomplish great things and that a student is much more than a test score. Today, 30 years later, Posse alumni are irrefutable proof of the program's success. These dynamic leaders are a growing presence at the highest levels of their fields. They represent a powerful network that embodies our hopes for a better future.*

*As high school students, Posse alumni demonstrated exceptional leadership potential, earning them full-tuition scholarships to top colleges. As collegegoers, they supported each other and built a reputation as thoughtfully engaged members of the campus community—each class blazing the trail for the next.*

*Now as alumni—united by a shared Posse experience and equipped with powerful degrees—they are uniquely positioned to make an impact. Whether in education, research, government, law, health, the arts or business, Posse alumni bring with them a focus on equity and inclusion. Collectively, their diverse voices are helping to ensure that every group has a seat at the table.*

*Today, over 5,000 Posse alumni are living, working and making a difference in 21 countries around the world. By 2030, Posse and its partner colleges project more than 10,000 alumni in the workforce. The Posse Foundation is thrilled to celebrate their achievements to date and cannot wait to see what they do next.*





## Marvin Figueroa

**Deputy Secretary of Health and Human Resources, State of Virginia**

### **VANDERBILT UNIVERSITY**

As one of the country's youngest deputy secretaries, Marvin Figueroa helps lead the day-to-day operations of the Health and Human Resources Secretariat, including policy development, planning, and intergovernmental relations across 12 state agencies. With a master's degree in education from Harvard University, Marvin has previously worked in the Congressional Hispanic Caucus Institute as a Gates Foundation Secondary Education Fellow, and on Capitol Hill as a senior policy advisor to Virginia Senator Mark Warner.



## Gia Griffith

**Vice President, Strategy and Operations for Data, Security, and Identity Products, Visa Corporation**

### **RICE UNIVERSITY**

Gia Griffith followed her undergraduate degree in mechanical engineering with an MBA from Georgetown University's McDonough School of Business and a master's in engineering management from The George Washington University. She has launched and strengthened business operations for corporations in the United States and across Latin America, Asia and Africa.

“ I have the opportunity to shape policies that help individuals facing similar struggles to those my family experienced when we immigrated from Honduras. I get to frame discussions in a way that takes into account all parts of our communities. Oftentimes, when you come from an immigrant, low-income household, you focus on the resources and experiences that you did not have rather than on the things you did have. Posse turned that deficit mentality on its head and helped me view my background as a source of strength.”



## Eboni Freeman

Television Writer, *This Is Us*

### UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

Eboni Freeman worked for FOX Sports for more than nine years as a producer, where she won an Emmy for her work on the 2015 Women's World Cup. After a career pivot to writing as a fellow in the 2016 Sundance Episodic Lab, she joined the staff of acclaimed NBC series *This Is Us*.



## Sulman Usman

Founder and CEO, Adaptive Green

### VANDERBILT UNIVERSITY

Sulman Usman is the co-founder of Adaptive Green, a leading startup in sustainable roof technology. The company recently designed and installed the new green roof at the United Nations headquarters in New York City. The structure boasts 11,000 square feet of solar panels and thousands more of plants capable of cooling the ambient air by up to 6 degrees. Sulman holds a degree in engineering from Vanderbilt.

“ I’m very passionate about working on *This Is Us* specifically because I believe in the stories we are telling. I think it speaks to a lot of people’s everyday lives and experiences. What I love about TV writing is its collaborative nature; I love sitting around a room with unique, talented individuals debating and pitching ideas. I pull so much of my personal life into my work as a writer. As a TV writer you have to learn to work well with others—*Posse* definitely challenged me to do that.”

## College + University Partners

Agnes Scott College  
Babson College  
Bard College  
Boston University\*  
Brandeis University\*  
Bryn Mawr College\*  
Bucknell University\*\*  
Carleton College  
Case Western Reserve University  
Centre College  
Colby College  
The College of Wooster  
Connecticut College\*  
Cornell University  
Dartmouth College  
Davidson College  
Denison University\*  
DePauw University\*  
Dickinson College  
Franklin & Marshall College\*  
The George Washington University  
Grinnell College  
Hamilton College  
Hobart and William Smith Colleges  
Illinois Wesleyan University  
Kalamazoo College  
Lafayette College\*  
Lawrence University  
Lehigh University  
Middlebury College\*\*  
Mount Holyoke College  
Northwestern University  
Oberlin College  
Pepperdine University  
Pomona College\*  
Sewanee: The University of the South  
Smith College  
St. Olaf College  
Syracuse University  
Texas A&M University\*  
Trinity College  
Tulane University\*  
Union College  
University of California, Berkeley  
University of Chicago  
University of Michigan  
University of Notre Dame  
University of Puget Sound  
University of Rochester  
The University of Texas at Austin  
University of Virginia\*  
University of Wisconsin-Madison\*\*\*  
Vanderbilt University  
Vassar College  
Villanova University  
Wellesley College  
Wesleyan University  
Wheaton College

\*represents an additional cohort of 10 Scholars recruited by the institution each year. For example, Boston University is a dual-city partner and recruits Posse from two different program sites each year, awarding 20 Posse Scholarships annually.



## Graduate School Affiliates

Carnegie Mellon University Heinz College of Information Systems and Public Policy  
Cornell University Law School  
Duke University Fuqua School of Business  
Johns Hopkins University Krieger School of Arts & Sciences  
Northeastern University D'Amore-McKim School of Business  
Northwestern University Kellogg School of Management  
Northwestern University Pritzker School of Law  
Teachers College, Columbia University  
University of Chicago Booth School of Business  
University of Washington School of Social Work  
Yale University School of Forestry & Environmental Studies

## Career Program Partners

20th Century Fox  
826 Foundation  
AAR  
AB  
AbbVie  
Abt Associates  
Acadian Asset Management  
The Advertising Council  
After-School All-Stars  
The Allstate Corporation  
American Girl Place  
American Honda Motor Co., Inc.  
American Museum of Natural History  
Ameriprise (Columbia Threadneedle)  
Angelo Gordon  
Aon  
Art Institute of Chicago  
The Asia Society  
The Associated Press  
Bank of America Merrill Lynch  
Barclays  
Biogen  
Bloomberg  
Blue Cross Blue Shield  
BMO Harris  
BNP Paribas  
Boston Healthcare for the Homeless  
Boston Lawyers Group  
Boston Teacher Residency  
Breakthrough Collaborative  
Brightsphere  
Brooklyn Bridge Park Conservancy  
C5 Youth Foundation  
Capital Group  
Care USA  
CBRE  
CBS Television Studios  
Central Intelligence Agency  
Chemomics International  
Chick-Fil-A  
City Year  
CME Group  
College Success Foundation  
Conservation Law Foundation  
CoStar  
Crossroads for Kids, Inc.  
Crown Castle  
CVS Health  
DC Public Library  
Deloitte  
Deutsche Bank  
Direct Energy  
Discovery Communications  
Double H Ranch  
DTCC  
DREAM  
Eaton Vance  
Edelman  
Entergy Corporation  
Evoke  
Exelon Corporation  
Exoneration Project

Facebook  
Fidelity Investments  
Fiduciary Trust Company  
The Field Museum  
Fiver Children's Foundation  
Freddie Mac  
The Fresh Air Fund  
Friendship Public Charter Schools  
The Global Good Fund  
Goldman, Sachs & Co.  
Goodwin Procter LLP  
Google  
GSI Environmental Inc.  
Hall Capital Partners LLC  
Harlem Village Academies  
H-E-B  
Hill Holliday  
HJ Foundation  
The Hole in the Wall Gang Camps  
The Hudson Companies  
IBERIABANK  
Illinois Tool Works  
Infor  
Institute of International Education  
Jones Lang LaSalle  
JPMorgan Chase & Co.  
Kaiser Associates  
Kirkland & Ellis LLP  
Kroger  
L + M Development Partners  
Laitram Corporation  
Let's Get Ready  
Liberty Mutual  
Livongo  
Lockton Insurance Brokers, Inc.  
Louisiana Public Health Institute  
Massachusetts General Hospital  
Mastercard  
Match Education  
Mattel  
Maximus  
Mayer Brown LLP  
MD Anderson Cancer Center  
Medline  
Memorial Herman  
MFS Investment Management  
Miami Children's Museum  
Midwest Academy  
Milbank, Tweed, Hadley & McCloy LLP  
Moody's Corporation  
Morgan Stanley  
Museum of Contemporary Art  
The Museum of Fine Arts, Boston  
NBCUniversal  
Nestle USA  
National Grid  
New England Aquarium  
New York City Economic Development Corporation (NYCEDC)  
Newman's Own Foundation  
NextEra Energy, Inc.  
The Nielsen Company

Noblis  
Northern Trust  
Northwestern Center for Talent Development  
Norwegian Cruise Line  
Office of Senator Elizabeth Warren  
Pandora  
Paramount Pictures  
Parthenon-EY  
Partnership for Public Service  
Paul, Weiss  
Penguin Random House  
Perella Weinberg  
Plymouth Rock Assurance Corporation  
The Posse Foundation  
Princeton-Blairstown Center  
Propeller  
Public Broadcasting Service (PBS)  
Public Defender Service  
Putnam Investments  
PwC  
Radio One  
RBC Capital Markets  
Reach Education, Inc.  
Rent the Runway  
Richards Kibbe & Orbe LLP  
Roku  
Royal Caribbean Cruises LTD  
Service Year Alliance  
Shawmut Design & Construction  
SmithBucklin  
Snag  
Sony Pictures Entertainment  
Sotheby's  
State Street Corporation  
Steppenwolf Theatre  
Success Academies  
Summer Medical + Dental Education Program  
SumoLogic  
Teach For America  
Thompson Island Outward Bound  
The Travelers Companies, Inc.  
Trust for Public Land  
Tudor, Pickering, Holt & Co.  
Turner Broadcasting System  
Uncommon Schools  
United States Tennis Association  
United Talent Agency  
UniWorld Group, Inc.  
Valley Bank  
Vertex  
Viacom Media Networks  
VICE  
West Monroe Partners  
The Walt Disney Companies  
Walter Reed Army Institute of Research  
Weil, Gotshal & Manges LLP  
West Monroe Partners  
WGBH  
The Whiting – Turner Contracting Company  
Willis Towers Watson  
WorldTeach



## Cara Brumfield

Senior Policy Analyst, Georgetown Center on Poverty and Inequality

### LAFAYETTE COLLEGE

Cara Brumfield is a policy researcher whose work focuses on identifying effective strategies for reducing poverty and improving equity. She has a master's degree in public policy analysis from American University.



## Andy Nguyen

Head of Sales Strategy and Insights, Google

### DENISON UNIVERSITY

With an MBA from the University of Michigan's Ross School of Business and additional certification from Germany's WHU - Otto Beisheim School of Management, Andy Nguyen's career has spanned Neuberger Berman, Pepsico and Kraft. He has spent the past four years at Google in Chicago, rising to lead a team of analysts in the travel and healthcare industries.

“My values are driven, in part, by my lived experiences with poverty. So many people don't get the kinds of opportunities to excel and to fulfill their dreams that I got—and I want to change that. Now I work every day to help develop and push for policies and programs to ensure that everyone—regardless of their income, race, gender, disability status, immigration status, sexuality or gender identity—can have access to opportunities to support themselves and their families, and to pursue their dreams.”



## Dr. Darnisa Amante

President & Co-Founder, Disruptive Equity Education Project (DEEP)

Adjunct Lecturer, Harvard Graduate School of Education

### BRANDEIS UNIVERSITY

From working with the Obama Foundation and students in low-income public schools to coaching executive members of the Academy of Motion Pictures in Hollywood, Dr. Darnisa Amante is making a difference with DEEP, an innovative professional development & strategy organization. She holds a doctorate in educational leadership from Harvard Graduate School of Education.

“As the oldest of eight children, I often watched my grandparents and family members dig into the deepest levels of themselves to provide, to stay healthy, and to fight the active push of drugs into our neighborhood. I was not simply taught perseverance, it was modeled consistently.

*There is a lot of fear surrounding difficult conversations about race, confronting one's own biases, and calling out systems of injustice. I love that I can support people in saying the things that need to be said. Posse helped me see that you can truly build environments that are transformational.”*



## Erin Whalen

Co-Founder, DaVinci Rise High

### BRANDEIS UNIVERSITY

In 2016, Erin Whalen and fellow educator Kari Croft conceived of DaVinci RISE High, a high school devoted to meeting the needs of youth experiencing homelessness, probation and foster care in Los Angeles. The innovative idea beat out over 10,000 entries to receive a grand prize of \$10 million in funding from XQ: The Super School Project, co-founded by Laurene Powell Jobs. He is now the school's assistant principal, responsible for curriculum development and student culture.

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## Dr. Ibrahima Bah

Assistant Professor, Astrophysics and Quantum Field Theory, Johns Hopkins University

### LAFAYETTE COLLEGE

Ibrahima Bah's extensive academic work in physics includes a Ph.D. from the University of Michigan, a joint postdoctoral position at the University of Southern California and The Institut de Physique Théorique at Saclay in France, and a postdoctoral fellowship in particle theory at the University of California, San Diego. He has been on the faculty at Johns Hopkins as an assistant professor in physics since 2017, with research focusing on theoretical high-energy physics and cosmology.



## Eduardo De La Torre

CEO/Founder, DVG Financial

### VASSAR COLLEGE

Eduardo De La Torre joined the war efforts in Iraq in 2003 as a paratrooper in the U.S. Army. After several tours of duty, he left the armed forces and became a researcher at the Institute for Surgical Research in San Antonio before attending Vassar College through the Posse Veterans Program. After graduating in 2017, Eduardo founded DVG Financial with the goal of helping veterans become financially secure.

“Neither of my parents were educated past 6th grade. When I earned a Posse Scholarship, I was able to go to school without a single dime from my parents, which was critical.

*So much of my career has been somehow dependent on other people having a bigger faith in what I could do than I did, people who opened the door and pushed me through it. I look forward to seeing even more Posse Scholars succeed in STEM and move on to important positions in the world and contribute in interesting ways.”*

## Endnotes

<sup>1</sup> Additional Scholars have since graduated, bringing the total number of Posse alumni to more than 5,000. Posse's newest location, Posse Bay Area, opened in 2015 and does not yet have alumni.

<sup>2</sup> Posse's full alumni dataset is missing more parent education level and first-generation status data than the subset of alumni who completed the census. As a result, missing data makes up a higher percentage of all Posse alumni for these two categories.

<sup>3</sup> Fall 2017 enrollment in four-year, degree-granting institutions was 56.6% female and 43.4% male. National Center for Education Statistics. Total fall enrollment in degree-granting postsecondary institutions, by level and control of institution, attendance status, and sex of student: Selected years, 1970 through 2028. (2018). Retrieved from [https://nces.ed.gov/programs/digest/d18/tables/dt18\\_303.30.asp](https://nces.ed.gov/programs/digest/d18/tables/dt18_303.30.asp)

<sup>4</sup> Underrepresented minorities include Black, Latinx, and Native American undergraduate students. College Results Online. (n.d.). Retrieved from College Results Online: <http://www.collegeresults.org/aboutthedata.aspx>

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<sup>10</sup> Chetty, R., Friedman, J.N., Saez, E., Turner, N., & Yagan, D. (2017, July). Mobility Report Cards: The Role of Colleges in Intergenerational Mobility. NBER Working Paper No. 23618; Glynn, J. (2017, September). Opening Doors: How Selective Colleges and Universities are Expanding Access for High-Achieving, Low-Income Students. Retrieved September 16, 2019, from Jack Kent Cooke Foundation: [https://www.jkcf.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/09/JKCF\\_Opening\\_Doors.pdf](https://www.jkcf.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/09/JKCF_Opening_Doors.pdf)

<sup>11</sup> Jaschik, S. (2018, April 27). Making the Case for Test Optional. Retrieved September 5, 2019, from Inside Higher Ed: <https://www.insidehighered.com/news/2018/04/27/large-study-finds-colleges-go-test-optional-become-more-diverse-and-maintain>

<sup>12</sup> Posse Institute analysis of 38 partner institutions that provided SAT median scores, using College Results Online databank tool, The Education Trust, 2017. [www.collegeresults.org](http://www.collegeresults.org)

<sup>13</sup> National Student Clearinghouse Research Center. (2017). High School Benchmarks 2017: National College Progression Rates. Retrieved September 5, 2019, from National Student Clearinghouse: <https://nscresearchcenter.org/wp-content/uploads/2017HSBenchmarksReport-1.pdf>

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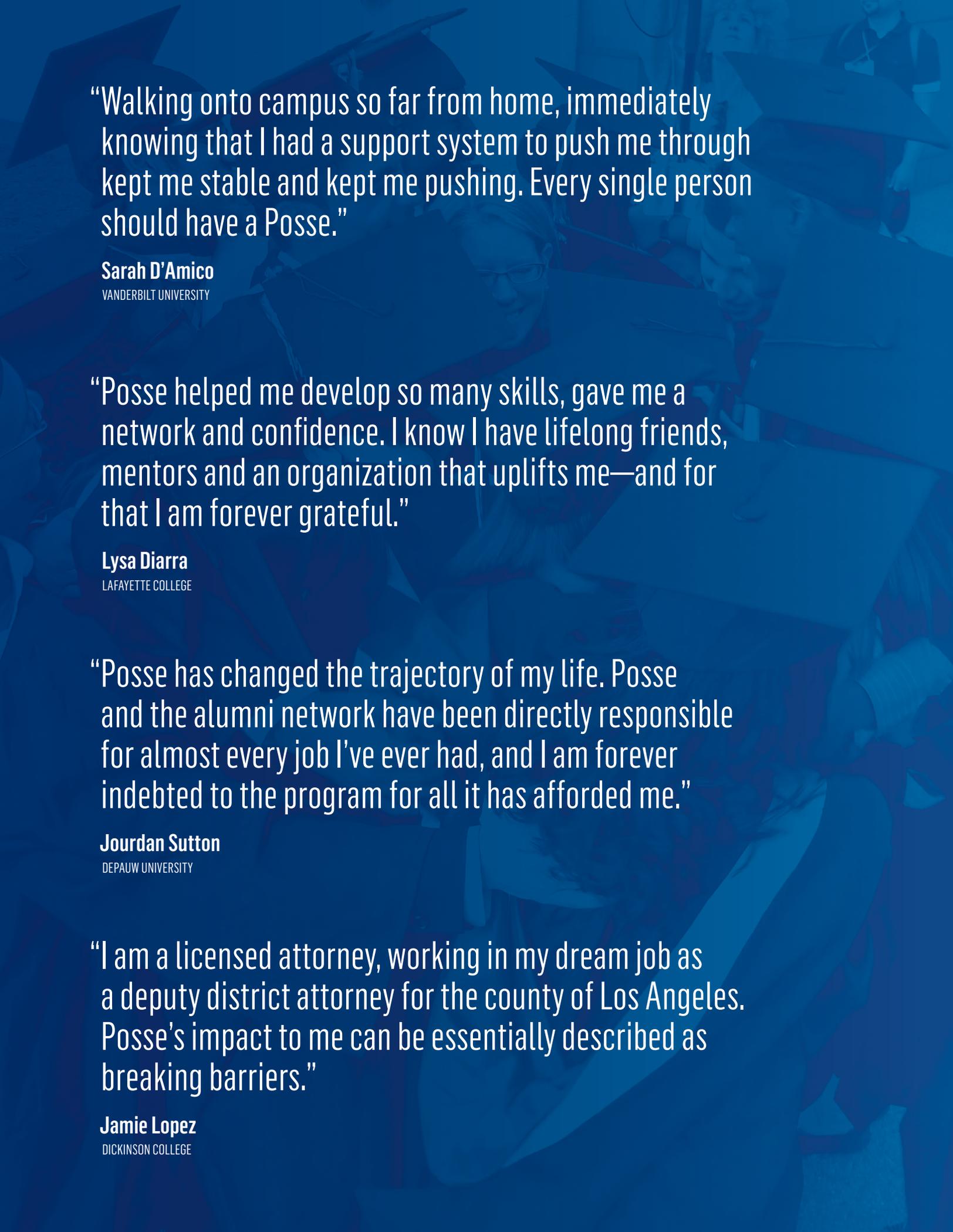
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“Walking onto campus so far from home, immediately knowing that I had a support system to push me through kept me stable and kept me pushing. Every single person should have a Posse.”

**Sarah D'Amico**  
VANDERBILT UNIVERSITY

“Posse helped me develop so many skills, gave me a network and confidence. I know I have lifelong friends, mentors and an organization that uplifts me—and for that I am forever grateful.”

**Lysa Diarra**  
LAFAYETTE COLLEGE

“Posse has changed the trajectory of my life. Posse and the alumni network have been directly responsible for almost every job I've ever had, and I am forever indebted to the program for all it has afforded me.”

**Jourdan Sutton**  
DEPAUW UNIVERSITY

“I am a licensed attorney, working in my dream job as a deputy district attorney for the county of Los Angeles. Posse's impact to me can be essentially described as breaking barriers.”

**Jamie Lopez**  
DICKINSON COLLEGE

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