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## Making an Impact Through Scholarships

### NSPA Announces Winners of the 2018 Scholarship Provider of the Year Award (SPOY)

CHARLOTTESVILLE, VA (Oct. 15, 2018) - The National Scholarship Providers Association (NSPA), the leading resource and network for scholarship providers in North America and beyond, has been advancing the collective impact of scholarship providers for nearly twenty years. Annually, since 2000, NSPA recognizes outstanding leadership, achievement, and innovation in two categories: independent scholarship providers and higher education institutions. This year's winners, University of Maryland University College (UMUC) and the Hispanic Scholarship Fund (HSF), were honored during the 2018 NSPA Conference Welcome Reception that took place in Albuquerque, NM.

NSPA is the only national organization solely dedicated to supporting the needs of professionals who work in the scholarship industry. The NSPA membership is comprised of diverse organizations, including foundations, public charities, educational institutions, and corporations. "These two SPOY award recipients do an excellent job with their scholarship programs. We received a record number of applications this year and the competition was tougher than ever. We are grateful to Fastweb for their ongoing support and sponsorship of this distinguished award.", said Jackie Bright, Executive Director of NSPA.

Fastweb, the nation's recognized leader in helping students pay for college, is in its 19th year sponsoring this prestigious award. The award embodies the dedication of the entire NSPA network of providers who are involved in helping students achieve college success and completion. Each year, the recipients receive a special honor at the NSPA Annual Conference, various exclusive benefits, and a cash prize of \$2,500. "Fastweb is pleased to once again sponsor the Scholarship Provider of the Year awards" said Mark Nelson, Vice President,



Fastweb. “Annually we look forward to recognizing scholarship providers who are committed to supporting students in achieving their college objectives.”

Organization: University of Maryland University College

Award Accepted by: Janet Thomas, Director, Military Support Processes and Trends Analysis, Department of Stateside Military Operations

“I’m thankful to accept the award on behalf of UMUC, the Blewitt Foundation, and the National Military Family Association, for all that they are doing to bring light to an underserved population of students in the military-connected community.”, says Janet Thomas, who manages the Pillars of Strength program at UMUC.

Many scholarship opportunities exist for our nation's military heroes who are wounded, injured or become seriously ill in the line-of-duty since September 11, 2001. However, scholarship opportunities for caregivers to those military heroes are almost non-existent; these caregivers are truly unsung, behind-the-scenes heroes. UMUC understands the life-altering sacrifices caregivers are forced to make for their families and loved ones in these situations. UMUC seeks -- in partnership with the Blewitt Foundation and the National Military Family Association -- to use the Pillars of Strength scholarship program to assist caregivers in overcoming those challenges by providing them with the post-secondary education they need to compete in today's job market and provide for their family's future. The Pillars of Strength scholarship program at UMUC started in 2013 and has awarded nearly \$500,000 in scholarship dollars since the program began.

Organization: Hispanic Scholarship Fund

Award Accepted by: Daniel Edeza, Vice President, Recruitment, Selection, and Scholar Advocacy and Tania Ramirez, Analyst

Founded in 1975, the Hispanic Scholarship Fund empowers Latino families with the knowledge and resources to successfully complete a higher education, while providing scholarships and support services to as many exceptional Hispanic American students as possible. HSF strives to make college education a top priority for every Latino family across the nation, mobilizing the community to proactively advance that goal – each individual, over a lifetime, in every way he/she can. HSF also seeks to give its scholars all the tools they need to do well in their course work, graduate, enter a profession, excel, help lead our nation going forward, and mentor the generations to come. As the nation’s largest not-for-profit organization supporting Hispanic



American higher education, HSF has awarded over \$500 million in scholarships and provides a range of impactful programs for students/scholars, alumni, and parents.

### **About NSPA**

The mission of the National Scholarship Providers Association is to advance the collective impact of scholarship providers and the scholarships they award. NSPA is a unique membership association that offers tools, resources, professional development, and networking needed to administer a successful scholarship and/or student support program. During the 16-17 academic year, NSPA members awarded \$2,559,416,255 in scholarships to 517,835 students. (57% of NSPA members participated in the survey.) To learn more or to become a member, visit [www.scholarshipproviders.org](http://www.scholarshipproviders.org).

### **About Fastweb:**

Fastweb, a top site in the Monster network, is the nation's recognized leader in helping students pay for school, by providing scholarship and financial aid information, as well as information on jobs and internships. As the oldest and most popular free online scholarship matching service, one out of three college-bound seniors use the site and more than 50 million users have benefitted from Fastweb's information and services. Fastweb lets students create personalized profiles that can be matched against its expansive databases of colleges and scholarships. To learn more about Fastweb, visit [www.fastweb.com](http://www.fastweb.com) and follow Fastweb on social media for the latest on paying for school all year long: Twitter (at @PayingForSchool); Facebook; Pinterest; Google+.