Transforming Leadership, Transforming Lives
About LEDA

Leadership Enterprise for a Diverse America (LEDA) empowers a community of exceptional young leaders from under-resourced backgrounds by supporting their higher education and professional success in order to create a more inclusive and equitable country.

LEDA believes that selective colleges are not only a gateway to opportunity, but a nexus for the development of leadership in every field. By helping talented students from under-resourced backgrounds access these institutions and providing them with the tools necessary to succeed in their careers and beyond, LEDA seeks to ensure that this country’s leadership is truly reflective of its citizenry. **LEDA's vision is to build an inclusive and equitable America where leadership reflects, celebrates, and supports diverse perspectives.**

LEDA's programs are **completely free** and comprise a longitudinal initiative designed to address the specific challenges faced by high-achieving, under-resourced students in accessing the leadership pipeline. This program trajectory includes two components: the LEDA Scholars Program and LEDA Career and Alumni Services.

“I learned two valuable lessons from LEDA: first, a humble leader can learn from anyone; and second, a good leader should be of great service to those around them.”

– BRITTANY • AVONDALE, AZ
LEDA Cohort 5, Princeton University ’14
The LEDA Scholars Program specializes in identifying outstanding student leaders.

LEDA Scholars have come from 49 States and the District of Columbia.

Socioeconomic Background
LEDA Scholars come from under-resourced backgrounds and have an average household income of $36,500 per year.

First-generation college students are given particular consideration.

Academic Qualifications
- Unweighted GPA of at least 3.5
- Enrollment in rigorous courses when possible (honors, AP, IB, dual enrollment)
- Strong analytical reading and writing skills, demonstrating potential to succeed at selective colleges and universities

Personal Attributes
- Desire to be challenged academically
- Strong commitment to their studies
- Desire to be a leader in their families, schools, and communities
- Connection to LEDA’s Core Values of Excellence, Integrity, Compassion, and Community

LEDA in 2022
- 1,850 young leaders are part of the LEDA Community
- 73% of LEDA Scholars are first-generation college students
- 36% of LEDA Scholars have enrolled in Ivy League institutions
- 86% of LEDA Scholars have enrolled in one of the top 75 most selective colleges
- 90%+ of LEDA Scholars graduate from college within six years, compared to the national six-year graduation rate of less than 48% for students from low-income backgrounds
- 32% of LEDA Scholars obtain a graduate or professional degree after college
Recruitment & Admissions

Each year, LEDA recruits 100 exceptional public high school students who demonstrate leadership potential and may benefit from additional support as they navigate their journey to and through college. Successful applicants must complete a rigorous three-part application process, mirroring the admissions process for highly selective colleges and universities.

LEDA’s Recruitment Strategy

- Dedicated to building a diverse Scholar community
- Develop partnerships with nonprofit organizations whose missions align with that of LEDA
- Engage current Scholars to recruit applicants from their high school alma maters
- Travel to schools to connect in person with students, counselors, and community partners
- Host virtual programs for students to learn about LEDA and connect with staff
- Collaborate with counselors and teachers to identify excellent student-leaders

High school juniors can start their application at ledascholars.org/apply. Questions can be emailed to recruitment@ledascholars.org.
The *Aspects of Leadership* Summer Institute

LEDA Scholars spend the summer between their junior and senior year in high school at the *Aspects of Leadership* Summer Institute, housed on the campus of Princeton University. The intensive, residential five-week program is completely free of charge for LEDA Scholars and includes leadership study, writing instruction, standardized test preparation, and college guidance.

*Aspects of Leadership*: LEDA’s *Aspects of Leadership* curriculum develops Scholars’ critical thinking and leadership skills by exploring some of the toughest ethical and policy issues we face in the 21st Century. The course encourages both personal empowerment and collaboration by employing innovative methodologies, including team-building activities, case studies, role-play simulations, debates, critical thinking exercises, and Scholar presentations.

*Writing Instruction*: LEDA’s writing curriculum prepares Scholars to write at the level expected at rigorous colleges and universities, emphasizing academic argument, clarity of style and structure, research, and revision. Writing classes are limited to 13 Scholars and supplemented by weekly one-on-one conferences with writing instructors, who are current or former faculty at selective universities.

*Standardized Test Preparation*: Tutoring is provided by Advantage Testing, a leading tutoring company based in New York. Scholars prepare for the SAT and ACT in classes and through practice tests and are provided with preparation materials.

*Community Building and Residential Life*: For the five weeks of the Summer Institute, LEDA Scholars live in a Princeton University dormitory and experience a supervised version of collegiate residential life. The residential experience is designed to foster empowerment, personal responsibility, and a strong sense of community among the Scholars.

*College Guidance*: Through one-on-one counseling sessions and workshops with their LEDA College Guidance Counselor, Scholars explore their interests and strengths, discuss their college options, and assemble a personalized list of colleges that prioritizes individual fit. Scholars learn about over 100 outstanding colleges and universities through college trips, college fairs, student panels, and information sessions offered for LEDA Scholars by visiting admissions representatives.
College Guidance

LEDA Scholars leave the Summer Institute with a college list and a clear understanding of the college application process. Throughout their senior year, LEDA’s staff continues to support Scholars every step of the way.

LEDA’s College Guidance Services

- Provide feedback on all college application materials, including expert support on all application essays
- Cover costs for standardized tests and application fees
- Counsel Scholars and their families throughout the process of applying for financial aid
- Help Scholars identify and complete applications for scholarship opportunities
- Submit detailed recommendation letters to highlight and contextualize the unique achievements of each Scholar
- Advocate for Scholars with college admissions and financial aid offices
- Advise Scholars and families throughout the college enrollment process to ensure that they have the information they need to choose the best college for them
LEDA prioritizes maintaining close relationships with Scholars throughout their college careers and beyond. LEDA helps students navigate the transition from high school to college and assists them throughout their college careers to become exemplary students and campus leaders both by connecting them with resources at their colleges and supplementing those resources according to individual Scholars’ needs.

**LEDA helps Scholars succeed and lead in college and beyond by:**

- Conducting check-ins with each Scholar throughout college, with particular emphasis during the first-year transition
- Recommending campus resources to facilitate success and involvement
- Connecting younger Scholars with older Scholars who serve as Peer Mentors and share their interests and experiences
- Organizing community events – annual reunions, holiday dinners, student panels, networking events, staff visits – on college campuses
- Referring Scholars to other LEDA programs that can support them with career exploration, graduate school planning, and advocacy training
LED&A Career and Alumni Services

LED&A has extended our leadership development efforts by addressing the impact of income inequality on career development, graduate school planning, and maintaining a robust alumni community.

The LED&A Career Network

The LED&A Career Network positions students for future leadership roles, serving LED&A Career Fellows – high-achieving college students from under-resourced backgrounds who are selected to join the LED&A Career Network during their freshman year of college, LED&A Scholars in college, and Scholars and Fellows who are college alumni.

Career Network Services

- Résumé, cover letter, LinkedIn, and application feedback
- Targeted recruitment for competitive internship and full-time opportunities
- Access to a robust professional network including employers, LED&A alumni, Scholars, Career Fellows, Board Members, and other stakeholders
- Advising and support for the exploration of post-graduate pathways, including graduate school planning and exploration of research and fellowship opportunities
- Interview preparation, networking guidance, remote and in-person professional development workshops, job search support, and individual career coaching
- Invitation to attend the LED&A Career Institute for 150-180 rising college sophomores
LEDA Career Institute & Partners

The LEDA Career Institute is a completely free, multi-day, in-person annual event for 150-180 rising college sophomores, providing exposure to career exploration, engagement with top employers, and instruction to navigate the internship and job search processes.

LEDA Career Partners participate in the LEDA Career Institute, conduct webinars, and host industry insight events. Career Partners also recruit candidates for internships and full-time opportunities that are shared through LEDA’s e-newsletters, email blasts, and social media. Current partners include:

- Standard Chartered
- Strada Education Network
- ARIEL Institute
- Jack Kent Cooke Foundation
- Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation
- Bloomberg Philanthropies
- Goldman Sachs
- TJX
- EY
- Paul Weiss
- Ropes & Gray
- LEGO
- UBS
- FORTRESS
- BCG
- CHUBB'
- Deloitte & Co
- HarperCollins Publishers
- Blackstone Charitable Foundation
- Willkie Farr & Gallagher

About Our Career Fellows

LEDA Career Fellows are high-achieving, under-resourced students who attend some of the most selective colleges in the nation. The information below presents a snapshot of our 2022 Fellows.

- 91% identify as people of color
- 84% are first-generation college students
- 42 colleges are represented in total
LEDA Graduate Education and Fellowships Initiative

LEDA’s Graduate Education and Fellowships Initiative supports LEDA Scholars, Career Fellows, and alumni as they pursue education beyond their undergraduate years. Increasingly more industries require graduate degrees, and LEDA harnesses the expertise developed in supporting students from under-represented populations attend college to empower them in the next step of their academic and professional journeys.

LEDA students and alumni considering graduate school have access to support in researching academic programs, exploring options for funding, connecting with other LEDA alumni and campus-based resources in their field, and refining their applications.

LEDA Public Service Pathways Initiative

Launched in 2021, LEDA’s Public Service Pathways Initiative aims to break down the systemic and significant barriers that under-resourced students face in pursuing public service careers. Emerging from the earlier LEDA Policy Project, this initiative addresses the financial burdens at the point of entry for public service careers – often an unpaid or low-wage position.

The Public Service Pathways Initiative positions LEDA students to succeed by:

- Provide crucial, direct financial support that makes public sector positions viable
- Diversify the perspectives represented in the public service field
- Allow LEDA students to build experience in the public service field
- Develop new partnerships with public service employers to create systemic change
The LEDA Alumni Network

The LEDA Alumni Network provides LEDA alumni with opportunities to receive post-graduate career and graduate school planning support and advising through the Career Network and to remain engaged with and give back to the LEDA Community.

Alumni Network Goals

- Engage LEDA college alumni more fully in the LEDA Community
- Continue to cultivate the leadership potential of LEDA alumni through professional opportunities and networking
- Connect alumni, and their employers when possible, to the LEDA Career Network
- Create a platform for LEDA alumni to “give back” through volunteerism, mentorship, and financial support

“...It was amazing how easily my Cohort-mates and I fell into comfortable friendship with one another after years of not seeing each other. The LEDA Community waiting to warmly welcome me back.”

— TANIA • GARY, IN
LEDA Cohort 9, Middlebury College '18

LEDA College Graduates: Where Are They Now?

More than 800 LEDA Scholars have graduated from college and are pursuing exciting careers and graduate study, including:

CHRISTINA FROM NEW YORK, NY
Haverford College '13: Therapist at Catholic Guardian Services

HARSAN FROM FRESNO, CA
Princeton University '15: Product Manager at Clubhouse

JOSUË FROM UNION CITY, NJ
Cornell University '20: Account Manager in Large Customer Sales at Google

KENDALL FROM BROOKLYN, NY
Vassar College '11: Senior Manager and Diversity & Inclusion Lead for Americas Region at LEGO Group

MEAGAN FROM MCALLEN, TX
Georgetown University '13: Program Associate at Investor Alliance for Human Rights

NARIZZA FROM MOUNTAIN VIEW, HI
Columbia University '21: Brand Research Coordinator at Direct Agents
College Enrollment History

Adelphi University 1
Alabama A&M University 1
Albright College 1
Amherst College 14
Arkansas State University 1
Babson College 1
Bard College - Annandale-on-Hudson 1
Barnard College 14
Beloit College 1
Bentley University 1
Bethune Cookman University 1
Biola University 1
Boston College 12
Boston University 4
Bowdoin College 2
Brandeis University 5
Brown University 54
Bryn Mawr College 6
Carleton College 3
Carnegie Mellon University 7
Case Western Reserve 2
Christian Brothers University 1
Claremont McKenna College 1
Colgate University 8
College of the Holy Cross 1
Colorado College 1
Colorado Mesa University 1
Colorado State University Ft. Collins 1
Columbia University 21
Cornell University 12
CUNY Baruch College 1
CUNY Brooklyn College 1
CUNY City College 1
CUNY College of Staten Island 1
CUNY Macaulay Honors College 3
Dartmouth College 21
Davidson College 12
Denison University 2
DePauw University 11
Duke University 8
Earlham College 1
Emerson College 1
Emory University 18
Florida Inst. of Tech. 1
Franklin & Marshall College 2
George Mason University 1
Georgetown University 44
Georgia State University 2
Gettysburg College 1
Guilford College 4
Harvard University 73
Harvey Mudd College 2
Haverford College 6
Howard University 4
Ithaca College 1
Johns Hopkins University 12
LA. Trade Technical College 1
Lehigh University 1
Lewis and Clark College 3
Louisiana State University 1
Loyola University of New Orleans 1
Macalester College 3
Mercer University 1
Michigan State University 2
Middle Tennessee State University 1
Middlebury College 11
Mills College 1
Mississippi State University 2
MIT 26
Morehouse College 1
Mount Holyoke College 4
Muhlenberg College 1
New Mexico State University - Las Cruces 2
New York University 4
North Carolina Agricultural & Technical State University 1
North Central College 1
North Park University 1
Northeastern University 2
Northern Arizona University 1
Northern Illinois University 1
Northwestern University 8
Oberlin College 3
Occidental College 23
Olin College of Engineering 1
Our Lady of the Lake University 1
Pennsylvania State University 1
Pitzer College 4
Polytechnic Institute of NYU 1
Pomona College 15
Portland State University 1
Princeton University 171
Reed College 7
Rhode Island College 1
Rice University 11
Rochester Inst. of Tech. 1
Rutgers University Honors Program 3
San Diego State University 2
San Joaquin Delta College 1
Santa Clara University 1
Sarah Lawrence College 1
Scripps College 1
Seattle University 1
Seton Hall University 1
Sewanee 1
Skidmore College 2
Smith College 10
Sophie Davis School of Biomedical Education at CUNY 2
Southern Illinois University 1
Southwestern University 1
Spelman College 4
St. Edward's University 1
St. John's University 1
St. Mary's University 1
Stanford University 163
Stephens College 1
SUNY Albany 1
SUNY Binghamton 1
SUNY Fredonia 1
SUNY Oswego 1
SUNY Stonybrook 2
Swarthmore College 23
Texas A&M University 2
Texas Tech University 2
The College of Idaho 1
Trinity College 2
Trinity University (TX) 1
Tufts University 13
Tulane University 1
U.S. Air Force Academy 2
UC Berkeley 4
UC Davis 3
UC San Diego 1
UC Santa Cruz 1
UCLA 6
UMass Amherst 1
UMD College Park 2
UMN - Twin Cities 1
UNC Chapel Hill 14
Union College 1
University of Arkansas 6
University of Central Florida 1
University of Chicago 4
University of Denver 1
University of Hawaii - West Oahu 1
University of Hawaii Hilo 1
University of Hawaii Manoa 2
University of Kansas 1
University of Louisville 2
University of Miami 1
University of Michigan 2
University of Minnesota 1
University of Missouri St. Louis 1
University of Nebraska 2
University of Nevada Reno 1
University of Notre Dame 5
University of Oregon 1
University of Pennsylvania 28
University of Puget Sound 2
University of Rhode Island 1
University of Richmond 18
University of Rochester 2
University of South Carolina at Columbia 1
University of Tennessee Knoxville 1
University of Texas at Brownsville 1
University of Texas Austin 6
University of the Pacific 2
University of Tulsa 1
University of Virginia 1
University of Washington 5
University of Wisconsin Madison 1
University of Wyoming 1
USC 5
Vanderbilt University 5
Vassar College 8
Wabash College 1
Wake Forest University 3
Washington University in St. Louis 15
Wellesley College 6
Wesleyan University 12
Westminster College 1
Whitman College 1
Wichita State University 1
Williamette University 1
Williams College 7
Worcester Polytechnic Institute 1
Yale University 87