

October 19, 2020

Dear GSAPP Community,

I am pleased to announce today GSAPP's commitment of \$1 million to establish the Norma Merrick Sklarek Scholars Fund. Columbia alumna Norma Merrick Sklarek '50 B.Arch was a trailblazer, and when she passed the New York state exam in 1954, she was among the first Black women to become a registered architect in the State of New York. The fund will be used over the next three academic years to support a cohort of full tuition financial aid awards and will be aimed at positively addressing inequity and barriers for students who have historically been underrepresented at GSAPP.

This commitment builds on GSAPP's shift to merit-based scholarships and the establishment of two scholarship funds specifically aimed at supporting students historically underrepresented at GSAPP: the George and Nancy Rupp Fellowship, honoring the legacy of the former President of the University, and the Milton and Yvonne Edelin Scholarship, the largest gift from a Black alumna in the School's history. These gifts help support GSAPP's commitment to attracting the best talent from a wide range of geographic, cultural, and economic backgrounds.

Throughout its history, GSAPP has attracted extraordinary applicants, and we are committed to breaking down the barriers that increasing costs of post-graduate education may create. We understand that Financial Aid has become a significant decision-making factor for accepted students and, in turn, is often cited as the most important factor in selecting post-graduate work. Our priority is to make it increasingly possible for students to seek professional paths based on impact, passion, and opportunity in the built environment fields that we all work so hard to cultivate, and we know there is much more to do.

Over the past six months, we have faced the turmoil of the COVID pandemic and begun to reckon with the racism against Black people in our own professions and institution. As we face and grapple with longstanding inequities, strengthening and sustaining the diversity of GSAPP's student perspectives has never felt more essential. I commit that this step is the first of many as GSAPP strives to renew the School's legacy of breaking down barriers and creating new pathways for knowledge and practice.

Warmly,

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Please join Columbia GSAPP in endowing the Norma Merrick Sklarek '50 B.Arch Scholarship Fund

established in 2020

Intended to promote diversity, inclusion and equity by breaking down barriers to access for graduate study, the first Sklarek scholarships will be funded with \$1 million from GSAPP. We invite alumni and friends to join us in establishing an endowment for the same purpose, helping GSAPP make this initiative permanent. Make a gift to the Sklarek Fund [here](#).

SPOTLIGHT ON NEW SCHOLARSHIP FUNDS

George and Nancy Rupp Fellowship Fund

established in 2017

George Rupp served as President of Columbia University from 1993-2002, and was recognized for his commitment to forging stronger relationships with local New York neighborhoods, among his many achievements. To honor his leadership and support GSAPP's efforts to admit students who have been historically underrepresented within the School, two donors came together to endow a scholarship fund in his name.

Milton & Yvonne Edelin Scholarship Fund

established in 2018

Milton Edelin '57 M.Arch established an endowed scholarship at GSAPP to support students with financial need, with a preference given to students from underrepresented groups. It is the largest gift from a Black alumnus in the School's history. Read more about the Edelin scholarship [here](#).



"I know how hard it was for me as a young person to balance working and attending graduate school, and it costs so much more to attend now," Edelin says. "I believe if you can just get to school, you can do good things."

David L. Ardito '53 MSUP Scholarship Fund

established in 2019

A uniquely generous bequest enabled the creation of an endowed scholarship fund in the name of the late David Ardito.

Learn more about all of GSAPP's endowed scholarship funds [here](#). Please email lc2685@columbia.edu with any questions.

FINANCIAL AID BY THE NUMBERS

17% of incoming students received GSAPP scholarships in 2019

37% of tuition is covered by the average financial aid award

27% increase in financial aid disbursements to Master Degree students since 2014

\$5.6 Million in financial aid was distributed to Master Degree students in 2019

THE CAMPAIGN FOR GSAPP

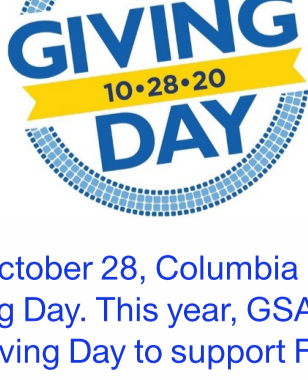
The current GSAPP fundraising campaign has put a strong emphasis on financial aid.

Funds raised for Financial Aid 2016-2020

\$4.1 Million

Funds raised for Financial Aid 2003-2015

\$2.2 Million



On October 28, Columbia University will host its annual Giving Day. This year, GSAPP will [dedicate all funds raised on Giving Day to support Financial Aid](#).

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