

Northwestern



**Student Enrichment Services
Impact Report**

January 2019

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03

Started in 2014, Student Enrichment Services (SES) has grown from a one-person-team into a department that is seen as a home and resource for first-generation and/or low-income (FGLI) students. 97% of students from the 2018 Spring SES Impact Survey described feeling welcomed, comfortable, valued, and treated professionally when interacting with SES staff



Leading the Conversation

Across higher education, SES has played an instrumental role in elevating Northwestern's reputation as a model for supporting first-generation and/or low-income students. On October 21, 2018, Marcia Chatelain, Associate Professor of History and African American Studies at Georgetown University cited SES's "I'm First Campaign" in her article in The Chronicle, "We Must Help First-Generation Students Master Academe's 'Hidden Curriculum.'" In June 2017, Johns Hopkins University invited the

Background & Overview

In October 2012, the Quest Scholars Network (QSN) expressed a need for centralized support and resources to enhance their experience as low-income college students at Northwestern. A number of Quest students met with Vice President for Student Affairs, Patricia Telles-Irvin, to talk about their experiences. They authored a five-page document outlining their concerns.

Shortly after, President Schapiro participated in the Second White House College Opportunity Day of Action, and declared – “Expanding opportunity for more students to enroll and succeed in college, especially low-income and underrepresented students, is vital to building a strong economy and a strong middle class.” President Schapiro joined a number of other college presidents and education leaders at the Day of Action, challenging themselves and pledging to new action around college access. Following this convening, President Schapiro and the Board of Trustees committed to increasing the number of Pell eligible students enrolled at Northwestern to 20% by 2020.

A proposal for the establishment of the SES office was presented to the Budget Committee by Dr. Patricia Telles-Irvin, Vice President for Student Affairs in FY13, and in November 2014, Student Enrichment Services (SES) was created to centralize support for students coming from first-generation and/or low-income (FGLI) backgrounds. The office was charged with providing the “wrap-around” support needed to facilitate and enhance the college experience for FGLI students. Figure 2, top right, reflects the original diagram that outlined the six intended service categories of the office: Support and Coaching, Networking, Learning Opportunities, Leadership, Connection to Resources, and Parent Outreach.

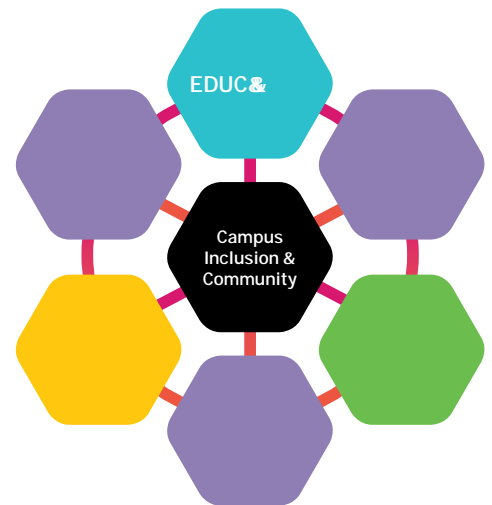
Figure 2: Original Concept for Student Enrichment Services (FY14)

Office of **Enrichment Services**



Mission, Initiatives & Communities

Figure 3: Campus Inclusion and Community Framework: Tri-sector Model of Cultural Practice (Jenkins & Walton, 2008)



Mission

SES partners with first-generation, low-income, and/or DACA/Undocumented students to foster identity development, navigate campus resources, and build community. Through campus-wide partnerships and advocacy, SES strives to build an inclusive Northwestern community that is welcoming, supportive, and accessible for all students.

SES Signature Initiatives

Based on research from Ostrove and Long (2007) and the 2013 Focus Group Report on Low-Income Students, SES's three signature initiatives focus on enhancing student and family connection and belonging to campus. Ostrove and Long found that students' socioeconomic status influenced their social and emotional well-being in the context of higher education.

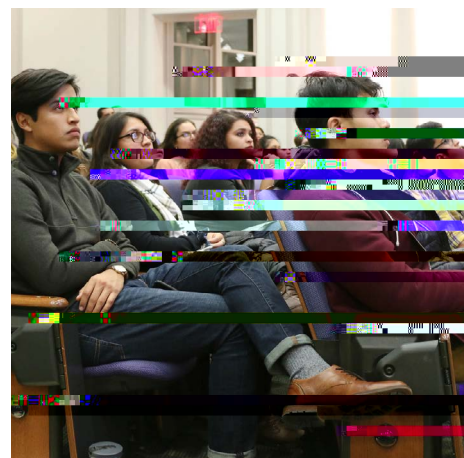
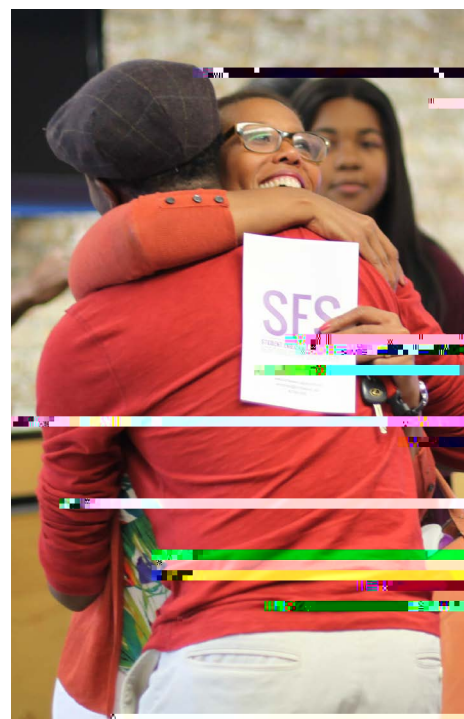
1. **Parents and Families:**

SES celebrates newly admitted students and their families from the Chicagoland area by bringing Northwestern to Chicago. Students, alumni, faculty, and staff join guests at the Mexican Fine Arts Museum for casual, supportive conversations around the first-generation and/or low-income experience at Northwestern. Spanish translation is provided throughout the entire event. In addition, an SES Open House takes place on the first day of Wildcat Welcome each year to welcome new students and their families. During the SES Open House, incoming students and their families have the opportunity to connect with current students and staff in a relaxed environment. Further, each student leaves with a Welcome Kit.

2. **Commencement Activities:**

SES is proud to recognize the outstanding accomplishments of its' graduating seniors. In partnership with the Undergraduate Office of Financial Aid and the Commencement Office, regalia fees are covered, and special First-Generation Stoles are distributed to recognize first-generation graduates. In addition to the First-Generation Stoles, family members of First-Generation graduates receive I'm First buttons to acknowledge graduation as a collective achievement. Funding is also available to cover Senior Week activities.

3. **'I'm First' Campaign:** I'm First is an online campaign that honors the first generation experience at Northwestern through storytelling and awareness-building, utilizing in-person programs, print and web media, and branding across campus. The campaign includes a web directory of first-generation faculty and staff members, and this directory remains the second most visited page on the SES website, since launching in Spring 2018, per google analytics.



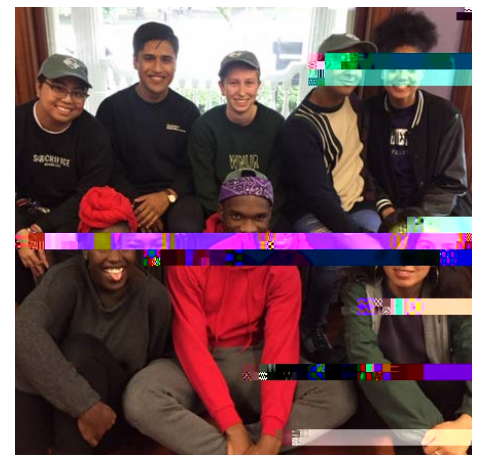
SES Communities

Social psychology research focused on stereotype threat and belongingness, inform SES's approach to curriculum design and program development for FGLI students. In particular, the Compass Peer Mentor program incorporates findings from Stephens, Hamedani, and Destin's work with first-generation students during their college transition (2014). Their work tested an intervention that closed the social-class achievement gap through sharing student stories that highlighted students' different backgrounds with FGLI students, and, in turn, increased help-seeking tendencies and end-of-year grade point averages.

1. **Quest Scholars Network:** Quest Scholars Network (QSN) is Northwestern's only low-income and/or first-generation student group. Northwestern QSN has over 400 members and is open to all students. SES works closely with QSN on programming, advocacy, and outreach. SES advises the Quest scholars and provides financial support, leadership coaching, and program development. Each year, SES coordinates quarterly retreats, bi-weekly meetings, and staff support for large scale events.
2. **Ryan Scholars:** Patrick and Shirley Ryan's generous donation in 2007 established the Ryan Scholars Program to financially support high-achieving, low-income students with exceptional leadership potential and help them attend Northwestern without incurring significant loan debt. Each year, students who demonstrate commitment to service, leadership, and outstanding academic performance are selected to become Ryan Scholars. SES hosts quarterly, community-building events for Ryan Scholars.
3. **Compass:** Grounded in research and best practices, Compass follows a weekly cohort model that connects first-year students, with trained, upper-class mentors throughout the entire academic year. Started in Fall 2015, Compass increases students' sense of belonging in the Northwestern Community, while providing access to important resources across campus through weekly cohort workshops and peer mentorship. In addition to the mentees, SES hires eight peer mentors who attend weekly professional development sessions and one-on-one mentoring from an SES staff member. Compass mentors gain interpersonal, facilitation, and leadership skills throughout the year. Further, each year at least 50% of the mentors were former Compass mentees. Annually, Compass supports approximately 45 students per year.

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- Mentor Quote

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Resources & Contacts

Removing financial barriers, streamlining information, and creating accessible resources is vital for FGLI student success. To this end, SES provides a number of resources that ensure FGLI students are able to effectively navigate campus, meet their basic needs, and persist toward graduation. From providing essential and emergency needs (SEEN Fund) to simplifying the ways in which students access funding opportunities (SES One Form) – the demand for additional resources has grown. The following section includes an overview of key resources and showcases the increasing demand.



Growth and Demand for the SEEN Fund

More than half of respondents from the SES Impact Survey accessed SEEN at least once (56%), and one quarter accessed SEEN more than five times (28%). The demand for SEEN grows each year as represented by a 458% increase in requests from FY17 to FY18 (from 17 to 95 student requests).

Figure 5: SEEN Fund Growth; FY16 – FY18

2. Free Laptops & Winter Gear

Through generous donor support, students receive free Dell laptop computers and are eligible to receive winter coats,

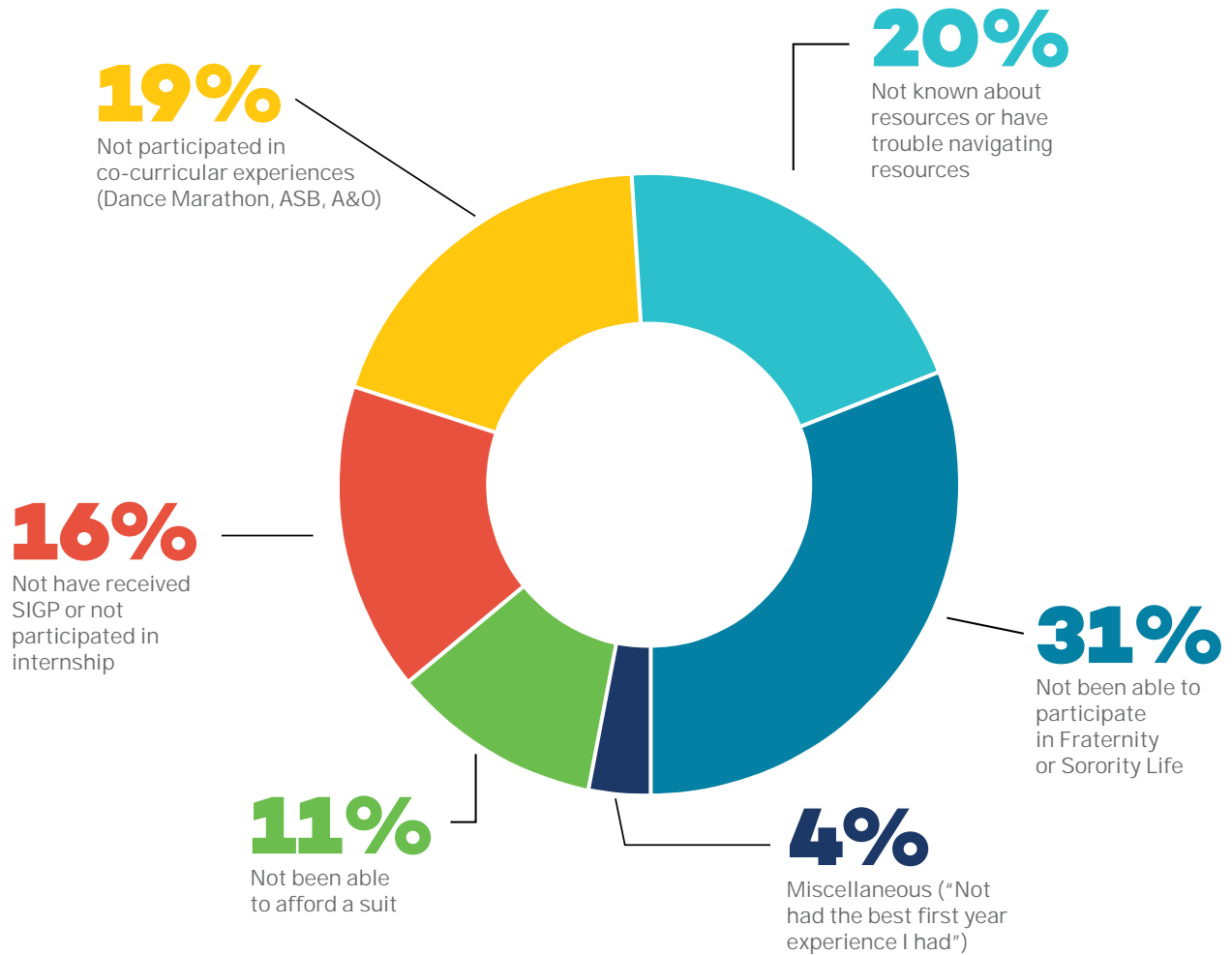
3. ***Knight Start-Up Stipend***

The Knight Start-Up Stipend was piloted in 2017-2018 to provide first-year students from low-income backgrounds with a \$1,500 stipend to cover costs associated with start-up expenses. 100 students participated in the pilot and received an initial \$800 disbursement during their

On the SES Impact Survey, students were asked what they would do if SES One Form weren't available. The graphic below reflects those responses.

Figure 7: SES Impact Survey Graphic

SES One Form - Student Feedback, 2017-2018



Student Contacts and Touch Points

Students interact with SES in a variety of ways. Some students interact one-time with SES to receive a resource such as a winter coat, while others have ongoing relationships with SES staff, interacting multiple times throughout the year for referrals, additional funding, resources, and/or psycho-social support. Student Contacts are defined as the number of individual (distinct) students utilizing SES resources.

During the academic year of 2017-2018, **SES interacted with 993 distinct students who utilized SES resources and/or had an individual meeting with an SES Staff member. These 993 meaningful interactions represent support of 72% of the total population of Pell eligible students at Northwestern (17.2% or approximately 1,375 students at Northwestern are Pell eligible).**

The 993 distinct students represent a range of demographic backgrounds with 94% of students coming from lower-income backgrounds* and 33% coming from first-generation

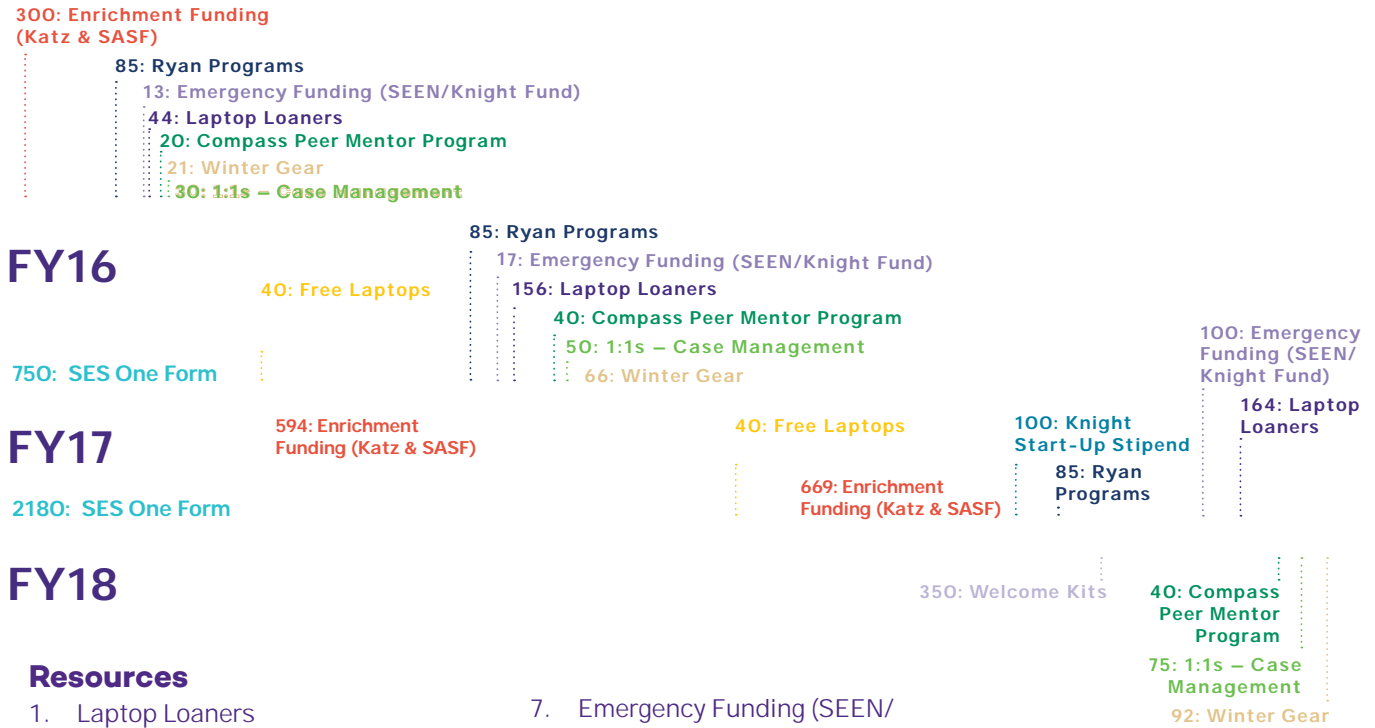
backgrounds. The racial and ethnic diversity of this group is varied and represents students who are: 29% white, 25% LatinX, 19% Asian-Pacific Islander, 15% Black, 8% two or



Figure 10: Growth in SES Resources

11 unique resources are offered through SES (see list below). From laptops and winter gear, to participation in the Compass Mentor Program. The demand for these resources has grown exponentially over the past four years. 4,055 student resources were utilized in FY18, up from 513 in FY16, reflecting an increase of 265%.

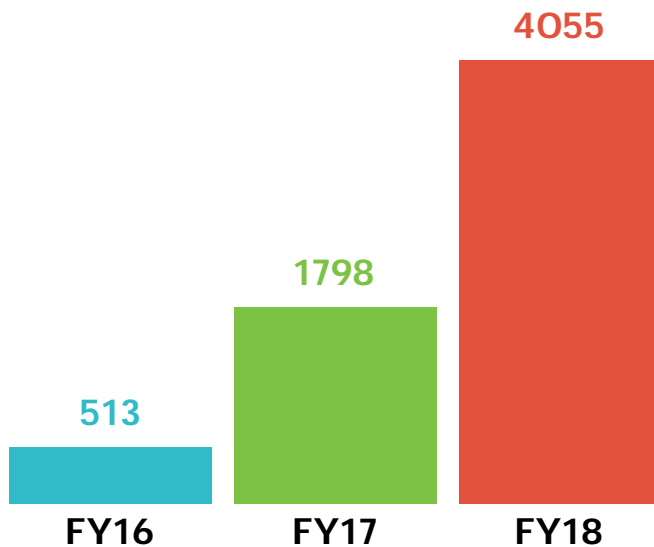
Student Resources



Resources

1. Laptop Loaners
2. Free Laptops
3. Winter Gear
4. Knight Start-Up Stipend Recipients
5. Welcome Kits
6. Enrichment Funding (Katz & SASF)
7. Emergency Funding (SEEN/ Knight Fund)

Growth in Resource Distribution



Institutional & Policy Changes

Reeves and Yeager found that bureaucratic difficulties in college environments can reduce sense of belonging for first-generation college students (2015). Based on this research, SES partners with several campus units to advocate for policy changes that will improve student experience and enhance connection and belongingness to campus. **Over the past four years, advocacy efforts through SES have led to important institutional changes across Northwestern University.** Some of these institutional and policy changes, include:

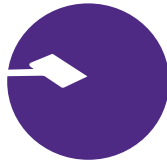


Enhancing Access to Laptop Loaner Offerings: The SES Lending Library provided free laptop

loaners to students throughout the academic year from Winter 2015 through Summer 2018. However, supplies were limited, only undergraduate students were eligible, and pick-up times were restricted to regular office hours of 8:30-5 pm, Monday through Friday. This Fall 2018, the University Library replaced SES's laptop loaner program by offering free laptop loaners to all students (undergraduate and graduate) and offers more accessible hours that extend beyond the typical work-day and include weekends.

Building Capacity in Support of Enrichment Funding:

In FY16, Ellen Katz, Trustee and Alumna, made a gift of \$225K to SES, to support low-income students with funding to participate in the co-curricular experience at Northwestern. At the same time, the Student Activity Assistance Fund (SAAF) also provided financial support to reduce barriers from participating in organizations and activities. Over the course of the past three years, SES has worked closely with the Student Organizations and Activities team (SOA) to streamline funding efforts and simplify the way in which students access resources. Through this partnership, in Fall 2018, SOA took over management of the majority of enrichment funding through SAAF.

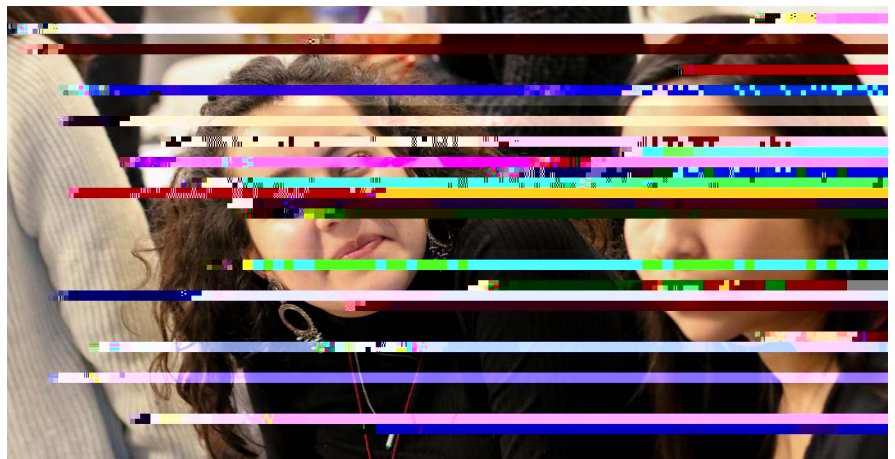


Enhancing Financial Aid Resources: Two SES initiatives led to policy changes within

Financial Aid. 1) Start-Up Stipends; and 2) Funding for Pre-Departure Study Abroad Expenses.

- **Start-Up Stipends:** In Fall 2017, Lester and Becky Knight, trustees and alumni, made a gift of \$175K toward Start-Up Stipends for low-income, first year students. This stipend provided students with funding at the start of the quarter to purchase essential items such as books, housing supplies, prescriptions, and travel home. The Knight Stipend was invaluable to students and essential to their success. As a pilot program, the Knight Stipend revealed a shortcoming in Northwestern's aid packages that led to the Financial Aid office addressing this gap institutionally. In Fall 2018, 300 of Northwestern's highest-need students from the Class of 2022 received \$500 in start-up funds as part of their aid packages.

- **Funding for Pre-Departure Study Abroad Expenses:** In Fall 2016, generous funding from Ellen Katz allowed SES to support students with funding for pre-departure expenses that they were struggling to afford. These expenses would include fees for passports, visas, luggage, special travel equipment, and more. Similar to the Knight Stipend program mentioned above, this funding support revealed a shortcoming in aid packages for study abroad programs. As such, in Fall 2017, the Financial Aid office expanded their Bridge Builder program to include funding support for these pre-departure expenses.





2. Increase Staffing

Although Northwestern met the 20% by 2020 goal early, staffing support within SES has remained flat since FY16. Three full-time staff members support 17.1% of Pell eligible students currently enrolled at Northwestern (approximately 1,400 students). This represents a student to staff ratio of 466:1. Staffing responsibilities range from administering restricted funds, to disbursing resources such as winter gear and laptops, to providing 1:1 sup-

port to students in crisis. While administering these responsibilities are critically important, a gap in student support that focuses on leadership, learning, and coaching remain, as highlighted in Figure 12 below. **With increased staffing, SES could move beyond a transactional relationship with FGLI students, to a more holistic partnership that would help ensure students move from surviving to thriving throughout their time on campus.** Moreover, additional

staff would ensure enhanced stewardship and management of the growing amount of donor funds. Lastly, an increase in staff support **would grow SES's ability to build capacity for colleagues across campus, ranging from faculty, to advisors, to additional administrative staff.** The graphic below represents the growth of the Pell eligible population compared with the growth of the SES team.



Acknowledgments

The growth of SES over the past four years could not be possible without the commitment and support of several campus partners:

- **Alumni Relations and Development (ARD):** Thank you to the Alumni Relations and Development team, specifically Jamie Strait, for her leadership and stewardship of all of our donors, trustees, and advocates.
- **Athletics:** Thank you to the entire athletics department for their generosity in hosting the SES Open House in the Ryan Fieldhouse, and a special thank you to Jim Phillips and Mike Valentine for their support of our Under Armour Winter Gear Program.
- **Business and Finance:** Thank you to Financial Operations, specifically Mike Szczepanek, for providing start-up funding to launch the SES One Form in its inaugural year of FY17.
- **Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS):** Thank you to the entire Counseling and Psychological Services team, in particular, Rosemary Magana and Meghan Finn for ensuring students are connected with culturally competent providers in Evanston and Chicago.
- **Financial Aid:** Thank you to Financial Aid, specifically Brian Drabik, for his support of our students and partnership on several initiatives.
- **New Student and Family Programs (NSFP):** Thank you the entire NSFP team for their continued partnership with Wildcat Welcome events, and a special thank you to Mayra Garces for her commitment to SES's Northwestern in Chicago Family Programs.
- **Northwestern Career Advancement (NCA):** Thank you to Northwestern Career Advancement for providing targeted career development programming to FGLI students and for hosting all NCA funds on the SES One Form platform (Career Development Fund, Summer Internship Grant Program, and Career Treks).

