The President’s Millennial Scholars Program is a new four year retention and professional preparation initiative designed to provide support for undergraduate students from underrepresented populations. Made possible through a gift by an alumni benefactor, PMSP aims to provide the services and opportunities that these students need to overcome barriers that may otherwise prevent them from successfully earning college degrees. The program facilitates academic, cognitive, personal, career and professional development, plus mentorship from faculty and staff. Increasing access and support is key in ensuring that the next generation of diverse leaders and scholars are positioned to become catalysts for change and make an impact at LSU and beyond.

HOW IT WORKS

The President’s Millennial Scholars Program’s ultimate goal is to create high-quality learning environments where academic and professional excellence is the expectation. The first two years of the program concentrate on a student-centered approach to ensure academic and personal development. The last two years highlight career development with a focus on internships and professional opportunities. To ensure that students are meeting and exceeding the anticipated outcomes, they are asked to keep a personal journal as part of their program portfolio. Throughout each semester, the program director, faculty mentors and graduate assistants guide and empower students through one-on-one mentoring sessions, cohort meetings, study halls and online resources. The staff also works to connect scholars to campus and external resources and opportunities for engagement and excellence.

CONTACT US

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Denny and Jane Shelton provided seed funding for the President’s Millennial Scholars Program through what Denny describes as “a real appreciation for education, the need for unrepresented students to gain an advantage that many never had and a university president who is committed to making a difference.”

Their gift followed conversations with LSU President F. King Alexander regarding the opportunities that such a program would afford to deserving students. Denny believes that the President’s Millennial Scholars will be ambassadors for change. “I see where we were. I see the progress that we’ve made. We’re still not nearly where we need to be,” Denny said. “This program will help kids narrow that gap.”

Denny hopes that the program, aside from launching scholars’ successful academic and professional careers, will create a legacy of giving and progress. “Don’t ever forget where you came from, and always remember that somebody helped you,” he said.

### PATRICK TAPALLA

**Hometown:** Denham Springs, La.  
**Major:** Mechanical Engineering  
**Graduation Year:** 2019

**What did your selection as a President’s Millennial Scholar mean to you and your family?**  
No words can describe how proud they are that a member of the family is representing a voice in our community. From a personal perspective, if you search my name up Google, the first image that pops up is me in a suit and tie representing this program. That means a lot to me.

**What impact does this scholarship have for you?**  
From a financial standpoint, the program certainly delivers, but the experience and developmental knowledge that the program has to offer multiplies its value tenfold.

**How do you promote diversity?**  
The only way to overcome adversity is to succeed. Achieving my goals is a great way to show that people from different backgrounds can represent their passions and beliefs in society.

### AJAH WILLIAMS

**Hometown:** Vidalia, La.  
**Major:** Biochemistry  
**Graduation Year:** 2019

**Why did you choose to attend LSU?**  
I was raised in a very small rural town, and I was not challenged during school. At LSU, I will be challenged and required to think critically. I want to show younger students from Vidalia that it is possible to succeed in a large university after high school.

**What are your academic and professional goals?**  
I plan to attend medical school and represent African Americans and women in the field. Until then, my goal is to maintain a competitive GPA, excel in my courses and continue my community involvement.

**What would you say to the donors of LSU?**  
Your generous donations have impacted students’ lives in a significant way. You have made a difference in your lifetime. I am dedicated to academic excellence, and your donation will not be taken for granted.