

# NORMAN TOPPING STUDENT AID FUND



# ANNUAL REPORT

2021-2022

# LETTER FROM THE CHAIRS

Since 1970, the Norman Topping Student Aid Fund has served as a hub of scholarship, service, and community for countless USC students. The 2021-22 school year was no exception. As USC transitioned back into in-person learning, the Topping Fund and its staff rose to the challenge, providing financial support, mentorship, and hybrid programming. This annual report celebrates the Topping Family's strength and resilience, and highlights the efforts of the Governing Board and staff to support our Topping Scholars, Fellows, and alumni.

While the upcoming year will undoubtedly be one of change, we remain incredibly optimistic about the future of the NTSAF. Looking ahead, we will focus on facilitating communication between the Topping Family and the broader USC community, continuing to incorporate anti-racist frameworks into our practices, and securing the financial future of the Fund.

*Liam Tsao*

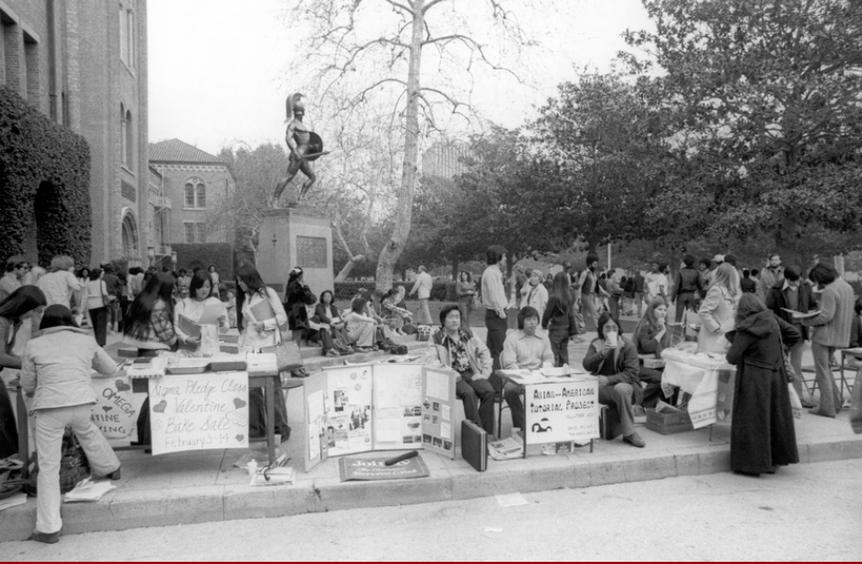
**LIAM TSAO**

2022-2023 NTSAF Governing Board Chair

*Hannah Franco*

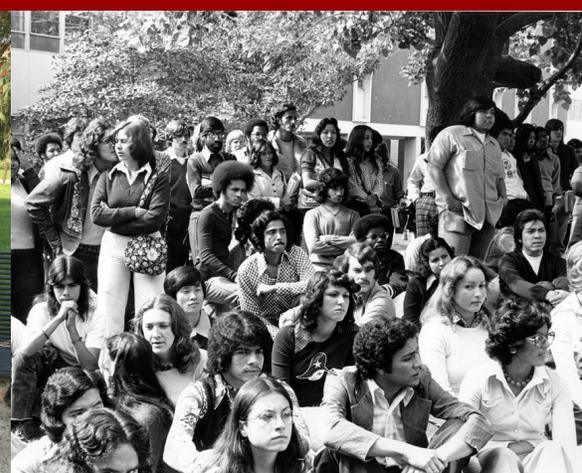
**HANNAH FRANCO**

2021-2022 NTSAF Governing Board Chair



# MISSION STATEMENT OF THE FUND

The central mission of the Norman Topping Student Aid Fund is to empower our Topping Scholars and Fellows to realize their full potential at USC, in their communities, and in life beyond the University. To achieve this mission, the Fund provides support and guidance, community-building programs, and financial assistance. The Fund advocates for equity in higher education by selecting students with high financial need who exhibit an extraordinary commitment to community.



# A YEAR OF TRANSITION



The 52nd year of the Topping Fund was unlike any in its history. After a year online, USC largely returned to in-person classes and activities. Nevertheless, the pandemic's effects continued to be felt. Flexibility and resilience were the keys to a successful year.

The Topping Office modified signature events like Topsgiving and Study Break to be in-person, while abiding by USC and county COVID-19 policies. Through a mix of online, hybrid, and in-person events, staff adapted to ever changing conditions, prioritizing student accessibility and safety.



At the end of spring semester, over 200 scholars, fellows, family members, and university partners came together for a graduation and (belated) 50th anniversary celebration at the USC Hotel. We also said farewell to Topping's beloved Director, Dr. Trista Beard. Thank you for your tireless service to the Topping Family and best of luck in your new position!

# TOPPING FUND BY THE NUMBERS

**\$1.38 million**

in scholarship grants were awarded to

**158 students**

**5600 hours**

of community service  
by Topping Students

**62%**

of Topping Scholars  
graduate debt-free

**39%**

FROM  
SURROUNDING  
COMMUNITY

**98%**

FIRST-GENERATION

**3.61**

AVERAGE  
CUMULATIVE  
GPA

**4.6%**

AVERAGE  
ACCEPTANCE RATE

**100%**

FIRST-TIME FRESHMEN  
GRADUATED IN 6 YEARS



**Humanities**  
12%

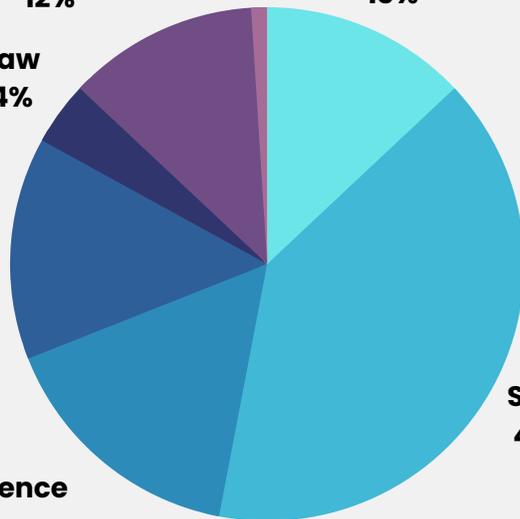
**Business**  
13%

**Law**  
4%

**Politics/Policy**  
14%

**Social Science**  
16%

**STEM**  
40%



**75%**

Undergraduate  
Scholars

**25%**

Graduate  
Fellows



# MISSION STATEMENT OF THE BOARD

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The NTSAF Governing Board endeavors to accomplish the mission of the Fund, maintaining its integrity, while ensuring longevity and resilience. It will do so by facilitating communication between Topping Scholars and Fellows and the larger USC community, creating and implementing long-term policy, and selecting Topping Scholars and Fellows.



# THE GOVERNING BOARD

The NTSAF Governing Board remained receptive to the needs of the Topping community during this year of transition. Committees focused on improving engagement with the USC community, supporting scholars and fellows, and building a DEI framework for the NTSAF.



- Created an additional exceptional funding grant category for students enrolled in a Progressive Degree Program. This allows scholars who did not receive previously use exceptional funding to apply for a 10th semester of aid.
- Approved \$44,000 in exceptional funding requests for academic travel, exam preparation, professional attire, and more.
- Created a performance review for the Governing Board Chair and Director to identify areas of improvement.
- Utilized Topping's Instagram account and hosted an ice-cream social to engage the broader USC student body.
- Published a memo on DEI approaches in higher education and voted to continue the Anti-Racism and Equity Ad-Hoc Committee for another year.



# THE RECOGNITION BANQUET

On April 29th, the Topping Fund celebrated the graduation of 33 scholars and 12 fellows alongside over 200 family members, campus partners, and alumni at the USC Hotel.



The first in-person reunion since 2019, it was an unforgettable evening filled with inspiring speeches, delicious food, and live entertainment courtesy of the Trojan Mariachi and Marching Bands.



The Recognition Banquet was also an opportunity to reflect on the future of the NTSAF. Topping Alum Mr. Hoy Quan '79 launched the Give It Forward Pledge, a fundraising initiative in which alumni pledge to donate an amount equivalent to their Topping Scholarship over time.

# ALUMNI

We'd love to stay in touch! Use the QR code below to update your contact information, join the Topping LinkedIn page, or leave a donation.



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