A LETTER FROM OUR CEO, KAREN STERK

Dear Friends and Supporters —

As we enter month 18 of the pandemic we are continually inspired by the grit and persistence of JRF Scholars. The new class of 125 Scholars are focused and diligent as they complete their schoolwork, take care of their families and contribute to their communities.

Because of the wonderful support from YOU, we were able to provide 35 additional Scholar Grants this year.

Shout out to Synchrony and Mejuri, our two new corporate partners supporting JRF Scholars. Welcome to Dimples Williamson, LaToro Yates, and Stacy Sollenberger new JRF Board Members.

We’ve realized the support we provide for Scholars is a critical part of the success equation and have expanded our offerings.

We’ve expanded the support services for Scholars including:

1. New Scholar Orientation - July 2021 - JRF Scholars had the chance to meet each other as well as the JRF Staff Team. There was a visible “ah ha moment” when the Scholars recognized their common experience.

2. Educational Webinars for JRF Scholars and potential JRF Scholars.
   - College 101 - Presented by Dr. LaToro Yates - Higher Education Enrollment Specialist and JRF Board Member.
   - Time Management - Presented by JRF Alumnae & Scholarship Program Manager - Cat Luna
   - How to Pick a College & How to Pay for College - Presented by JRF Alumnae and Program Staff - LaTrena Artist, Cat Luna and Michele Johnson - Higher Education Scholarship Consultant.

3. Office Hours - LaTrena and Cat offer weekly open office hours where any JRF Scholar can come to ask questions, troubleshoot, or just talk through something that is on their mind.

We look forward to continuing on our path of excellence helping women with abundant potential achieve their dreams.

Thank You Thank You Thank You!

Karen Sterk
JRF Welcomes Three New Board Members

**STACY SOLLENBERGER**  
Creator and Executive Coach,  
Stride Executive Coaching

Stacy is an Executive Coach and founder of Stride Executive Coaching, LLC where she is a catalyst for individuals and corporations taking decisive, transformative steps on their leadership journeys. Stacy is passionate about education, lifelong learning, and continual personal development. Her favorite pastime is to combine her loves of travel and running with her sisters and extended family. She was a partner with ISHR Group for 21 years and previously worked as a Human Resource Manager for General Electric. Stacy earned both her Bachelor of Arts in Social Science and a Master of Labor Relations and Human Resources from Michigan State University. Stacy and her husband Alan both grew up in Michigan. They have raised three children, two of whom are studying in the Midwest and one who will soon follow. While they live in Atlanta with their two rescue dogs, they return to Northern Michigan as often as possible.

**LATORO YATES**  
Higher Education Enrollment Specialist

LaToro is an Enrollment Specialist in Higher Education most recently serving as the Executive Director For Enrollment Management at York College of the City University of New York. There he was responsible for managing three departments: Admissions, Financial Aid, and Testing. He has 14 years of experience in Enrollment Management and Student Affairs and has led York College to three consecutive years of their highest enrollment in the school’s history. He is active in the community and helped create a homework to play program at the Salvation Army in Jersey City. He earned a Ph.D. in Educational Leadership, Management, and Policy from Seton Hall University in 2013.

**DIMPLES WILLIAMSON**  
VP, Senior Client Development Leader,  
Synchrony

Dimples joined Synchrony Financial in 2014, and she leads the strategy development and implementation for credit programs for a $2 billion portfolio. She previously worked for General Electric for 14 years working in Sales, Marketing, and Client Development. She earned her Master of Business Administration from Pennsylvania State University and a Bachelor of Science in Marketing Management from Virginia Tech University. She serves as a mentor for high school and college-bound students and teaches them leadership skills and college preparation. She lives in Cumming, GA, with her husband Travis.

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**STAR Party 2021 Raffle Prizes**

- **$500 Gift Certificate**
- **$1,000 Gift Certificate**
VALERIE PIERS

“Coming up, the fourth week of the first year of my bachelor’s track at Columbia University, where I will pursue a major in Film and Media Studies, minor in English, after earning my Associate of Arts in Liberal Arts, Journalism in 18 months. The plan is to make it to graduate school in Investigative Journalism at Columbia. I remember who helped and those who got in the way. I remember those who thought I was worth it and those who dismissed me and my dreams. Just a few days after being turned down as a finalist for a scholarship because the organization thought it would be best to invest in ‘women leaders of tomorrow’—in other words, young women—I had an interview for the JRF scholarship. My morale was pretty low that day after being told I was too old to be worth anything. Then Ms. LaTrena Stokes and Ms. Tylanna Baker stepped in and told me something different. And I’m still at it!”

“Thank you, Jeanette Rankin Foundation, for believing in me from day one! Leading by example. That’s how you do it!”

— Valerie

Click here for more information on Valerie Piers.

SCHOLAR LUIZA

“Since I was in high school, I have had a dream of attending college and earning a degree. I was not able to attend college after high school, and instead went into the job market to help my family. I made my child and my family my number one priority, but always had college in the back of my mind.”

“My career goals after graduation is to be employed as a rural high school in my area. I am passionate about teaching and want to teach at a school where teacher retention is low. I live within a half hour of rural school districts, and I want children who live in those areas to have a great education.”

“We had a Zoom meeting with new Scholars… and it was an incredible experience for me. They all have children to raise, households to run, laundry to do, houses to clean, all while attending classes and doing homework and studying for exams. It was amazing to meet them and know I am not alone in pursuing an education in my 30’s”

— Luiza

Click here for an article on Luiza.

SCHOLAR SUSANNAH

Susannah is attending Pennsylvania State University. She is going to be earning her bachelor’s degree in Psychology and Social Sciences.

“My community would benefit in many ways because I am a people person. I love to help others and share my knowledge with those that I care about which includes my family, friends, neighbors, church community and students I work with. These are people that can be misinformed or like myself, uninformed to all of the opportunities that are out there. Education should be available and accessible for everyone. The goal is that we will share what we’ve learned with our connections so we don’t wonder what we could have been.”

— Susannah
Thank you to all our sponsors and everyone who attended the

STAR Party 2020

JOIN US FOR THE VIRTUAL STAR PARTY 2021

You’re Invited!

November 4, 2021 | 8-9 PM EDT

SHINING STAR 2021 HONOREE

Lucille O’Neal
This year we are over the moon excited to honor Lucille O’Neal! She is an inspiration to all JRF Scholars. Lucille O’Neal spent 30 years raising her children (including former NBA stand-out Shaquille O’Neal.) Much like JRF Scholars, she made the decision to go back to school as a non-traditional student starting her journey at Bethune-Cookman and eventually earning her PhD. Her book *Walk Like You Have Somewhere to Go* details her journey. She is an inspiration to all of us!

JRF ALUMNA SHINING STAR 2021 HONOREE

Khadijah Abdur-Rahman
New this year, we are shining a light on a JRF Scholar Alumna who is making a difference. Khadijah Abdur-Rahman is doing just that. She was elected Fulton County Commissioner in November of 2020, securing the seat after a record-setting victory in the June 2020 Democratic Primary—winning by 16 points. She made history by becoming the first Muslim woman elected in Georgia.

STAR PARTY 2021 EMCEE

Monica Kaufman Pearson
We are so thrilled to welcome back Monica Kaufman Pearson as our STAR Party emcee. She is a trailblazer for women in the journalism field. Monica was the first woman and the first woman of color to anchor the daily evening news for WSB-TV. Thank you, Monica!

We are working to empower women through education by raising $100,000 for scholarships! Each one of you has the ability to impact a woman’s life forever through the STAR Party.

Click here to register for the 2021 Virtual STAR Party!
Thank You to Our Sponsors

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