



# MLT ASCEND: 2020 IMPACT REPORT

MANAGEMENT LEADERSHIP FOR TOMORROW  
7201 WISCONSIN AVE SUITE 400, BETHESDA, MD 20814 | [WWW.MLT.ORG](http://WWW.MLT.ORG)




## ABOUT THE PROGRAM

Management Leadership for Tomorrow (MLT) is a nonprofit organization that equips high-achieving African American, Latinx and Native American students with the skills, coaching and connections necessary to excel at all career stages.

MLT's unique array of career-advancing initiatives includes MLT Ascend, a college persistence and career development program for undergraduate students.


### MLT Ascend Scholars:

- Are low-income and/or first-generation-to-college
- Are attending a four-year college or university
- Identify as African American, Latinx, and/or Native American
- Are nominated by a community or university partner
- Earn a cumulative high school GPA of at least 2.8




### FRESHMAN-TO-SOPHOMORE RETENTION

EACH YEAR, **98%** OF ASCEND FRESHMEN PROGRESS TO SOPHOMORE YEAR



### ACADEMIC PROFILE

AVERAGE CUMULATIVE GPA: **3.1** WITH **25%** AT OR ABOVE GPA OF **3.5**



### COLLEGE PERSISTENCE

**93%** OF SCHOLARS ARE ON TRACK TO EARN A BACHELOR'S DEGREE WITHIN 4-6 YEARS



MLT Ascend Scholar Elon S. with Coach Derek O.

With Ascend, Scholars explore and develop their strengths, passions, and interests in order to plan for and pursue successful academic and professional careers. Ascend offers:

- One-on-one coaching
- Access to internships with top companies
- Community-building events and skill development workshops
- Exposure to the broader MLT professional network

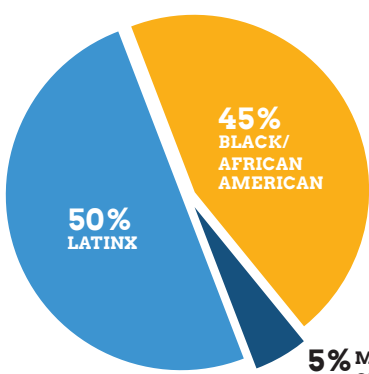
Ascend selected its first Scholar cohort in 2014 and is now tracking college outcomes for **775 students** across the nation. This report, updated for 2020, highlights key program results and scholar outcomes.

*"Ascend is a perfect program for first-generation college students. The learning curve faced by first-generation students affects all facets of the college experience—academically, socially and professionally. MLT has helped me navigate these areas with greater ease."*

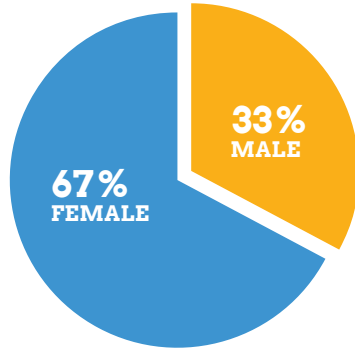
*MLT Ascend Scholar Veronica F., American University, 2023*

## WHOM WE SERVE

### SCHOLARS BY ETHNICITY



### SCHOLARS BY GENDER



MLT Ascend Scholar N'dia S., Howard University, 2018



## TOP 5 FIELDS OF STUDY

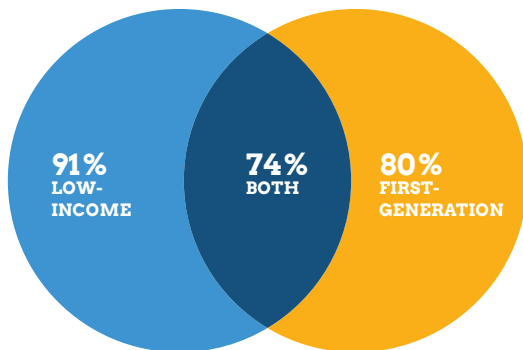
Ascend scholars pursue a diverse array of academic interests, with most Scholars studying the following:

1. Business
2. Biology & Health Sciences
3. Social Sciences
4. Humanities
5. Engineering



MLT Ascend Scholar Uriel F., Xavier University, 2018

### SCHOLARS BY SOCIO-ECONOMIC STATUS





## TOP 10 COLLEGES ATTENDED BY ASCEND SCHOLARS

Scholars are ascending to new heights at more than 100 institutions across the country! The majority of Ascend Scholars attend the following universities:

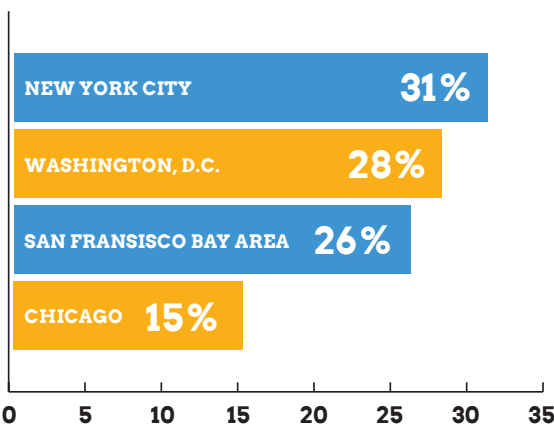
- American University
- Fordham University
- Georgetown University
- Howard University
- New York University
- Syracuse University
- University of California, Berkeley
- University of California, Davis
- University of California, Santa Cruz
- University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign

## WHERE WE SERVE

The Ascend program partners with community organizations committed to the long-range success of low-income, first-generation-to-college students. Our Scholars have been nominated by the following organizations in Chicago, New York City, San Francisco, and Washington, D.C.:

- American University
- Aspire Public Schools
- College Bound Initiative
- College Track
- Cristo Rey Network
- Eagle Academy for Young Men
- East Harlem Tutorial Program
- Gary Comer College Prep
- Georgetown University
- Howard University
- KIPP Through College
- Level Playing Field Institute
- LINK Unlimited Scholars Program

## SCHOLARS BY HOME REGION



Ascend Scholars and Coaches at the 2019 San Francisco Regional Kickoff

*“Talking to a lot of my mentor’s network, I was able to find out about several business sectors that interested me and was given many resources to conduct research in order to pick the best internship option for me.”*

*MLT Ascend Scholar Dejanna N., Howard University, 2022*

## MLT'S TOOLS FOR SUCCESS

### PLAYBOOK



### COACHING



### NETWORK



At MLT Ascend, Coaches and Scholars are equipped with the following critical tools that contribute to students' college persistence and successful career development:

- **MLT Ascend Scholar Roadmap**
- **S.M.A.R.T. Goals Framework**
- **Internship and Scholarship Library**
- **Online Scholar & Coach Engagement Platform**

### ASCEND COACHING

Ascend is distinct because we secure underrepresented minority Coaches with whom Scholars can identify. Ascend Coaches are recent college graduates or early career professionals whose experiences make them well-equipped to provide Scholars the coaching and mentoring they need to advance in the classroom and workplace.

### MLT ASCEND COACHES:

- Are alumni of an MLT program
- Identify as underrepresented minorities
- Have completed their undergraduate studies or are within a year of earning a Bachelor's degree
- Represent various professional industries including business, engineering, technology, and the social sector



*"Coach Ruth has played a major role in my success... She is always there to support me whenever I feel like giving up, or there to encourage me to take risks and try out new things."*

*MLT Ascend Scholar Ashley E., The City College of New York, 2022*

*"To me, there is an inherent duty and obligation to help the next generation of leaders in any way that I can. The [Ascend] program has taught me the importance of truly listening, and that being myself is enough to inspire someone."*

*MLT Ascend Coach Ruth P.*

Coaches guide Scholars using an MLT roadmap that helps them stay on track to graduate, maximize their college experience, and accelerate toward a fulfilling career. **Ascend will pilot a new coaching model in 2020** that better leverages MLT's expertise in undergraduate career coaching.

## SOLVING FOR GREATER IMPACT

While only eleven percent of first-generation and low-income students complete a Bachelor's degree nationally<sup>1</sup>, **ninety-three percent of Ascend Scholars are on track to earn a Bachelor's degree in four to six years.** Ascend Scholars attain degrees at a higher rate, far exceeding the fifty-eight percent six-year completion rate for students attending public institutions.<sup>2</sup>

Despite gains in college access, approximately sixty percent of underrepresented minority college graduates are unemployed or underemployed — working in jobs that do not require a college degree. MLT is committed to changing this trend.



*"I graduated in December and started working as a Regional Coordinator for Louisiana GEAR UP. I'm now preparing for the GRE, paying down my loans, and planning for a Masters in Teaching."*

*MLT Ascend Scholar Darius S.  
Louisiana State University, 2019*



*"Life update, Ascend team! I got a new job at Facebook doing diversity work on a 6-month contract. I negotiated a pay raise and managed to double my income!"*

*MLT Ascend Scholar Zaria C.  
Agnes Scott College, 2018*

### ASCENDING BEYOND 2020

To address this gap and build upon the successes from the first six years of the Ascend initiative, MLT will pilot a new program model that responds to an increasing demand for undergraduate career coaching. By adjusting the existing program to leverage what MLT does best — career acceleration for underrepresented minorities — we are confident we can not only promote persistence, but also have a positive impact on the career trajectory and economic prospects for larger numbers of low-income students.

**To learn more about how you can support MLT Ascend, please visit us at [mlt.org/mlt-ascend](https://mlt.org/mlt-ascend)**

<sup>1</sup> Pell Institute 2014

<sup>2</sup> NCES's Higher Education: Gaps in Access and Persistence Study August 2012

Looking ahead, MLT Ascend aims to connect more low-income first generation students with career-accelerating first jobs out of college. Below, find a selection of some of the companies, organizations, and institutions that have hired MLT Ascend alumni:

- Accenture\*
- Achievement First
- The Advisory Board Company
- Amazon\*
- AmeriCorps
- The Associated Press
- Baltimore City Public Schools
- Bank of America Merrill Lynch\*
- Barclays Investment Bank
- Children's Aid Society
- City Year
- CNN
- DC Public Schools
- Deloitte\*
- Drug Enforcement Agency
- Eli Lilly & Company\*
- Facebook\*
- Fannie Mae\*
- First Graduate Program
- Gear Up Program
- General Mills\*
- Google\*
- Intuit\*
- JP Morgan Chase\*
- KIPP\*
- KPMG
- Learning Policy Institute
- LinkedIn\*
- Planned Parenthood
- PricewaterhouseCoopers
- Shell Oil Company
- Teach for America
- United Nations Foundation
- US Department of Justice
- The Walt Disney Company\*

*\*Indicates MLT Corporate & Social Sector Partners*



Citi Foundation



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