The Mensa Education & Research Foundation is a philanthropic, nonprofit 501(c)(3) organization that benefits society by inspiring and empowering intellectually gifted people. Support comes from American Mensa, Ltd., Mensa International, and other charitable donations.

Donations are deductible in the United States for income tax purposes.

Information on all of the Foundation’s programs and activities can be found at mensafoundation.org.
PRESIDENT’S REPORT

A growing bounty for which to be thankful

THE PAST YEAR went by quickly. I’m another year older, maybe wiser, and happier. Why happier? One big reason is that it’s been a productive year for the Mensa Foundation and, for me, that’s fun and rewarding.

As Foundation President, I’m fortunate to work with a board of trustees comprising a great group of people, as well as some awesome staff at the American Mensa National Office. The board added three voting trustees — Keri M. Guilbault, Virginia, USA; Vicki Herd, Alberta, Canada; and Jennifer Wise, Washington, USA — who each bring a plentiful helping of passion for our mission along with incredible experience. They also generously made room in their busy lives to share their expertise with us. Read more about them on the Foundation website (mensafoundation.org/trustees).

Financially, the Foundation is very stable. Our investment policy, revised last year in April, has yielded much better returns for us. Net return on investments this year was $113,661 versus $39,144 last year — an increase of $74,517, more than 90 percent.

Total current net assets are $4,697,456 compared to $4,423,976 last year, an increase of $273,480. We continue to be able to support funding programs at their current levels and effect some growth.

Individual contributions rose from $62,042 in 2017 to $89,745 in 2018 — an increase of $27,703, more than 44 percent. This next year, we expect to see much more activity in the fundraising arena.

Other highlights of successes from the past year are sprinkled through this report and on our website. One item of note is the awarding of the inaugural Mensa Foundation Prize, which included $10,000 as part of the award. Honoring discoveries in intelligence and creativity, its 2017 recipient was Dr. David Silver of London, the lead on the AlphaGo team developing the first computer program to defeat the world’s best Go player. In a May 2017 tournament, AlphaGo won all three games against the world’s top Go player.

I mention the Mensa Foundation Prize because it was made possible by a generous donor, Kenneth Thomson from California, who endowed it through his estate. A Mensa for nearly 50 years, he valued the organization as much as he valued intelligence and learning. This was his way to help encourage the use of intelligence and give back to an organization he cherished.

Not all of us can be quite so generous, but all of us can make a difference. In our current fiscal year, the Mensa Foundation continues to focus its efforts on a culture of philanthropy within American Mensa, as well as Mensa International, so that we can increase our impact. We are also taking steps to communicate the mission to those outside the organization.

Mensa members know what it’s like to grow up gifted. Imagine being able to say that you are part of helping gifted youth have a smoother path because you cared enough to help. Supporting the Foundation is one way to do that.

The Foundation team knows we can’t just ask for donations, we also have to donate. Of the Foundation Board of Trustees and staff, 100 percent are donors. This year, the total was more than $12,000. In the coming year, we will challenge ourselves to increase our donations.

You, too, can be a part of fulfilling one of Mensa’s purposes to “identify and foster human intelligence for the benefit of humanity.” Your gift of time, treasure, and talent provides scholarships, promotes research, champions gifted youth, and empowers educators. As former Foundation Treasurer Guy Conti puts it: “I look at my participation in the Foundation, and I really like it to being part of a family. And, you know, giving is just doing what any family member does.”

GIFTED YOUTH

THE FOUNDATION’S COMMITMENT to educational outreach manifests itself readily in its programs and support for gifted youth.

See how at mensafoundation.org/giftedyouth

SCHOLARSHIPS

Helping gifted students is an investment in society, and training future teacher-leaders in the field of gifted education is vital. Our Gifted Education Fellowship is intended to assist U.S. educators in acquiring post-graduate degrees in gifted education or a closely related field from an accredited institution of higher education. The Fellowship has a value of $5,000 per year, renewable for one year. (Learn more at mensafoundation.org/GEFellowship.)

SCHOLARSHIPS

The Foundation’s longtime College Scholarship Program bases its awards totally on essays written by applicants. In the 2017-18 program year, thousands of students competed for 178 scholarship awards at the local, regional, national, and international levels. With the help of volunteer chairs and judges nationwide, and the support of the National Office, the Foundation awarded $131,700 in scholarships. The International Scholarship Program grows each year, with 62 entries this year from Mensans in 25 countries. Ten Mensan judges from 10 countries chose these recipients: Sebastian Sedlar, Mensa Czech Republic; Joshua Taya, Mensa Canada; Gwyneth Rolph, British Mensa; Simon Hellstrom, Mensa Sweden; and Tyler Barton, Mensa New Zealand.

MENSAFORKIDS.ORG

The award-winning Mensa for Kids website features a treasure trove of resources for gifted youth and their families and teachers. Lesson plans were expanded this year to reflect Mensa’s partnership with Hasbro. It’s the place to learn about scholarships, the Mensa Honor Society, and the Excellence in Reading program. Young Mensan Magazine, Bright newsletter, and games round out the activities.

Learn more at MensaForKids.org
DEVELOPING A CULTURE of philanthropy remains a strong focus to ensure funding to grow and sustain Foundation programs. Last year, an information campaign helped Mensans learn more about the Foundation’s work regarding scholarships, research, gifted youth, and educators. That resulted in a yearly increase in total donors and in total donations.

The Foundation’s work in the global community continues to grow with expansion of its award and scholarship programs to include more international participants. (See more on international award winners on Page 5.)

Growing support globally will play a key role in the Foundation’s continued growth.

“To fulfill our mission of benefitting society, we will need philanthropic individuals across the world to show their support for the Foundation’s initiatives,” said Foundation Philanthropy Director John Thompson.

Efforts in the U.S. and abroad will continue with new steps to raise awareness about the Foundation’s good works and mission. A philanthropy team will identify goals and work toward them. Annual appeals and Foundation events will cultivate new donors.

Additional efforts, such as developing leadership- and legacy-giving societies, will strengthen our fundraising capability.

Our upcoming leadership-giving societies will properly acknowledge our most loyal donors and will provide all of our donors with more opportunity to boost the impact of their gifts. Our legacy-giving societies will ensure your gift has a lasting impact on the Foundation’s intelligence-based mission.

YOUR DONATION COUNTS IN COUNTLESS WAYS: Make a gift today at mensafoundation.org/donate
THANK YOU TO ALL OF OUR DONORS! WE COULDN’T DO IT WITHOUT YOU!
Aneta Kuczewska of Poland has adapted LaserTank, one of the most difficult and extensive free logic games in the world, into a three-language encyclopedia about the game. Designed for computer and mobile devices, LaserTankpedia (lasertankpedia.zdobywca.com) contains thousands of boards, hundreds of categories, and thousands of statistics.

Jerry Martin of Grass Valley, Calif., believes Sudoku, a puzzle pastime enjoyed by millions, can teach young students how to think, as opposed to how traditional school subjects teach what to think. “I believe Sudoku is a powerful, practical, and appealing ‘tool’ for impacting the cognitive evolution of all humanity,” says Jerry, a retired educator who also won the 2010 Copper Black for his Saluting New Readers program (saluting-new-readers.org). Solo Sudoku activity excels at training logical thinking, but Jerry also focuses on developing “interpersonal intelligences” by holding an annual Children’s Team Sudoku Tournament, which includes weekly classes and YouTube videos.

The Children’s Museum of Indianapolis is the largest children’s museum in the world and offers children and adults, regardless of income, opportunities to explore and learn through interactive and passive displays and programs. Its mission is to create extraordinary learning experiences across the arts, sciences, and humanities that have the power to transform the lives of children and families. “The Children’s Museum of Indianapolis offers mind-expanding experiences to all through free days each month and programming that inspires young minds and old to see and search beyond barriers they might otherwise encounter,” said Foundation Trustee Eldon Romney. “It is a model for children’s museums everywhere.”

Janine Teo of Singapore looked at a problem: hundreds of millions of out-of-school children worldwide denied workforce prospects because of poverty, diversity politics, gender, disability, armed conflict, or other factors. Her solution: Solve Education!, which uses game mechanics and artificial intelligence in an educational application, Dawn of Civilization. Designed to combat poor-quality schools that perpetuate the cycle of educational inequality, the game runs on low-end smartphones and intermittent internet. “Our findings show that when they are marginalized from employment, it is nearly impossible to be motivated to learn the skills for that marketplace,” Janine says. Launched in August 2017, Dawn of Civilization now has more than 4,000 learners, and Solve Education! has secured partnerships in six countries.

Not to put too fine a line on it, but David Ilan’s art has a point. The North Hollywood, Calif., artist’s pointillism style (drawing using only dots) has grown to “one person = one dot” projects, such as the one his art has a point. The North Hollywood, Calif., artist’s pointillism style (drawing using only dots) has grown to “one person = one dot” projects, such as the one he uses to help schools with STEM education. “Getting a dot in a drawing joins people in a cause and forever makes them part of a community,” says David, also the recipient of a Volunteer Service Award from President Obama. David’s STEM Pointillism Project (davidilan.com/STEM) features a drawing of a student on a science book with four leaves, representing the four areas of STEM education, coming to life around her.
COLLOQUIUM

PRIVACY IN THE 21ST CENTURY:
MYSTERY OR MYTH?

2018 COLLOQUIUM, scheduled July 2 in Phoenix, will explore how privacy rights have been transformed in the digital age and how they may yet change. Sponsored by the Mensa Foundation, this one-day symposium will provide a forum for Mensans and the general public to probe “Privacy in the 21st Century.”

Expert speakers will examine the inherent intertwine of privacy rights and information technology, including how governments, marketers, and political data firms collect, store, and use what the world’s largest privately held software business calls the “ever-increasing volume, velocity, variety, variability and complexity of information.”

We’ll ask how legislative actions will affect the role of tech companies in government surveillance. And with new technology platforms poised to change the way data ownership works, we’ll explore how those smart products may affect limits of the third-party doctrine in the U.S. Constitution’s Fourth Amendment.

The Phoenix event will follow last year’s study of the evolution and revolution of manufacturing. Held in Indianapolis, Ind., which bills itself as “A State that Works,” the event featured a “cobot” demonstration and speakers who examined the economic, technological, educational, and geopolitical ramifications of the manufacturing sector.

Learn more and register at ag.us.mensa.org/colloquium

THE AWARDS FOR EXCELLENCE IN RESEARCH recognize outstanding research on aspects of human intelligence and giftedness. This year’s recipients are:

2018 SENIOR DIVISION

Saiuying Steenbergen-Hu, Northwestern University: Factors That Contributed to Gifted Students’ Success on STEM Pathways: The Role of Race, Personal Interests, and Aspects of High School Experience (coauthor Paula Olszewski-Kubilius)

Linda S. Gottfredson, University of Delaware: Hans Eysenck’s Theory of Intelligence, and What it Reveals About Him

Jonathan Wai, Duke University: Helping Disadvantaged and Spatially Talented Students Fulfill Their Potential: Related and Neglected National Resources (coauthor Frank C. Worrell)

Dr. Martin Dresler, Rad Bowd University Medical Center (the Netherlands): Mnemonic Training Reshapes Brain Networks to Support Superior Memory (coauthors William R. Shrier, Boris N. Konrad, Nils C.J. Müller, Isabella C. Wagner, Guillén Fernández, Michael Czisch, Michael D. Greicius)


2018 JUNIOR DIVISION

Enyi Jen, Purdue University: High-Ability Students’ Perspectives on an Affective Curriculum in a Diverse, University-Based Summer Residential Enrichment Program (coauthors Marcia Gentry, and Sidney M. Moon)

Renae D. Mayes, Ball State University: Adversity and Pitfalls of Twice-Exceptional Urban Learners (coauthor James L. Moore, III)

Ruth Karpinski, Pitzer College: High Intelligence: A Risk Factor For Psychological and Physiological Overexcitabilities (coauthors Audrey M. Kinase Kolb, Nicole A. Tetreault, and Thomas Borowskic)

Learn more and register at ag.us.mensa.org/colloquium

THE MENSA RESEARCH JOURNAL highlights scholarly articles and recent research related to intelligence from a diverse selection of international authors. It includes relevant and timely research on intelligence, specially curated for Mensans, and is available at only $9 (USD) per issue.

The summer issue looks at artificial intelligence, specifically the connection between human and artificial intelligence – a link particularly relevant for Mensans and which dovetails nicely with this year’s and next year’s Colloquium discussions.

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