

**Regional Scholarship Providers Network (RSPN)
Meeting Minutes
January 22, 2025 | 9:00 a.m. – 10:30 a.m.
SCF Lakewood Ranch**

1. Meeting Attendees – There were 26 attendees at the January meeting.

1. Hank	Battie	A. Jean Battie Scholarship Fund
2. Linda	Benedict	CareerSource Suncoast
3. Nicole	Bentze	Florida State University College of Medicine
4. Susie	Bowie	William G. and Marie Selby Foundation
5. Harriet	Cowan	ASALH
6. Jodie	DeLoach	DeSoto County Education Foundation
7. Diana	Dill	Take Stock in Children Sarasota
8. Andrea	Doggett	UnidosNow
9. Laura	Dykstra	Community Foundation of Sarasota County
10. Omar	Edwards	SDMC and Kappa Alpha Psi
11. Heather	Ferrigno	Education Foundation of Sarasota County
12. Brent	Giangregorio	Women’s Resource Center
13. Scott	Henderson	Community Foundation of Sarasota County
14. Scott	Hopkin	State College of Florida Foundation
15. Caitlin	Joyner	Rotary Futures
16. Ron	Kline	ASALH
17. Anna	Kollmeyer	Catholic Community Foundation of SWFL
18. Melanie	Lavendar	Opportunities For All, Sarasota Chamber
19. Joan	Leonard	SunCoast Blood Centers
20. Stephanie	Miller	Community Foundation of Sarasota County
21. Theresa	Quin	Manatee School for the Arts
22. Gina	Rosabal	Healthy Teens
23. Kristin	Taylor	Gulf Coast Community Foundation
24. Lori	Tomlinson	State College of Florida Foundation
25. Clara	Villanueva	University of South Florida-SM
26. Kiarra	Womack	William G. and Marie Selby Foundation

2. Welcome – Susie welcomed the group and thanked SCF. She reviewed the reasons for the creation of the RSPN emphasizing that the goal is about building community. The group objectives include to *strengthen relationships, improve communications, increase collaboration, share information, and learn and develop together.*

3. Intro - Kiarra reviewed the 2025 meeting topics, the agenda, and asked attendees to introduce themselves along with providing 1 thing they would like to learn to benefit their process this year. Below is a synopsis of the responses:

- a) Supporting students; Working through anxiety; Seeking accurate information; Encouraging positive A.I. use; Marketing scholarships; Tracking student loan debt; Student engagement; Community impacts; and incorporating new A.I. systems through learnings at RSPN.

- 4. A.I. Presentation** – Scott Henderson, Director, Insights at the Community Foundation of Sarasota County, presented A.I. Utilization in the scholarship application review process. The meeting covered an overview of A.I., highlighted innovative ways organizations are using A.I. applications to streamline and enhance the review process, shared real-world use cases that demonstrate its impact, and included a list of free resources that providers can use in practice. The session concluded with an open Q&A and discussion. Keeping with the A.I. theme, please see the following notes regarding the meeting summary generated by the A.I. Zoom notetaker present at our meeting.
- a) Scott Henderson discusses AI and its potential impact on scholarship processes. While AI presents challenges due to the rapid pace of change, he encourages being curious and finding ways to utilize it effectively rather than being overly anxious about it. Scott shares his background in the nonprofit sector and experience of organizational change. The key points are that AI is evolving quickly but approaching it with an open mindset to understand and adapt can be beneficial for scholarship providers.
 - b) Scott provides an overview of artificial intelligence (AI) and its different types, including narrow AI for specific tasks, general AI with human-like intelligence, and super AI that can simulate and surpass the neural networks of the human brain. He discusses machine learning as a subset of AI, as well as generative AI like ChatGPT that can create new content using natural language. Scott explains how AI learns through supervised learning with labeled data, unsupervised learning to categorize unlabeled data, and reinforcement learning through feedback loops. He gives examples of how organizations use AI for streamlining processes, reducing bias, content creation, and problem-solving. Scott also touches on the potential of AI to identify talented individuals beyond academic performance for scholarships.
 - c) Scott discussed the potential use of AI in scholarship processes, highlighting its ability to automate screening and matching, analyze essays for coherence and alignment with scholarship goals, and reduce bias in the evaluation process. He also mentioned the use of AI for fraud detection, personalized application feedback, and predictive analytics for award decisions. Scott emphasized the importance of creating policies and guardrails before implementing AI in decision-making processes. He demonstrated the use of AWS Bedrock system, which uses natural language processing to review applications and provide scores based on a pre-defined rubric. Scott also suggested the use of AI to optimize eligibility criteria and fund allocation. The team discussed the potential of using AI to improve the scholarship review process and increase efficiency.
 - d) Scott discussed the potential of AI systems to enhance efficiency and productivity, particularly in the context of scholarship advising. He highlighted the importance of considering how additional time could be utilized, suggesting that it would likely be spent with people. Scott also mentioned the upcoming meeting in mid to late April and promised to share the meeting notes, slides, and Scott's contact information. He encouraged the team to invite other scholarship advisors to the network. Scott also discussed the transition to Foundant and the potential for AI to manage tasks. He mentioned the need for training staff to work with these systems and the importance of addressing potential biases in AI. Scott

also touched on the challenges of balancing individual interests with the needs of the community.

- Share your feedback and interest in future RSPN topics by completing the survey [HERE](#).
5. **Closing** – Kiarra thanked everyone for attending and encouraged them to offer input on how to make the Network as impactful as possible on the survey. The next quarterly meeting will be held on April 16, 2025, at 9-10:30am, location TBD.