



IN THE REARVIEW MIRROR: LOOKING BACK ON FOUR YEARS AS MENSA FOUNDATION PRESIDENT



BY CHARLIE STEINHICE
MENSA FOUNDATION TRUSTEE AND PAST PRESIDENT

MY PASSION for road trips is well-known. Forty years into my quest to visit every county in the U.S., I still have 14 percent left to explore. As I reflect on my four years as President of the Mensa Foundation, I can't help but use a travel analogy to illustrate my journey.

Picture being on a bus trip across the country, traveling west on Interstate 70. The journey has already covered a significant distance, from Maryland through the Midwest and across the Great Plains. When we reach the flat terrain of Colorado east of Denver, it's my turn to drive for the next 250 miles. This stretch leads us through the Rockies, crosses the Continental Divide, and passes over Vail Pass into the stunning Glenwood Canyon. As the scenery transforms, the bus passengers cheer and chant my name as if I alone were responsible for the breathtaking views.

In reality, I was simply in the right place at the right time.

When I began my term as President in July 2020, the Mensa Foundation faced several challenges. The organization was in transition, with a small, relatively

inexperienced Board and a newly purchased headquarters requiring major renovations. The editorship of the *Mensa Research Journal* was vacant, and American Mensa Ltd. had reduced its annual donation to the Foundation by 80 percent due to pandemic-related budget cuts. Most critically, sparked by then-Trustee Deb Stone, the Board had begun a crucial reassessment of how the Foundation could enhance its impact. We had recently adopted a new mission: "Unleashing intelligence for the benefit of humanity." My initial contribution was to

redefine this mission with the term "unleash."

During my tenure, we made significant strides. We revitalized the *Mensa Research Journal* with Dr. Jeff Papa's leadership, enhancing its content with themed issues, book reviews, and author interviews. We expanded our Board with Nguyen Pham and Michelle Rakshys, who led a crucial program audit. This audit led us to prioritize increasing the value of existing scholarships over creating new ones. We then expanded again, adding Billie Lee and Jeff Papa as Trustees. And in a Foundation first, we commissioned an original scholarly research study to understand the unmet needs of highly intelligent individuals at different ages and stages of life.

The focus on "Giftedness Through the Lifespan" for our 2022 Colloquium was groundbreaking, being the first conference in North America to cover this comprehensive scope. The success of this event led to subsequent Colloquiums on related topics and a new monthly Speaker Series, thanks to Dr. Joi Lin's dedicated efforts.

Financially, we secured nearly \$2.7 million in donations over four

years, enabling strategic investments in website redesign, market research, and the original study. As a result, our net assets grew by 25 percent to \$5.4 million as of March 2024.

While our financial position is strong, we still need ongoing support to fund new programs and expand our resources. We encourage continued contributions to help us drive our mission forward and make an even more significant impact.

In addition to thanking our donors and volunteers, I am deeply grateful for the contributions of all our current and recent Trustees, especially both Vice Presidents during my tenure: Deb Stone and Jenny Wise. Special thanks go to our full-time staff, Jill Beckham and John Thompson, who have been instrumental in turning ideas into action and keeping our initiatives on track. I might have held the steering wheel, but they kept that bus running.

Looking ahead, the Foundation is in capable hands with our new President, Nguyen Pham. His vision for a stronger partnership with American Mensa promises exciting developments. In this Annual Report, Nguyen outlines his strategy to deepen this collaboration and leverage our combined strengths. His focus will be on addressing the unmet needs identified in our recent study and exploring new initiatives that support gifted individuals and intellectual growth. Not to steal his thunder, but Nguyen envisions a partnership where the Mensa Foundation and American Mensa work together to create programs that support both gifted individuals and those interested in intellectual development. I'll defer to him to elaborate further.

As I step into a supporting role, I'm excited to see how Nguyen and the team will continue to advance our mission. The road ahead promises new opportunities, and I am confident that under their leadership, the Mensa Foundation will achieve even greater milestones. Together, we can enhance our understanding of intelligence and support gifted individuals and those eager to expand their cognitive abilities.

YOU MATTER

This past year, your support funded a groundbreaking research study into the unmet needs of you, the highly intelligent individual. This first-of-its-kind initiative has sharpened the focus of the Mensa Foundation's efforts and will guide our programming for the coming years.

The results were stark but not surprising. They reflect your story — your frustrations, your needs, your fears, your wishes, and your disappointments. This research highlights the unique challenges faced by the Mensa community and other highly intelligent individuals.

Your Ability to Thrive Matters

Your stories underscore the importance of addressing these challenges to foster well-being and personal fulfillment. Your needs matter. Your experiences matter. And your mental health matters.

You Are Unique

As a highly intelligent individual, you encounter challenges that few others can fully grasp — whether it's navigating complex social dynamics, managing high expectations, or seeking fulfillment in your pursuits. While these obstacles can be demanding, they also underscore your exceptional abilities and potential. Our study's findings confirm that your experiences are distinct, and your journey is uniquely your own. But these differences are not just what set you apart; they are what make you an indispensable part of the Mensa community.

As a Mensan, you understand the power of shared experiences. Together, we respond, inspire, achieve, and support one another. As our community grows, so does its impact, creating an ever-expanding network of empowerment.

You Are Crucial to Our Community

Your involvement helps others like you — highly intelligent individuals who benefit from our programs and initiatives. You have the power to transform this community. Your philanthropy matters because it enables us to implement the research findings to develop new programs. You provide vital resources that empower gifted individuals to thrive.

As we look to the future, we invite you to unleash intelligence. Make a donation to the Mensa Foundation. Together, we can make a transformative impact on society. Thank you for being an essential part of our journey. Your support truly makes a difference.

John Thompson
Mensa Foundation Director of Development & Impact

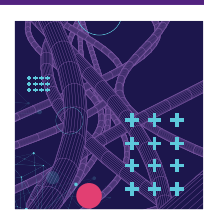
P.S. Your support unleashes intelligence! Scan to donate now or visit MensaFoundation.org/unleash.



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MENSA FOUNDATION: PARTNERING UP WITH AMERICAN MENSA



BY NGUYEN PHAM,
MENSA FOUNDATION PRESIDENT, MR. MENSA 2011



GREETINGS, FELLOW MENSANS! As the new President of the Mensa Foundation, I'm excited to share our vision for a deeper partnership with American Mensa. First, I owe an enormous debt of gratitude to my predecessor, Charlie Steinhice, who served the Foundation dutifully as President for the past four years. As the President who stewarded the Foundation through arguably our most arduous juncture, Charlie indeed leaves big shoes to fill — although my shoes are pretty tall.

Notably, Charlie oversaw the commissioning of the Foundation's

recent "Study of Unmet Needs Among Highly Intelligent Individuals," which has illuminated key areas where we can make a significant impact, particularly in supporting gifted individuals. Soon to be publicly available, this research project provides clear guidance for the Foundation's next steps and underscores the potential benefits of closer collaboration with American Mensa.

The Mensa Foundation is dedicated to exploring, supporting, and uplifting human intelligence for a brighter future. Our mission focuses on championing gifted

individuals while also fostering intellectual growth among those interested in expanding their cognitive abilities. We aim to broaden our understanding of human intelligence and empower individuals at every stage of their lives through research, education, and global support. By embracing diverse definitions and expressions of intelligence, we aspire toward a future where all people can thrive.

To address the findings of our study, we're proposing new initiatives that align with our two-fold mission:

Building New Knowledge of Human Intelligence

- Cultivate a scholarly network to conduct and encourage research into the multidimensional nature of intelligence.
- Publish and disseminate research findings through the *Mensa Research Journal* and other platforms.
- Host educational events to explore human intelligence and related concepts.
- Recognize and empower exceptional contributions to the understanding of human intelligence by awarding prizes and providing financial investment.

Supporting Intellectual Growth Throughout the Lifespan

- Contribute financial resources for continuing one's education and/or research and for empowering people to use their intelligence for good through scholarships and grants.
- Provide educational resources and programs to enhance cognitive development through all stages of life.
- Build a coalition of educators and other professionals to promote continuous learning and development.
- Embrace neurodiversity by ensuring our initiatives support a broad range of cognitive needs.

We envision a collaborative partnership between the Mensa Foundation and American Mensa in the development and deployment of programs that support both gifted individuals and those interested in intellectual growth. By leveraging the complementary strengths of both organizations, we will create a robust infrastructure that addresses significant global challenges while advancing our collective understanding of human intelligence.

Dear fellow Mensans: Your involvement is crucial as we pursue this enhanced and audacious partnership. Please visit MensaFoundation.org to learn how you can contribute to our mission. And, as always, stay brilliant.



SPEAKER SERIES UNWINDS NEW IDEAS ON GIFTED POTENTIAL

THE INAUGURAL YEAR of the Mensa Foundation Speaker Series exceeded all expectations. Thanks to your generosity, we raised nearly \$20,000 and ushered over 200 participants into dynamic, thought-provoking discussions on issues vital to the gifted community.

The series featured a diverse and accomplished lineup of speakers who tackled essential topics beyond traditional measures of intelligence. These discussions addressed the unique social and emotional needs of gifted individuals, explored the Theory of Positive Disintegration, and followed the compelling theme of "Beyond IQ," which involved discussions that go beyond the traditional understanding and measures of intelligence. The series also showcased how Mensans are using their intelligence for the betterment of society. Through all these conversations, we offered fresh perspectives on how to nurture and unleash the full potential of gifted minds.

In collaboration with esteemed partners such as the Gifted Development Center, the Dabrowski Center, and Supporting Emotional Needs of the Gifted, the series provided a platform for deep exploration into the challenges and opportunities faced by the gifted community. A particularly impactful highlight was the "Mensa Talks" sessions, which featured real-world examples of Mensans applying their intelligence in innovative ways, inspiring attendees to think creatively about their own potential for positive impact.

As we approach the end of this year's Speaker Series, with upcoming sessions on autopsychotherapy and navigating academic acceleration for gifted learners, we are already looking ahead to the next year. We are eager to include more voices from within the Mensa community for our 2025 series. If you have expertise or experiences that could benefit others, we invite you to consider joining us as a speaker. Please contact John Thompson to explore how you can contribute to this enriching initiative.

FOUNDATION'S TRAILBLAZING STUDY UNVEILS UNMET NEEDS OF THE HIGHLY INTELLIGENT



THE MENSA FOUNDATION is pleased to share the results of a significant research project that your support made possible. This year, esteemed researchers from William & Mary conducted an extensive study involving 3,443 participants, primarily from the Mensa community, focusing on the unmet needs of highly intelligent individuals. The study examined four critical areas: education, career, social and emotional well-being, and mental health, with the goal of better understanding the challenges faced by this unique population.

The findings were enlightening, revealing that 53 percent of participants fall into the Moderate Needs category, indicating a substantial demand for targeted resources. Key challenges

such as time management, communication, emotional regulation, and financial constraints were identified as significant barriers to reaching full potential. Additionally, societal attitudes often contribute to feelings of isolation and misunderstanding, further complicating these issues.

While specific initiatives are still being developed, the study highlighted six key areas where support is most needed:

- Academic Skill Development: Providing essential training in time management and study techniques
- Mentorship and Career Planning: Establishing networks and workshops to guide informed decisions
- Financial Accessibility: Reducing financial barriers to education and career advancement.
- Social Connectedness: Promoting community interaction to reduce isolation
- Mental Health Support: Ensuring access to professionals familiar with high intelligence
- Shifting Societal Attitudes: Fostering a more supportive and understanding environment

Your contributions have been instrumental in making this research possible. The insights gained will guide the Mensa Foundation's future efforts, ensuring that highly intelligent individuals receive the support they need to thrive in all aspects of their lives.

YOUR IMPACT: EDUCATION, RESEARCH, AND SUPPORT TOWARD UNLEASHING INTELLIGENCE

YOUR SUPPORT has been the driving force behind a truly remarkable year. Along with nearly 900 other donors, you helped raise more than \$470,000, advancing our mission to explore, support, and uplift intelligence for a brighter future.

Your generosity continues to expand the Mensa Foundation's flagship scholarship program. This year, 183 recipients were awarded over \$200,000 in funds. This remarkable progress reflects your unwavering commitment to nurturing talent and supporting the intellectual growth of those pursuing higher education. As we move forward, these principles will remain central to our mission, empowering the next generation of thinkers and leaders.

Your contributions also helped us transform our website into a more

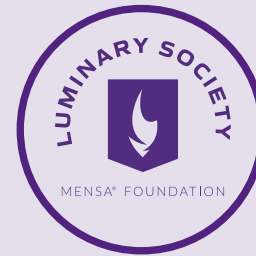


engaging and resourceful space. It's now easier than ever for those who share your passion for advancing intelligence to connect with us and access valuable resources. As we evolve, this platform will continue to expand, offering even more opportunities for learning, engagement, and community building.

Most notably, your support fueled a novel research project focused on identifying the unmet needs of highly intelligent individuals. This study reveals critical insights into areas such as education, career development, and mental health, guiding us as we develop new programs that make a real difference. The findings are key to strengthening our ability to serve gifted individuals of all ages, ensuring that our support is as effective and inclusive as possible.

As we look to the year ahead, our commitment to unleash intelligence is steadfast. The insights from our research are opening new pathways to support and empower gifted individuals at every stage of life. We are excited about the future and look forward to achieving even more in the year ahead.

THANK YOU TO ALL OF OUR GENEROUS DONORS!



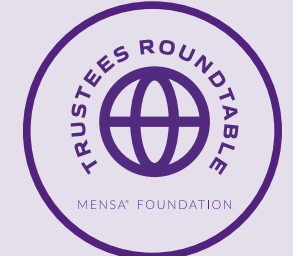
The Luminary Society celebrates the lifetime commitment of those who have generously contributed \$10,000 or more to the Mensa Foundation. This distinguished group of donors is recognized for their significant impact on our programs and initiatives. Your support enables us to nurture and advance human intelligence on a global scale.

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The Legacy Society honors individuals who have included the Mensa Foundation in their estate planning. By planning your legacy with us, you ensure a lasting impact on advancing human intelligence through scholarships, research, education, and resources. Your foresight and generosity help secure the Foundation's ability to thrive and adapt, supporting intelligence and giftedness across the lifespan for generations to come.

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| Carol W. Martinez | Rosemary Greathouse |
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| Matthew Whiteacre | |
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The Trustee's Roundtable recognizes donors who contribute \$500 or more within a fiscal year. Your unrestricted gifts help us carry out our mission to unleash intelligence for the benefit of humanity and support intelligence and giftedness across the lifespan.

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|-----------------------------|------------------------|
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| Shelton Alsup | Paul Michniowski |
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| Jill Beckham | Jennifer D. Morris |
| Mark Allen Boldger | Lori J. and Ron Norris |
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COLLOQUIUM ELEVATES GIFTED MINDS GROWING AND THRIVING AT WORK

THE MENSA FOUNDATION'S 2024 COLLOQUIUM continued its exploration of giftedness across the lifespan by focusing on the topic of "Giftedness in the Workplace." Building on the success of previous years, this event brought together esteemed scholars, researchers, and professionals to explore the unique challenges and opportunities gifted individuals face in professional environments. The Colloquium reflected the Foundation's commitment to supporting intellectual growth throughout the lifespan, ensuring that gifted individuals can thrive in their chosen fields and in life.

Dr. Nicole C. Scott, an industrial/organizational psychologist and HR professional with a PhD specializing in giftedness in the workplace, presented her research on the complex experience of navigating traditional workplaces as a gifted individual. Her findings highlighted the tension between the intrinsic drive for excellence and the external pressures to conform to social norms. Dr. Scott emphasized the importance of creating supportive, inclusive environments that recognize and cultivate the diverse talents of gifted individuals, aligning with the Foundation's values of embracing neuro-

diversity and fostering holistic human development.

Dr. Deborah Ruf, a respected figure in gifted studies, provided valuable insights into how gifted adults navigate career choices amidst the complexity of multi-potentiality. Drawing from her 18-year longitudinal study, Dr. Ruf discussed how social privilege, parental influence, and cultural expectations shape the career trajectories of gifted individuals. Her presentation aligned with the Foundation's commitment to a lifespan perspective, helping individuals make informed, fulfilling career decisions that honor their diverse talents and personal values.

Dr. Joi Lin, a member of American Mensa and a passionate advocate for the career development of the gifted, shared compelling case studies of gifted social entrepreneurs who have successfully harnessed their talents to drive social change. Her research underscored the potential of gifted adults to create positive social impact through innovative business models while also addressing the barriers they face. Dr. Lin's work resonates with the Foundation's mission to empower individuals to apply their

intelligence for a brighter future, especially through entrepreneurial endeavors that contribute to societal well-being.

Dr. Jae Yup Jared Jung, an Australian expert in the career decisions of gifted students, rounded out the scholarly discussions with his research on how gifted individuals make career choices and the factors that influence these decisions. He highlighted the specific challenges faced by twice-exceptional students, gifted individuals in non-Western cultures, and those with exceptional talents in mathematics. Dr. Jung's findings contribute to the Foundation's goal of building new knowledge of human intelligence and supporting the intellectual growth of



individuals across different life stages and cultural contexts.

In addition to these presentations, the Colloquium hosted a panel of Mensa members who shared their lived experiences of being gifted in the workplace. Participants included Julianne Lipschutz and James Taylor of Denver Mensa and Cintia Melo of Mensa Brazil. Their personal stories provided powerful insights into the real-world challenges and successes that gifted individuals encounter, further illustrating the Foundation's commitment to human-centered support and fostering inclusive environments where everyone can thrive.

The 2024 Colloquium not only advanced our understanding of giftedness in professional settings but also offered practical strategies for employers, educators, and gifted individuals themselves to navigate the professional world more effectively. As we look forward to future Colloquia, the Mensa Foundation remains steadfast in its mission to explore, support, and uplift intelligence for a brighter future.

The 2025 Colloquium, which will continue to explore themes around giftedness across the lifespan, will take place in Chicago on July 1 and via live



FOUNDATION '23-'24 FINANCIALS	
EXPENSES	
Program Services	\$606,194
Support Services	\$393,937
Total Expenses	\$1,000,131
REVENUE	
Contributions (Total)	\$414,453
Without Donor Restrictions	\$134,897
With Donor Restrictions	\$279,556
American Mensa	\$10,000
Publications	\$49,511
Rent	\$116,891
Investments	\$268,084
Other Income	\$41,636
Total Revenue	\$900,575



SOARING INTEREST IN SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM INSPIRES NEED FOR MORE MENSA JUDGES



BY JILL BECKHAM
MENSA FOUNDATION DIRECTOR

THE MENSA FOUNDATION SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM is more popular than ever. This past year, more than 28,000 applicants — a record — articulated their academic and professional goals and plans in 550-word essays, leading the Foundation to award 188 scholarships worth over \$202,000. If we still printed out the essays, the stack would have been nearly 10 feet high! Getting through them was only possible thanks to the hard work of more than 500 volunteers who reviewed and judged each submission.

The Scholarship Program, a cornerstone of the Mensa Foundation's initiatives, has evolved from a cumbersome paper-based system to a streamlined online platform, significantly increasing participation. Next year, we will adopt a new software platform to further simplify the process for our scholarship chairs. However, this upgrade will also increase the demand for judges to evaluate the growing number of essays.

If you're interested in supporting this vital program by reading and judging essays, please reach out to Director@mensafoundation.org. Your involvement is crucial to continuing our mission of providing educational opportunities and unleashing intelligence.



EXPLORING INTELLIGENCE ACROSS SETTINGS AND SPECIES: HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE MENSA RESEARCH JOURNAL

THE *MENSA RESEARCH JOURNAL*, published by the Mensa Foundation, offers insights into intelligence research through scholarly articles from respected authors and researchers worldwide. Released at least three times a year, the journal is accessible to all and offers gift subscription options.



The **Fall 2023 issue** delved into the fascinating world of **Animal Intelligence**, marking a notable shift from the journal's usual emphasis on human cognition. This issue was inspired by readers who expressed curiosity about how animals perceive and utilize intelligence. It featured an array of studies that explored various aspects of animal cognition, such as how certain species process visual information from birth, navigate unfamiliar environments, and even exhibit behaviors that resemble human practices, like magic tricks. The issue broadened the journal's scope, offering a unique perspective on the diversity of intelligence across species.



The **Winter 2024 issue** highlighted the exceptional work of the 2023 **Mensa Foundation Awards for Excellence in Research** recipients. This included in-depth studies on the challenges that spatially talented students encounter in traditional academic settings, the evolving definitions and perceptions of "giftedness," and the effectiveness of various interventions designed to support underachieving gifted students. The research provided compelling insights into the multifaceted nature of intelligence, offering readers a deeper understanding of the factors that influence cognitive development and academic success.



The **Summer 2024 issue** was closely aligned with the Mensa Foundation's annual Colloquium and centered on the event's theme of "**Giftedness in the Workplace.**" This edition featured comprehensive research on the strengths, vulnerabilities, and unique needs of gifted employees in professional settings. It also examined how early education shapes career success and explored the distinct challenges that gifted individuals face in the workplace, including labor disputes. The articles provided invaluable insights, helping readers understand how giftedness impacts not just personal development but also professional life and career trajectories.

The *Mensa Research Journal* values input from its readers on future research themes and encourages gifting subscriptions to those interested in exploring the depths of intelligence. Visit MensaFoundation.org/MRJ to subscribe or purchase individual issues. 📖



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