Early Arrival Programs
Scholars Academy & STAR
Rick Sluder, Brelinda Johnson, Travis Stratton
Origins of the Program

2005  High school seniors from underserved populations signed contracts to enter MTSU and remain in the Academy through college graduation

2006  The first Summer Institute was established to assist gifted and underachieving minority and first-generation students in realizing their potential

- Originally an initiative of Office of Institutional Diversity and College of Continuing Education
- Then moved to Intercultural and Diversity Affairs, a unit in Student Affairs
- Now resides in the Office of Student Success, a unit within Academic Affairs

2005-15  Two major components: five-week residential Freshman Summer Institute (students enrolled in University Seminar and Fundamentals of Communication) and on-going academic and social support services provided through fall and spring semesters

2016-18  Program was redesigned to a two-week early arrival Freshman Summer Institute and enrollment was increased by 100 students each year
MTSU’s Story: The Quest for Student Success

A comprehensive, strategic initiative designed to improve retention and completion rates.
Developing the Program

1. Advisor Support
2. Campus Partners Support
3. Program Redesign
4. Communication Plan with Counselors and Parents
Student success as a key strategic goal

Data-informed (and assessed) practices

A one-university, learner-centered model

A focus on outcomes

Scholars Academy Mission Statement
MTSU’s Scholars Academy is a holistic, realistic, and intrusive program that assists students with their transition to the collegiate setting. All students, with an emphasis on the needs of first-generation and/or Pell-eligible students, are provided the opportunity to enhance their learning experiences by receiving a quality education in a supportive, learning environment. Providing a foundation for academic, social, and identity development, the Scholars Academy promotes excellence and helps to accelerate student’s abilities to succeed in the classroom and become assets to the community.
Refining the Program

2018  Appointed Scholars Academy Manager and Assistant Manager

2019  Reformatted Peer Mentor Program, Opening & Closing Ceremonies, and Freshman Summer Institute schedule to be similar to individualized college schedules with M/W and T/R course offerings

- Added campus partners from math, reading, counseling, tutoring services, health services, and advising to course offerings during Freshman Summer Institute

- Created Student Transition and Academic Readiness (STAR) program to offer more students an opportunity for an early arrival experience

- STAR is a one-week program structured as a student conference

2020  Created remote Peer Mentor Training and Freshman Summer Institute
Investing in the Program

Annual support from the President’s Office for the program: Approximately $491,000

Full-time positions to staff the program:

- Associate Vice Provost for Student Success
- Manager, Scholars Academy
- Assistant Manager, Scholars Academy
Scholars Academy

- Target Population - students with one of the following criteria:
  - Underrepresented
  - 1st Generation
  - 3 ACT sub scores 16 – 19
  - High school GPA 2.75 or below
  - High school graduates of high metropolitan areas (Chattanooga, Memphis, Nashville)
- Two-week early arrival program
- Consistent check-ins and communication with students and parents in 1st year

S.T.A.R.

- Target Population – All incoming freshmen and transfers
- One-week early arrival student conference
- Enrollment of UNIV 1010 for fall semester
- Introduction to campus academic and social resources
- Midterm check-in
# Outcomes

## Retention, Graduation Rates for Scholars Academy Freshmen and Other Freshmen

| # in Pgm | Cohort Fall Term | Scholars Academy One Year Retention | Scholars Academy One Year Retention | Scholars Academy Two Year Retention | Scholars Academy Two Year Retention | Scholars Academy Three Year Retention | Scholars Academy Three Year Retention | Scholars Academy Four Year Retention | Scholars Academy Four Year Retention | Scholars Academy Six Year Graduation | Scholars Academy Six Year Graduation | Scholars Academy Other Freshmen | Scholars Academy Other Freshmen | Scholars Academy Other Freshmen | Scholars Academy Other Freshmen | Scholars Academy Other Freshmen | Scholars Academy Other Freshmen | Scholars Academy Other Freshmen | Scholars Academy Other Freshmen | Scholars Academy Other Freshmen | Scholars Academy Other Freshmen | Scholars Academy Other Freshmen | Scholars Academy Other Freshmen | Scholars Academy Other Freshmen | Scholars Academy Other Freshmen | Scholars Academy Other Freshmen |
|----------|------------------|------------------------------------|------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|----------------------------------------|----------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|----------------------------------|----------------------------------|---------------------------------|-------------------------------|---------------------------------|---------------------------------|---------------------------------|---------------------------------|---------------------------------|---------------------------------|---------------------------------|---------------------------------|---------------------------------|---------------------------------|---------------------------------|---------------------------------|---------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| 33       | 2013             | 81.82%                            | 70.35%                             | 78.79%                             | 59.99%                             | 60.61%                                  | 53.64%                                  | 33.33%                             | 27.19%                             | 54.55%                          | 46.27%                          | 70.35%                         | 59.99%                         | 60.61%                         | 53.64%                         | 33.33%                         | 27.19%                         | 54.55%                          | 46.27%                          | 70.35%                         | 59.99%                         | 60.61%                         | 53.64%                         | 33.33%                         | 27.19%                         | 54.55%                          | 46.27%                          |
| 112      | 2014             | 84.82%                            | 73.32%                             | 70.54%                             | 63.46%                             | 66.07%                                  | 57.09%                                  | 31.25%                             | 25.61%                             | 48.21%                          | 50.85%                          | 73.32%                         | 63.46%                         | 66.07%                         | 57.09%                         | 31.25%                         | 25.61%                         | 48.21%                          | 50.85%                          | 73.32%                         | 63.46%                         | 66.07%                         | 57.09%                         | 31.25%                         | 25.61%                         | 48.21%                          | 50.85%                          |
| 164      | 2015             | 83.54%                            | 75.33%                             | 72.56%                             | 65.76%                             | 62.80%                                  | 57.76%                                  | 27.44%                             | 22.80%                             | 50.85%                          | 60.85%                          | 75.33%                         | 65.76%                         | 62.80%                         | 57.76%                         | 27.44%                         | 22.80%                         | 50.85%                          | 60.85%                          | 75.33%                         | 65.76%                         | 62.80%                         | 57.76%                         | 27.44%                         | 22.80%                         | 50.85%                          | 60.85%                          |
| 308      | 2016             | 77.27%                            | 76.40%                             | 69.16%                             | 65.22%                             | 64.29%                                  | 58.96%                                  | 27.27%                             | 23.75%                             | 58.96%                          | 58.96%                          | 76.40%                         | 65.22%                         | 64.29%                         | 58.96%                         | 27.27%                         | 23.75%                         | 58.96%                          | 58.96%                          | 76.40%                         | 65.22%                         | 64.29%                         | 58.96%                         | 27.27%                         | 23.75%                         | 58.96%                          | 58.96%                          |
| 347      | 2017             | 77.81%                            | 75.35%                             | 66.57%                             | 66.17%                             | 59.37%                                  | 58.60%                                  |                                    |                                    | 58.60%                          | 58.60%                          | 75.35%                         | 66.17%                         | 59.37%                         | 58.60%                         |                                    |                                    | 58.60%                          | 58.60%                          | 75.35%                         | 66.17%                         | 59.37%                         | 58.60%                         |                                    |                                    | 58.60%                          | 58.60%                          |
| 461      | 2018             | 75.49%                            | 75.08%                             | 64.43%                             | 66.95%                             |                                        |                                        |                                    |                                    | 66.95%                          | 66.95%                          | 75.08%                         | 64.43%                         |                                        |                                        |                                    |                                    | 66.95%                          | 66.95%                          | 75.08%                         | 64.43%                         |                                        |                                        | 66.95%                          | 66.95%                          |
| 181      | 2019             | 79.01%                            | 78.38%                             |                                    |                                    |                                        |                                        |                                    |                                    | 78.38%                          | 78.38%                          |                                    |                                    |                                        |                                        |                                    |                                    | 78.38%                          | 78.38%                          |                                    |                                    |                                        |                                        | 78.38%                          | 78.38%                          |
# Outcomes

## Retention, Graduation Rates for Scholars Academy Black Male Freshmen and Non-Scholars Black Male Freshmen

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Scholars Academy

Unforgettable, unexpected, encouraging, resourceful, a great way to stay ahead of the game!

Creating bonds, getting acquainted, constructive, courage, place of mind, effective networking, friendship, uplift.

Important, important, important.

Life-long bonds, important, networking, uplift, leadership, important, important, important.

A great introduction, exciting, amazing, new, exciting, introducing, amazing, unexpected.

Memorable, exciting, new, exciting, introducing, amazing, unexpected.