

# Deborah Bial

## President and Founder, The Posse Foundation

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### Topics

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### About Deborah Bial

President and Founder, The Posse Foundation

Deborah Bial is an expert in the field of education and leadership development. Her extensive experience in facilitating dialogue related to issues of diversity and in guiding selective institutions of higher education towards improved admissions policy has gained her national recognition in the higher education community in the United States.

Bial is the president and founder of The Posse Foundation, a youth leadership development and college access organization that sends teams (Posses) of students from diverse backgrounds to selective colleges and universities. Since 1989 The Posse Foundation has identified 3,665 Posse Scholars. These young people have won \$406 million in leadership scholarships from Posse's partner colleges and universities, are graduating at a rate of 90 percent and are active leaders both on their campuses and now in the workforce. Posse is a national organization with 90 employees, a budget of \$13 million, and assets of \$41 million. Posse's 33 person board represents industry leaders in the fields of business, media, and higher education.

Bial has grown The Posse Foundation from a concept into one of the most comprehensive college access and scholarship programs in the United States. Today it supports programs in Atlanta, Boston, Chicago, Los Angeles, Miami, New Orleans, New York City and Washington D.C. – and has partnerships with 39 top colleges and universities. By 2020, The Posse Foundation will operate out of ten cities and will boast over 6,000 alumni throughout the United States.

Bial earned her masters and doctoral degrees in education with a focus on higher education administration, planning and social policy from Harvard University. In 1999, she received a \$1.9 million grant from the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation for her dissertation work, which focused on the design and assessment of a new college admissions tool that could be used in addition to traditional college admissions measures. The new tool, an "Adaptability Index," is used to assess non-cognitive traits that may predict persistence and identify leadership potential. To date approximately 6,000 students have been evaluated using this new method.

In October 2007, Bial received a prestigious MacArthur Fellowship from The John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation.

### Select Keynotes

- **Education as it relates to poverty.**

Debbie addresses education as it relates to poverty.

### Select Articles

- [Deborah Bial of the Posse Foundation: Success Isn't Always About You](#)

This interview with Deborah Bial, president of the Posse Foundation, was conducted and condensed by Adam Bryant. The Posse Foundation recruits and trains students from public high schools to form teams to help them succeed in college.

