

The Influence of the AACP Walmart Scholars Program on Academic Career Paths: A 16-Year Analysis

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OBJECTIVE

To assess the influence of the historical American Association of Colleges of Pharmacy (AACP) Walmart Scholars Program on the frequency of Scholar appointments in academia.

BACKGROUND

Mentoring relationships are proven to be integral in the development of new faculty members.¹ The AACP Walmart Scholars program was created in an attempt to highlight the importance of acquiring and nursing student/mentor relationships as well as ensure there was a steady flow of qualified pharmacy educators as pharmacy programs continued to open across the country.^{2,3}

Walmart and AACP committed themselves to expose pharmacy learners, including students, residents, fellows, and graduate students, to careers in academic pharmacy by providing tools, resources, and experiences obtained through attending the AACP Annual Meeting.^{2,3} Since its inception in 2005, the program had a total of 1,202 participants.²

The success and impact the Academy conveyed on Scholars to obtain a career in academia post-graduation has yet to be explored.

METHODS

A retrospective review was conducted from January to July 2022 for 1,202 Walmart Scholars by a team of student pharmacists and faculty. Scholars were hand-searched on available resources. Identity verification was guided by the Scholar's name, sponsor school, and award year.

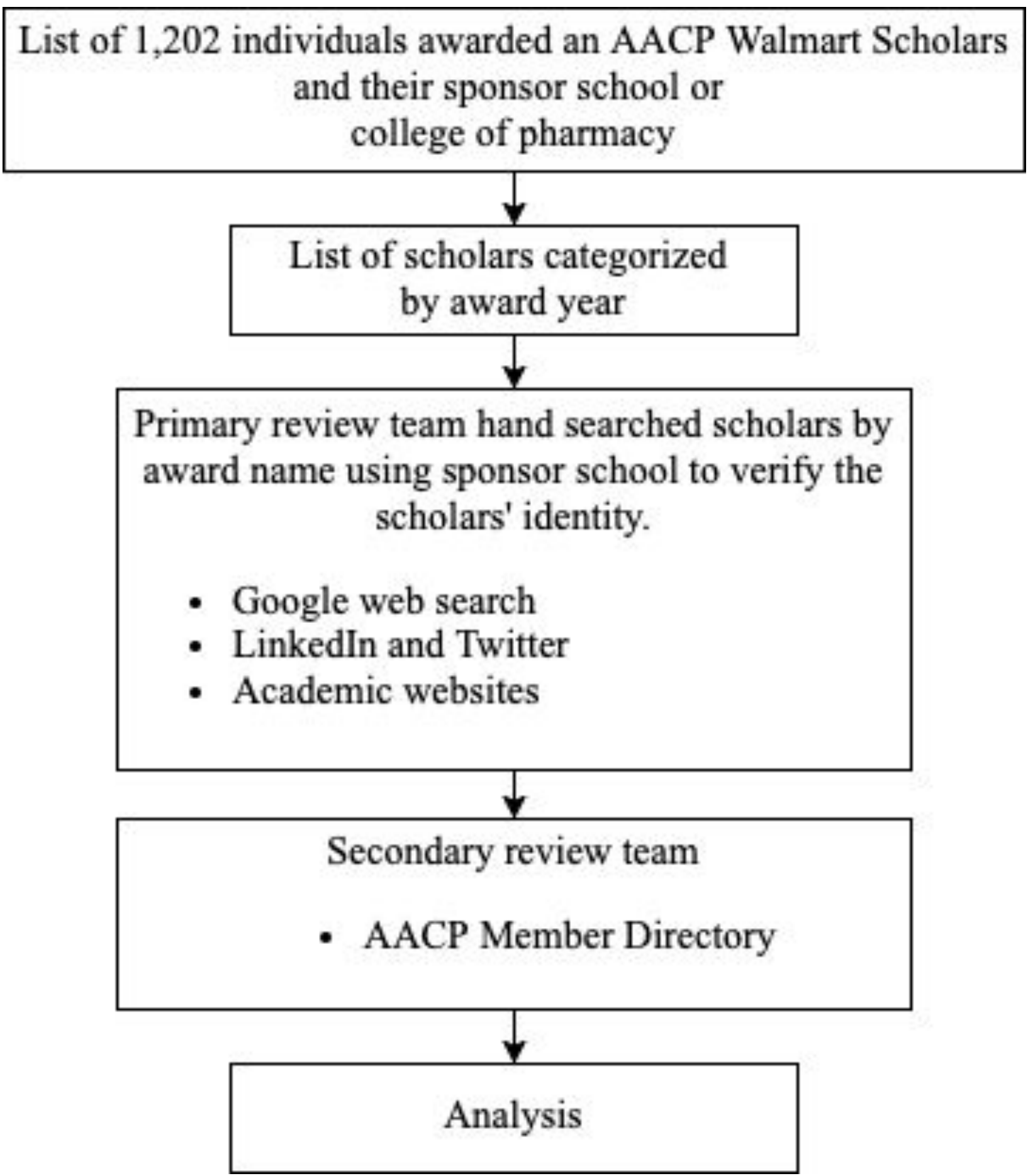


FIGURE 1 . Project Workflow.

RESULTS

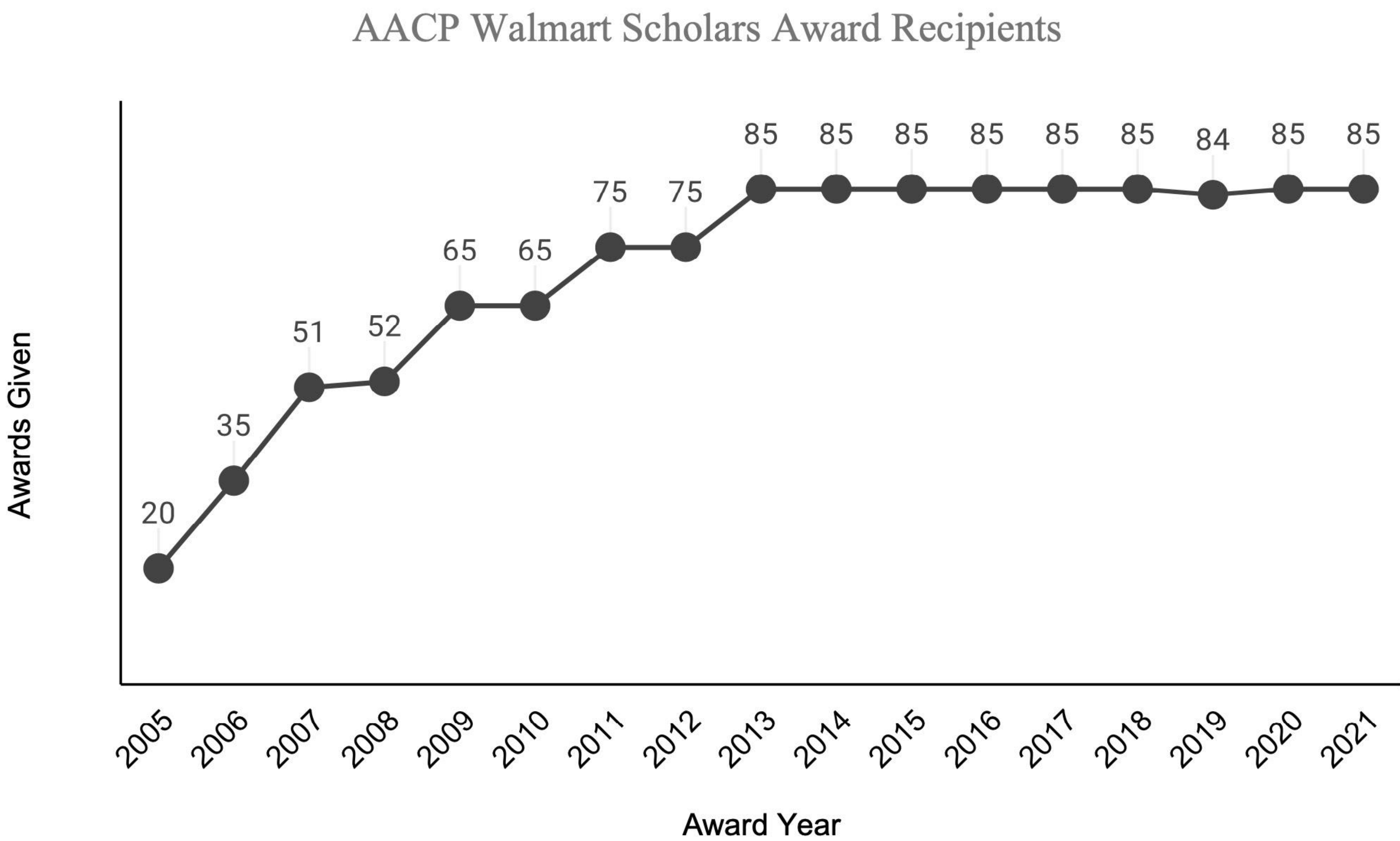


FIGURE 2. Number of AACP Walmart Scholars Award Recipients.

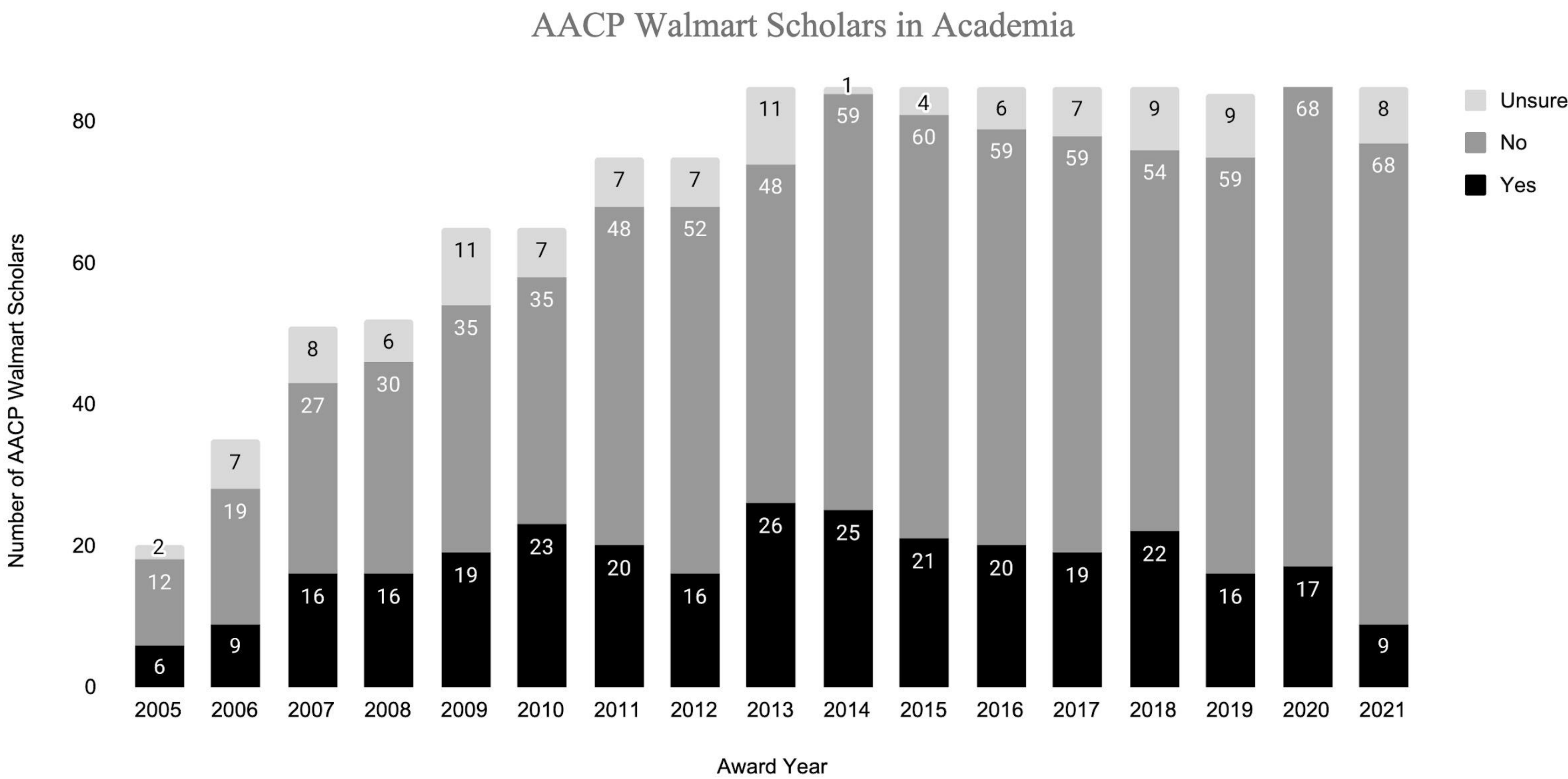


FIGURE 3. Career Outcome of Scholars by Number and by Year.

CONCLUSIONS

The historical AACP Walmart Scholars Program provided Scholars with an introductory glimpse into academic pharmacy through formalized mentorship and access to training through the financial scholarship to attend both the AACP Annual Meeting and Teacher's Seminar.

The program influenced a portion of participants to pursue academic careers.

The authors believe, it is necessary for the academy to consider alternative opportunities and programming considering the reported impact in order to nurture the next generation of teachers in the pharmacy academy.

LIMITATIONS

The study represents a single, present time point for Scholars in academia.

The current strategy does not account for those with a historical academic appointment; those not featured on school websites due to adjunct or part-time appointments; those who serve as preceptors for students or residents; or those employed in programs outside of schools and colleges of pharmacy.

Identity confirmation was limited to public information on the available resources and may be an underrepresentation of Scholars due to legal name changes.

REFERENCES

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