



Watson Census, 1969-2018

As we approached Watson's 50th Anniversary, we asked fellows to share the impact of the Thomas J. Watson Fellowship on their lives. Through an online census we connected with 1080 fellows and every fellowship class.

We learned that the Watson application process was the first time that they embraced the power, and challenge, of building a blueprint for their beliefs and biggest ideas. And we learned that the confidence and perspective gained from the fellowship experience became a renewable resource that inspired their lives and those of many others. Most telling was that the Watson experience became the professional foundation for over 70% of fellows -- testament to what happens when passion and promise fuse on a year of independent discovery.



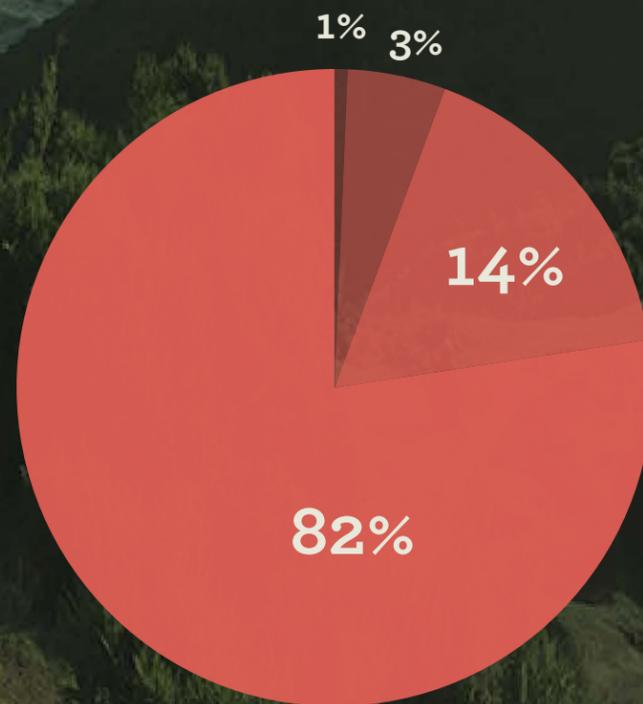
In the following slides:

5 = Definitely Agree, 4= Mostly Agree, 3= Somewhat Agree, 2= Mostly Disagree, 1= Definitely Disagree



“Seven years after I returned from my Fellowship, I founded the School for Field Studies (SFS). To date, SFS has graduated over 20,000 students, so my Watson clearly had far reaching impacts on many lives beyond the substantial value delivered to me.”

*James Elder, 1973 Watson Fellow
President, Campaign for Environmental Literacy*



Mission

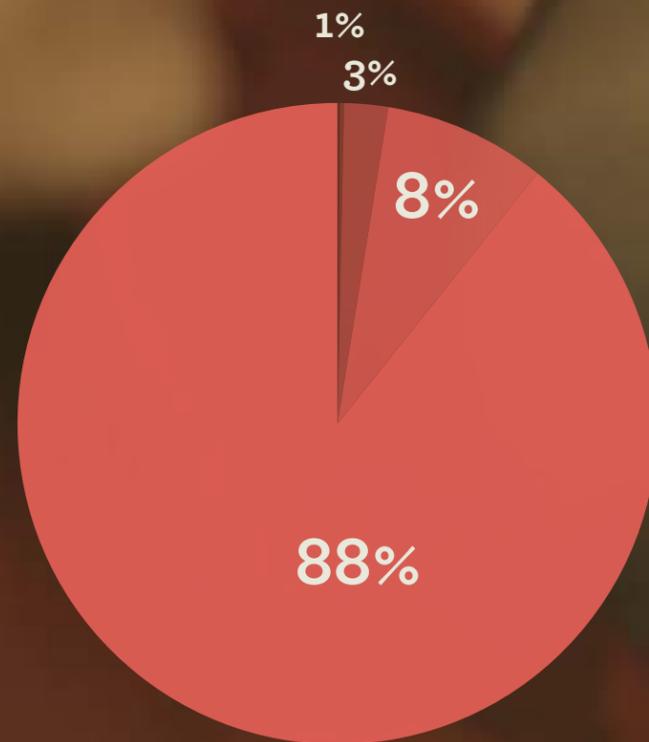
96% of Fellows definitely or mostly agreed the Watson, experienced matched the mission -- “to explore with thoroughness a particular interest, test their aspirations and abilities, view their lives and American society in greater perspective and develop a more informed sense of international concern”.

Photo: Sujie Zhu, 2015 Watson Fellow
Project: Cross-cultural Improvisation



“My Watson has shaped every career decision I have made -- to pursue a first job in international development, to join the Foreign Service, and to seek out ways to use music to advance cross cultural understanding in my role as a diplomat.”

*Wren Elhai, 2008 Watson Fellow
Foreign Service Officer, U.S. Department of State*



Perspective

96% of fellows definitely or mostly agreed the Watson required them to view their lives and American society in greater perspective.

Photo: Vera Rudi, 2016 Watson Fellow

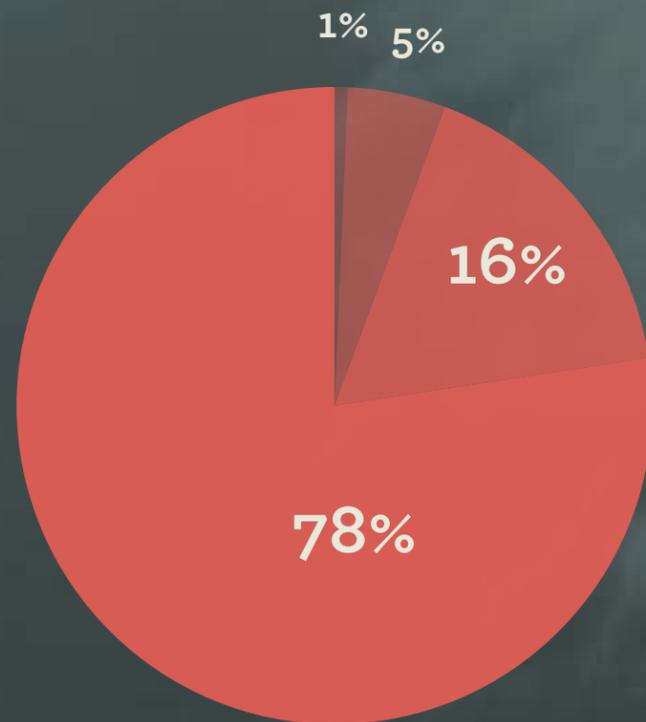
Project: Understanding Meditative Practices



“My Watson gave me a lifetime of courage to confront our most difficult challenges and to work together with others for the common good.”

Charlie Collins, 1969 Watson Fellow

President & CEO, YMCA, San Francisco



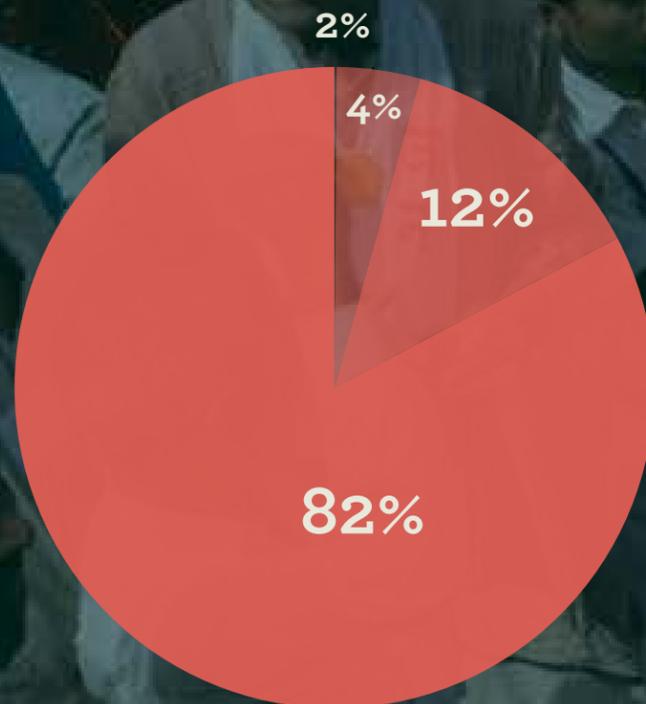
Confidence

94% of Fellows definitely or mostly agreed the Watson made them more confident to pursue the things that matter most to them.



“The Watson Year woke me up, shook me to my core. The stark realities I faced almost forty years ago are still with me as a moral compass and guide which I hold close to my heart every day.”

*Margaret Clark, 1978 Watson Fellow
Executive Director, Aspen Global Health and Development
Vice President, Policy Programs, Aspen Institute*



International Concern

94% of fellows definitely or mostly agreed the Watson gave them a more informed sense of international concern.



*“I felt lucky. And blessed. And saved
out of a life without dreaming.”*

Garrett Hongo, 1973 Watson Fellow

We look forward

to celebrating 50 years of discovery with you and announcing
many new projects to inspire the next generation of creative leaders.

*“...a constant and lasting reminder
that impossible is nothing”.*

Opeyemi Awe, 2015 Watson Fellow