Free money for school

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February 15 marks the first of many due dates for students pursuing academic and vocational programs to apply for grants and scholarships. A few hours invested in applications could add up to much needed cash to pay for academic essentials.

Students at UH have an abundance of scholarship opportunities, ranging from degree-specific to community affiliation awards, based on both merit and financial need.

A primary source of funding is the UH System, which is working to decentralize services for its 10 campuses in order to enhance customer service and the distribution of awards.

"We find that many local students don't apply for aid at the same levels as other states," said Associate Vice President of Student Affairs Karen Lee. "The desire is to encourage all students to apply for financial aid and scholarships from as many sources as possible."

Additional sources of funding are available through the UH Foundation, a private nonprofit that provides philanthropic support, manages private investments and nurtures donor and alumni relationships.

"Students are central to our universities, and many donors are passionate about helping students access a quality education and graduate on time," said foundation spokesperson Margot Schrife. "They recognize the critical role scholarship support makes in the lives of so many students."

During the 2010-2011 academic year, the UH Mānoa campus awarded more than $3.7 million in grants and scholarships to 1,273 students—approximately $3,000 per recipient. UH system-wide distributions totaled $9.5 million in grants and scholarships based on merit and financial need.

In addition to programs available through the UH System and the Foundation, students are encouraged to seek funding through outside sources, such as the Hawai‘i Community Foundation. Like the UH Foundation,

HCF is also a non-profit fund management agency that assists individuals, organizations and businesses
HCF is also a non-profit fund management agency that assists individuals, organizations and businesses with their grant and scholarship programs.

"There are many ways donors can create scholarships," said Schrire. "Many donors choose to build a legacy that will benefit students for years to come through planned and estate gifts."

Ke Ali i Pauahi Foundation provides a range of funding for various levels of education, such as support for non-traditional students, as well as merit and financial aid awards. Though the fund does have programs with preference for Native Hawaiians or alumni of Kamehameha Schools, applications are available to all interested students.

Others, like the Outrigger Duke Kahanamoku Foundation offer both academic and athletic scholarships (limited to water sports), including team grants, which can be used to defray the cost of equipment and travel not covered by the school.

Many grantees, like UH Mānoa student Pa ahana Kincaid, have traveled a long way on their educational journey, and an award provides both a financial and moral boost. Kincaid, who returned to pursue her degree in social work after a family break, received an award from the Women's Campus Club.

"I'm so honored and proud," said Kincaid during the Jan. 24 Women's Campus Club award lunch. "It means so much to me to know that there are others out there who care."

And for those who don't believe in a "free ride," all qualified grant and scholarship money is completely tax-free for students in a degree-seeking program.

A Federal Application for Federal Student Aid is not mandatory, however, grant managers like the UH Foundation and HCF require students to submit their FAFSA in order to develop a more comprehensive student financial aid package.

"One of the key elements to being a successful applicant is to apply early ... the payoff is worth it," said Lee. "UH has a wide variety of scholarships and it is our goal to award every dollar."

**Deadlines**

**The UH Foundation** February 15, 2011 11:59pm HST  
http://www.uhfoundation.org/  
https://www.star.hawaii.edu:10012/

**Hawaii Community Foundation** February 25, 2011 5:00 pm HST  
http://www.hawaiicommunityfoundation.org/scholarships

**UH System Scholarship** March 1, 2011 4:00pm HST  
http://www.hawaii.edu/finaid/scholarships/system/index.html

**The Duke Kahanamoku Outrigger Foundation**  
**Athletic Team/Individual** February 15, 2011 (postmarked)  
**Scholarship** April 1, 2011  
**Athletic Event** August 15, 2011
http://www.dukefoundation.org/

Ke Ali`i Pauahi Foundation April 1, 2011 4:30 pm HST
http://www.pauahi.org/scholarships

Tips:

1. Start early
2. Gather letters of recommendation from non-family members
3. Take time to write a thoughtful essay
4. State your educational goals and aspirations and personal background
5. Include volunteer or community service
6. Apply often — you can't win an award unless you apply!