

10:37 pm - February 07, 2012 — Updated: 10:40 pm - February 07, 2012

New scholarship program begins at UH-Hilo

SPECIAL TO WEST HAWAII TODAY

Big Island students are about to benefit from increased access to a college education, thanks to a new partnership between the University of Hawaii at Hilo and the Dorrance Family Foundation. UH-Hilo Chancellor Don Straney has announced the Hawaii launch of the Dorrance Scholarship Program, a four-year scholarship program designed to benefit local students who are the first in their family to attend college.

Beginning this year, up to 10 eligible students will receive need-based scholarships of \$8,000 per year to attend UH-Hilo. Awards will be renewable for a total of eight semesters of funding, and additional cohorts of scholars will be added in subsequent years. The Dorrance Scholars will also participate in custom-designed summer programming providing academic enrichment, international travel and employment preparation.

The new Hawaii program is an extension of the highly successful Dorrance Scholarship Programs, which have operated in Arizona for the past 13 years. Administered by the Arizona Community Foundation, the programs have opened doors to higher education and boosted graduation rates for more than 400 first generation college students at Arizona's three public universities. Recipients of the Dorrance Scholarship on the Big Island will be among the most fortunate students in Hawaii — the total educational and programmatic value of each award is estimated to be more than \$60,000.

Some 70 percent of UH-Hilo's current enrollment of more than 4,000 students depend upon financial aid to fund the cost of attending university, giving UH-Hilo the highest percentage of students receiving aid of any of the 10 campuses in the University of Hawaii System. Almost 42 percent of UH-Hilo students, moreover, qualify for Pell grants, the federal aid which is reserved for students with the highest financial need. The majority of UH-Hilo students — approximately 70 percent — are the first in their family to attend college, way above the national average.

Applications for the Dorrance Scholarship are being accepted online at dorrancescholarship.org.

The deadline is Feb. 22.

Eligibility criteria:

- Seniors in good standing who will graduate from an accredited Big Island high school,
- First generation to attend college (neither parent holds a four-year degree),
- Minimum cumulative 3.0 grade point average,
- Verification of SAT or ACT test score,
- Admitted to the University of Hawaii at Hilo,
- Demonstrated financial need (completed FAFSA at fafsa.ed.gov),
- Reside on campus freshman and sophomore year,
- Agree to participate in all aspects of the scholarship program,
- Signed Dorrance Scholar Participation Agreement, and
- Meet all application related deadlines.

Benefits of the Dorrance Scholarship:

- \$8,000 per year,
- eight semesters of funding,
- summer transition experience,
- conservation program,
- mainland semester,
- entrepreneurship experience,
- international travel,
- Dorrance adviser,
- cultural enrichment,
- community outreach opportunities, and
- tutoring and mentoring.

For more information about the Dorrance Scholarship, contact Maria Martin, Hilo scholarship coordinator, at mmartin@azfoundation.org or (808) 557-6343.

<http://www.westhawaii.com/sections/news/local-features/new-scholarship-program-begins-uh-hilo.html>