



## Native Village of Kotzebue/ Kotzebue IRA

Education Department

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## Higher education scholarship Program Guidelines & Application

The Native Village of Kotzebue (NVOK) Higher Education Scholarship Program Provides financial aid to eligible members with the associated costs of pursuing a degree at an accredited post-secondary education institution. This is a needs-based award. Students must show financial need after other sources of funding have been considered. The program is dependent upon the annual Federal budget process. Thus, the amount of finances available varies with appropriations made by the U.S. Congress. The NVOKs Higher Education Scholarship Program is a SUPPLEMENTAL program. Therefore, applicants must apply for additional resources from other sources. This program is governed by the Code of Federal Regulations: 25 CFR 40.

### **Code of Federal Regulations: 25 CFR 40**

PART 40 – ADMINISTRATION OF EDUCATIONAL LOANS, GRANTS, AND OTHER ASSISTANCE FOR HIGHER EDUCATION

Sec.

- 40.1 Appropriations for loans or grants
- 40.2 Working Scholarships
- 40.3 Applications
- 40.4 Security
- 40.5 Repayments

AUTHORITY: Sec. 11, 48 Stat. 986; 25 U.S.C. 471

SOURCE: 22 FR 10533, December 24, 1957, unless otherwise noted. Redesignated at 47 FR 13327, March 30, 1982

#### **§40.1 Appropriations for loans or grants.**

Funds appropriated by congress for the education of Indians may be used for making educational loans and grants to aid students of one-fourth or more degree of Indian blood attending accredited institutions of higher education or other accredited schools offering vocational and technical training who reside within the exterior boundaries of Indian reservations under the jurisdiction of the Bureau of Indian Affairs. Such educational loans and grants may be made also to students of one-fourth or more degree of Indian blood who reside near the reservation when a denial of such loans or grants would have direct effect upon Bureau programs within the reservation. After students meeting these eligibility requirements are taken care of, Indian students who do not meet the residency requirements but are otherwise eligible may be considered.

[33 FR 9708 July 4, 1968. Redesignated at 47 FR 13327, March 30, 1982]

#### **§40.2 Working Scholarships.**

Working Scholarships may be granted to Indians who wish to earn their board and room by part-time work at Federal boarding schools that are located near a college, trade, or vocational school.

#### **§40.3 Applications.**

Applications for educational loans, grants, and working scholarships shall be submitted through the superintendent or officer in charge of the agency at which the applicant is enrolled in the manner prescribed by the Commissioner.

#### **§40.4 Security.**

If a borrower or cosigner has security to offer for an educational loan it must be given in an amount adequate to protect the loan.

#### **§40.5 Repayments.**

Repayment schedules for educational loans may provide not to exceed two years for repayment for each year in school.

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### **ELIGIBILITY**

- The applicant must be a tribally enrolled member of the Native Village of Kotzebue or a descendant of a NVOK tribal member, with a minimum of   Alaska/Native American blood quantum.
- The applicant must be enrolled at an accredited post-secondary educational institution.
- The applicant must be at least eighteen (18) years of age OR have guardian/parental authorization.
- The applicant must apply for all available campus-based aid by an established due date; and
- The applicant must have unmet need (difference between the cost of the education and the applicant's resources for defraying that cost) as determined by the eligible institution's financial aid office.

### **RESTRICTION OF AWARD:**

The HES Program **does not** fund vocational training, student conferences, seminars, developmental courses (i.e. professional skills improvement) or any professional licensing examinations.

### **LENGTH OF FINANCIAL AID:**

If the undergraduate degree or certificate program requires four or more years, the student may take extra years to complete the program, but students must finish the undergraduate degree in no more than five academic years.

\*Please refer to page one, 25 CFR 40, if further information is sought.

The NVOK may waive the time limits for hardship caused by special circumstances. To remain eligible for future funding, the students must submit a grade report or transcript for each term to NVOK.

**THESE CHANGES WILL TAKE EFFECT DECEMBER 1, 2006. ALL STUDENTS WHO REMAIN ELIGIBLE FOR FUNDING DURING THE 06/07 SCHOOL YEAR WILL RETAIN THE LEVEL OF FUNDING THE RECEIVED IN FALL/06.**

### **FUNDING PRIORITIES**

Recognizing the need for a trained workforce that meets the current and projected needs of the region, the Native Village of Kotzebue will:

1. Allocate 50% of its higher educating funds equally for those students who have undergraduate Junior or Senior academic standing AND have declared their major in one of the following career fields:
  - A. Science and Technology
  - B. Natural Resources/Mining/Rural Development
  - C. Education/ Inupiaq Studies
  - D. Aviation
  - E. Health

\*To see what majors qualify please turn the page  
\*\*The major must be approved by the NVOK Education board.
2. Allocate the remaining 50% to other career fields, at an amount of \$1,400.00 per semester for a full-time Undergraduate student; \$750.00 for a part-time Undergraduate student.
  - If funds are available then \$300.00 will be distributed for Master's Degree seeking students and if the student has not exceeded their five year funding limit.
  - (Advanced College Credit) High School students wanting to take college classes are eligible for part-time scholarships, unless the school district does not pay for the fees and providing if funds are available.
  - The student must enroll in a pre-requisite class that must be approved by the NVOK Education Board.
3. Prioritize all funding, in the following order:
  - 1.) Tribally enrolled Kotzebue residents at the time of first application – Undergraduate Degree
  - 2.) Tribally enrolled members residing outside of Kotzebue at time of first application – Undergraduate Degree
  - 3.) Tribally enrolled Kotzebue residents at time of first application – Masters Degree
  - 4.) Tribally enrolled members residing outside of Kotzebue at time of application – Master's Degree.

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## APPLICATION PROCEDURES FOR NEW STUDENTS

We require a complete application packet at the time of submission, including ALL supporting documents. **Only complete applications with required supporting documents will be considered for funding.** It is the student's responsibility to make sure all documents are submitted by the due date. Awards for summer time will be based on availability of funds. Please use the following checklist to ensure the student have sent a complete packet.

- Student Aid Report; Proof that a Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) has been completed, so school can properly complete Student Budget/Need Sheet
- Completed Scholarship Application
- Official (unopened by student) transcripts from the school the student last attended: high school, college, university, vocational/trade school or General Education Development (GED) high school equivalency certificate
- Registration/Class Schedule  
(must be generated by school, indicating specific classes – not handwritten or typed list created by student)
- Student Budget/Need Sheet (completed and signed by Financial Aid Officer at college/university)
- Copy of acceptance letter from the school in which the student will be enrolled
- Verification of tribal enrollment in Native Village of Kotzebue, including (ALL MUST BE TURNED IN):
  - Certificate of Indian Birth
  - Birth Certificate
  - Social Security Card
  - I.D. Card
- Letter of Intent: Personal, signed statement naming the school student plans to attend, students class standing, major area of study, projected graduation date, educational and personal goals, and how the student plans to serve Kotzebue once student has successfully completed course of study.
- Two (2) Letters of recommendation (not from a family member)
- A Certificate of Agreement to repay the grant if the student fail to enroll, withdraw or is expelled, unless there are mitigating circumstances (see #7 under “Student Responsibilities”)
- Current photograph of applicant.

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## STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES

**1. AT THE END OF EACH SEMESTER/QUARTER, CONTINUING STUDENTS MUST SUBMIT:**

- \_ Completed Continuing Student Application
- \_ Official transcripts of semester/quarter just completed  
(**Deadline: 4:30 P.M. 30 days from application deadline**)
- \_ Registration for upcoming semester (must be generated by school, indicating specific classes).

**2. FOR EACH NEW ACADEMIC YEAR, STUDENTS MUST:**

- \_ File for free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA)
- \_ Complete Continuing Student application (if you are a new student then student must complete also)
- \_ Student Budget/Need Sheet (completed and signed by Financial Aid Officer at college/university)
- \_ Official transcripts of semester/quarter just completed (**The only exception is summer school students who have a deadline of 4:30 P.M., 30 days from application deadline**)
- \_ Registration for upcoming semester (must be generated by school, indicating specific classes – not handwritten or typed list created by student)
- \_ Letter of Intent, stating how the student performed the prior semester, class standing, GPA and personal goal.

**3. APPLICATION DEADLINES:**

**Fall Semester/Autumn Quarter..... July 15<sup>th</sup>**

**Spring Semester/Winter Quarter..... December 15<sup>th</sup>**

**Spring Quarter ..... February 15<sup>th</sup>**

**Summer Semester/Summer Quarter ..... April 15<sup>th</sup>**

**\*Prior to the deadline the student will have no longer than 6 weeks, if the NVOK**

**Education Department is notified, to turn in any supporting documents that are missing.**

**4. STUDENT BUDGET/NEED SHEET:**

The student must complete the top portion of the Student Budget/Need Sheet and take it to the Financial Aid Officer at the educational institution to complete. The student must check with the Financial Aid Officer to make sure they have received the Free Application for Financial Aid (FAFSA) Before the student submits the Student Budget/Need Sheet. If they complete the form before they received the FAFSA, that is not considered a completed Need Sheet and the student will re-submit our form. **If the student does not submit a FAFSA to the student school, the student will not be considered for funding by the Native Village of Kotzebue.**

**5. INFORMATION CHANGES/UPDATES:**

If the student has **any changes** after the submission of this application, such as new contact information during the semester, the NVOK Education Department must be notified. We will need phone number(s) including a cell phone number, mailing address and e-mail address. It is the responsibility of the applicant to notify the NVOK Education Department as soon as possible. Failure to do so could result in loss of future award consideration.

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**6. CLASS WITHDRAWAL/CLASS SCHEDULE CHANGES:**

Student must inform NVOK Education Department staff of any actions taken during the term – i.e. withdrawal, drops, and changes to registration. Students must submit written notice justifying such action/change and submit a copy of the Withdrawal Notice and revised registration. If a full-time student changes to part-time status, they must immediately notify NVOK Education Department Staff, submit a new Budget/Need Sheet reflecting part-time costs AND RETURN any funds above the cost of tuition, fees & books. If the student does not comply they may be ineligible to receive future funding or will be placed on academic probation.

**7. WITHDRAWAL**

- A. If the student withdraws from school, the student will be required to pay back any portion of the grant received if the student, without mitigating circumstances, fails to enroll, withdraws or is expelled before the completion of a term.
- B. Within 10 days of the student’s failure to enroll or withdraw or expulsion, the student will be required to submit to the NVOK Education Department:
  - 1. The date of the student failure to enroll, withdraw or expulsion;
  - 2. A written statement with supporting documentation stating the student’s reasons for failure to withdraw or expulsion, including mitigating circumstances.; and
  - 3. A copy of the students request to the institution that all remaining scholarship funds be returned to the NVOK.
- C. The NVOK Education Committee will review all cases of failure to enroll, withdrawal or expulsion, to determine if the student’s circumstances qualify as mitigating circumstances. The NVOK will notify the student in writing of arrangements to pay the balance of funds based upon a Certificate of Agreement between the student and the NVOK, or grant the student a wavier from repayment based upon mitigating circumstances.
- D. A Certificate of Agreement, agreeing to repay the grant if the student fails to enroll, withdraws or is expelled, unless there are mitigating circumstances. Mitigating circumstances are defined as unanticipated and unavoidable events or situations beyond a student’s control that prevent him or her from completing a course. These mitigating circumstances include, but are not limited to, and **must be approved by the Education Committee:**
  - 1. Serious accident or illness of the eligible student.
  - 2. Serious illness or death in the eligible students immediate family.
  - 3. Active-duty military service, including active duty for training.
  - 4. Cancellation of course by the college/university.

\*\*\*The NVOK requires documentation to substantiate the student’s claim for mitigating circumstances. The student must submit a description and the supporting evidentiary documents to the NVOK.

**8. STUDENT PROGRESS CHECKS:**

NVOK Education Staff perform progress checks on students twice yearly. Staff will travel to the University of Alaska – Fairbanks, and the University of Alaska – Anchorage during the Fall and Spring semesters, as funding is available, and we will schedule visits with students. A sign up sheet is sent to the Native and Rural Student Services office for the student to schedule an appointment. Visits are not only to check on student progress but to see if there is anything we can do to help the student maintain academic success. During our visits we will ensure that the students have met with their academic counselor and established a relationship. The student needs to bring their class schedule to the meeting. We will review the credit load to ensure that the student is taking required classes that are applicable to their degrees. It is MANDATORY that students meet the representative. If a student fails to do so without prior notification and substantial reasoning, future funding may be jeopardized.

**9. HEALTH SERVICES:**

If the student is leaving Alaska to attend school, the student should arrange for health coverage during the time that they will be attending school. Contact Alaska Native Medical Center (in Anchorage to inquire about IHS services in the area the student plans to attend. ANMC will inform students of what must be done to obtain health services outside of Alaska. Students need to inquire about student health insurance at their college/university. It is important also to do this so that the student is prepared for any possible emergency

Alaska Native Medical Center  
Attn. Contract Health Services  
4315 Diplomacy Drive  
Anchorage Alaska, 99508  
Phone: (907) 729-2470 Toll Free: 1-800-478-1636

**10. AT THE TIME OF GRADUATION:**

When a student fulfills degree requirements and graduates, the student is required to submit a copy of his/her diploma to the NVOK Education Department.

**11. PRIOR APPROVAL OF INTERNET-DELIVERED COURSES:**

Internet – delivered courses may be accepted as eligible courses of the HES Program. To enroll in Internet-delivered courses, a student must also include in the letter of intent: declaration of the student to take internet courses, identification of which the courses are Internet-delivered and explanation of how they are applicable to the area of degree. If the courses are found to be eligible and the student is only taking Internet courses, the following additional rules apply: Enrollment is a minimum of six (6) credits per term; Course credits must be applicable to an area of degree; and all Internet-delivered courses must be completed by the end of the term.

**SCHOLARSHIP APPLICATION REVIEW AND AWARDS**

The NVOK Education Department staff will review the application and will:

- \_ Determine the students unmet need, using information from the financial aid office at the education institution
- \_ Approve eligibility for a scholarship, according to the tribe's priority plan outlined above
- \_ Within availability of funds (based on the yearly negotiated Self-Governance Agreement with the federal government), fund no more than a student's unmet need.

**SCHOLARSHIP AWARD NOTIFICATION**

The NVOK Education Department will notify the student and the financial aid office at the education institution in writing of approval or denial of the scholarship.

- \_ The scholarship funds will be divided equally for those students enrolled in an institution based on a Trimester or quarterly system if the student meets the requirements.

**GRANT RECEIPT**

1. The NVOK will issue a check to the educational institution
2. The educational institution's financial aid office will distribute the scholarship money according to its policy on disbursement.

**STUDENT SCHOLARSHIP FILES**

The NVOK Education Department will maintain the student's files a ledger of all costs, and related records necessary to identify all transactions involving expenditures of funds made available to the student under this program. These records:

1. Identify the student's award and status;
2. Demonstrate the students eligibility;
3. Document the amount of the student's award and the manner in which the students unmet need was calculated and met;
4. Identify whether the student's enrollment was terminated
5. Identify collections based on the Certification of Agreement and
6. Identify waivers from repayment.

By November 1 of each year, the NVOK Education Department Staff will submit a Higher Education Grant Program Annual Report for the preceding academic year to the **Director of the Office of Indian Education Programs**.

**APPEAL PROCESS**

If the applicant expresses dissatisfaction with the decision to deny services, the NVOK Education Coordinator or other staff making the decision will review with the applicant the basis for which the decision was made and confirm the validity of facts and the related decision. If error was made or new additional evidence justifies modifying the decision, appropriate adjustments will be made.

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If the Applicant continues to be dissatisfied after the above review, the applicant may request review by the Education Director. If the applicant continues to be dissatisfied after the Education Director has reviewed the evidence, the applicant has the right to appeal the denial within twenty (20) days of receipt of such denial. A longer period may be allowed if adequate justification supports the applicant's request. The applicant must submit a written request to the NVOK Tribal Council requesting a hearing and explaining the reasons for which the hearing is requested.

When a hearing is requested, the NVOK Education Department staff will submit a written statement regarding the issue(s), facts, guidelines, and/or Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) upon which the decision is based. A copy of this statement will be available to the applicant upon request prior to the scheduled hearing. The applicant has the right to be represented by someone of his/her choice, including an attorney at his/her expense.

The applicant may appear in person, or telephonically at the designated time and place of hearing; however it is the applicant's responsibility to make all arrangements and to pay for any expense that may be incurred. If the applicant cannot appear in person, the hearing will continue to take place. The individual filing an appeal will be notified of the decision within five (5) days of the hearing. Upon extenuating circumstances, the NVOK tribal council may reschedule hearings.

## **DEFINITIONS**

### **ACADEMIC YEAR**

A period of time in which a full-time student is expected to complete equivalent of at least two semesters, two trimesters, or three quarters at an institution that measures academic progress in credit hours.

### **ACCREDITED INSTITUTION**

An institution of higher education which is accredited by a nationally recognized accrediting agency or association, or which qualifies under the three institution certification methods.

### **ACADEMIC PROGRESS**

The Native Village of Kotzebue required that each student funded maintain academic progress. This means successful completion of each term. By the students junior year they must declare a major and maintain steady progress towards a degree.

### **ACADEMIC PROBATION**

If the student does not meet the minimum grade or credit requirements, the student will be placed on academic probation for the next term. If the student does not meet the minimum requirements after completion of the probationary term, the student will be suspended from our program. Once suspended, the student will not be eligible to apply for another scholarship until they have successfully completed a term without NVOK funding. Upon successful completion of the suspended term, a student may reapply for services. Once services are reinstated, students must continue to maintain academic progress each term or services may be terminated!

### **CAMPUS-BASED AID**

The federal financial aid programs (i.e. Supplemental educational Opportunity Grants (SEOG), College Work Study (CWS), and Perkins Loan) administered by the financial aid office.

### **CERTIFICATE OF AGREEMENT**

A written agreement between a grant recipient and the higher education program describing how a recipient pays back grants when the recipient does not meet the requirements in 25 CFR 40 (Code of Federal Regulations governing Native higher education grants).

### **CONTINUING STUDENT**

A grant recipient who is currently enrolled in an eligible institution and is maintaining satisfactory progress in his or her course of study according to the institution's standards of satisfactory progress.

### **ELIGIBLE INSTITUTION**

An institution of higher education that is accredited by a national or regional accrediting agency or is a candidate for accreditation, or is a tribally controlled community college.

### **FINANCIAL AID OFFICE**

The office of an institution of higher education that has responsibility for institutionally administered financial aid.

### **FINANCIAL AID PACKAGE**

The institution's documents that identify the amounts and types of financial aid awarded by the institution and the amount of unmet need.

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## **FULL-TIME STUDENT**

An enrolled student who is carrying a full time academic workload (other than correspondence course): A minimum of 12 credit hours per semester or 10 credit hours per quarter, or the school's definition of full-time status.

## **FAFSA**

**A DOCUMENT THE STUDENT *MUST* FILL OUR IF THE STUDENT WANTS TO BE CONSIDERED FOR A NVOK SCHOLARSHIP.** The FAFSA is the **Free Application for Federal Student Aid** to the following programs that are administered by the U.S. Department of Education and provide for over \$33 billion a year to students attending post-secondary Schools:

- Federal Stafford and PLUS Program
- Campus-Based Programs
- Federal Supplemental Education Opportunity and Pell Grants
- Federal Work Study
- Perkins Loans

The FAFSA will take 4-6 weeks to get processed and the student will receive a **Student Aid Report (SAR)**. The SAR is an electronic printout of the information that the student provided on the FAFSA. The student will need to look over the information to ensure that it was entered into the database correctly. The student will either need to make the corrections or simply sign off if the information is correct. Once the student turns the SAR in, it will take a couple more weeks to hear whether or not the student is eligible for federal aid.

Filling out the FAFSA is often the first step to receiving other financial aid. Even if the student is not sure that he/she is eligible- **the students need to apply.** In addition to being mandatory for consideration for and NVOK Higher Education Scholarship, students are often pleasantly surprised to find that they *are* eligible for funding. But students should apply as soon as possible for a better chance at funding. The student can obtain applications from most colleges or vocational training facilities in the student's area. If the student does not have these in the area, check the school counselor. But the fastest way to apply is online: [www.fafsa.ed.gov](http://www.fafsa.ed.gov). FAFSA on the web uses skip logic based on the student's particular information, so the student will need to answer fewer questions than on the paper application. FAFSA on the web also checks the student's answers before the application is submitted, so there is less chance the student's application will be rejected because of missing or conflicting information. The student can save application information so that it can be completed and transmitted at a later time. FAFSA on the Web can be used on Windows or Macintosh computers, using the most popular Netscape and Microsoft browser versions.

## **GOOD STANDING**

Students must maintain a minimum GPA of 2.00 or better. Full-time students must complete 12 credits per semester or 10 credits per quarter. Part-time students must complete a minimum of 6 credits.

## **MITIGATING CIRCUMSTANCES**

A circumstance, such as a student's medically diagnosed condition impairing the ability to continue a course of study documented by his or her or any other undue hardship that significantly hinders a student's academic process.

## **PART-TIME STUDENT**

An enrolled student who carries a part-time academic workload: A minimum of 6 credits as a degree-seeking student.

## **PROGRAM PLAN**

An individualized course of study in which the student, in conjunction with the degree granting institution of higher education, outlines the required courses for the desired degree.

## **UNMET NEED**

The difference between the student's cost of education and the resources available to defray those costs.