



"Knowing the scholarship's collaborative background—all the tribes, individuals, and businesses who have contributed to it—gives it special meaning."

*— Former AIES Recipient
University of Washington
School of Law*

PROGRAM OVERVIEW

The American Indian Endowed Scholarship program, created in 1990, establishes a partnership among the state, the American Indian community, and the private sector to support students in higher education.

Washington residents with close social and cultural ties to an American Indian tribe or community are eligible for the scholarship.

The state appropriated nearly \$292,000 to a trust fund for the program. These funds have been matched by private donations. To date, contributions from tribes, businesses, and individuals equal almost \$316,000. The combined funding creates the permanent endowment, from which the interest earnings are used to award scholarships each year.

HOW THE ENDOWMENT WORKS

Representatives of the American Indian community have formed a non-profit 501(c)(3) organization, known as the Friends of American Indians in Education (FAIE), to promote and coordinate fund-raising activities for the scholarship.

All contributions to FAIE go into the endowment. Contributed money is not used to support FAIE or the Washington Student Achievement Council. Almost \$300,000 of the first private contributions were matched by an equal amount of state dollars. Endowment earnings are used for scholarships.

PROGRAM PURPOSE

The scholarship increases equitable access for individuals associated with the American Indian community.

- Only 57 percent of American Indians at Washington four-year public institutions receive their bachelor's degree, a completion rate far below the 70 percent average for students overall.
- Of bachelor's degrees granted by Washington institutions in 2013-14, about 1 percent went to American Indian students; this population represented 0.9 percent of advanced degrees.





BENEFITS TO STUDENTS

American Indians make up approximately two percent of the state population but are historically underrepresented in higher education. This program inspires higher levels of educational achievement. Recipients must demonstrate a financial need for the scholarship. Preference is given to upper-division, graduate, and professional students.



BENEFITS TO THE STATE

Promising applicants who demonstrate an intent to return service to the state's American Indian community are strong candidates for the scholarship. The program improves equity in enrollment and supports students whose success is essential to improving economic sufficiency.

PROGRAM RESULTS

- Through the 2015-16 fiscal year, 351 students have received the scholarship. Thirteen students will receive scholarships in 2015-16.
- Several recipients now have careers in law, medicine, education, business, and resource management. All plan to return to their tribes or to work on behalf of American Indian peoples.
- Three \$1,050 and one \$1,550 scholarships were awarded to renewal recipients for 2014-15. In addition, one \$1,550 and seven \$1,050 scholarships were awarded to new recipients.

EMERGING ISSUES

- Significantly reduced endowment interest earnings during the past several years have resulted in fewer scholarship awards at reduced dollar values, a pattern that is expected to continue into the foreseeable future.
- Due in part to the statewide economic downturn, the endowment fund has experienced a decline in private donations, also contributing to slower growth in interest earnings available for scholarships.



FOR MORE INFORMATION:

Becky Thompson, Director of Student Financial Aid
beckyt@wsac.wa.gov or 360-753-7840

For more information about contributing to the endowment contact: Augustine McCaffery, FAIE President, at 206-527-9458.

"The scholarship program has been very supportive emotionally as well as financially . . . I'd combine the financial aid benefit with knowing that there is an organization that is interested in giving me the recognition and support to return to school."

*— Former AIES Recipient
University of Washington
School of Medicine*



Washington's student financial aid programs are known collectively as Opportunity Pathways.

The Washington Student Achievement Council administers these programs, helping tens of thousands of students earn college certificates and degrees annually.