



## **SUQUAMISH TRIBE**

### **Higher Education and Vocational-Technical Higher Education Program**

#### **Policies, Guidelines and Procedures**

##### **I. Policy**

The Suquamish Tribal Council believes that each Tribal Member should have support from the Tribe and the opportunity to achieve his or her educational goals. The Tribe views the Higher Education and Vocational-Technical Program as an investment in both the Tribal Member and the future of the tribal community.

The Tribe will support Tribal Members who meet the eligibility requirements to the greatest extent possible. However, the amount of funding available depends on the Tribe's ability to fund and the Tribal Council's annual budget approval. The Suquamish Tribe does not guarantee funding. Financial support from the Suquamish Higher Education Program is not an entitlement or a Tribal Member right.

The Higher Education Committee and staff administer the Higher Education and Vocational-Technical Program to achieve the policies of the Suquamish Tribe and will use the following guidelines. These Policies, Guidelines and Procedures are effective from the date they are approved by the Tribal Council until rescinded or revised by a new Tribal Council resolution.

##### **Application Deadlines**

Fall Quarter/Semester for the whole academic year

**July 1**

Winter Quarter/Semester

**November 1**

Spring Quarter

**February 1**

Summer Quarter

**May 1**

If you do not attend consecutively, in order to return to school/training you must turn in an application for the next applicable deadline. The Students must send in an official transcript at the end of each term or give permission for the higher education manager to access the student's account with login information. If the transcript is not received by the time awards are scheduled for disbursement, a portion or the entire award may be held until the transcript is received.

## **II. Application Procedures and Check List**

- Before an applicant will be considered for an award from the Higher Education Program, the applicant must submit a complete application. “Complete Application” means that all of following items are complete and have been received by the Higher Education Program staff.
- Application – an Application must be submitted each Fall Term. In addition to basic information, the applicant must sign and submit an Authorization to Release Student Information.
- 250-word essay (minimum) – the applicant must write a 250-word essay introducing them self and stating their educational and career goals, the amount of time they believe they will need to complete the course of study and how this scholarship will help them achieve their goals. Returning students will write an essay reflecting on how college or their schooling is impacting their educational and career goals.
- Tribal Enrollment Certification – new applicant must either (a) provide a signed Certificate of Enrollment from the Suquamish Enrollment Officer or a copy of their tribal id card.
- Admission and/or Class Schedule – the applicant must provide either a letter of acceptance or admission from the school or a copy of the student’s class schedule from the school.
- Financial Needs Analysis Form- Request the form to be completed by College/University Financial Aid Office. Information must be sent Directly from the College/University Financial Aid Office. (This form must be submitted at the beginning of each academic year.)
- Evidence of Application for an outside funding source - the applicant is required to apply for at least one scholarship/additional funding from an outside funding source each year. Copies of the application and any response from the funding source must be submitted. Any outside funding source/scholarship received will not be subtracted from the base funding provided by the Tribe, however a tuition waiver will be applied to your tuition amount.
- Grade Transcript – each applicant must submit an official transcript from the school they last attended. If the application is for a First-Time Student, the applicant must submit either a copy of their high school diploma, GED Certificate or transcript from a higher education or vocational-technical school. If the application is for a Continuing or Reinstated Student, an official transcript from the most recent term must be submitted.

### **III. Scholarship Assistance and Funding Priorities**

#### **Associate, Bachelors, Masters or Doctorate Degree and Vocational-Technical Program Associate's Degree or Certificate from Accredited Institution.**

##### **A. Within Kitsap County Resident**

1. Must reside in Kitsap County at the time of application.
2. Potential Funding:
  - a Tuition, fees, books and supplies; and
  - b Supplemental funding up to a maximum of \$1,200 per month for full-time students; part-time students may receive up to \$500 per term

##### **B. Washington State Resident - Outside of Kitsap County**

1. Reside in Washington State but outside Kitsap County at time of application.
2. Potential Funding: tuition, fees, books and supplies up to a maximum total funding of \$10,000 per academic year.

##### **C. Out of State Resident**

1. Reside outside Washington State at time of application.
2. Potential Funding: tuition, fees, books and supplies up to a maximum total funding of \$7,500 per academic year.

**Fulltime undergraduate credit level: 12 or more credits**

**Part-time undergraduate credit level is: 1-11 credits**

**Graduate and beyond credit level: 9 or more credits**

**Part-time graduate and beyond level: 1-8 credits**

#### **Part-time Student**

A student may attend a Higher Education or Vocational-Technical accredited institution on a part-time basis and receive financial support from the Suquamish Higher Education Program. The eligibility requirements are the same as full-time students; however, the amount of financial assistance available will be pro-rated based on the number of credits (for example, a student taking 9 credits may be eligible to receive 75% of the available book allowance).

#### **Special Programs**

Tribal members who wish to attend a qualified non-accredited program or institution may receive financial support from the Higher Education Program. "Qualified Non-Accredited Program or School" means a program that has been approved by the Higher Education Committee and the Tribal Council and will enhance the member's employment or employment potential. The member must submit a program description from the institution and demonstrate how attendance at the school will enhance their employability.

Academically challenged students may be eligible for special, modified eligibility requirements and/or higher education support determined on a case by case basis by the Higher Education Committee. We can accept a letter from a Counselor, Doctor, advocate or from the student detailing the issues and the need for less credits and full support.

#### **IV. Academic problems**

Students are expected to take responsibility for their own success. By initialing the following, I understand that if I demonstrate consistent problems with school, penalties and consequences may be imposed as follows:

\_\_\_\_\_ I understand that if I complete less than all of the number of credits I have received funding for or I fall below a 2.0 GPA for one term, I will be placed on Academic Warning for the next term.

\_\_\_\_\_ I further understand if I complete less than all of the credits I have received funding for or I fall below a 2.0 GPA for two consecutive terms, I will be placed on Academic Probation for the next term. (Academic Probation means that students who receive supplemental funding will only receive financial assistance for tuition, fees, books and supplies from the Higher Education Program. Students who do not receive supplemental funding who are placed on Academic Probation will not receive funds that would otherwise be awarded for books from the Higher Education Program).

\_\_\_\_\_ I further understand if I complete less than all of the credits I have received funding for or I fall below a 2.0 GPA for a third consecutive term or I do not receive any credit for one term, I will be placed on Academic Disqualification. (Academic Disqualification means that the student will not receive any financial support from the Higher Education Program until they qualify for Academic Reinstatement).

\_\_\_\_\_ I further understand in order to be considered for Academic Reinstatement, I must successfully complete one semester/term without assistance from the Higher Education Program.

\_\_\_\_\_ I further understand that if I am placed on Academic Disqualification for failure to maintain at least a 2.0 GPA or failure to maintain the course load that I received funding for, I will be required to reimburse the Higher Education Program the proportional difference between funding awarded and the credits achieved. (Students who are placed on Academic Disqualification for failure to successfully complete any credits for the term the student received funding for will be required to reimburse the Higher Education Program all of the funding received for that term).

\_\_\_\_\_ I further understand I may petition the Higher Education Committee for reconsideration of the disqualification or reimbursement decision. (The Higher Education Committee may consider "Special Circumstances" when deciding whether the student is obligated to reimburse a portion or all of the funds received for the term that resulted in Academic Disqualification).

\_\_\_\_\_ The student will be given an opportunity to enter into a payback agreement, which will most likely entail a voluntary withholding of wages and/or a voluntary garnishment of any distribution the student might otherwise be eligible to receive. Failure to enter into a payback agreement or to abide by the terms of such agreement will result in the Tribe taking legal action to collect on the debt.

## **V. Higher Education Terms and Conditions**

The following terms and conditions will apply to all Higher Education Program awards:

- A. Awards will be distributed each quarter or semester. The award for tuition and fees will be sent directly to the school. The award for books and supplies will be sent to the student before the beginning of the term and the supplemental funding award, if any, will be sent to the student at the beginning of each month.
- B. The student must notify the Higher Education Program immediately if the student withdraws from a class or registers for fewer credits than indicated on the student's application. Students must submit a copy of the approved add/drop form or withdrawal form. Students who (i) fail to notify the Higher Education Program within 7 days of withdrawing from classes or failing to register for sufficient credits or (ii) who drop classes or withdraw from school after the tuition reimbursement deadline will be subject to Academic Warning or Academic Disqualification and may be obligated to reimburse any funds disbursed on the student's behalf.
- C. If a student withdraws within the withdraw date from the college/university to receive any refund, that refund must be returned to the Higher Education Program. Students who fail to return that refund will not be eligible to apply to the higher education program until all funds are repaid. Students will be allowed to make payment arraignments if necessary.
- D. Any student who engages in intentional academic misrepresentation including misrepresentation of grades, plagiarism, or other fraudulent academic action will not be eligible for funding for at least three (3) years from the date the intentional academic misrepresentation is discovered by the Higher Education Program or the student's education institution. Reinstatement of a student's eligibility for financial assistance after completion of the three (3) year period of suspension will be determined by the Higher Education Committee on a case-by- case basis and will depend on whether the student adequately demonstrates a change in circumstances which reflects the student's current situation in a positive light. Students who engage in intentional academic misrepresentation must reimburse the Higher Education Program any amounts of previous funding (during the time of the misrepresentation). Intentional misrepresentation or fraud may also subject the offender to civil and/or criminal liability under tribal, state, and/or federal law.
- E. The Tribe will not support funding to attend "for-profit" institutions, for example, the DeVry Institute or the University of Phoenix, unless the institution is approved by an appropriate accrediting board and the Higher Education Committee approves.
- F. The Higher Education Program will accept applications for assistance to attend a program that will result in the applicant receiving a second degree or certificate at the same level as one previously supported by the Suquamish Higher Education Program. The Higher Education Committee will decide on a case-by-case basis which applications for a second degree will be awarded. Generally, the award will not exceed tuition, fees, supplies and books.

## **VI. Appeals from Decisions**

Committee decisions may be appealed as follows:

1. Applicant must submit a letter of appeal to the Higher Education Committee no later than 15 days of the day the Decision Notice is mailed to the Applicant. The letter of appeal must state the reason that the Applicant believes the Higher Education Committee should re-consider its decision.
2. Higher Education Committee may reverse its decision but only if the Applicant provides documentation to support his or her claim that the Higher Education Committee's initial decision was based on lack of or incorrect information.
3. Higher Education Committee will notify the Applicant no later than 30 days from the date it receives the letter of appeal whether the Committee upholds or reverses its initial decision. The second decision of the Higher Education Committee is final



## SUQUAMISH TRIBE

### Higher Education Program Policies

#### ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF RECEIPT AND STATEMENT OF UNDERSTANDING

To finance your education, a partnership is formed between you, the college/university and the Suquamish Tribe. You are making adult decisions and taking on adult responsibilities. We expect responsible and appropriate adult behavior with regard to your college career choices and commitments. By initialing the following, I understand that:

\_\_\_\_\_ I am responsible for following all directions carefully and completely, adhering to deadlines, and keeping copies of all documents.

\_\_\_\_\_ I am responsible for turning in my application by the posted deadline. If I do not turn in my application by the deadline, I will not be eligible for any funding for that term.

\_\_\_\_\_ I am responsible for abiding by all tribal, state, and federal laws regarding truthfulness and misrepresentation and understand that the Suquamish Tribe will rescind any funding awarded should it discover an omission or misrepresentation has occurred.

\_\_\_\_\_ I am responsible for communicating with the Higher Education Program staff as early as possible any changes in my college career including, but not limited to: dropping classes, changing credit load, dropping out of school, changing programs and graduating.

\_\_\_\_\_ I am responsible for informing this office of any changes in my contact information. I understand that if this office cannot contact me, i.e. Disconnected phone, returned mail or no response on my part, this office will rescind financial support for my education.

\_\_\_\_\_ I am responsible for courteous treatment of staff and committee members during my education career

**I have read and agree to adhere to the responsibilities outlined above. I have read the Higher Education Program Policies, Guidelines and Procedures and agree to comply with the policies and rules contained in the Guidelines. I also acknowledge that any failure to carry out these responsibilities and abide by the requirements of the Higher Education Program Policies may result in my obligation to pay back some or all of the funds received.**

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_