

January 10, 2007

Robert L. Ehrlich, Jr.
Governor, State of Maryland

The Honorable Thomas V. Mike Miller, Jr.
President, Maryland Senate

The Honorable Michael E. Busch
Speaker, Maryland House of Delegates

Dear Governor Ehrlich, President Miller and Speaker Busch:

The William Donald Schaefer Scholarship Advisory Council and Program was created by HB 1307 (Chapter 413, Acts of 2004) to provide financial assistance to Maryland residents attending a Maryland higher education institution to prepare for and pursue careers in public service. The Maryland Higher Education Commission (MHEC) is to provide, each year, a report to the Governor and General Assembly on the administration of this program. This letter is in response to this request.

The legislation took effect October 1, 2004, however, funds were not provided in the fiscal year 2005 budget to make awards during the 2004-2005 academic year. Instead, MHEC's Office of Student Financial Assistance (OSFA) worked during 2004 and 2005 to develop an appropriate awarding structure to begin making awards in fiscal year 2006.

An Advisory Council was appointed in October 2004, comprised of 10 members, each serving two-year terms, representing the segments of higher education in Maryland and organizations that may employ individuals receiving the scholarship. The list of members is attached. The Advisory Council had its first meeting in November 2004, to discuss program guidelines, recipient selection criteria, and the possibility of raising funds for the program. OSFA finalized draft guidelines based on discussions that took place at the November meeting. Guidelines went to the Advisory Council for final review and then to the Commission for approval in March, 2005. Funds in the amount of \$60,000 were provided in the FY 2006 budget and the first ten awards were made during the 2005-2006 academic year.

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Ten students were offered an award, and four alternates were chosen. As one of the recipients from academic year 2005-2006 only used the award for one semester, one of the 2006-2007 alternates was also offered the award.

The criteria used by the Advisory Council to determine the recipients is (in order of importance): financial need; application volunteer/public service experience; 1000 word essay regarding career goals and interest in public service; grade point average; three letters of reference; and a resume. Additionally, the Council considered demographic information to ensure equal access for all eligible applicants. Each Council member reviewed the above listed information on each of 53 applicants and ranked them according to a standard form. A meeting was held where each Council member's top applicants were discussed in detail and the meeting continued until a consensus was reached.

For the 2006-2007 academic year, William Donald Schaefer (WDS) Scholarship applications were made available in January, 2006, and were accepted until March 15, 2006. The Office of Student Financial Assistance received 204 applications. Of the 204 applications received, 12 were received after the deadline, 32 were incomplete, 66 showed no need for assistance as applicants had an Expected Family Contribution of over \$10,000 and/or had a cumulative, unweighted GPA below 2.93. Although there were 94 eligible applicants, the 53 applicants with the lowest EFC's (\$0 to \$3,089) were considered by the WDS Advisory Council. The average award for the eleven recipients was \$7,612 for academic year 2006-2007.

Below is a list of the eleven recipients, their respective institutions, majors and degrees sought:

Towson University – Education/Social Science – B.S.
Hagerstown Business College – Criminal Justice – A.A.
Towson University - Elementary Education - B.S.
Loyola University of Maryland – School Guidance Counseling – M.S.
University of Maryland, Baltimore – Medicine – MD
University of Maryland, Baltimore – Social Work/Law – J.D./M.S.W.
College of Southern Maryland – Early Childhood Education – A.A.
University of Maryland, Baltimore – Law – J.D.
University of Maryland, Baltimore – Social Work – M.S.W.
University of Maryland, Baltimore – Law – J.D.
Coppin State College – Social Work – B.S.

All students accepted the WDS Scholarship award and signed a promissory note agreeing to work in public service in the State of Maryland one year for each year they receive the award.

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The three alternate recipients have the following statistics:

University of Maryland, Baltimore – Social Work – M.S.W
University of Maryland Baltimore County – Social Work – M.S.W
University of Maryland, Baltimore – Social Work – M.S.W

All alternates were highly encouraged to reapply for academic year 2007-2008 awards.

A recognition ceremony was held for the eleven recipients and their families in July, 2006.

Should you have questions regarding the William Donald Schaefer Scholarship program or its implementation, please contact Elizabeth Urbanski, Acting Director, OSFA, at 410-260-4561 or urbansk@mhec.state.md.us.

Sincerely,

Calvin W. Burnett
Secretary of Higher Education

cc: Members, Senate Budget and Taxation Committee
Members, Senate Education, Health & Environmental Affairs Committee
Members, House Appropriations Committee
Members, House Ways and Means Committee
Andrea Mansfield, Acting Assistant Secretary

Enclosure