

In Pursuit of Excellence

THE PANTHERA EDGE WHEA SCHOLARSHIP

Granted By "The Panthera Edge Foundation"

Background:

Studies continually demonstrate that those who receive a bachelor's degree out-perform and out-earn and live longer than those without a bachelor degree. All these factors lead to productive lives with healthier living, opportunities to better educate their children, and opportunities to give back and assist their communities.

Pew Research Center's aptly titled article, "The Rising Cost of Not Going to College", provides some stark contrasts between those with a bachelor's degree and those with a high school diploma. Think about this!!!!

Those aged 25-32, the millennials with a bachelor's degree earn \$17,500 more per year than those with a high school diploma. Not only do vast differences in earnings exist but also in other economical statics such as the unemployment rate and poverty level for these groups. The PRC's 2013 published data for millennials showed an unemployment rate of 12.2% for high school graduates versus a 3.8% rate for those with bachelor degrees. Poverty levels for millennial, high school grads versus millennial, college grads show a marked difference of 22% compared to 6%. (The Rising Cost of Not Going to College, 2014, February 11, www.pewsocialtrends.org, pg.1, accessed on February 7, 2016).

As each year passes, the economic gap between those with a high school diploma versus a bachelor's degree continues to widen. In fact, the value of a high school diploma can be characterized as in decline. From 1965 to 2013 earnings for a high school graduate have decreased by \$3000. Whereas, incomes for college grads is the highest in more than a decade with the top 25% earning at least \$60,000 in their first job. (Zumbrun, J. (2016, January), Incomes for College Grads Highest in More Than a Decade, retrieved from www.wsj.com).

It is worth repeating; higher education is the key to many of life's issues.

The Opportunity:

Often there are struggles that make it difficult for some students to attend a 4 year university. Finances are often a significant hurdle to overcome.

The Panthera Edge Foundation understands the importance of hard work and making good choices to prepare for acceptance to a Bachelor Degree Program, in an employable field of endeavor.

Panthera Edge is pleased to assist a deserving WHEA high school senior in that pursuit of higher education, by offering a scholarship to a 4 year university, either in Hawaii or on the mainland.

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www.pantheraedge.org

video link: <https://www.pantheraedge.org/panthera-scholarship-video>

The Scholarship:

A **\$4,000** scholarship will be awarded to a high school senior at WHEA to assist with tuition and fees at a 4 year college/university. The scholarship funds are deposited into the scholarship student's university account for use at that university. Please note, scholarship is **TUITION** only!

The scholarship is accompanied with an ongoing relationship to foster mentoring and potential additional support, annually.

The Foundation Board of Directors will make the selection, based on criteria largely shared in the Application.

Eligibility requirements:

1. A high school **2026** graduate of WHEA.
2. Accepted and committed to a 4 year college/university in Hawaii or on the mainland.
3. It is **REQUIRED** that the student be enrolled and begin classes Fall 2026, i.e. NO GAP year.
4. Pursuing a bachelor's degree.
5. Answer simple question - financial assistance is needed for tuition, Y or N.
6. Ability to demonstrate pursuit of excellence in scholastics, character, extracurricular, and personal life.
7. Impress the Selection Committee with your Essay in 2,000-2,500 words.
8. **Submit complete Application/Essay NLT March 31st (no exceptions).**

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The Essay (min-maximum words: 2,000-2,500)

(Please note the following are suggestions as you think about your essay content.)

- Your essay is KEY in this selection process.
- We want to know who you are.
- Share your decision making process as you pursue a bachelor's degree.
- For example, what steps did you take with your HS academic selection to position yourself in being accepted to the college/university of your choice?
- What steps did you take to prepare yourself financially?
- How reliant are you on scholarships, grants, financial aid?
- Discuss your thoughts on education as an investment in your future.
- How have you developed leadership skills and character building traits?
- Give examples that demonstrate sound character and good citizenship.
- What areas in your life have influenced your decisions as you pursue your degree?
- Discuss how extra curricular activities may have inspired a passion of yours.
- Again, we want to know who you are, what makes you unique, what separates you from others, and makes you different.

SCHEDULE

- **March 31st 2026** - **Essay** must be submitted to Natalie Kik-Brown, Executive Director, Panthera Edge Foundation, at nkikbrown@pantheraedge.org.
- **March 31st 2026** - **Application and Essay** must be submitted to Randi Hayashida, High School Advisor, WHEA. Ms. Hayashida will forward the applications to Natalie Kik-Brown.
- **May 1st 2026** - The award decision will be made by May 1, 2026.

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APPLICATION

\$4,000 SCHOLARSHIP

To Accredited 4 Yr University

Hawaii or Mainland

- ➡ Due NLT March 31st
- ➡ Submit Essay to Natalie Kik-Brown, Executive Director, Panthera Edge Foundation at nkikbrown@pantheraedge.org.
- ➡ Email Essay using docx or PDF format.
- ➡ Submit Application to Randi Hayashida, High School Advisor, WHEA.
- ➡ Please put your **Name** and **High School** on your essay!

Name: _____

Age: _____

High School: _____

Email Address: _____

Phone: _____

GPA(cumulative): _____

ACT and/or SAT: _____

University Attending: _____

Date of acceptance or expected date of acceptance: _____

Field of Study: _____

In 1-2 sentences, summarize your:

(MUST ANSWER OR ESSAY MAY NOT BE CONSIDERED)

(1) **ACADEMIC HIGHLIGHTS:**

(2) **ATHLETIC or Other Extra-Curricular HIGHLIGHTS:**

(3) **GOOD CITIZENSHIP HIGHLIGHTS:**

Please answer Financial Need:

(1) I NEED financial assistance for College/University tuition. (Y or N) _____