

HIGHER EDUCATION PROGRAM: POLICIES, GUIDELINES, AND PROCEDURES

Koniag Education Foundation administers the Afognak Native Corporation (Afognak) Higher Education Program. Applications are available annually for the selection process. **HEP APPLICATIONS for full or part-time students MUST BE postmarked by March 15, electronically received by midnight Alaska Standard Time (AST) March 15, or hand delivered by 5 PM AST on March 15.*** Funding is awarded annually, and scholarship recipients will be announced at the Annual Meeting, held in May each year.

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

The Afognak Higher Education Program is designed to recognize and provide financial support to **voting Afognak Shareholders** with demonstrated scholastic ability who are pursuing higher education in a traditional college, university, or vocational education program.

WHO MAY APPLY

1. The Higher Education Program awards scholarships to (i) Afognak Native Corporation (**Afognak**) **Shareholders** who are Native, and (ii) **Afognak Shareholders** who are descendants of a Native.
 - a. The two categories of eligible applicants set out in 1 above each include (i) an adoptee of a Native or a descendant of a Native whose adoption occurred prior to majority and is recognized at law or in equity, and (ii) an adoptee whose adoption occurred after the age of majority, but only if that adoptee is both a Native and a voting Shareholder.
2. Applicants must be accepted to accredited institutions, universities, colleges, vocational education, or trade schools.
3. Employees and Board Members who also meet all other requirements under "**Who May Apply**", are eligible.
4. Applicants must be a high school graduate or have a GED by the start of the postsecondary education to be eligible to apply for HEP funding.
5. Applicants who are in good standing with Afognak's other scholarship programs.
6. Applicants can apply for funding under one of the following categories:

Full-Time Students: This category is for students who will be attending school full-time. Full-time traditional college or university status is defined as follows:

- a. Undergraduate – 12 or more credit hours.
- b. Graduate – 9 or more credit hours.

Part-Time Students: This category is for students who will be attending school part-time. Part-time traditional college or university status is defined as follows:

- c. Undergraduate – less than 12 credit hours.
- d. Graduate – less than 9 credit hours.

Vocational Education: This category is for students who are preparing for professions that are non-academic and directly related to a trade, occupation, or vocation. *Vocational applications are accepted year round until

the budget of \$10,000 is exhausted.

APPLICATION PROCEDURES

1. Each applicant is responsible for submitting a complete HEP application packet. The application and all required attachments, including those items being sent directly by a third party (e.g. transcripts, letters of recommendations), must be received by the deadline.
2. Applicants are encouraged to apply online at www.koniageducation.org/scholarships or go to My.Afognak.com for the appropriate link. Afognak Shareholders can register on My.Afognak.com by entering their name, Shareholder ID number, first and last name, last four digits of their social security number, birthdate, email address, and PIN. Contact Shareholder Services if you need assistance registering on My.Afognak.com or have questions regarding the online application process.
3. A complete application packet includes the following:
 - a. Completed HEP application form. If questions do not apply, applicant will write "N/A" (not applicable).
 - b. The applicant's Afognak Shareholder ID number must be noted on the application to provide proof of eligibility.
 - c. Most recent high school or college official or unofficial transcript (whichever is applicable). Vocational applicants do not need to submit transcripts.
 - d. First time applicants must provide a letter of acceptance from the educational institution they plan to attend.
 - e. All applicants must complete the Budget Sheet. Backup documentation justifying costs noted on the budget sheet must be provided, such as a cost of attendance form from the school.
 - f. ***Applicants will not be awarded scholarships valued at more than the total cost of attendance identified on their application.***
 - g. First time applicants must provide two (2) Letters of Recommendation. One Letter of Recommendation must come from an individual who knows the applicant's scholastic or leadership ability, such as a present or former faculty member or employer. The other Letter of Recommendation may be submitted by:
 - i. A faculty member,
 - ii. An employer,
 - iii. An individual who knows the applicant well; such as a minister, priest, doctor, or elder in your community.No Letter of Recommendation from the applicant's family members will be accepted. The term "family members" is defined as spouse, parents, children, brothers or sisters, either by blood or adoption.

Students who are re-applying do not need to resubmit the above information.
 - h. The Letter of Application may consist of up to two pages. *Please note the change to this year's application. All of the below must be addressed to receive a high score, if you have any questions on this portion please reach out to KEF or Afognak staff.*
A top scoring application must clearly discuss or demonstrate:
 1. Introduction - Personal Background
 2. Education goals (why attending school, school, degree)
 3. Field of Study Relevancy to Career Goals
 4. Leadership
 5. Community Service Contribution

6. Benefit to Greater Community
7. Benefit to Alutiiq Community
8. Family Relationship and History to Afognak
9. Tribal Affiliation
10. Overall Writing Quality

- i. A recent portrait photo of the applicant (optional). By submitting a photograph and signing the Student Pledge, the Applicant grants Afognak the right to use, publish, display, and distribute his/her image.
4. All required items listed above must be submitted using My.Afognak.com or by mail, fax, email, or personal delivery to:

Koniag Education Foundation
Afognak Native Corporation Higher Education Program
4241 B Street, Suite 303B
Anchorage, AK 99503
scholarships@koniageducation.org; Fax (907) 562-9023

5. A HEP applicant may also apply for a Career Enhancement Opportunities (CEO) scholarship during the same year. CEO funds cannot be awarded for the same purpose.

QUESTIONS

Applicants are strongly encouraged to contact the Higher Education Program if they have questions regarding the HEP application process or policies as incorrect, and incomplete applications will not be considered for funding.

While staff of KEF and Afognak are available to assist students with their applications PRIOR to the deadline, it is the student's responsibility to submit a complete application by the deadline.

Koniag Education Foundation
Afognak Higher Education Program
scholarships@koniageducation.org
Phone (907) 562-9093 / (888) 562-9093

Afognak Native Corporation
Higher Education Program
scholarships@afognak.com
Phone (907) 222-9500 / (888) 292-9580

HEP APPLICATION PACKET CHECK LIST

Contact the KEF Scholarships manager (907) 562-9093, scholarships@koniageducation.org, or Afognak Shareholder Services (907-222-9500; scholarships@afognak.com) if you have questions while completing this application. Make sure you have completed all items below and included them in your application packet as listed:

- HEP application form.** Make sure your application form is completely filled out. If an area does not apply to you please fill in the blank with N/A (not applicable) to prevent your application from being scored lower.
- Insert your Shareholder ID number in your application to provide proof that you are eligible for a scholarship.** (Refer to the section "**Who May Apply**" for further information).
- Most recent unofficial or official high school or college transcript with your GPA clearly indicated. If you did not graduate from high school provide a copy of your GED.** *Vocational applicants do not need to submit transcripts.*
- First time applicants provide a letter of acceptance from your educational institution.**
- Complete the Budget Sheet.**
- Backup Documentation for Budget Sheet: Cost of Attendance.**
- First time applicants provide two letters of recommendation.** Students reapplying do not need to resubmit letters of recommendation.
- The Letter of Application may consist of up to two pages.** A top scoring application letter must clearly discuss or demonstrate:
 1. Introduction - Personal Background
 2. Education goals (why attending school, school, degree)
 3. Field of Study Relevancy to Career Goals
 4. Leadership
 5. Community Service Contribution
 6. Benefit to Greater Community
 7. Benefit to Alutiiq Community
 8. Family Relationship and History to Afognak
 9. Tribal Affiliation
 10. Overall Writing Quality
- Signed Student Pledge.**

Students will not be awarded scholarships valued at more than their total need identified on their budget sheet.

All items must be submitted using www.koniageducation.org or by mail, fax, email or personal delivery to:

Koniag Education Foundation, Afognak HEP Program
4241 B Street, Suite 303B, Anchorage, AK 99503
scholarships@koniageducation.org
Phone (907) 562-9093 / (888) 562-9093 / Fax (907) 562-9023

Applications must be postmarked by March 15, or electronically received by midnight Alaska Standard Time (AST) March 15, or hand delivered by 5 PM AST on March 15.

You are encouraged to plan accordingly to ensure timely completion and receipt of all documents prior to the application deadline. An email verifying receipt of your application will be sent to you when your application is received. Applicants who apply online will receive an automatic email when their application is received. **If an applicant applies online and does not receive an automated email within 15 minutes, he or she should log back onto www.koniageducation.org/scholarships to verify that the application was successfully submitted.**

A student who would like another individual to assist in the scholarship process must complete and sign the Limited Power of Attorney form. To request a copy, please contact Afognak Shareholder Services.

Photographs are optional and appreciated as Afognak would like to use them for newsletters, reports, publications, etc.

REVIEW PROCESS

The Afognak Native Corporation Board of Directors appoints a Scholarship Committee to select recipients of HEP awards. The Scholarship Committee considers all information. The Committee scores each application in a variety of categories:

Full-time, Part-time and Graduate applicants: Scholastic Achievement, Completeness of Application, Letters of Recommendation (*first time applicants only*), and the Letter of Application.

Vocational applicants: Completeness of Application, Letters of Recommendation (*first time applicants only*), and the Letter of Application.

Students should note their participation in Corporation-sponsored programs (i.e. Future Leaders Summit, Alaska Native Executive Leadership Program, High School Intern, College Intern) as evidence of "Benefit to Alutiiq Community".

The decision whether to consider or not consider an application due to the applicant's past material violation(s) of any of Afognak's scholarship program policies is in the sole and absolute discretion of the Scholarship Committee. Further, the decision to award scholarship funds to an applicant, and the amount of any funds awarded, is in the sole and absolute discretion of the Scholarship Committee.

GENE SUNDBERG AWARD

The Afognak Native Corporation honors our friend, mentor, Alutiiq leader, and longtime Board member, the late Gene Sundberg. Mr. Sundberg's relentless pursuit of education benefits resulted in the creation of Afognak's scholarship program in 1984. The Board of Directors memorializes Mr. Sundberg's dedication and commitment to the Afognak peoples through a \$6,000 Gene Sundberg Award. The HEP recipient with the highest overall score in the graduate, full-time, part-time, and vocational category will receive the Gene Sundberg Award in addition to their HEP scholarship award as follows: \$2,500 graduate, \$2,000 full-time, \$750 part-time, and \$750 vocational.

DISBURSEMENT OF FUNDS

1. HEP funds will only be disbursed directly to the educational institution. All awards are calculated and paid in U.S. currency and students whose requests are in foreign currency will be recalculated to U.S. currency before they are scored and awarded.
2. The full amount of the funding awarded will be distributed equally between the academic terms the student anticipates attending in one year, up to four terms per year, based on part-time **or** full-time enrollment status.
3. HEP scholarship award checks will not be sent out each academic term until:
 - a. An unofficial transcript from the educational institution from the **previous** academic term has been received by the Afognak Scholarship Program; and
 - b. Proof of enrollment (i.e. current class schedule) for the **current** academic term has been received by the Afognak Scholarship Program.
4. HEP funds can be applied toward the following expenses: tuition, books, fees, supplies, and reasonable living expenses in conjunction with the student's post-secondary education. The HEP program does not fund non-related school expenses such as credit cards, cell phones, equipment purchases, and other non-school related expenses. The Scholarship Committee may determine which costs are acceptable and adjust awards accordingly.
5. The Committee may award top performing students with a spot bonus award mid-year using forfeited scholarship carryover fund.

NUMBER OF HEP AWARDS

The number of HEP awards in each category is dependent upon:

- a. the number of eligible applicants; and
- b. availability of funds.

SUCCESSFUL APPLICANT RESPONSIBILITIES

1. **COMMUNICATION** – Notify the Program immediately if there is a change to the applicant's mailing address, institution/program attending, or enrollment status (full-time vs. part-time).
2. **PROOF OF ENROLLMENT** – HEP recipient must provide proof of enrollment (i.e. a class schedule, unofficial transcript that indicates your enrollment, or letter from the educational institution verifying enrollment).
3. **TRANSCRIPTS** – HEP recipients must submit an official transcript at the beginning of each academic **year**, and an unofficial transcript at the end of each academic **period**. Funding checks will not be mailed each academic term until:
 - a. An unofficial transcript from the student from the **previous** academic term has been received by the Afognak Scholarship Program; and
 - b. Proof of enrollment (i.e. Current class schedule) for the **current** academic term has been received by the Afognak Scholarship Program.

If the recipient fails to submit his or her transcripts to Afognak, future applications will not be considered, and any awards approved for the recipient will be withheld until the transcript requirements are met. If the recipient fails to meet the requirements within the following academic term, the funds will revert back to Afognak.

4. **GRADE POINT AVERAGE (GPA)** – The recipient **must maintain a cumulative 2.0 grade point average** (GPA). If a recipient's GPA falls below this criteria, the recipient will be placed on probation for one term and must participate in the KEF Mentorship Program. If these conditions are not met following the one term probation period, funding will be discontinued until the GPA requirement is met. A recipient may not apply for future funding until the GPA requirement is met.
5. **DEGREE PROGRESSION** – If you have been in a degree program for longer than the institution's program-stated average length of time and are not showing progression toward graduation, you are required to provide your institution advisor's academic plan to demonstrate your progression toward graduation. Recipients not making degree progress will be placed on probation through graduation and must participate in the KEF Mentorship Program. If these conditions are not met, funding will be discontinued until the degree progression requirement is met. A recipient may not apply for future funding until progression is made.
6. **TEMPORARY CHANGE IN STATUS (FULL-TIME TO PART-TIME)** – A recipient who receives funding to attend school full-time must maintain full-time status during the academic period in which the recipient applied for HEP funding. Failure to maintain full-time status by moving to part-time status will result in the recipient being placed on probation for one term and must participate in the KEF Mentorship Program. If the student does not maintain full-time status for the probationary term, then funds will be adjusted for the subsequent term.
7. **CHANGING OF INSTITUTION/PROGRAM** – Once a financial award has been made to a recipient, the recipient must notify the Afognak Scholarship Program if they are changing institutions or programs during the funding year. Funding awards are based upon the institution/program identified in the recipient's application. A change in institution/program will result in a re-evaluation of the award. Changing of an institution will not result in an increase of a HEP award but may result in a decrease of a HEP award, based on new financial need information.
 - a. A recipient must notify the Program by submitting a letter if he/she is changing institutions/programs.
 - b. If a recipient changes institutions or programs, it is the recipient's responsibility to submit a new budget sheet, and admissions letter. The recipient's total score will be adjusted to reflect the cost of the new institution/program and the HEP award will be adjusted accordingly.
 - c. A recipient may be financially responsible for changes made to their status, changing of institutions/programs, etc., and be required to reimburse funds lost as a result of his/her change, to the Afognak Scholarship Program. If the recipient fails to reimburse funds to Afognak, future applications will not be considered.
8. **RESCORING OF APPLICATION** – Due to change in institutions, programs, and categories, the Committee will re-evaluate funding on a case-by-case basis.

9. **FAILURE TO ATTEND/DROP-OUT** – If a recipient fails to attend the educational institution for which they have been funded, or drops out before completion of the year, Afognak will require that the HEP funds be returned to Afognak in full, either by the institution, by the recipient, or a combination thereof. If the recipient fails to return HEP funds to Afognak, future applications will not be considered.
10. **MISUSE OF FUNDS** – If a recipient misuses or attempts to misuse scholarship funds, Afognak will require that the HEP funds be returned to Afognak in full, either by the institution, by the recipient, or a combination thereof. If the recipient fails to return HEP funds to Afognak, future applications will not be considered, and any current awards approved for the recipient will be withheld. In the case of fraud or criminal act, the Scholarship Committee may decline to consider any new Scholarship applications even if the scholarship recipient repaid Afognak the misused funds in full. The Scholarship Committee will determine whether any funds have been used improperly on a case-by-case basis.

DEFINITIONS

The following terms used throughout this application and guidelines document are defined for clarity:

Academic year: Begins June 1 and ends on May 31 each year (12 months).

Academic term or Academic Period: An academic term or period is a division of an academic year, the time during which a school, college or university holds classes. These divisions may be called terms. The schedules adopted by institutions of learning or education systems vary widely. A semester system divides the academic year into two terms, roughly 16–18 weeks each. A trimester system divides the academic year into three terms, roughly 14 - 16 weeks each. A quarter system divides the academic year into four terms, roughly 12 weeks each, and generally counts the summer as one of the terms.

Accredited institutions: Educational accreditation is achieved through a process that monitors a college, university, or vocational education center's services and operations to determine if applicable standards are met. If standards are met, accredited status is granted by the agency.

Accepted to: You are considered "accepted to" a university or college when you have completed all necessary information to enroll in a degree-seeking program in your university, college, or vocation education center.

ANCSA: Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act of 1971.

Applicant's family member: Your spouse, parents, children, brothers or sisters, either by blood or adoption.

Class schedule: A class schedule lists the classes you will take during the semester or quarter. A class schedule is an unofficial document but it must be printed from your school website or other school document to prove that you are actually enrolled in the courses listed.

Cumulative grade point average: Your cumulative grade point average (GPA) reflects your most recent completed coursework for all the years you've gone to high school or college. It is a cumulative, numerical equivalent of your letter grades. In the most common system, A=4, B=3, C=3, D=1, and F=0.

Descendant of a Native: Pursuant to Section 3(r) of ANCSA, a Descendant of a Native is defined as: (1) a lineal descendant of a Native or of an individual who would have been a Native if such individual were alive on December 18, 1971, or (2) an adoptee of a Native or of a descendant of a Native, whose adoption (a) occurred prior to his or her majority, and (b) is recognized at law or in equity.

Enrolled in: A student is considered "enrolled" when the student has registered for classes.

Full-time student: Taking 12 or more undergraduate credit hours or 9 or more graduate credit hours during a semester/term/quarter or as defined by the school (official verification must be submitted). If your school defines full-time status differently, please submit the proper documentation stating their definition of full-time status.

Graduate degree programs: Master degrees such as Master of Arts (M.A.), Master of Business Administration (M.B.A.), Master of Teaching (M.A.T.); and doctorate degrees such as Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D.), Doctor of Education (Ed.D), etc.

Letter of recommendation: A letter from someone who knows you, such as a teacher, employer, or minister that can describe your leadership or scholastic ability.

Letter of acceptance: Once a university, college, and vocational education center has received all of the required information, they need to process your application to attend their institution, they will officially approve your acceptance. They will then send you a Letter of Acceptance announcing that you have been accepted.

Official transcript: An official transcript is the high school or university certified statement of your academic record. The official transcript is usually printed on security sensitive paper and contains the school or university seal and signature of the University Registrar. Some schools and universities also issue electronic official transcripts directly to scholarship programs.

Native: Pursuant to Section 3(b) of ANCSA, a Native is defined as: A citizen of the United States who is a person of one-fourth degree or more Alaska Indian (including Tsimshian Indians not enrolled in the Metlakatla Indian Community), Eskimo, or Aleut blood, or combination thereof. The term includes any Natives as so defined either or both of whose adoptive parents are not Natives. It also includes, in the absence of proof of a minimum blood quantum, any citizen of the United States who is regarded as an Alaska Native by the Native village or Native group of which he claims to be a member and whose father or mother is (or, if deceased, was) regarded as Native by any village or group. Any decision of the Secretary regarding eligibility for enrollment shall be final.

Part-time student: Less than 12 undergraduate credit hours or less than 9 graduate credit hours during a semester/term/quarter or as defined by the school (official verification must be submitted).

Quarter: A quarter system divides the academic year into four terms, roughly 12 weeks each, and generally counts the summer as one of the terms.

Semester: A semester system divides the academic year into two terms, roughly 16–18 weeks each. A trimester system divides the academic year into three terms, roughly 14 - 16 weeks each.

Spot Bonus: Periodically, the Committee may issue the top performing students a spot bonus award mid-year from the forfeited scholarship carryover fund.

Afognak Shareholder ID Number: The 12-digit identification number that is assigned to each Shareholder when they receive stock in the Corporation.

Unofficial transcript: A printed record of a student's academic history that contains all courses both past and current, but is not stamped and/or marked "Official" and is not enclosed in a sealed envelope marked "Unofficial if Opened".

Undergraduate degree programs: 2-year associate of arts degrees (A.A.) and 4-year degrees, including bachelor of arts (B.A.), bachelor of science (B.S.), bachelor of fine arts (B.F.A.), etc.

Vocational education: Vocational education or vocational education and training prepares trainees for jobs that are based on manual or practical activities, traditionally non-academic, and totally related to a specific trade, occupation, or vocation. It is sometimes referred to as *technical education* as the trainee directly develops expertise in a particular group of techniques or technology.

Voting Afognak Shareholder: An Afognak Native Corporation (Afognak) Shareholder who owns a share of stock or shares of stock in Afognak Native Corporation and is a Native or descendant of a Native as defined by ANCSA.