



The State University  
of New York

## Office of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion

### GUIDELINES FOR 2015-16 EMPIRE STATE DIVERSITY HONORS SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM

#### I. Introduction

The New York State budget includes funds for SUNY to administer the Empire State Diversity Honors Scholarship (ESDHS) Program for students from a broad range of backgrounds who will contribute to the diversity of the student body in their campus or academic program. For procedural questions, please contact the Office of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion at (518) 320-1189.

#### II. Program Administration Guidelines

- A. Campus Participation: SUNY State-operated/funded and Community Colleges are eligible to participate in this program.
- B. Program Funding: Participating campuses are required to match ESDHS funds awarded to students on a dollar-for-dollar basis. A campus may over-match their program allocation. See the attached list of campus allocations for current year funding for your campus. Federal Title IV financial aid funds cannot be used as matching funds.
- C. Student Eligibility and Selection: Each campus is responsible for establishing a procedure for selecting award recipients. The process must include an opportunity for students to be made aware of the scholarship program (for example, web site description or publications) and information used by the campus to determine eligibility. The following requirements and guidelines should assist in the selection process:

*Academic Criteria*: Eligible students must be enrolled in a degree program and have demonstrated high academic achievement characteristic of an honors program. It is the responsibility of each campus to define the criteria for high academic achievement for its own scholar selection process. Although it is recommended that SUNY Empire State Diversity Honors Scholarship recipients participate in a campus honors program, if one is available, this is not a prerequisite for campus participation or student selection. Recipients may be enrolled less than full-time providing they continue to meet the campus definition for high academic achievement.

*Financial Criteria*: Recipients are not required to demonstrate financial need. However, to determine eligibility for other State and Federal financial aid, all recipients should complete the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA).

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*Eligibility Criteria:* Participants must be U.S. citizens or permanent resident aliens and must be New York State residents, who will make a contribution to the diversity of the student body in their program or school, primarily by overcoming a disadvantage or other impediment to success in higher education. Even though financial need is not a requirement for program eligibility, campuses may consider financial need and economic disadvantage as **diversity indicators**. Other diversity indicators might include physical or other disability, first generation college student status and non-English speaking background. Membership in a racial/ethnic group that is underrepresented in the program or school for which the student is applying may serve as a plus factor in making awards, but may not form the sole basis of such an award and every student applicant shall be evaluated on his or her own merits. The campus selection process may require that the student self-declare a racial/ethnic category.

- D. Award Amount: The maximum student award available under this program is one-half the student's cost of attendance<sup>1</sup> or \$3,000, whichever is less, to be matched in an equal amount by the campus. There is no minimum award. All ESDHS program funds must be matched with at least an equal amount of campus funds. Selected students who, in the opinion of the campus aid office, may be eligible must apply for Pell and TAP before the SUNY Empire State Diversity Honors Scholarship can be disbursed. The amount of the total ESDHS, including the campus matching share, cannot exceed the difference between the total cost of attendance and family resources plus financial aid. It is the intent of this program that recipients continue to receive ESDHS support while enrolled at the campus granting the scholarship, provided the student meets the required academic criteria established by that college.
- E. Allocation of Scholarship Funds to Campuses: SUNY System Administration will allocate funds to campuses. Past campus utilization of funds and compliance with reporting requirements will be considered.
- F. Reporting: Campuses are required to submit an annual summary of scholarship recipients to the Office of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion by May 20, 2016. The summary will include student ethnicity and academic information such as high school average, standardized test scores, college GPA, amount of total scholarship and confirmation of matching funds. Future allocations are dependent upon submission of this report.

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<sup>1</sup> Cost of attendance is limited to annual costs for NY State resident tuition, fees, room, board, textbooks and supplies, transportation and personal expenses as defined in the campus financial aid student budget.