

Tuition waivers offer relief

During the 2014/2015 school year, the college planned on awarding more than \$650,000 in free tuition

by Zak Laster

Getting ready for college can be a very stressful time. You're ready to move on from high school and finally become an adult, but along with continuing your education comes massive amounts of inevitable debt. You want to continue your education and work towards that degree, but how are you going to pay for all your schooling on the way to your degree?

One solution at Clackamas Community College is through tuition waivers. Getting your tuition waived for one, two or even three terms, can really help release the burden of debt. For athletes on college campuses getting a scholarship is a great way to get an education at a discounted price. However, to earn a scholarship, also known as a tuition waiver, it's important to stay focused on your schoolwork.

"The requirements are you have to pass

at least 12 credits, and you have to go in and sign papers from our athletic director," said David Smallwood, freshman baseball player. "You just have to pay for your books and your class fees."

These requirements are the same for all athletes wanting to get a tuition waiver. For some athletes, getting a tuition waiver is a way to give back to their family.

"My parents have always helped me out with money," said volleyball player Lindsey Keegan. "They would pay for my school whether I went here or not, but I knew (the tuition waiver) would make it easier on them."

Being an athlete isn't the only way to receive a tuition waiver on campus. CCC awards tuition waivers in several different departments including art, music, drama, business, computer science, horticulture,

manufacturing, science, as well as Associated Student Government.

In the 2014-2015 school year, the college planned to award 7,800 credits or more than \$650,000 in free tuition. The most free tuition was allotted to peer assistants, who were eligible for 1,000 credits of free school. The second highest number of free credits went to the wrestling team, which was awarded 745 in free credits, or the equivalent of 20 full-time athletes in fall, winter and spring terms.

One of the lesser known ways to get a tuition waiver at CCC is through the Peer Assistant program. This program is coordinated by Dustin Bare.

"It's really peers helping other peers out," said Bare. "In doing so, they're able to earn a tuition waiver."

Students have an easier time understanding the college processes from other students who have already experienced things on campus and in the computer systems. A peer assistant may be a great help for a student unsure about how to look up their textbooks on *MyClackamas*, how to pay a bill, understand emails sent from the college or how to make sure they know how to see their academic evaluation to get their degree in an efficient manner. Peer Assistants may also give campus tours and assist with how to register for classes. One great benefit Bare sees of the Peer Program is the Call Center.

"The hundreds to thousands of phone calls that come into the school every year, many of those are answered by students, and students are calling," said Bare. "It's really students helping students. The program helps students grow professionally and learn the system."

Another aspect of the Peer Program is the peer mentor program, which is also overseen by Bare. This is the tutoring that happens in the math and writing labs.

Overall the Peer Assistant/Peer Mentor Program has 24 spots over 10 different ar-

photo by Becca Moreno



Lindsey Keegan, CCC student, plays on the Cougar volleyball team in return for a tuition waiver. Playing on a sports team is one of many ways students can access tuition waivers.

reas that include the admissions welcome center, the advising and career center, the front welcome desk, international connector, counselling, call center, disability, math/writing labs and enrollment. To be considered for the one of these spots, you must have a 3.25 GPA and at least 12 credits completed at Clackamas.

"We want them to have a little bit of a foundation of understanding some of those intricacies of *myClackamas*," said Bare. "Understanding how to use Moodle, when I'm struggling in a class, what do I do? If you haven't ever taken a class you may not have had those experiences."

In order to keep your job in the program, you must have passed 12 credits with a minimum 3.0 GPA. This is to ensure the peer assistants hired are progressing through their college careers. Students are allowed to take more than 12 credits in a term, but tuition for only 12 credits will be waived. To be a part of the Peer Assistant program, the school has a recruiting process it completes to find qualified applicants. With 12 credits equaling approximately \$1,000 a year, tuition waivers can give students many opportunities that they may not otherwise have. To earn a waiver, they have to do a lot of extracurricular work, but the benefit of the financial relief is worth it.

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