

2010 HCHS seniors awarded over \$1.7 million in scholarships; dual credit classes saving parents thousands of dollars on college tuition

SUPERINTENDENT'S CORNER

By: Timothy W. Saylor
Superintendent of Harlan County Schools

The 2010 graduating class of Harlan County High School garnered nearly \$2 million in scholarship money while getting a jump on college through the dual credit program that saved parents nearly \$80,000 on college classes.

A post-secondary education is extremely expensive. The Harlan County Public School District is pursuing every avenue to try and help students and their families make college affordable.

For students and parents, this makes an easier, less stressful transition to college, especially when the estimated cost for students to attend the University of Kentucky in Lexington for the 2010-2011 school year is \$21,200. Tuition and fees alone at UK cost \$8, 123, not including travel and living expenses.

The cost of tuition to attend the Kentucky Community and Technical College system is much less at \$3,750. However, that is not cheap. This tuition rate is based on students living at home with parents and commuting to classes. State education officials indicate the community college system is becoming more popular with students and parents as a result of the lower tuition.

HCHS students were awarded approximately \$1,747,816 in scholarships at the end of the 2010 school year. Colleges and universities awarding scholarships to seniors included Alice Lloyd College, Berea College, Campbellsville College, Eastern Kentucky University, Lincoln Memorial University, Lindsey Wilson College, Morehead State University, Southeast Community and Technical College, Union College, University of Kentucky, University of Louisville and the University of the Cumberlands. Numerous business scholarships, local memorial scholarships, civic club scholarships and alumni associations scholarships were awarded.

Meanwhile, many of these same students have a tremendous jump on college after having completed dual credit classes offered at HCHS for free or half-price tuition (reduced to \$187.50 per course).

The free dual credit classes offered a savings of \$45,000, with 32 students taking physics, 22 students taking advanced computers, six students taking honor physics, 31 students taking web design, 22 students taking Cisco Academy I and II and seven students taking Cisco Academy III and IV.

The dual credit classes with half-price tuition with a savings of \$32,250 were advanced topics in Math with 44 students, English IV with 57 students, US History with 37 students and Crafts (six hours) with 17 students.

Marilyn Williamson, mother of current UK freshman Larry Williamson, noted that her son began classes this fall with 22.8 hours of college credit. Nineteen hours were accrued by taking dual credit classes at Harlan County High School.

“He will be considered a sophomore after this first semester,” said Williamson. “He is taking calculus and chemistry. Because he had so many hours to transfer he was able to take fewer hours at UK to begin with so he could concentrate on these harder classes.”

Williamson said the opportunity “was great. I feel less stress because he had those hours.”

Students have commented on the fact that by being able to participate in dual credit classes while in high school that they are better prepared for college. They have been exposed to college curriculum and to college teachers, greatly reducing anxiety of the move to post-secondary learning.

Guidance counselors at Harlan County High said the dual credit program has afforded many students the unique opportunity to pursue college hours while in high school. With proper planning and scheduling, student may earn enough college hours to enter a post-secondary educational facility as a sophomore.

To prepare students for the best possible start at their post-secondary institution, I commend the guidance staff for making every effort to educate and inform HCHS students about available scholarships and financial aid opportunities. All available scholarships are posted on the school website, on high school bulletin boards and are announced in senior English classes.

It is imperative that students begin their scholarship search early and effectively as the competition for these dollars is highly competitive. To learn more about funding college, visit your school guidance counselor or log on to <http://www.kheaa.com/website/kheaa/home>.