



Student Affairs Update

FLORIDA OPPORTUNITY SCHOLARS PROGRAM

Division of Student Affairs
155 Tigert Hall
PO Box 113250
University of Florida
Gainesville, FL 32611-3250
www.ufsa.ufl.edu/ovp

"This scholarship will allow me to set the bar for future generations of my family. It is truly making dreams come true."

*Brandon White
Florida Opportunity Scholar*

The Florida Opportunity Scholars Program is a new initiative to ensure that first-generation-in-college students from economically disadvantaged backgrounds have the resources they need to be academically successful at UF. The goal of the program is to retain these students and have them graduate at rates at least equal to the undergraduate population at large.

Recipient Demographics

The Florida Opportunity Scholars Program began Summer 2006 with 207 students. At this time, there are 445 Florida Opportunity Scholars attending UF. The chart below summarizes recipient demographics.



President Machen greets scholars at fall reception

Florida Opportunity Scholars Recipient Demographics as of 9/25/06

Recipients 445

Admission Date

Summer '06 207
Fall '06 238

Gender

Male 152
Female 293

Race

African American 182
Hispanic 104
White 93
Asian American 49
Other/Unknown 17

Average Family Income \$24,079

Average Financial Need \$13,768

Total Grant/Scholarships \$6,127,619

Average FOSP Award \$3,672

Total FOSP \$1,634,113

Contact information for this publication:

Office of the Vice President for Student Affairs

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*This publication is available in alternative print format upon request.

ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

To be eligible for a Florida Opportunity Scholarship, a student must:

- Be a Florida resident and U. S. citizen, national or permanent resident.
- Be a first-time in college entering freshman beginning Summer B 2006 or later.
- Be accepted for admission to UF as an undergraduate.
- Be a first-generation college student. This means neither parent has a bachelor's degree.
- Have demonstrated financial need as determined from aid application. The parents' total annual income must be less than \$40,000.

Program Philosophy

First-generation-in-college students have unique needs and challenges. The Florida Opportunity Scholars Program was developed to expand the opportunities for academically prepared first-generation-in-college students to attend UF without being overwhelmed with the additional costs of attending college like paying for books and fees, meals and housing, transportation, and other miscellaneous expenses. A number of support strategies that target this group have been developed to ensure academic success, engagement at UF, social interaction, and a sense of belonging to the UF community. These strategies include:

- Providing financial aid packages that ensure that qualified students complete their undergraduate education debt-free.
- Scheduling beginning of term receptions with the UF President and other state and campus leaders.
- Providing "Navigating the Swamp," a one-half day orientation.
- Providing a series of financial literacy mini-courses.
- Providing a counseling empowerment support group for first generation college students.
- Providing interventions for students struggling with certain math and science classes.
- Requiring mandatory participation in SLS 1102, "Enhancing the Freshman Year Experience," a semester long one-credit course.
- Providing a peer mentor support program.

Supporting Florida Opportunity Scholars

The Florida Opportunity Scholars Program continues to grow. A development campaign was recently launched to provide for future increased costs as new recipients are selected for each freshman class. Contributions are matched dollar-for-dollar by the state of Florida's First Generation Matching Grant Program. To make a gift online, go to:

www.uff.ufl.edu/OnlineGiving/FundDetail.asp?FundCode=012979

Florida Opportunity Scholars at fall reception

