

HCC creates 'Bienvenidos' scholarship to support Latinx students

HOLYOKE — The Holyoke Community College Foundation has allocated \$75,000 to endow a new scholarship fund specifically for Latinx students attending HCC.

Through the "Bienvenidos Latinx Scholarship," HCC will provide financial support up to \$2,500 each to eligible Latinx students attending or planning to attend HCC.

The Foundation plans to award Bienvenidos scholarships worth \$50,000 to 20 students during the inaugural year, with the remaining \$25,000 set aside in an endowed fund for future years.

The deadline to apply for Bienvenidos scholarships for the 2021-2022 academic year is Friday, Aug. 6. The online application is available on the HCC website at: hcc.edu/bienvenidos

"HCC marked a major milestone in 2016 when the U.S. Department of Education recognized the college as a 'Hispanic Serving Institution,' which means at least 25 percent of our students are of Latinx or Hispanic heritage," said Amanda Sbriscia, vice president of Institutional Advancement and executive director of the HCC Foundation. "As an HSI, though, we are committed to doing more than simply serve our Latinx students. We want to see them thrive."

Bienvenidos was chosen as the name of the scholarship program

because it means "welcome" in Spanish. Beyond the direct financial support, scholarship recipients will also be connected to peer and alumni mentors and workshops to ensure their ongoing success.

"The Bienvenidos scholarships will open doors to a college education and welcome Latinx students into our community with everything they need to succeed at HCC," Sbriscia said. "That includes providing a culture that embraces inclusion and increases their sense of belonging. The name of this new scholarship was an important piece of prioritizing that welcoming culture — Bienvenidos says it all."

Applicants selected for scholarship awards by the college's Hispanic Leadership Committee will be invited along with their families to celebrate during a first-ever Bienvenidos Latinx Scholarship reception on the HCC campus on Sat., Aug. 28.

To be eligible for the Bienvenidos scholarship, students must be enrolled or intend to enroll in at least six credits at Holyoke Community College for the fall 2021 semester and must identify themselves as a Hispanic, Latina/o, or Latinx. The Bienvenidos Scholarship is open (but not limited) to DACA, undocumented, and international students.

Preference will be given to students residing in Holyoke, Springfield, and Chicopee.