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Support for low-income students

Summary: UMM is included with the other U campuses in the expanded Founders Opportunity Scholarship program that will cover qualified incoming freshmen and transfer students. More than 600 UMM students are expected to benefit.

(February 16, 2006)-The University of Minnesota, Morris is included with the other U campuses in the expanded Founders Opportunity Scholarship program that will cover qualified incoming freshmen and transfer students. The program details were announced this week by University of Minnesota President Robert Bruininks.

All undergraduate students from Minnesota who are eligible for a federal Pell Grant will be guaranteed scholarships and grants to cover 100 percent of their tuition and required fees, when the program is fully phased in. The guarantee will eventually benefit more than 4,500 low and moderate-income undergraduates each year across the University's four campuses.

"When the Founders award program is fully phased in, we expect that more than 600 UMM students will benefit from it," said James Morales, associate vice chancellor for enrollment at UMM.

In announcing this expansion of support for low-income students, University President Robert Bruininks said, "Becoming one of the best public research universities in the world requires that we remain a place of great educational opportunity for all students, regardless of their financial background. Today's announcement makes our commitment to preserving access as strong as that of any institution in the country."

"The University of Minnesota, Morris has a well-established reputation as a public honors college," continued Morales. "'Public'" highlights UMM's commitment to access, while 'Honors' underscores the high quality of its academic programs. The Founder's Award program is further evidence of UMM's commitment to preserving access for low-income students to the high quality education offered on this campus."

Under the plan, the University will also restructure its programs that provide financial assistance to Pell-eligible students from Minnesota by consolidating them under a new "Founders Opportunity Award" program. The new program will guarantee gift and grant assistance in an amount at least equal to tuition and required fees, with funding coming from a mix of federal and state grants, private scholarships and university resources. The University will also match whatever Pell Grant award a student receives. For the lowest income students, this could result in additional financial support for housing and other expenses.

Bruininks estimated that, once fully implemented, the consolidated program would require \$22 million a year above and beyond the grant and gift assistance that eligible students receive from Pell Grants, Minnesota state grants and academic scholarships.

"Expanding access to this powerful financial tool is an important way for us to help students who start their college

careers at a community college or other academic institution attend and succeed at the U,” Bruininks said.

Bruininks said that the new award program would provide financial assistance to nearly every student from families with an annual income of less than \$50,000. The award program's financial commitment would be for four years. Students would need to meet all of the University's preparation requirements and be registered full time.

"The Founders Award program is simply an excellent program," added Morales. "It will provide a powerful financial benefit to many deserving Minnesota students."

For more information about The Founders Opportunity Scholarship Program and other scholarships at UMM visit [UMM Office of Financial Aid](#).

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