

Message from President Cook

November 9, 2023

Hello everybody. We've got a great announcement to talk about today with a new scholarship program at NDSU and I have Seinquis Lienen with me. Seinquis, first and foremost, tell everybody a little bit about yourself.

Yeah, thanks for having me President Cook. My name is Seinquis and I serve as the Senior Director of Strategic Enrollment Management at NDSU. I've been proud to call NDSU home for a little over nine years and happy to be here.

And you're kind of in this new role and we're really excited to have you in this role. So, we know you're going to knock it out of the park. Thank you. No pressure, right? There you go.

We're talking about this new scholarship program. Can you tell everybody a little bit more about it?

Absolutely. Beginning in the 2024-2025 academic year, we are offering the NDSU Tuition Award Program. And keeping with our land grant mission we are really; we strive to provide an education that's high quality but also affordable and so what we're offering to incoming students and to returning students as well is the chance to have their base tuition and fees fully covered if they meet the eligibility criteria. So, this is a really big deal for us so we're pretty excited about it. You said meet eligibility criteria so tell us a little bit more about who will benefit. Right.

So, as I mentioned eligible North Dakota and Minnesota students who are in their first or second year at NDSU in the 2024-25 academic year, who also have a family income level of \$80,000 or less, and are also eligible for the federal Pell Grant, will be able to be considered for this award.

So, for context, the average tuition and fee costs are about \$10,000 to \$12,000 for North Dakota and Minnesota students and so by being eligible for this program it really would make NDSU a great affordable option. And not only will this benefit students it's also going to benefit the state of North Dakota and the world.

I think when you think about the number of students who come to NDSU and who stay in the state to pursue their career it's a really, it's an added value for our state because we know our students are highly qualified, they're eager to do well, and positively impact their profession and their communities and so we see this as a benefit for all and are looking forward to those who are eligible to receive it.

Yeah, I absolutely love it. It aligns with our land grant mission as you said, it lines around access to education and this is how we all know we change lives and sometimes generations of families and all the rest by creating opportunities like this.

So, absolutely love that, love the work you're doing, and then you alluded to it it's about access to education but it's ultimately about, you know, workforce and talents and our students stay in the state when they graduate so we certainly love that too.

So how do students apply?

Yeah, that's a great question. It's actually a pretty simple process to apply and be considered. The free application for federal student aid, commonly known as the FAFSA, is one of the required applications to be considered for this award program So North Dakota and Minnesota students

should fill out that FAFSA when it becomes available in December. In addition to filling out the FAFSA students simply need to be admitted to NDSU to be considered.

In fact, if you, if I may I'd like to add one more thing. This is one program of many. So, we also encourage students to continue to explore their other scholarship options whether it's scholarships offered by the state, scholarships offered by NDSU, private or external opportunities, all of those things can help make NDSU attainable and affordable. Absolutely.

So, you kind of touched on it but just to make sure we're real clear on this point. How is it awarded?

It is awarded based on, based on the information we receive from the from the FAFSA, like I said. It's also what we call a last-dollar scholarship. So, we're calling it a program because every student's award amount is going to vary depending upon the other types of aid they're bringing in. When I say other types of aid that includes gift aid.

So, money that doesn't need to be repaid back to use towards your education. Things like scholarship, financial aid, waivers from all various sources. Federal sources, state institutional or private sources. So, what we're going to do is look at all of that aid that students are bringing in and this program will come in and make up the difference.

Why should these students choose NDSU?

That's a great question. Something I talk about often in my job. For me, it's four reasons. It boils down to reputation, size, location, and programs. NDSU is really well known in the area and our reputation is strong. We are a high-ranked research institution meaning that students get a lot of engaging ways to learn and be challenged in the classroom and find ways to build their resume. We also have really strong academic programs and really strong athletic programs. We're really proud to be Bison here.

That's a reason why I love working here. Another reason is our size. We're about 12,000 students strong at NDSU meaning that we're not too large we're not too small. We kind of offer a mix of both big and small opportunities and you can really make campus what you want through the numerous involvement opportunities. I also say our location makes us very unique. We love that we're located in the Fargo Moorhead community because Fargo offers so many opportunities for our students while they're here but also career opportunities when they think beyond their degree at NDSU. And so, in Fargo, you're going to find the small-town feel that's mixed with a lot of big city offerings which is why a lot of students from the region seek NDSU as the place they want to go to school.

The last I'll say, which I've kind of already alluded to, is our program offerings. We offer 100 undergraduate programs and several other master's and doctoral programs. So, students who want to pursue an advanced degree after they finish their undergraduate can stay right here and work towards their career interest in their academic goals. All right I think you nailed it. I love it. I love it. I love it.

So, everybody on campus, this is an amazing opportunity we want to let you know about it certainly, we want families and students to know about this new scholarship program. Really exciting times and really happy to have you on board leading the charge on this.

So, can't wait to spread the word on this and have a great semester and everybody we got to say it. Go Bison!