

ASU scholarship funding needed

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Today's News-Herald

Published Friday, January 6, 2012 11:15 PM MST

The Havasu Foundation for Higher Education has switched its seven-year goal of bringing a four-year university to Lake Havasu City to supporting Arizona State University's campus here.



The Havasu Foundation for Higher Education is now fundraising for scholarships for students beginning at the campus this fall. Jackie Leatherman/News-Herald Photo

The organization worked for years trying to convince a major university to open here.

Now that ASU has committed to opening a campus at a former middle school site a block away from the city's Main Street, HFHE leaders now say they need to help ensure the campus's success.

And, once again, that requires fundraising.

HFHE successfully raised \$2 million in the first eight months of 2011 to meet ASU's request for local money to cover the costs campus renovations. Renovations are currently under way.

Now with \$2 million raised, HFHE is trying to raise another \$1 million for scholarships to help attract students to the new campus.

"The student scholarships that the HFHE will provide are critical to our efforts to attract students to the programs in Lake Havasu," said David A. Young, ASU's senior vice president for academic affairs. Young has been instrumental in developing the ASU campus here.

Since December 2011, HFHE has gathered \$20,000 and wants to at least reach \$100,000 by May, said Jerry Ernst, the president of Horizon Community Bank and scholarship committee member.

"The Eagles donated \$11,000 to us," he said. "That's a great start to the scholarship fund. The scholarship campaign is off and running. We have a goal on the website of \$1 million. We actually have a plan in place for about \$100,000."

That plan includes about \$20,000 being distributed by HFHE to Lake Havasu's seniors, with the remaining funneled through ASU to solicit students living outside of the city to the new campus, Ernst said, adding that all funding raised by HFHE will only go to ASU's students in Lake Havasu City.

“The main thrust behind (this) is to have the most successful four-year university we can have,” Ernst said. “Our mission has changed from bringing a four-year university to Lake Havasu City to foster the success of the four-year university in Lake Havasu City and the success will come from enrollment, so that is the economic impact, that is the cultural impact, that is letting more people stay here in town and getting a further level of higher education; all the benefits that could come from the university are compounding if the number is greater.”

Applications are being accepted for five majors to be offered: psychology, life science, communication, organizational leadership and general studies. The campus is expected to be open for the fall semester. The state board is expected to approve the 2012-2013 tuition rates this spring, but ASU officials previously said they expect rates to be around \$6,000 a year for Arizona residents and around \$9,000 a year for all out-of-state residents.

Ernst said the organization will now always solicit for scholarship money, but he said at some point they hope the alumni of the Lake Havasu City campus will replace a portion of the community’s contributions. He also asked local organizations that typically give scholarships to consider dedicating an amount to the local ASU campus students.

HFHE’s website allows people to donate a minimum of \$10 monthly or \$100 a year. HFHE volunteers will also be at the Havasu Balloon Festival and Fair Jan. 19-22 collecting donations as minimal as \$5. A payroll deduction might also be an option.

For more information about how to donate, call Ernst at 928-854-3000 or email at: jerrye@horizoncommunitybank.com. HFHE’s website is: www.havasufoundation.org.

For more information about the campus, contact Laura Rosensweet, admissions counselor, at 928-505-2972 or laura.rosensweet@asu.edu.

You may contact the reporter at jleatherman@havasunews.com

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