


# Windward CC freshman enrollment jumps by 20%

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This fall, [Windward Community College](#) increased freshman enrollment by 20% over 2021, welcoming 398 freshmen to the Kāneʻohe campus. Moreover, there was a 71% spike in male freshmen and 40% jump in Native Hawaiian freshmen students. There was also a 63% rise in students coming directly from Hawai'i public high schools.



Some of these impressive gains can be attributed to the [Hoʻolei Tuition Award program](#), which provides full tuition at the college for the first year—fall and spring semesters—for 2022 graduates of public and charter schools in Windward Oʻahu. The award offers tuition savings of up to \$3,144, and, for many, a chance to attend college. More than 270 freshmen received a Hoʻolei award.

“The money I received from scholarships gave me more freedom in how I spend my time concentrating on my studies, taking advantage of student life, and forging bonds with friends and coworkers,” said Paipai o Koʻolau scholarship recipient **Duane “Nalu” Diaz**, who is on his way from Windward CC to [UH Mānoa](#) for a degree in social work. “Like many students, without financial aid from a third party I would struggle to pay for the degree I need to enter the workforce and contribute to society.”

The Hoʻolei Tuition Award program and the Paipai o Koʻolau program were created with grants from the [Harold K.L. Castle Foundation](#). They allow students to prioritize college despite a difficult economy and

financial pressures.

"The Harold K.L. Castle Foundation's generosity allowed students to choose college when otherwise the cost and the need to work would have made it impossible," said Windward CC Chancellor **Ardis Eschenberg**. "Scholarships change lives for our students and trajectories for their families."



Duane "Nalu" Diaz

During the last academic year, Windward CC Early College counselors made personal visits to high schools to deliver information to high school seniors about scholarships, financial aid and on- and off-campus jobs. Windward public and public charter high schools helped get information to students and encouraged them to apply.

Eschenberg said, "The Harold K.L. Castle Foundation is helping Windward CC grow a healthier student population, even more, they are helping our community to grow in economic and social mobility, and giving opportunities where there were none."

Windward CC announced a [\\$1-million fundraising drive](#) to support student scholarships at a [50th anniversary kickoff event](#) in September. The endowed fund will generate investment income that will enable 13 students to attend Windward CC tuition-free every year in perpetuity.

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