



2017 US Pacific Territories Capacity-Building Scholarship Announcement

The Western Pacific Regional Fishery Management Council and its Education Committee members are pleased to announce the availability of up to three scholarships for academic years 2017-2018. These scholarships support the aspiration to build the capacity of American Samoa, Guam and the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands (CNMI) to effectively manage their fisheries and related resources through the employment of their own people.

The US Pacific Territories Capacity-Building Scholarships may be used for the following:

1. Completion of the junior and senior years to obtain one of the following undergraduate degrees:
 - i) BA or BS in Marine Science at the University of Hawai'i at Hilo, or
 - ii) BS in Oceanography with a concentration in Fisheries Science at the Hawaii Pacific University; or
2. Completion of one of the following graduate degrees:
 - i) MS or PhD in Marine Biology at the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa's Hawai'i Institute of Marine Biology (HIMB),
 - ii) MS in Marine Science at Hawaii Pacific University,
 - iii) MS in Tropical Conservation Biology and Environmental Science at the University of Hawai'i at Hilo, or
 - iv) MS in Biology at the University of Guam.

Eligibility Requirements

Undergraduate Student

1. Be a US citizen or national with strong ties to American Samoa, Guam or the CNMI;
2. Have successfully completed freshman and sophomore years of college with a grade point average of 3.0;
3. Have been accepted to attend the University of Hawai'i at Hilo (BA or BS in Marine Science) or Hawaii Pacific University (BS in Oceanography with a Concentration in Fisheries Science) in Honolulu for the 2017-2018 academic year;
4. Be available for an 8- to 10-week paid internship in Hawaii;
5. Have demonstrated interest and/or previous work/involvement with fisheries, coral reef conservation or related fields;
6. Commit to being employed for a minimum of two years (one year for each scholarship year) with the American Samoa Department of Marine and Wildlife Resources, Guam Department of Agriculture or the CNMI Department of Lands and Natural Resources after completion of the undergraduate degree. Those who do not fulfill this commitment will be required to pay back the scholarship amount that has been provided.

Graduate Student

1. Be a US citizen or national with strong ties to American Samoa, Guam or the CNMI;

2. Have been accepted to attend one of the following graduate programs for the 2017-2018 academic year: University of Hawai`i at Mānoa's MS or PhD in Marine Biology; Hawaii Pacific University's MS in Marine Science; University of Hawai`i at Hilo's MS in Tropical Conservation Biology and Environmental Science; or University of Guam's MS in Biology;
3. Have demonstrated interest and/or previous work/involvement with fisheries, coral reef conservation or related fields;
4. Commit to being employed for one year for each scholarship year (maximum two years) with the American Samoa Department of Marine and Wildlife Resources, Guam Department of Agriculture or the CNMI Department of Lands and Natural Resources commencing within the year after completion of the graduate degree or departure from the educational program for which the scholarship was provided. Those who do not fulfill this commitment will be required to pay back the scholarship amount that has been provided.

Eligibility Documents

Undergraduate Student

1. Complete the accompanying scholarship application and a two-page essay on your reasons for pursuing your chosen degree. The essay should include a summary of your relevant experience, your long term career goals and your motivations to serve your home islands in the area of sustainable marine resource management.
2. Provide an official college transcript of freshman and sophomore classes completed to date; and
3. Submit two letters of recommendation, one by a college instructor of your choice and one by a community leader who can speak to your overall ability, likelihood of your success in an undergraduate program of study in Hawaii, and commitment to working in a local fisheries related agency for a minimum of two years upon completion of the undergraduate degree.

Graduate Student

1. Complete the accompanying scholarship application and a two-page essay on your reasons for pursuing your chosen degree. The essay should include a summary of your relevant experience, your long term career goals and your motivations to serve your home islands in the area of sustainable marine resource management.
2. Provide official undergraduate college transcripts and, if relevant, graduate-level college transcripts;
3. Submit two letters of recommendation from professors, employers and/or community leaders who can speak to your overall ability, likelihood of your success in a graduate program of study in Hawaii, and commitment to working in a local fisheries related agency for a minimum of two years upon completion of the undergraduate degree.

Mail completed application and letters of recommendation to **Kitty M. Simonds, Executive Director, Western Pacific Regional Fishery Management Council, 1164 Bishop Street, Suite 1400, Honolulu, Hawaii 96813, by February 28, 2017**. Preliminary decisions will be made by March 15, 2017. Final decision is contingent upon 1) an acceptance letter from the University of Hawai`i at Hilo, Hawaii Pacific University or the University of Hawai`i at Mānoa HIMB for the 2017-2018 academic year and 2) the signing of an agreement to work with the American Samoa Department of Marine and Wildlife Resources, Guam Department of Agriculture or the CNMI Department of Lands and Natural Resources in fisheries ecosystem related work for one year of for each scholarship year or to provide immediate reimbursement for the scholarship funds that had been provided. Funding for 2018-2019 will be provided based on proof of continued progress in the college program and maintenance of a 3.0 grade point average.

**Letter of Recommendation for
2017 US Pacific Territories Capacity-Building Scholarship Applicant**

The Western Pacific Regional Fishery Management Council and its Education Committee have determined that it would significantly benefit the Territory of American Samoa, Territory of Guam and the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands (CNMI) if residents from their own islands were educated and employed to serve in the local fishery-related agencies. People who were raised in the islands have an intimate understanding of the traditional and unique cultures and societies and the integral part that fisheries plays in them. They have a vested ancestral interest and cultural commitment to ensure the health of the fishery resources and their use to sustain local communities. They are also more likely to remain as long-term residents and employees in the islands, unlike employees who are recruited from outside.

The Education Committee is comprised of representatives from Western Pacific Regional Fishery Management Council, National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) Pacific Islands Regional Office, NMFS Pacific Islands Fisheries Science Center, US Fish and Wildlife Service's Wildlife & Sport Fish Restoration Program, University of Hawai'i at Mānoa's Hawai'i Institute of Marine Biology, University of Hawai'i at Hilo, Hawaii Pacific University, American Samoa Community College, University of Guam, Northern Marianas College, American Samoa Department of Marine and Wildlife Resources, Guam Department of Agriculture, and the CNMI Department of Lands and Natural Resources.

The aspiration of the Council and the Education Committee is to build the capacity of American Samoa, Guam and the CNMI to effectively manage their fisheries and related resources through the employment of their own people.

###

In your own words, please explain why you think this student is deserving of a US Pacific Territories Capacity-Building Scholarship.

Please give a sealed copy of your letter to the student with your signature across the closing envelope flap so it can be mailed along with the student's completed application. Two letters of recommendation are required.

The deadline for receipt of all materials is February 28, 2017.