Scholarships and Financial Support

Looking for financial assistance?

Every spring, the School of Drama awards scholarships for undergraduate students for the next academic year. Scholarships can range from $100 to three paid quarters of resident tuition. Scholarships are intended for current drama majors, although we do occasionally award outstanding non-majors as well.

For the Hughes, Harrington, and School of Drama scholarships, students must be in residence on the Seattle campus for the quarter they will be receiving the award. The department recommends scholarship applications for students who are maintaining a 3.0 overall and 3.5 departmental GPA. Students who do not meet this criteria are eligible to apply, and can also be recommended by faculty, but should understand that departmental and overall GPA are a major part of the scholarship selection criteria for most scholarships.

The scholarship application must include a coversheet, drama resume, current transcript, and short essay. Please read the eligibility requirements for each scholarship carefully. Scholarship applications should be submitted as a single PDF file to Caitlin Goldbaum (goldbauc@uw.edu) by April 21, 2017.

Current scholarships available for 2017-2018 include:

The Frank and Martha Ackerman Scholarship—This fund was created by Frank and Martha Ackerman in honor of Martha's mother. It is intended to be equally divided between the Schools of Drama and Music. This scholarship is awarded to either graduate or undergraduate students who have provided evidence of financial need and are in good academic standing.

The John Ashby Conway Memorial Scholarship—John Ashby Conway taught design at the School of Drama for 40 years and retired in 1975. He was the original designer of the Penthouse Theater. Upon his death in 1987, a memorial scholarship was set in his name and overseen by his widow, Dorothy. This scholarship is awarded to an undergraduate or graduate student in design or technical theatre. Students must be active participants in the School of Drama community.

The James R. Crider Undergraduate Fund for Costume Design—James Crider was a member of the UW School of Drama faculty from 1952 until 1990, during which he taught various history of dress and costume design/construction courses, as well as designing for School of Drama productions and outside professional productions. The purpose of this fund is to provide financial support to undergraduate students in the SoD, and to encourage and nourish the love of theatrical costume design and construction in students in whom the seed of that love has already sprouted. This scholarship is awarded to one undergraduate who shows special promise as a designer and builder of theatrical costumes.

Donal Harrington Memorial Scholarship—Donal ("Dan") F. Harrington joined the School of Drama faculty as a directing professor in 1938. A beloved teacher and director, he served the school nearly 30 years, retiring in 1967. He spent one year as the School's Executive Director. Harrington is remembered as remarkable for keeping in touch with all of his students after they graduated. An avid traveler, he could summer almost anywhere in the world and count on spending time with former students turned friends. Endowment established by a bequest from alumnus William Crossett. Many of Harrington's former students are also donors. This scholarship is awarded to an undergraduate student who is a Washington State resident and has demonstrated outstanding potential in the field of acting, directing and/or artistic entrepreneurship. To be eligible, students must be in residence on the Seattle campus for the quarter they will be receiving the award.

The Holliday Family Scholarship—Kathy Holliday was the undergrad adviser from 1998-2008. Upon leaving the UW, she established the Holliday Family Scholarship “because of the work we do – and for the students.” The fund will support undergraduate students pursuing a degree in dramatic arts at the UW; to honor her parents who lacked the means to pursue education and the arts, but instilled its importance in their children; and to express gratitude for the scholarship support she received as an undergrad which allowed her to complete her own degree. Undergraduate recipients are nominated and selected by a faculty committee. Students must be active members of the School of Drama community.

Glenn Hughes Memorial Scholarship—In honor of Founding School of Drama Director Glenn Hughes, this scholarship was established at the time of his passing in 1964 by the Arena Alumni Group. This group is comprised of School of Drama BA alumni and faculty who preserve the memories and activities of the School of Drama and have been the principle donors to this fund over many years. This scholarship is awarded to an outstanding drama major and provides up to one year of undergraduate tuition. It may be divided among multiple undergraduates. To be eligible, students must be in residence on
The Lyle and Liz Martin Humanitarian Student Award – Jessica Martin, School of Drama BA ’08, created this student award to honor her parents and their enduring generosity. This award seeks to recognize an undergraduate student who is active in his or her studies and community; who may have been overlooked or ineligible for other scholarships, but most of all, who possess a generosity of spirit. Aware of the hardships many students face, this award was designed so that the recipient may treat themselves to a hot meal, purchase a much needed new pair of shoes, buy groceries, get his or her car tuned up, or other such expenses that are often just out of reach. It is often small luxuries that make a world of differences and can encourage a student in their hard work. Undergraduate recipients are nominated and selected by a faculty committee, typically in Winter quarter.

Michael Quinn Writing Prize – Michael Quinn was a member of the SoD PhD faculty from 1989 to 1994 when he lost his battle with lymphoma. In the words of Sarah Nash Gates, “PhD and BA students found him intellectually challenging, clear and very witty. His photographic memory allowed him to quote playwrights, theorists and baseball stats with amazing ease. Michael was instrumental in bringing major guests to campus to enrich our program and was an excellent mentor in the PhD program. Illustrating his generosity – before he died, he arranged for the royalties from his book to fund a student prize for writing.” Barry Witham adds, “Michael was a genuine young scholar who prized scholarship and wanted to encourage it. At first the fund was meant for PhD students but then he decided it should award good writing at any level. For me it certainly encapsulates the spirit and vision of a wonderful man.” The faculty selects the best essay written by a School of Drama student for the Quinn Writing Prize. This prize is traditionally awarded to a student in the doctoral program.

Shelley & Phil Schermer Endowment Scholarship – Phil and Shelley (Henze) Schermer both graduated from the University of Washington's School of Drama. Phil's MA in Scenery, Lighting Design and Technical Direction and Shelley's BA in Drama led them both to work in the professional theatre community of Seattle. Shelley was hired by ACT and the Seattle Rep as a scenic artist and prop master. Phil was hired at the University as the School of Drama's Theatre Production Supervisor where he oversaw the School's scenery shop, student workers, and technical staff. Years later Phil worked as the Technical Director of ACT and eventually became the Producing Director. After Phil's untimely death in 1997, Shelley has continued as a valued member of the Seattle theatre arts community. This award provides financial assistance to undergraduate or graduate students who are studying technical theatre, scenic or lighting design, or sound design. Selection for the undergraduate scholarship will be determined by demonstrated aptitude for success in theatre design and/or technical theater. Graduate students who receive this award must participate in an internship with one of the professional theater companies in Seattle.

School of Drama Scholarship – In 1962, when Greg Falls was Director of the School of Drama, he felt it necessary to establish a School of Drama Scholarship. Many, many alumni have and continue to support this fund. This scholarship is awarded to students on the basis of merit and leadership within the School of Drama. This scholarship is typically given to undergraduate students, but can be awarded to graduate students as well. To be eligible, students must be in residence on the Seattle campus for the quarter they will be receiving the award.

Senior Capstone Project Award – The Senior Capstone Project award funds an applied research project that investigates, explores, and articulates the various areas of study in the Drama BA in cooperation with a local community partner. In addition to financial support, this award grants students faculty mentorship, publicity in School of Drama communications, and designation as a School of Drama Honors student. Projects funded by this award are designed so that students have a portfolio documenting their work that can be used for graduate school applications and job interviews, as well as practical experience creating arts in the Seattle community. This award provides financial assistance to a rising senior undergraduate working on a capstone project in cooperation with a local Seattle community partner. The Senior Capstone Project award requires a separate application.

The Jenna Ulrich Memorial Award – Jenna was a BA student who tragically was killed in an auto accident shortly after graduating. The award was established by her parents, Rick and Mya, “for a deserving BA student who emulates Jenna’s spirit and artistic contributions to the School of Drama.” This scholarship is awarded to an undergraduate who whose overall citizenship and community engagement enhances the School of Drama. Undergraduate recipients are nominated and selected by a faculty committee.

The Meri Wada Award – Meri Wada is an amazing woman and costumer who dedicated her 46-year career to the UW School of Drama. Upon her 1997 retirement, a fund was established by members of the Costume Shop Staff to honor her. This award is for a current or graduating undergraduate student who shows promise and skill in the area of technical costume. Undergraduate recipients are nominated by costume shop staff or faculty, and then decided by consensus among shop staff and faculty. This award may be presented to a continuing or graduating undergraduate student.

We also have information about Graduate Tuition and Financial Aid and past Scholarship Recipients available online.

More scholarship information is available from:
Related Files

- Scholarships Application (PDF)
- Scholarships Application (DOCX)
- Senior Capstone Project Award (PDF)