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Scholarship deadline extended

By **JIM DINO**

Staff Writer

The deadline for students to apply for the Greater Hazleton Area Civic Partnership's Scholarship program has been extended.

Bob Skulsky, the partnership's executive director, said the May 1 deadline has been pushed back to May 11 so more people can apply for the scholarship.

The partnership's scholarship program is offering a maximum of \$6,000 to any student pursuing a technical degree who would like to stay in the area and work after graduation.

The idea behind the program is that the successful recipient or recipients have to agree to stay in the area and work for three years after graduation.

Skulsky and members of the scholarship committee have always feared that students are resisting from applying for the scholarship because of the requirement to stay here.

"For those people who are concerned about having to pay it back, we tell them to treat as if it were a student loan," Skulsky said. "It is a most favorable student loan. It has a very low interest rate, the minimum payment is \$50 per month and the student has 10 years to pay it back."

Skulsky said another concern the committee has is that applicants are sending their résumés to the wrong place.

The applications have to go to the chamber's new headquarters in downtown Hazleton's Citiscape, 20 W. Broad St.

Those eligible for the scholarship must be pursuing a degree or certification in a two- or four-year accredited program of study.

Some of the applicable two-year programs include industrial maintenance technician, manufacturing technology, electronics technology, computer technology and industrial technology.

Four-year programs that are eligible include computer engineering, manufacturing engineering and production technology.

Candidates must live within the boundaries of the Hazleton Area School District or Weatherly Area School District, must achieve a minimum 2.75 grade point average and must demonstrate employability and the desire to satisfy local employer needs.

When the applicable programs were identified, they mirrored job opportunities typically available in the Hazleton area job market.

Since the program began in 2001, 10 people from the Hazleton area have furthered their educations and returned to Hazleton to work thanks to the program.

Five have achieved a two-year degree, four more are still in school and at least two of them are seeking a four-year degree.

Prospective scholarship recipients can also contact their school's guidance counselor for more information.

For more information on the program or to get a scholarship application, contact Bob Skulsky, executive director of the partnership, at 455-1508, or visit www.hazletonchamber.org.

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