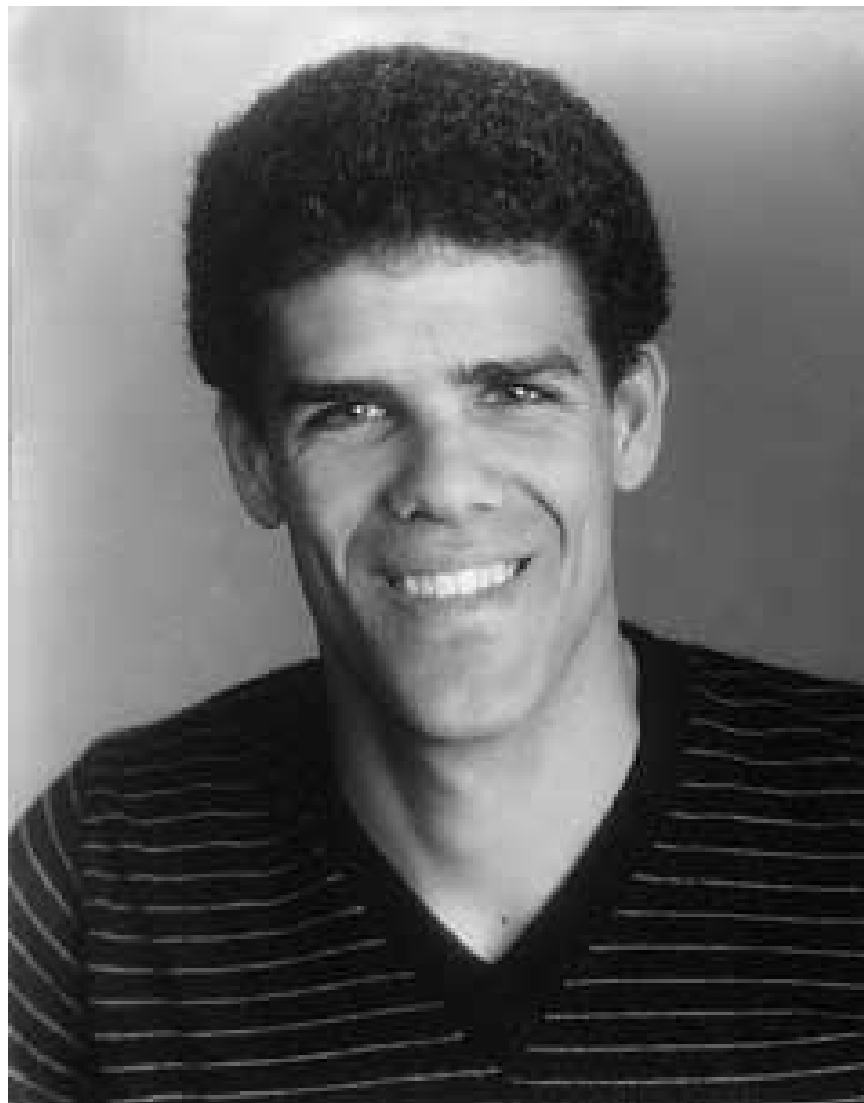


The John W. Perry Fund

Scholarships for Students Denied Federal
Financial Aid Because of Drug Convictions



a project of the DRCNet Foundation

www.RaiseYourVoice.com/perryfund/



The John W. Perry Fund

Scholarships for Students Denied Federal Financial Aid Because of Drug Convictions

In 1998, Congress enacted an amendment to the Higher Education Act that denies loans, grants, even work-study jobs to tens of thousands of would-be students every year who have drug convictions. All these young people, who have already been punished for their offenses, are now spending more time working to pay for school, reducing their course loads or dropping out entirely. Since that time, a major student-led campaign to overturn the law has spread to hundreds of campuses around the nation, aided by civil rights, education and drug policy reform organizations; and a resolution opposing the provision has been adopted by more than 120 student governments at the time of this writing (September 2007). In addition, the 335+ member Coalition for Higher Education Act Reform (CHEAR), a powerful national coalition of education, religious, criminal justice, civil rights, drug treatment, and health organizations, continues to lobby for full repeal of the law. CHEAR played a major role in achieving a change to the law, passed in early 2006, that limits the law's scope to people who were in school and receiving aid at the time of their offenses. However, tens of thousands continue to lose their aid every year nonetheless.

The DRCNet (Drug Reform Coordination Network) Foundation, in partnership with Students for Sensible Drug Policy (SSDP) and other friends of civil liberties, has created the **John W. Perry Fund** to help some of the students affected by the law remain in school. Though we can directly assist only a handful of deserving students, the Perry Fund makes a powerful statement to build opposition to the law among the public and in Congress and let thousands of people around the country know about the campaign to repeal it and the movement against the drug war as a whole.

About John Perry

John William Perry was a New York City police officer and Libertarian Party and ACLU activist who spoke out against the “war on drugs.” He was also a lawyer, athlete, actor, linguist and humanitarian. On the morning of September 11, 2001, John Perry was at One Police Plaza in lower Manhattan filing retirement papers when the first plane hit the World Trade Center. Without hesitation he went to help, losing his life rescuing others. This scholarship program, which addresses a drug war injustice, is dedicated to this hero's memory. John Perry's academic achievements are an inspiring example for students: He was fluent in several languages, graduated from NYU Law School and prosecuted NYPD misconduct cases for the department. His web site is www.johnwperry.com.

Introduction to the John W. Perry Fund

Thank you for your interest in the John W. Perry Fund, a program providing scholarships to students losing federal financial aid because of drug convictions. The Perry Fund was created in response to a law passed by Congress in 1998 -- known as the "HEA drug provision" or the "Aid Elimination Penalty" -- which denies federal scholarships, loans or work-study eligibility to anyone convicted of a state or federal misdemeanor or felony drug offense while enrolled in school and receiving federal financial aid.

In addition to providing scholarships, the Perry Fund also raises awareness of the HEA drug provision and the growing national campaign opposing it. A wide range of educational, civil rights, religious, drug policy reform, and other organizations have joined our effort. Several students who have lost aid have gone public, working with our organization and with our close allies in this effort, Students for Sensible Drug Policy; some of these students have been featured in major national media outlets such as ABC News, CNN, BET, *New York Times*, *Wall Street Journal*, *Washington Post*, Associated Press and others. We urge interested parties to visit our HEA reform web site at www.RaiseYourVoice.com, and Students for Sensible Drug Policy at www.SchoolsNotPrisons.com, or call us at (202) 293-8340 or e-mail heareform@drcnet.org to get involved.

You do not have to become an activist to be eligible for a Perry Fund scholarship; you only have to want to attend and succeed in school despite the law that took your financial aid away. If you have lost financial aid because of the HEA drug provision, we urge you to apply.

Who will receive scholarships?

The Perry Fund awards scholarships of up to \$2,000 per semester to students affected by the drug provision who have the greatest financial need (educational expenses less available resources), but also for whom our assistance will be most effective in enabling them to both attend and succeed in school. It is projected that the typical award will be approximately \$1,000. Applicants have the option to spend scholarship funds on drug treatment programs to restore their eligibility for federal aid; however, applicants are encouraged to use this option only if they have an actual substance abuse problem. The government's financial aid worksheets are one tool used to assess need, but the fund also considers individual circumstances that may make it particularly difficult for a given student to pursue higher education (e.g., socioeconomic disadvantage, physical or learning disability, incarceration, drug addiction, etc.). Our main interest is that recipients be decent people doing their best to succeed in school and become productive members of society regardless of their pasts.



Marisa Garcia's marijuana possession conviction cost her federal financial aid.

How to Apply for a John W. Perry Scholarship: Step One

The first step in applying for a John W. Perry scholarship is to make sure that you are truly ineligible for federal financial aid. We have heard scores of reports of would-be students mistakenly believing that they are ineligible because of a past conviction and not bothering to apply; and we have even heard of cases where applicants may have received faulty advice or even been rejected for aid improperly.

Section 484, subsection (r) of the Higher Education Act of 1998 (HEA) delays or denies federal student financial aid eligibility to applicants with any state or federal drug conviction if the applicant was enrolled in school and receiving federal financial aid at the time of the offense(s). Applicants with a single possession conviction lose eligibility for one year from their conviction date; those with a second possession conviction or one sales conviction lose eligibility for two years; and three possession convictions or two sales convictions cost an applicant eligibility indefinitely. Students enrolling in a qualifying drug treatment program can regain eligibility upon completing it, but lose aid from the date of conviction through the date they complete the program.

Neither juvenile convictions nor municipal level infractions (e.g. a “ticket”) count as offenses triggering revocation of aid; however, applicants who were tried as adults despite being juveniles may lose their aid. A student convicted of a drug offense in the middle of a semester may be required to repay the portion of their aid that is allocated to the remainder of the semester, but we do not know if that is being enforced.

If you have only one or two possession convictions on your record, or one sales conviction, then you regain your financial aid eligibility one or two years from the date of your last conviction, based on the rules described above. If you are not sure if you are eligible for aid or not, we recommend you submit the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (www.fafsa.ed.gov) and allow the government to determine your status. If you have been denied aid under the drug provision but think it was a mistake, we urge you to contact the Department of Education and seek restoration of your aid retroactively.



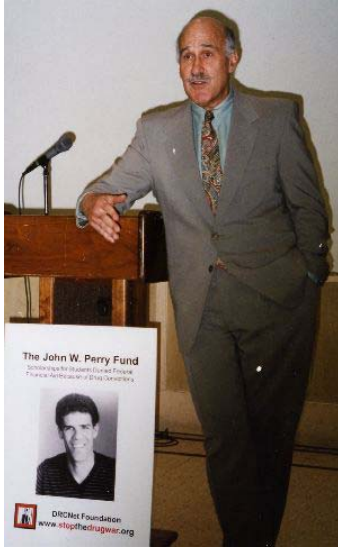
Kris Sperry received a \$600 scholarship, one semester's tuition at Arkansas State University. Sperry earned a bachelors degree in biology, increasing his income potential and ability to support his family.



Ten members of Congress joined education and civil rights advocates at the Capitol to call for repeal of the drug provision (May 21, 2002).

How to Apply: Step Two

Send us a copy of your FAFSA form (optional), including the drug question worksheet (required, cutting and pasting from the web version is acceptable), and a copy of your Student Aid Report (SAR), if the Dept. of Education sent you one. (These forms and worksheets are available online at www.fafsa.ed.gov.) If you did not get a SAR back from the Department of Education, it either means that they have not processed your application yet, or that they found you fully ineligible for the school year and will not be processing it. Don't panic, though; we know how to interpret your FAFSA with or without the SAR.



Former ACLU executive director *Ira Glasser* addressed our New York City kickoff/fundraiser, March 26, 2002.

How to Apply: Step Three

In addition to your FAFSA and SAR, this application asks for a description of the situation that led to your drug conviction(s), the nature and dates of your drug conviction(s), and most importantly, your current financial situation, overall and with regard to being able to attend school. The application also asks for basic personal information, some optional.

Our purpose in asking these questions is to help us understand your situation and compare it with those of other applicants, to assess how well the level of support that we can provide will enable you to attend and succeed in school, and to maximize our ability to match you up with another scholarship provider if we are unable to grant you college funds ourselves. You do not have to tell us anything that you are uncomfortable revealing, but please know that we will respect your privacy and keep your information confidential unless you

specifically tell us otherwise. We are not here to pass judgment on your past conduct; we are asking these questions to enable us to help all applicants as much and as well as we can.

When Will We Let People Know Our Decisions?

Because the John W. Perry Fund is an ongoing effort, there is no specific date by which we will be able to tell you “yes” or “no.” We hope to make awards for fall 2007, and from there to continue to the spring and after. We will continue to contact awardees as funds become available.

Privacy

As an applicant to the Perry Fund, you can consider your personal information to be confidential. We will not give it out without your prior permission, and we will not require such permission for you to be eligible for a scholarship. If you wish to participate in our “clearinghouse” program and increase the number of possible sources of scholarship for you, however, you will need to give us permission to share information with those other potential scholarship providers.



John Perry's mother, Patricia Perry, addressed the fundraiser.

“If my son goes to a party and he doesn’t have the courage to say, ‘No, I don’t want to smoke a joint,’ he can say, ‘No I could lose my student loan.’... It’s not actually a good example, because my son is not on scholarship.”
- *New York Times*, May 3, 2001



Rep. Mark Souder (R-IN), the law's author, unwittingly demonstrated how his law only punishes the poor and middle class.

Personal Information

First Name

Last Name

Social Security Number

 - -

Birth Date (mmddyy)

Gender

Male Female

Permanent Address

Permanent City

State

Zip Code

Permanent Phone Number

 - -

E-mail Address

Current Address

Current City

State

Zip Code

Academic, Disclosure, and Additional Information

College/University

College/University Address

Graduation Date (Mo./Yr.)

 -

College/University City

State

Zip Code

Major (if chosen yet)

G.P.A.

 .

Current Academic Classification

- Freshman 1st year of 2-year study
 Sophomore 2nd year of 2-year study
 Junior Graduate Student (specify)
 Senior Other (please describe)

Disclosure and Additional Information - Y/N

- May we share your information with potential donors who may be interested in supporting your education?
 Send me information on getting involved in the campaign to repeal the HEA drug provision.

Perry Fund Application

Return to: John W. Perry Fund, c/o DRCNet Foundation, 1623 Connecticut Ave., NW, 3rd Floor, Washington, DC 20009

Financial Information

2007-2008 Expenses		2007-2008 Financial Aid	
Tuition Cost	\$ _____	Federal Aid	\$ _____
Mandatory Fees	\$ _____	Student Loan	\$ _____
Room	\$ _____	Parental Loan	\$ _____
Board	\$ _____	Family Contribution	\$ _____
		Work Study	\$ _____
		Institutional Awards	\$ _____
Total Expenses	\$ _____	Total Financial Aid	\$ _____
Unmet Financial Need (Total Expenses minus Total Financial Aid)		\$ _____	

Drug Conviction Information

Please attach a page describing your drug conviction history, including the date of the offense(s), conviction date, conviction type (misdemeanor, felony or other), the type and amounts of drugs involved, and your role in the offense. Also describe any special or mitigating circumstances. Be sure to include your name and social security number at the bottom of each page.

Please know that we are not asking this to pass judgment on you for your past conduct. We need this information in order to verify that you do not qualify for federal financial aid, to provide guidance to donors who may wish to support your education, and to gather statistics on the impact of the HEA drug provision. All applications are reviewed individually, and we are sympathetic to anyone making a good faith effort to finish school and contribute positively to society.

Situational Essay (Optional)

Attach an essay describing any special circumstances that increase your dependence on financial aid and/or obstacles to education that you face or have faced. Include any accomplishments, plans, obligations or other details that you feel convey a deeper understanding of your individual situation. Include your name and social security number at the bottom of each page.

First Initial	Last Name	SSN (optional)
<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/> - <input type="text"/> - <input type="text"/>

Perry Fund Application

Return to: John W. Perry Fund, c/o DRCNet Foundation, 1623 Connecticut Ave., NW, 3rd Floor, Washington, DC 20009

Getting Involved

You can make a difference in the campaign to get the HEA drug provision taken off the books once and for all. A few ways that you or others who you know can help:

Speak with the Media: Nothing gets sympathetic media coverage for this issue more than the human faces of students or would-be students who have been adversely affected by the drug provision. Students and others working with us have appeared on major news networks like ABC, CNN and Fox, and widely read newspapers like the *New York Times*, *Washington Post*, *Wall Street Journal* and many more.



Caton Volk tells his story to BET and other media after our 5/21/02 press conference.

Going public with your story is a serious choice that you should think through and be sure that you are comfortable doing. People with whom we have worked have found the experience rewarding. You do not have to go public to get a John Perry scholarship, nor will doing so guarantee you one. Telling your story to the media is a way to be part of the larger effort to repeal the drug provision and restore financial aid to all the tens of thousands losing aid under this law. If you are interested in discussing this possibility, please contact David Guard at (202) 362-0030 or e-mail us at heareform@drcnet.org.



Pass the Student Government Resolution: More than 120 student government associations nationwide have adopted our resolution calling for repeal of the HEA drug provision (see back cover). You can help by assembling a coalition of sympathetic groups on your campus and presenting the resolution to your student government for consideration. Visit www.RaiseYourVoice.com for an activist packet and further information, or contact us at (202) 232-7111.

Lobby Congress: Schedule a visit with your US Representative and your two US Senators, and ask your student government leaders, school officials, parents, friends and others to do the same. Nothing makes an impact on a member of Congress than a visit from a group of well-informed constituents. You can reach them through the Congressional Switchboard at (202) 224-3121, or visit www.house.gov and www.senate.gov for their local office listings.

Students for Sensible Drug Policy: Join or start an SSDP chapter on your campus to lead the charge against the HEA drug provision and raise awareness of our nation's failed, destructive drug war. Visit www.ssdp.org to learn more about Students for Sensible Drug Policy and request an activist packet, or call them at (202) 293-4414.



visit: www.RaiseYourVoice.com

CHECKLIST

- Verify that you are ineligible for aid during the full range of time for which you are requesting a scholarship.
- Fill out both pages of the Perry Fund Application (pp. 6-7).
- Attach your Drug Conviction Information essay.
- Attach your Situational Essay (optional).
- Attach a copy of the results of your Q. 31 Drug Question Worksheet (<http://www.fafsa.ed.gov/before013.htm>).
- Attach a copy of your Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) application. (This is optional, but if you don't fill one out we may need to contact you for further information.)
- Attach a copy of your Student Aid Report (SAR), if the Department of Education sent you one.
- Include your name on all attachments.

SEND COMPLETED APPLICATION TO:

John W. Perry Fund
c/o DRCNet Foundation
1623 Connecticut Ave., NW, 3rd Floor
Washington, DC 20009
or via fax: (202) 293-8344

DONOR INFORMATION:

Donors and other interested parties please visit www.RaiseYourVoice.com/perryfund/ or contact us at (202) 362-0030 or heareform@RaiseYourVoice.com for additional information.

STUDENT GOVERNMENTS REJECT HIGHER EDUCATION ACT DRUG PROVISION

The following student governments have endorsed a resolution calling for repeal of the provision of the Higher Education Act that delays or denies college financial aid to persons with drug convictions (as of September 17, 2007):

U.S. Student Association • Association of Big Ten Schools • Oregon Student Association
Student Association of the State University of New York • United Council of University of Wisconsin Students
American University (DC) • Amherst College (MA) • Appalachian State University (NC) • Baltimore City Community College
Bates College (ME) • Bergen Community College (NJ) • Berkshire Community College (MA) • Brandeis College (MA)
Brown University • College of William and Mary • Columbia College (Columbia University) • Dalton College (GA)
Dartmouth College (NH) • De Anza College (CA) • Douglas College (Rutgers University) • Earlham College (IN)
Florida A&M University • Florida International University at University Park
Florida International University at Biscayne Bay Campus • Florida State University • Franklin Pierce College (NH)
Georgetown University (DC) • George Washington University (DC) • Goshen College (IN) • Gettysburg College (PA)
Grand Valley State University (MI) • Hampshire College (MA) • Howard University (DC) • Illinois State University at Normal
Indiana University at Bloomington • James Madison University (VA) • Lewis and Clark College (OR) • Linfield College (OR)
Louisiana State University • Loyola University (IL) • Mercyhurst College (PA) • Messiah College (PA) • Michigan State University
Monroe Community College (NY) • Mount Holyoke College (MA) • New College of Florida • North Carolina State University
Northwestern University (IL) • Ohio State University • Ohio University • Pennsylvania State University • Pitzer College (CA)
Pomona College (CA) • Portland Community College at Cascade (OR) • Portland Community College at Rock Creek (OR)
Portland State University (OR) • Rice University (TX) • Rochester Institute of Technology (NY)
Saint Cloud State University (MN) • Smith College (MA) • South Carolina State University
Southern Illinois University at Carbondale • Southern Oregon University • SUNY Albany • SUNY Binghamton
SUNY ESF • SUNY Broome • Syracuse University • Texas State University - San Marcos • Union College (NY)
University of California at Berkeley • University of California at San Diego • University of California at Santa Barbara
University of Colorado at Boulder • University of Connecticut • University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign • University of Iowa
University of Kansas • University of Maryland at College Park • University of Michigan • University of Minnesota at Twin Cities
University of Missouri at Columbia • University of Montana - Missoula • University of Nevada at Las Vegas
University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill • University of North Carolina at Pembroke
University of North Carolina at Wilmington • University of North Texas • University of Pennsylvania • University of Rhode Island
• University of Southern California • University of Tennessee at Knoxville • University of Texas at Austin
University of Texas at Dallas • University of Toledo University of Vermont • University of Wisconsin at Eau Claire
University of Wisconsin at Madison • University of Wisconsin at Milwaukee • University of Wisconsin at Richland
University of Wyoming • Utica College (NY) • Washington University (MO) • Wesleyan University (CT)
Western Connecticut State University • Western Maryland College • Western State College (CO)
Western Washington University • Yale University

WHEREAS A provision in the Higher Education Act of 1998 mandates that students convicted of any drug-related offense (without regard to the nature of the offense or the offender) be denied eligibility for financial aid for periods ranging from one year to "indefinite," and;

WHEREAS No other class of offender (including those convicted of rape or other violent offenses) faces similar restriction on student loan eligibility, and;

WHEREAS This provision will, by its very nature, impact primarily students of low to moderate economic means, and;

WHEREAS This provision will also have a discriminatory impact on people of color, as their communities are disproportionately targeted for enforcement of the drug laws (e.g. African Americans, who comprise 12% of the nation's population and 13% of drug users, make up 55% of those convicted for drug offenses), and;

WHEREAS To the extent that the federal government involves itself in education, it should be focused on making it easier, not more difficult, for citizens to educate themselves, and;

WHEREAS Education is an important factor in allowing people to become more productive, well-rounded citizens;

WE, THE UNDERSIGNED, call upon the 106th United States Congress to overturn that section of the Higher Education Act of 1998 that denies or delays access to financial aid based upon convictions for drug-related offenses.

contact: Coalition for HEA Reform, (202) 232-7111, www.RaiseYourVoice.com