

## HOW YOU CAN HELP

You can help by making a generous contribution to the DRCNet Foundation for The John W. Perry Scholarship Fund. The Fund continues to provide scholarships and is currently accepting applications. The Fund seeks 100 or more donors of \$1,000 or more each, to raise at least \$100,000, but gratefully accepts all contributions, large or small. Checks should be made payable to DRCNet Foundation, a 501 (c)(3) nonprofit charity; write "scholarship fund" or "Perry Fund" in the memo. Your contribution will be tax-deductible as provided by law.

## JOIN THE CAMPAIGN!

Though the Perry Fund will only help a small fraction of students affected by the HEA drug provision (also known as the "Aid Elimination Penalty"), it is a component of a larger effort to ultimately abolish this unwise law. To help out even more, you can join in the campaign to repeal the drug provision and end its injustices once and for all.

The Coalition for Higher Education Act Reform (**CHEAR**) is a national network of education, civil rights, religious, justice reform and other organizations working for repeal of this penalty. Over 400 national and state organizations and more than 120 student governments have called for repeal so far, many through CHEAR's outreach. CHEAR seeks to raise awareness about the negative effects of the drug provision and encourages Congress to pass legislation that will remove this law from the books. The Higher Education Act may be reauthorized before the end of 2007, and CHEAR is working hard to build the support necessary to restore financial aid. Visit <http://www.raiseyourvoice.com> to find out how to get involved.



**STUDENTS:** There are a few ways that you in particular can get involved. Start by lobbying your student government to pass the HEA Reform Resolution (over 120 endorsements so far). Also, look into joining a Students for Sensible Drug Policy chapter on your campus or starting a new one.



## DONATION FORM

YES! I want to support The John W. Perry Fund to provide scholarships to students who have lost aid because of drug convictions. Enclosed is my tax-deductible donation to the DRCNet Foundation for The John W. Perry Fund:

- \$50                       \$500  
 \$100                      \$1,000  
 \$250                     \$2,500  
other amount \$ \_\_\_\_\_

*(Please make your check payable to "DRCNet Foundation," put "scholarship fund" or "John W. Perry Fund" in the memo, and include this form or a note identifying it as for the Perry Fund.)*

- Yes, you may list my or my group/company's name in the scholarship publicity materials.
- I am also enclosing a non-tax-deductible donation to support the grassroots lobbying campaign to repeal the HEA drug provision.

*(this check should be made payable to the "Drug Reform Coordination Network")*

SEND ALL MATERIALS TO:  
DRCNet Foundation  
1623 Connecticut Ave, NW, 3rd Floor  
Washington, DC 20009

Or contact (202)362-0030 or  
[perryfund@RaiseYourVoice.com](mailto:perryfund@RaiseYourVoice.com) for more information

To learn more about the Drug Provision visit:

**[www.raiseyourvoice.com](http://www.raiseyourvoice.com)**

"WHEN YOU CAN'T GET FINANCIAL AID FOR A YEAR, EVERY BIT HELPS."

"My parents and I don't have much money at all. Losing the aid to go to college was a real blow."

# The John W. Perry Fund



Scholarships for Students Denied Federal Financial Aid Because of Drug Convictions

**"I WAS RUNNING OUT OF OPTIONS BECAUSE I MADE A MISTAKE."**

*"I want to change my life so that I can make a better future for my daughter."*

**"I was nearly forced to drop out."**

## ABOUT JOHN W. PERRY

John William Perry was a New York City police officer and a Libertarian Party/ACLU activist who spoke out against the “war on drugs.” He was also a lawyer, athlete, actor, linguist and humanitarian.

When the first plane hit the World Trade Center on the morning of September 11, 2001, John Perry was at One Police Plaza in lower Manhattan filing retirement papers. Without hesitation he went to help, and ended up losing his life in the service of others.

This scholarship program is dedicated to his memory and his commitment to drug law reform. John Perry serves as an inspiring academic example for the students this fund assists. He was fluent in several languages, graduated from NYU Law School and worked for the NYPD prosecuting misconduct cases.



## PURPOSE OF THE FUND

In 1998, Congress enacted an amendment to the Higher Education Act that denies loans, grants and work study jobs to tens of thousands of would-be students who have been convicted of drug offenses. All these young people who have already been punished by the justice system for their offenses are being dually punished by this law. They are forced to either spend more time working to pay for school, reduce courseloads, or in many cases drop out of school entirely.

In response to this unfortunate and unjust situation, the DRCNet (Drug Reform Coordination Network) Foundation, in association with Students for Sensible Drug Policy and other friends of civil liberties, has created The John W. Perry Fund. By providing scholarships to a few of the many people who have lost aid under this law, we hope to make a powerful statement that will build opposition to the law and let hundreds of thousands of people know about the campaign to repeal it.

## WHAT DOES THIS LAW SAY?

Section 484, subsection (r) of the Higher Education Act (HEA) of 1998 delays or denies federal student financial aid eligibility to applicants with state or federal misdemeanor or felony drug convictions. 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; three possession or two sales convictions cost an applicant eligibility indefinitely. In 2006 the law was changed to limit it to offenses committed while in school and receiving aid.

Students enrolling in an approved drug treatment program can regain eligibility on completion. However, the measure neither provides funds for these generally expensive programs, nor distinguishes between mere use and true substance abuse. Would-be students who have only experimented with marijuana, for example, might be unable to find a program willing to accept them; or instead take up scarce slots needed by actual addicts seeking help.

## QUICK FACTS

- As of February 2006, more than 200,000 would-be students have been denied federal financial aid since the HEA drug provision took effect in fall 2000.
- An unknown number of students did not even apply for federal aid because they correctly or incorrectly believed that they were ineligible.
- Aid denied annually totals in the hundreds of millions of dollars.



10 members of Congress and advocates gather at a Capitol Hill press conference urging repeal of the HEA drug provision.

## WHO RECEIVES SCHOLARSHIPS?

The John W. Perry Fund provides students affected by the HEA Drug Provision with scholarships of up to \$2,000. Preference is given to students who not only demonstrate



With the help of a Perry Fund scholarship, Donald Miller now attends York College, in Queens, NY.

the greatest financial need (education expenses less other available resources), but for whom our assistance is most likely to be effective in enabling them to both attend

and succeed in school. Awardees have the option of spending scholarship funds on drug treatment programs (which will in effect restore their federal aid eligibility), but are encouraged to choose this option only if they have an actual substance abuse problem.

The government’s own financial aid forms are one tool used to assess an applicant’s need, but the Fund also considers individual circumstances and experiences that

“  
*I did the jail time, paid the fine and served probation, but they just want to make it even harder. I’m taking a full course-load and working full-time, but I was almost forced to rethink my education.*  
”

Nicholas Haderlie  
Drug Provision victim

have placed special obstacles in the way of a given student’s ability to pursue higher education (e.g., socio-economic disadvantage, physical or learning disability, incarceration, drug addiction, etc.). The typical award is in the neighborhood of \$1,000.

The Fund will also share applicant information (with consent) with other scholarship providers and community foundations to turn our handful of awards into many more.