

Youth Scholarship Fund

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Applications, which require writing a 100-word essay explaining why the applicant is deserving of the scholarship, are now available at the diner and the schools. Students can come in, fill out the application and leave it at the diner. Committees from each of the three high schools will be reviewing the applications and a winner will be announced in May.

Deadline for submissions is March 30, 2009.

"We are living in very tough times and I know how expensive college is these days," Doukas said. "That's why I believe, as a father of three myself, that it is important to help a deserving student who wants to continue their education after high school.

"I also want to give something back to the Orange and Milford communities, which have supported our business right from the beginning earlier this year." Doukas once dreamed of pursuing a career as a lawyer. But rather than attending law school, as he had planned, Doukas worked in his father's diner and discovered he loved it and had found his own niche.

"It's in my blood. I envisioned the Equinox dining experience to be very value oriented, but with the use of the highest quality ingredients," he said. "We like to say we're more than just a diner, that we also provide comfort food at a value to our customers. We have a fresh bakery on premises, a culinary graduate chef and use the freshest ingredients, including fresh fish.

"Our goal is to take the diner to a different level, we want to put the dining into the diner experience," he said.

The 5,500 square foot, freestanding diner, has a full liquor license with 175 seats including a 50-seat private dining room. It has three 50" plasma televisions, as well as a sound system, which allows private functions to utilize both the television and sound system to integrate personalized material for an event, meeting or party.

David Kurek, general manager at the Equinox, said that the scholarship opportunity is a way for the restaurant to give back to the community that supports the business.

"It's so important for kids today to get the opportunities a lot of us have, and be able to continue their education," said Kurek, a native of New York who recently relocated to Milford. "People who come out of college have a real head start in life, and we wanted to help someone have that opportunity as well."

Bob Esposito, director of counseling services at Amity High School, said any financial help provided by the private sector and business community to go toward a graduate's college education is more than welcome.

"Scholarships are always a wonderful help for our students, and in these economic times it is more important than ever," said Esposito, who is coordinating the effort at Amity High School and will help select the student nominated for the monetary award from his school.

"We have a number of scholarship programs, and we are delighted to have another one," he said. "It's a great idea to include an essay as part of the application process."

Students are also required to list which colleges they are applying to, and to include any civic or community service activities they have taken part in.

"This comes from my heart," said Doukas, who also recently announced that on

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Director of Counseling
Amity High School