

Kona-California Scholarship Applicant 2010-2011  
Rachel Miyata

Being a "farm girl" is probably going to be one of the most important assets in my college student repertoire. The "early to bed, early to rise" description is really true for me. My seventy-six year old grandmother is a constant inspiration to me. Side-by-side, my grandmother and I pick our Kona coffee by hand in the blazing sun. I have years of balancing my academic, athletic, community service and family responsibilities on our struggling coffee farm. In a nutshell, I am very good at time management. Last year, I took a total of nine courses including one AP class, two college running start courses, two science and an advanced math class, I was also an officer in two clubs, and Girls Varsity Captain for all three of my sports: cross country, swim and tennis. My grade point average, (GPA), at the end of my junior year was a 3.72, which was the lowest of all three years of high school. I am currently Senior Class Vice President, Interact President, active member of the National Honor Society and Konawaena High School Credit Union Treasurer. I have two AP classes, one college Economics class, and a Physics class and my GPA is a 3.77. I love my volunteer work at the Kona Adult Day Center and enjoy tutoring Ms. Garner's Algebra I students for my seventh period. We just finished a busy coffee season again on my family farm and my current Spring Varsity sport is tennis. Because my father is a farmer and can grow just about anything, I am also closing in on my personal "1000 pound" goal of donating fresh surplus produce from my family's garden at the Hawaii Island Food Basket. We may not always be able to donate monetarily, but I think fresh produce is better. Farming is so important to our family and it has provided me with the advantage of helping me stay balanced in mind, body and spirit. I attribute this sense of balance to growing up in Kona and the Island spirit, values of my family and the community that helped raise me.

I have a strong calling to improve health care issues for our older population. This calling became clearer after I began volunteering as an activities assistant at the Kona Adult Day Center in my junior year. I have been nominated to attend the National Youth Leadership Forum in Medicine to be held in Los Angeles this summer and I am considering a career as a Geriatrician or in Elder Law. I decided I can make more of a difference with policy change, health care reform and preventive care. In fact, my Senior Project focuses on the health care needs of our growing aging "Baby Boomer" population. The Hawaii County statistics illustrate my Island's health status is consistently worse than the State average. I came to realize I needed to go beyond looking at County and State level issues and think about healthcare on a national and global scale. I have decided to accept Chapman University's offer of admission and feel this University will give me the best knowledge base I need to accomplish my goals. I am a natural leader and feel I can make the most impact on a system's level. There is so much that needs to be done. I think my skills as a good communicator, motivator, and planner will serve me well in college. I humbly ask your committee's consideration of finding me worthy of this scholarship and helping me finance my education and realize my goals.