



Catastrophic injury may mean that an officer can no longer perform the full duties of a police officer on the street, but it does not always mean the officer is not capable of continued employment in the law enforcement career field. One of the essential services needed by catastrophically injured officers is

education so that he or she can return to the workforce. This is one of the most important missions of the WOI. As of the 2013-14 academic years the average annual four year college tuition in Florida was \$13,809. For officers who are catastrophically injured in the line of duty, this is a substantial amount of money to pay for an education in a field where they will be able to work in order to provide for themselves and their families. For the catastrophically injured officer who is unemployed and dealing with multiple and continuous medical bills, the last thing on his or her mind is finding the money to attend college.

The WOI hopes to create partnerships with educational institutions where a catastrophically injured retired officer can earn a college degree or receive specialized training for a new profession. In the event a catastrophically injured officer is not able to take advantage of this education benefit but has a spouse who is unemployed, then the spouse may participate in the education benefit.

The WOI is developing partnerships with educational institutions in order to help offset the financial burden of college tuition. It is the goal of the WOI to establish these partnerships in hopes of sending the catastrophically injured officer to one of these educational institutions to obtain a college or technical degree. This can be accomplished by starting the Wounded Officers Initiative Scholarship Fund. The WOI Scholarship Fund would be for officers who are catastrophically injured as defined in the WOI "qualifying officers" page. Qualifying officers would then complete an on-line application form which would be reviewed by the WOI to ensure they qualify. Any officer who meets the requirements will be referred to the participating educational institution which offers the educational major in the field of study for which the wounded officer will be seeking new employment.

The participating educational institutions themselves will fund the Wounded Officer Scholarship and will make the final decision in granting the scholarship. The Wounded Officers Scholarship will cover the cost of tuition for the officer while obtaining a career

certificate, an undergraduate education, or post-graduate education. The amount of the scholarship shall be equal to the cost of tuition and matriculation and registration fees for a total of 120 credit hours. The officer or spouse may attend any or all of the institutions specified in this subsection on a full-time or part-time basis. An officer or spouse under this subsection must use this scholarship and complete their college degree by the 10th anniversary of the officer's retirement.

To qualify for scholarship under this paragraph, the officer or spouse shall be required to meet and maintain the regular admission and academic requirements defined by the educational institution in which the student is enrolled. Upon graduation The WOI will also work with employment agencies and employers to assist in placing the officers in their new career.

The WOI is committed to providing these essential services and opportunities to catastrophically injured officers to embark on their new futures and careers.

Source information regarding four year college tuition:

<http://www.collegecalc.org/colleges/florida/four-year/>