

# Posse partnership helps pay price of tuition for incoming students

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By Sophie Heller, Assistant News Editor

At the beginning of this academic year, Mount Holyoke, the University of Pennsylvania and the University of California at Los Angeles partnered with The Posse Foundation, an organization committed to identifying public high school students with exceptional academic potential who otherwise may be overlooked by college selections committees.

The first students are to enroll next year and will be on campus in the coming weeks for admitted student activities.

The Posse Foundation allows students the chance to pursue academic and extracurricular interests as a part of multicultural teams or “posses” of ten. As a Foundation partner, Mount Holyoke will award full-tuition leadership scholarships to Posse Scholars.

“They’re helping to redefine merit in higher education and, by example, demonstrating alternative ways of achieving equity while maintaining the highest standards. That takes extraordinary vision and leadership,” said Posse founder Deborah Bial in the Posse Newsletter of the Foundation’s partner universities and colleges.

Mount Holyoke is also one of the first colleges to recruit Posse Scholars for Posse’s Civic Engagement Program which will prepare students to become active in addressing social justice issues. These students will be chosen on the basis of their demonstrated interest in activism and community service. During every summer of their college careers, these Posse Scholars will have the opportunity to serve as interns at social justice organizations.

“We are looking forward to selecting our first cohort of Scholars,” said Jane Brown, Mount Holyoke’s vice president for enrollment and college relations in a press release on Posse’s website. “The range of traits that Posse screens for – such as leadership, resourcefulness, the ability to work well in a team and creative problem solving – are qualities that we value at Mount Holyoke and believe are key to a successful college experience.”

Mount Holyoke students are equally excited and feel that partnering with The Posse Foundation will greatly benefit not only Posse Scholars but also the Mount Holyoke community.

“In my case I get very generous financial aid from Mount Holyoke, and I am graduating in May. Without that help from the College I would never have dreamed that this would be happening. I think that by collaborating with The Posse Foundation Mount Holyoke is giving an opportunity to these kids to have the same experience that I had,” said Sichu Mali ’10.

“I think it will help with our overall goal of diversity,” said Elizabeth King ’11. “We’re always talking about diversity at Mount Holyoke, but it seems like economic diversity is a kind of diversity we haven’t worked hard enough to promote. I think this will bring a lot to Mount Holyoke.”