

## Filling Out the FAFSA

A big problem in Hawaii and across the nation is that not enough people fill out the FAFSA application. FAFSA, also known as the Free Application For Student Aid, is used by students to gain financial aid for college, career school, or graduate school. The FAFSA is an extremely useful resource that is not being used by the people who do need it. For example, students from low-income families do not fill out the form, but why not? Well, a lot of the issues come from basic questions such as “How do we apply for the FAFSA?” or just basic misconception such as “It is too complicated to fill out.” People not filling out the FAFSA can lead to more problems like students not going to college, which is why not filling the application out is a huge problem.

Imagine in the next fifty years, the problem of people not filling out the FAFSA stays the same or potentially gets worse. The amount of low-income students applying for college could start to drop more and more, which will possibly lower the average amount of money low-income families get due to not having the proper education to get a well-paying job. Furthermore, it will lessen the number of opportunities for intelligent students to have a better education instead of just stopping after high school and getting some minimum wage job. The problems that can come from not filling out something as simple as the FAFSA can cause detrimental problems for future generations in getting a good education.

There are many solutions to a problem so big, but so simple. The government can make it mandatory for low-income families and middle-class families to fill out the FAFSA, this can

create more opportunities for students from low-income families to go to college and pursue a better education. Another solution would promote more counseling and other helpful ways for people to learn about the FAFSA and for people to learn how to fill out the FAFSA. This can help families who did not know the FAFSA existed and to help those who do not know how to fill the FAFSA out. It would be even better if the two solutions were both enacted to force low-income families and middle-class families to do the FAFSA while assisting them in the process.

My entry relates to the vision and philanthropy of Clarence T.C. Ching in the way that the FAFSA will help young adults apply for college to get a good education and better lives. The education that young adults get from college will help them to get better jobs and better lives than those who did not go to college. Those who do go to college could be the ones who come back to Hawaii and help improve the island even more, whether they are investors, engineers, politicians, and other occupations that will help to improve the island. The FAFSA will help to achieve all of this and help to improve the lives of everyone, just like how Clarence T.C. Ching would try to improve the lives of the community and the islands.

If we act now, we will be able to put more of our students through college and help them to get a better education. The FAFSA will be able to help students to get enough money to be able to attend college. In the future, our children will grow up, fill out the FAFSA, be able to attend college with enough money, come back to Hawaii, and improve our island even more. More people filling out the FAFSA will increase the rates of students moving on to college, graduating college, and possibly help to boost the economy of the Hawaiian islands. The more

people that do apply for the FAFSA will improve their lives more, and the lives of other people in the future.