

Money For College

College is an investment in your future that you should be planning for now. You are fortunate to live in Oklahoma, where state colleges and universities are among the most affordable in the nation. Plus, Oklahoma has many resources available to help you and your family plan for and manage the cost of earning a college degree.

Did you know that during 2007-08 students attending Oklahoma public and independent (private) colleges and universities received financial aid totaling \$1.3 billion? There is a good chance you will qualify for financial aid!

TYPES OF FINANCIAL AID

Fortunately, there are many kinds of student financial aid to help you and your family manage the cost of college. While your high school guidance counselor can give you specific financial aid information, the following are some general sources of financial aid.

Scholarships - awards given for a variety of reasons, such as good grades, special talents or career plans

Grants - aid that's based on financial need and that doesn't have to be repaid

Work-study (student employment) - money you earn for college by working part time at the college or university you are attending or at an approved off-campus worksite in the community

Loans - borrowed money that you must repay over time, with interest

GETTING FINANCIAL AID

One way to get started on a financial plan for college is to take advantage of a free online service called the ACT Financial Aid Need Estimator at www.act.org/fane. The estimator can help your family plan to meet college costs at specific institutions by estimating your family's contribution, your eligibility for federal need-based financial aid and the amount of other financial aid you will need.

Here are five more helpful tips for locating sources of financial aid:

1. To apply for federal financial aid (grants, work-study and loans) and the Oklahoma Tuition Aid Grant (OTAG) program, you must complete the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) as soon as possible after Jan. 1 during your senior year in high school and each year you need aid in college. Call the financial aid office of the college(s) you plan to attend to learn about any additional forms they may require. The FAFSA is available online at www.fafsa.ed.gov, and families are encouraged to use this method of application

(step-by-step instructions are provided on the site). Paper copies can be obtained directly from any college financial aid office or high school guidance counselor. Remember, the first F in FAFSA stands for "free." Be wary of any organization that requires you to pay to fill out the FAFSA!

2. Check for scholarships sponsored by local organizations including your church, parent's employer, and community groups such as the American Legion, YMCA, 4-H Club, Elks, Masons, Kiwanis, Jaycees, Chamber of Commerce and the Girl or Boy Scouts. Your high school counselor can help you explore scholarship opportunities in your area.
3. Contact the admissions or financial aid office at the colleges you are interested in attending. Many colleges and universities offer scholarships to recognize academic achievement or special talents, such as athletics or performing arts. Much of this information is available on colleges' Web sites.
4. Search the Internet for helpful financial aid information. To start, visit www.OKcollegestart.org, www.ogslp.org, www.studentaid.ed.gov, www.mappingyourfuture.org, www.going2college.org, www.finaid.org, and www.fastweb.com. Avoid online scholarship searches or agencies that charge fees for their services. All the information you need is available free of charge.
5. It's best to use savings or free financial aid to pay for college, but that's not always possible or enough to cover college expenses. You might need to borrow money to pay for your education. But don't worry – there are many resources to help. Federal student loan lenders offer inexpensive loans with flexible repayment terms. Be sure to exhaust all federal loan options before considering "private" or "alternative" loans, which can have higher interest rates and fewer flexible repayment options. For more information, contact the Oklahoma Guaranteed Student Loan Program, Oklahoma's designated guarantor for federal student loans, at 800.442.8642 or visit www.ogslp.org.

FINANCIAL AID PACKAGES

Colleges you list on the FAFSA will receive your information and send you award notifications. Financial aid awards are called "packages." Packages can be any combination of scholarships, grants, loans and work-study opportunities that help you meet college costs. Compare the offers you receive from various schools before you decide which college might be your best fit both academically and financially, and make sure you accept award offers in a timely manner. Remember, you don't have to accept all loan funds offered to you. Borrow only what you need to pay school expenses.

FINANCIAL AID PROGRAMS

There are numerous state and federal programs to help you pay for college. Many of them are listed on the following pages. For more information, visit www.OKcollegestart.org or call the Student Information Hotline at 800.858.1840 or 225.9239 in Oklahoma City.

OKLAHOMA TUITION AID GRANT PROGRAM (OTAG)

OTAG is a need-based grant program for Oklahoma residents who attend approved colleges, universities and career technology centers in Oklahoma. Awards are approved for full-time or part-time undergraduate students.

Application

Application is made through the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) available online at www.fafsa.ed.gov, through high school guidance counselors or the financial aid office at the college you are planning to attend. For best consideration, you should complete and submit the FAFSA to the federal student aid application system as soon as possible after Jan. 1 of your senior year. **IT IS IMPORTANT TO APPLY EARLY.** Typically, the OTAG program receives more eligible applications than can be awarded with available funds, and how early a student applies can be the deciding factor in whether that student is offered an OTAG award.

Even if you are not eligible for federal aid through the FAFSA, you may still meet the requirements for OTAG. For more information, contact the OTAG office.

Eligibility

Financial need is measured by the Expected Family Contribution (EFC), which is determined based on the information the student provides on their FAFSA. Currently, OTAG awards are limited to students with an EFC of 1,700 or lower. The EFC appears on the Student Aid Report sent to students by the U.S. Department of Education once their FAFSA has been processed. An award will not be denied for academic reasons as long as the college's minimum requirements for admission are fulfilled and satisfactory academic progress is made according to the school's policy for student financial aid recipients.

Award Amount

Currently, the maximum annual award is the lesser of 75 percent of enrollment costs or \$1,000 for students attending public colleges, universities or career technology centers and \$1,300 for students attending eligible private colleges and universities. One-half of the award is disbursed in the fall semester, and one-half is disbursed in the spring semester. Funds are released to eligible students by campus officials after eligibility has been confirmed.

For More Information

Oklahoma Tuition Aid Grant Program

877.662.6231

225.9456 (Oklahoma City area)

otaginfo@otag.org

www.otag.org

OKLAHOMA TUITION EQUALIZATION GRANT (OTEG)

OTEG is a need-based grant program for Oklahoma residents enrolled as full-time undergraduates at Oklahoma not-for-profit, private/independent institutions of higher education.

Eligibility

To be eligible for OTEG award consideration, a student must:

- File a Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) and report Oklahoma as their state of legal residence.
- Be enrolled full time in the fall and/or spring semesters.
- Have a family income of \$50,000 or less.
- Be an Oklahoma resident according to the State Regents' Policy on Residence Status of Enrolled Students in the Oklahoma State System of Higher Education.
- Meet the institution's satisfactory academic progress requirements.
- Not have already earned a bachelor's degree.
- Not have already received OTEG awards for five years.

Award Amount

- Participating colleges and universities will each select the students to receive the award at their institution.
- Grant amounts are \$2,000 per academic year or \$1,000 per academic semester.
- Institutions will notify students of their awards.

For More Information

Oklahoma Tuition Equalization Grant Program

877.662.6231

225.9456 (Oklahoma City area)

www.OKcollegestart.org/Financial_Aid/Types_of_Aid/Grants/Grants.aspx

OKLAHOMA'S PROMISE (OKLAHOMA HIGHER LEARNING ACCESS PROGRAM)

The Oklahoma Legislature created a scholarship program that will help pay for a student's education if his or her parents' total yearly income is not more than \$50,000 at the time of application and not more than \$100,000 at the time the student goes to college. That program is called Oklahoma's Promise.

How It Works

- Student must be an Oklahoma resident and enroll in the program in eighth, ninth or 10th grade (home-schooled students age 13, 14 or 15). Student starts early so he/she can

get ready for college by taking high school courses that will help him/her do well.

- Student must take certain courses and pass those courses with at least a 2.5 cumulative grade point average. (See below for a full description of required curriculum.)
- Student must achieve at least a 2.5 cumulative grade point average for all courses in grades 9-12.
- Student must go to class regularly and do his/her homework.
- Student also agrees to stay out of serious trouble and away from drugs and alcohol.
- Student must be a U.S. citizen or lawfully present in the United States to receive the scholarship in college.
- Student must meet additional financial, academic and conduct requirements to keep the scholarship after enrolling in college.

What Are the Benefits?

Once a student has completed the program's goals and graduated from an Oklahoma high school, Oklahoma's Promise will help pay the student's tuition at a public community college or university. It will also cover a portion of tuition at an accredited Oklahoma private college or university or for courses at public technology centers that are approved for credit toward an Associate of Applied Science degree at a public college. The scholarship is good for up to five years or until the student completes a bachelor's degree, whichever comes first. The final amount of the scholarship will vary depending on where the student attends college, the tuition rates in effect at that time and whether he or she attends full time or less.

How Parents Can Help

Parents should encourage the student to do well in his or her courses and to stay out of trouble. When the student signs up for the program, the parents also sign an agreement and promise to help their child successfully reach the goals of the program.

Required High School Curriculum for Oklahoma's Promise Eligibility¹

- 4 English (grammar, composition, literature)
- 3 Lab Science (biology, chemistry, physics or any lab science certified by the school district; general science with or without a lab may not be used to meet this requirement)
- 3 Mathematics (from Algebra I, Algebra II, geometry, trigonometry, math analysis, calculus, Advanced Placement [AP] Statistics)
- 3 History and Citizenship Skills (including one unit of American history and two units from the subjects of history, government, geography, economics, civics and/or non-Western culture)
- 2 Foreign or non-English language (two years of the same language) OR Computer Technology (Courses in programming, hardware and business computer applications such as word processing, databases, spreadsheets and graphics will qualify. Keyboarding or typing classes DO NOT qualify.) (1 foreign language and 1 computer technology course WILL NOT meet this requirement.)

- 1 Additional course of any of the subjects listed above
- 1 Fine Arts (music, art, drama) or Speech
- 17 Total Units

¹ Students graduating from a non-accredited high school and home-schooled students must ALSO achieve a composite score of 22 or higher on the ACT test.

For More Information

Oklahoma's Promise
Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education
800.858.1840
225.9152 (Oklahoma City area)
okpromise@osrhe.edu
www.okpromise.org

ACADEMIC SCHOLARS PROGRAM

The Academic Scholars Program was created and funded by the Oklahoma Legislature as an incentive for students of high academic ability to attend both public and private higher education institutions in Oklahoma. The program was created to enhance the academic environment, to retain academically talented students within Oklahoma and to attract others of equal talent to the state.

Application

Applications are available every October and can be obtained by contacting the State Regents' office. The applicant must qualify prior to college entry.

Eligibility

Residents of Oklahoma automatically qualify by scoring within the 99.5 to 100.0 percentile levels on the ACT or SAT as administered in the state of Oklahoma. For students entering the program fall 2009, the minimum ACT sum of scores required was 133. The sum of scores required is subject to change each year. Students will need to contact the State Regents' office to verify the sum of scores required to qualify for the program. The test scores must be from a single national test date. Partial scores from more than one examination will not be considered.

Residents also automatically qualify by achieving one of the following designations: National Merit Scholar, National Merit Finalist or United States Presidential Scholar. Non-residents may qualify for the program by achieving designation as a National Merit Scholar, National Merit Finalist or United States Presidential Scholar. However, out-of-state student participation is limited, and achieving such a designation does not automatically qualify students for the program.

Institutional Nominee - State public colleges and universities may nominate students attending their institutions for the Academic Scholars Program based on criteria established by each individual institution. Nominees will be selected through the normal admission and/or scholarship application at the institution.

Award Amount

The amount of the award varies according to the type of institution the student attends and qualifying status. The annual scholarship amount for Automatic Qualifiers is \$5,500 for students who attend Oklahoma State University, the University of Oklahoma or The University of Tulsa; \$4,000 for students who attend any other Oklahoma four-year public or private college or university; and \$3,500 for students who attend Oklahoma community colleges.

The annual scholarship amount for Institutional Nominees is \$2,800 for students who attend Oklahoma State University, the University of Oklahoma or The University of Tulsa; \$2,000 for students who attend any other Oklahoma four-year public or private college or university; and \$1,800 for students who attend Oklahoma community colleges. Students who enroll at public universities and colleges are eligible for a tuition waiver in addition to the scholarship award noted above.

The scholarship will be awarded for up to eight semesters of attendance at an Oklahoma institution of higher education in accordance with the continuing eligibility requirements.

Criteria for Continued Eligibility

Participants awarded a scholarship must maintain a 3.25 cumulative grade point average. A program year is defined as beginning in the fall semester and continuing through the summer term. Scholarship recipients must maintain full-time enrollment each semester. Full-time enrollment shall mean a minimum of 12 hours per semester and 24 hours in the two regular semesters.

For More Information

Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education
800.858.1840
225.9239 (Oklahoma City area)
studentinfo@osrhe.edu
www.okhighered.org/academic-scholars

REGIONAL UNIVERSITY BACCALAUREATE SCHOLARSHIP

This scholarship enables 11 participating public universities to provide up to four years of scholarship support to academically promising Oklahoma students enrolled in a baccalaureate program. Each participating institution may nominate up to 15 freshman awardees per year.

Regional Universities

Cameron University, East Central University, Langston University, Northeastern State University, Northwestern Oklahoma State University, Oklahoma Panhandle State University, Rogers State University, Southeastern Oklahoma State University, Southwestern Oklahoma State University, University of Central Oklahoma, and the University of Science and Arts of Oklahoma.

Application

Application is made directly through the university the student plans to attend. The application deadline will vary for each institution.

Eligibility

- Applicants must be Oklahoma residents.
- Applicants must meet one of the following criteria defined below:
 - a. have an ACT composite score of at least 30 and a grade point average and class rank which are exceptional, as determined by the institution OR
 - b. be a National Merit Semifinalist or a National Merit Commended Student as designated by the National Merit Scholarship corporation.

(Only ACT and SAT test scores from tests administered on national test dates will be considered for admission to the program.)

Award Amount

- The annual award amount is \$3,000. Each awardee will also receive a resident tuition waiver from the institution.
- The scholarship is available for up to eight semesters of study in a baccalaureate program at a regional university or until the student is granted a baccalaureate degree, whichever occurs first.
- The scholarship award may be used only at the university making the award; it is not portable.

Criteria for Continued Eligibility

Participants awarded a scholarship must maintain a 3.25 cumulative grade point average. A program year is defined as beginning in the fall semester and continuing through the summer term. Scholarship recipients must maintain full-time enrollment each semester. Full-time enrollment shall mean a minimum of 12 hours per semester and 24 hours in the two regular semesters.

For More Information

Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education
800.858.1840
225.9239 (Oklahoma City area)
studentinfo@osrhe.edu
www.OKcollegestart.org/Financial_Aid/Types_of_Aid/Scholarships/State_Scholarship_Programs.aspx

ROBERT C. BYRD HONORS SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM

The Robert C. Byrd Honors Scholarship Program is federally funded to promote student excellence and achievement and to recognize exceptionally able high school seniors who show promise of continued academic excellence and achievement. Students are selected to receive scholarships based on meeting eligibility criteria and completion and evaluation of an application. An equal number of "Byrd Scholars" are selected annually to represent each of Oklahoma's five congressional districts. This program is administered by the Oklahoma State Department of Education.

Application

The Oklahoma State Department of Education mails application materials to all public, private and parochial schools. All applicants will be notified by mail about their status after the scholarship winners have been determined. Each application is rated according to predetermined selection criteria. Each application must contain the requested information and documentation which include such items as:

- official signed and notarized transcripts
- letters of recommendation
- student essay

Eligibility

Applicants must meet the following criteria in order to be eligible to compete for the Byrd Scholarship:

- Be a U.S. citizen or national or be a permanent resident of the United States.
- Be a legal resident of Oklahoma.
- Be a senior enrolled in full-time coursework leading to high school graduation.
- Have applied to or been accepted for admission as a full-time student by an institution of higher education.
- Be able to meet academic criteria as stated in the scholarship application (this includes GPA, ACT/SAT, and/or GED scores).
- Must not be in default on a previous federal loan, scholarship or grant.
- Must not have been declared ineligible to receive federal assistance as a condition of sentencing under Section 5301 of the Anti-Drug Abuse Act of 1988.

Award Amount

“Byrd Scholars” receive \$1,500 for the first year of study at an eligible post-secondary institution. Scholarships are renewable for up to three additional years of study provided students continue to meet eligibility standards as defined by the institutions they are attending.

For More Information

Oklahoma State Department of Education
Professional Services Division
Oliver Hodge Building
2500 N. Lincoln Blvd.
Oklahoma City, OK 73105-4599
405.521.2808

www.sde.state.ok.us/Finance/Scholarships/Byrd/

FUTURE TEACHERS SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM

The Future Teachers Scholarship Program was established by the Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education as an incentive to encourage the preparation of teachers in critical shortage areas in the public schools of Oklahoma.

Critical Teacher Shortage Areas

- Math
- Science
- English
- Foreign Language
- Early Childhood Education
- Counselor
- Library Media Specialist
- Speech Language Pathologist

Application

- A new application must be submitted each academic year.
- Application deadlines are established by individual institutions. Completed applications are to be submitted to the nominating institution. The following documentation is required:
 - a. First-time freshmen must submit a copy of their high school transcript and ACT or SAT score, whichever is applicable.
 - b. Students who have attended a post-secondary institution must submit official transcripts from all institutions attended.
 - c. All students must submit the essay portion of the application on a separate sheet.
- Institutions will submit scholarship candidates and alternates in priority order to the State Regents’ office.
- The State Regents’ office will notify institutions of awards.

Eligibility

- The student must be a resident of Oklahoma.
- The student must be nominated by the college in which they are enrolled on the basis of one of the following criteria:
 - a. cumulative high school grade point average ranking in the top 15 percent of his or her high school graduating class OR
 - b. ACT or SAT score ranking in the top 15 percent for high school graduates of the same year OR
 - c. admission to a professional education program at an accredited Oklahoma institution of higher education OR
 - d. an undergraduate record of outstanding success, as defined by the institution.
- Full-time and part-time students are eligible for the scholarship; however, highest priority will be given to full-time students.
- Scholarship recipients must maintain no less than a 2.5 cumulative grade point average.
- Each recipient must agree to teach in a shortage area in Oklahoma public schools for a minimum of three consecutive years upon graduation and licensure as a teacher.
- Recipients may receive the scholarship for not more than four years, or the equivalent of four years, of full-time study.

Award Amount

An award amount for each nominated student will be determined by the college the student attends. The following annual award limits have been set by the State Regents:

Enrollment	Hours Completed Toward Baccalaureate	Maximum Annual Award
Full-Time	60 hours and above	\$1,500
Full-Time	Less than 60 hours	\$1,000
Part-Time	60 hours and above	\$750
Part-Time	Less than 60 Hours	\$500

For purposes of this program, full-time enrollment means not less than 12 credit hours per semester for undergraduates and not less than nine credit hours per semester for graduate students. Part-time enrollment means not less than six credit hours per semester.

For More Information

Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education

800.858.1840

225.9239 (Oklahoma City area)

studentinfo@osrhe.edu

www.OKcollegestart.org/Financial_Aid/Types_of_Aid/Scholarships/State_Scholarship_Programs.aspx

GEORGE AND DONNA NIGH PUBLIC SERVICE SCHOLARSHIP

The George and Donna Nigh Public Service Scholarship was established by the 1999 Oklahoma Legislature to provide scholarship opportunities to outstanding students who are preparing for careers in public service. A component of the scholarship program is participation in seminars on public service offered by the Nigh Institute. Each college and university may nominate one scholarship recipient per year.

Application

Presidents of Oklahoma colleges and universities will be invited to submit a nominee for consideration of award prior to the beginning of the spring semester. An advisory committee appointed by the Nigh Institute will review and approve the nominations and make announcement of awards.

Eligibility

- Scholarship recipients must be residents of the state of Oklahoma as determined by the State Regents.
- Scholarship recipients must be enrolled full time in an undergraduate program at a public or private college or university in the state of Oklahoma.
- Scholarship recipients must be enrolled in a degree program leading to a career in public service as determined by the institution.
- Students receiving the scholarship must demonstrate exceptional academic achievement as evidenced by a number of factors, which may include grade point average, class rank, national awards, scholastic achievement, honors, teachers'

recommendations and the applicant's involvement in extracurricular activities.

Amount of Scholarship

- The scholarship award amount is \$1,000.
- Scholarships will be awarded on a yearly basis and are not renewable.
- Each participating college or university may nominate one scholarship recipient each year.

For More Information

Nigh Institute

Attn: Carl F. Reherman

Kirkpatrick Bank

3001 E. Memorial Road

Edmond, OK 73013

405.818.0414

www.okhighered.org/student-center/financial-aid/nigh.shtml

SCHOLARS FOR EXCELLENCE IN CHILD CARE PROGRAM

The Scholars Program awards scholarships to eligible child care professionals to complete coursework in the area of child development or early childhood education. These scholarships enable child care providers in Oklahoma to attend a technology center or community college to improve their skills through education.

Application

Eligible child care providers may apply for the:

- Career Technology Center Scholarship Early Education: Pathway to CDA coursework offered at area technology centers and online.
- Community College Scholarship for coursework in the area of child development or early childhood education leading toward a CDA Credential, Certificate of Mastery, Director's Certificate of Mastery*, Director's Certificate of Completion, and/or an associate degree in child development or early childhood education offered at local community colleges.

Career Technology Center Scholarship applications may be obtained by calling 405.225.9396 or 866.343.3881. Community College Scholarship applications may be obtained through the Scholars Program scholar coordinator at each of the local community colleges in Oklahoma. Scholarship applications can also be obtained by calling 405.225.9395 or 866.343.3881 or online at www.okhighered.org/scholars.

Eligibility

To qualify for the Scholars for Excellence in Child Care program, child care professionals must:

- Work in a one-star plus or above OKDHS or tribal-licensed child care facility with a minimum of 10 percent subsidy children at time of application.

- Work as a teacher, family child care provider, or director at least 30 hours per week earning \$15.50 or less per hour.
- Be employed at a child care facility at least three months before beginning coursework or have taken Entry Level Child Care Training (ELCCT).

Note: Due to the availability of education and training funds, employees from federally funded child care programs are not eligible to participate in the scholarship. Additionally, employees from school-age programs are not eligible to participate in the scholarship at this time.

Amount of Award

Tuition scholarship recipients receive 80 percent of tuition and fees and 100 percent of books (after other financial aid has been applied) for required courses toward Pathway to CDA coursework, a child development associate (CDA) Credential, Certificate of Mastery, Director's Certificate of Mastery,* Director's Certificate of Completion, and/or an associate degree in child development or early childhood education.

**Offered at Oklahoma State University-Oklahoma City*

For More Information

Scholars for Excellence in Child Care
 Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education
 866.343.3881
 405.225.9397 (Oklahoma City area)
www.okhighered.org/scholars

TUITION WAIVERS

College-Awarded Tuition Waiver Scholarships

State Regents' policy authorizes each institution in the Oklahoma State System of Higher Education to provide for tuition waiver scholarships on the basis of financial need, scholastic aptitude and achievement, academic discipline or field of study, student activity participation and academic level. State system institutions are also required to waive resident tuition for individuals who meet specific criteria.

State-Authorized Tuition Waivers

In addition to tuition waiver scholarships awarded by Oklahoma public colleges and universities, resident tuition will be waived fully or partially for the following:

- Senior citizens who wish to audit courses (includes a waiver of special fees and activity fees)
- POWs, MIAs and their dependents
- Dependents of peace officers and firefighters killed in the line of duty
- Exchange students on a reciprocal basis
- Graduate assistants, either resident or non-resident, with at least a one-quarter time graduate assistantship
- Academic Scholars Program awardees
- Regional University Baccalaureate Scholarship awardees
- Army or Air National Guard members in good standing
- Independent Living Act - Department of Human Services dependents who meet specific criteria

- Benefits-eligible employees at institutions in the Oklahoma State System of Higher Education

For More Information

Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education
 800.858.1840
 225.9239 (Oklahoma City area)
www.okhighered.org

NATIONAL GUARD TUITION WAIVER

The Oklahoma National Guard Tuition Waiver is established as an incentive for qualified men and women to join the Oklahoma National Guard and as a means to retain skilled, productive citizens within the state.

Application

The student is required to submit a Statement of Understanding and Certificate of Basic Eligibility each semester for which he or she is applying for the waiver. The certification form is to be signed by a commander or representative of the Oklahoma National Guard. This signature certifies that the student is in good standing with the National Guard and that the National Guard member agrees to abide by all program rules and procedures. The form is to be forwarded by the student to the institution he or she wishes to attend by the deadline determined by the institution.

Eligibility

A student who is a member of the Oklahoma National Guard shall be eligible for a full resident tuition waiver, provided the student:

- Is a bona fide member of the Oklahoma National Guard at the beginning of the semester for which he or she is applying for a scholarship or by the scholarship application deadline determined by the institution.
- Has been certified as a member in good standing by the Adjutant General.
- Is an Oklahoma resident or a non-resident student who is an active member of the Oklahoma National Guard.
- Does not currently hold a baccalaureate or graduate degree.
- Meets all admission and retention requirements of the institution.

Enrollment Requirements

A student meeting all of the program eligibility requirements will be awarded a full resident tuition waiver, provided the student:

- Is enrolled in a program of study leading to an associate degree or a baccalaureate degree.
- Is enrolled in a minimum of three semester credit hours in the summer term. (The student may meet this minimum enrollment requirement either at a single institution or more than one institution in the Oklahoma State System of Higher Education. It is the student's responsibility to provide institutions with a copy of the Statement of Understanding and Certificate of Eligibility to ensure the waiving of fees at both institutions.)

- Has submitted a plan for the completion of his or her degree with the Oklahoma National Guard. Waivers will not be awarded for courses leading to a certificate, continuing education courses or career technology courses which are not counted toward a degree program at another institution. Concurrently enrolled high school students are not eligible for this tuition waiver. The tuition waiver is not applicable to professional programs that do not require an earned degree.

Award Amount

A resident tuition waiver covers the cost of resident tuition for all courses for which resident tuition is charged. A non-resident student waiver will cover the non-resident portion only of the tuition charged by Oklahoma public college and universities. The student is responsible for all other fees, such as special course fees, student activity and facility fees, and assessment fees.

A student may receive a waiver for a maximum of 18 semester credit hours each semester, for up to six years from the date of first application.

For More Information

Oklahoma National Guard
800.GO.GUARD
www.ok.ngb.army.mil

INDEPENDENT LIVING ACT (FOSTER CARE TUITION WAIVER)

The Independent Living Act was established by the 2000 Oklahoma Legislature to ensure that eligible individuals who have been or are in the foster care program of the Department of Human Services receive services that include housing, medical coverage and education. The first recipients of the tuition waivers were 1999-2000 high school graduates.

Eligibility

- Student must have graduated within the previous three years from a high school accredited by the State Board of Education, the Oklahoma School of Science and Mathematics or a high school bordering Oklahoma as approved by the State Board of Education OR the student must have completed the General Educational Development (GED) requirements.
- Tuition waivers are available to students up to 21 years of age who have been in DHS custody for at least nine months between the ages of 16 and 18.
- Student must be enrolled in a public college or university or certain programs at technology centers.
- Tuition waivers will be made available to eligible students up to 26 years of age or upon completion of a baccalaureate degree or program certificate, whichever comes first.

Amount of Award

A resident tuition waiver covers the cost of resident tuition for all courses for which resident tuition is charged. The student is

responsible for all other fees, such as special course fees, student activity and facility fees and assessment fees.

For More Information

Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education
800.858.1840
225.9239 (Oklahoma City area)
studentinfo@osrhe.edu

www.OKcollegestart.org/Financial_Aid/Types_of_Aid/Scholarships/State_Scholarship_Programs.aspx

TEACHER SHORTAGE EMPLOYMENT INCENTIVE PROGRAM (TSEIP)

TSEIP is a legislative program that reimburses eligible student loan expenses or pays a cash benefit to individuals who graduate from an Oklahoma accredited teacher education program, receive teaching certification in math or science and agree to teach in an Oklahoma public secondary school for at least five years. TSEIP is administered by the Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education.

Application

Students must fill out a Participation Agreement Form available through their college or university education department or by calling the State Regents' Minority Teacher Recruitment Center at 800.858.1840. (Students may sign up as early as their freshman year but should note that teacher employment must be achieved within 16 months of graduating from a four-year institution.)

The participation form must be completed and signed before graduation and submitted to the college or university TSEIP coordinator no later than the date of the student's graduation from a four-year institution in Oklahoma.

The State Regents' office will notify applicants of application receipt, educational loan obligations and any qualifying disbursement benefit opportunities through TSEIP.

SPECIAL NOTE: Participants cannot be certified to teach math or science prior to signing the Participation Agreement Form. Applicants must enroll no later than the date of their graduation to be eligible.

Eligibility

- Individuals must declare an intention to teach in Oklahoma and graduate from an Oklahoma-accredited teacher education program.
- Individuals must complete the TSEIP Participation Agreement no later than the date of their graduation. The agreement form can be obtained from the TSEIP coordinator at each postsecondary institution.
- Individuals must maintain satisfactory progress in an academic program leading to an undergraduate or graduate degree in math or science education.
- Individuals must complete an approved program of professional teacher education that includes a student

teaching requirement that leads to a certificate to teach math or science at the secondary level.

- Alternative or emergency certificates will not qualify.
- Individuals must be employed to teach either science or math in a secondary classroom at least 75 percent of the time within 16 months of graduating from an accredited university.
- Individuals must complete the first full year of eligible full-time teaching service by 25 months from their graduation date from a four-year college or university.

Amount of Award

The annual award is based on a formula not to exceed three times the average annual cost of undergraduate resident tuition and fees at institutions that offer teacher education. The amount for the 2008-09 award was \$13,602. Students who participate in TSEIP but do not have outstanding loan obligations will receive a cash payment after five years of teaching.

Eligible Student Loan Programs for TSEIP Reimbursement

- Stafford Student Loans/Guaranteed Student Loans
- Perkins/National Direct Student Loans
- Loans made pursuant to the federal Supplemental Loans for Students program including CLAS
- Consolidation Loan Program loans
- Privately funded educational loans issued to students through colleges or universities

NOTE: Parent Loans for Students (PLUS) are not eligible.

For More Information

Contact the education department at your college or university, call the State Regents' Minority Teacher Recruitment Center at 800.858.1840 or visit the TSEIP Web site at www.cashforteachingok.org.

SREB ACADEMIC COMMON MARKET

The Academic Common Market (ACM) is an arrangement among Southern states allowing Oklahoma students to pay in-state tuition rates at out-of-state colleges or universities while studying in select programs not available at Oklahoma public institutions. The tuition savings to Oklahoma residents who participate in the ACM, as compared to those who enroll as out-of-state students, vary by institution.

Application

Contact the out-of-state college or university for information concerning admission into programs accessible via the ACM. The number of programs offered through the ACM is frequently updated, so visit the ACM searchable list at <http://search.sreb.org/acm/ChooseState.aspx> for the most recent list of accessible programs. Once you have been unconditionally accepted into one of these programs, complete and submit an ACM Application and Residency Certification Form to the address below, along with a copy of your letter of acceptance/admission into the program.

The form can be obtained from the ACM state coordinator for Oklahoma or at www.OKcollegestart.org/Financial_Aid/Types_of_Aid/Scholarships/State_Scholarship_Programs.aspx.

If the program is offered in the ACM inventory and it is determined that you are a resident of Oklahoma, a letter of certification will be sent to you and a copy provided to the appropriate official at the institution. This will qualify you for a waiver of out-of-state fees.

If there is interest in a program that is not on the current list of available programs, a request may be made that the program be reviewed for possible inclusion. In order to do so, the following must be submitted: a copy of the letter of acceptance into the specific program; the completed Application and Residency Certification Form; and curricular information about the program, including course descriptions and credit hour requirements.

Eligibility

- An individual must demonstrate residence in Oklahoma.
- Students must be accepted into a program of study not offered at an Oklahoma public college or university and listed in the ACM inventory for Oklahoma residents. ACM guidelines stipulate that only those programs that differ in curricular content by at least 50 percent from programs offered in the state may be included.
- Students who still have outstanding "provisions" or conditions to fulfill their admissions requirements must complete their obligations and provide evidence of full admission before applying for ACM.
- Applicants must complete and submit the ACM Application and Residency Certification Form.
- Institutions set policy regarding any institutionally imposed deadline for the payment of tuition. ACM students not accepted or certified within the deadline for payment may have to wait until the next tuition payment period to receive the out-of-state fee waiver or in-state status. Although Oklahoma accepts ACM applications year-round, you should apply at least two months before institutional deadlines to allow for processing time.

For More Information

Debbie Blanke

ACM State Coordinator; Academic Common Market Program

Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education

PO Box 108850

Oklahoma City, OK 73101-8850

405.225.9170

www.OKcollegestart.org/Financial_Aid/Types_of_Aid/Scholarships/State_Scholarship_Programs.aspx

STAFFORD LOAN FORGIVENESS PROGRAM FOR TEACHERS

The Stafford Loan Forgiveness Program for Teachers is intended to encourage individuals to enter the teaching profession and serve in designated low-income communities. Under this program, the

Department of Education repays all or a portion of a borrower's Stafford Loan obligations. To be eligible for this forgiveness program, a borrower must be a "new borrower" on or after Oct. 1, 1998, and must teach for five consecutive complete years and meet other requirements. For a complete list of eligibility criteria, borrowers may contact their loan holder or guarantor. For more information, visit www.ogslp.org or www.studentaid.ed.gov or call 800.4.FED.AID.

FEDERAL FINANCIAL AID PROGRAMS

To apply for federal financial aid (grants, work-study and loans), you must complete a form called the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) as soon as possible after Jan. 1 during your senior year of high school and each year you need aid for college. The FAFSA is available online at www.fafsa.ed.gov, and families are encouraged to use this method of application (step-by-step instructions are provided on the site). Paper copies can be obtained directly from any college financial aid office or high school guidance counselor. Additional information is available at www.studentaid.ed.gov.

Federal Pell Grant

The Pell Grant is a need-based grant to help undergraduates pay for their education after high school. The award does not have to be repaid. An undergraduate is a student who has not earned a bachelor's or graduate degree. The maximum annual award for the 2009-10 academic year is \$5,350, but awards can be less depending on the student's actual financial need.

Federal Academic Competitiveness Grants

The Academic Competitiveness (AC) Grants are available to first- and second-year students who are also receiving the federal Pell Grant. First-year students can receive up to \$750 in addition to their Pell Grant, while second-year students can receive up to \$1,300. To be eligible, the student must be a U.S. citizen, must have completed a rigorous high school program of study and must be enrolled full time in the first or second year of a two- or four-year degree program. First-year students must have graduated on or after Jan. 1, 2006, and second-year students must have graduated on or after Jan. 1, 2005. In addition, second-year students must have a first-year grade point average (GPA) of at least 3.0. Additional information is available at www.studentaid.ed.gov.

National SMART (Science and Mathematics Access to Retain Talent) Grants

National SMART Grants are available to third- and fourth-year students who are also receiving a Pell Grant. The SMART Grant provides up to \$4,000 per year in addition to the student's Pell Grant. For programs that require five years, students can receive the SMART Grant for an additional year. To be eligible, the student must be a U.S. citizen, enrolled full-time in the third or fourth year of a four-year degree program, have a grade point average (GPA) of at least 3.0 and be majoring in physical, life or computer science, engineering, mathematics, technology, or a critical foreign language such as Arabic, Chinese, Korean,

Japanese or Russian. Additional information is available at www.studentaid.ed.gov.

Federal Supplemental Educational Opportunity Grants (FSEOG)

The FSEOG is an assistance program administered directly by the financial aid office at each participating school (a campus-based program). The FSEOG is gift aid for undergraduates with exceptional financial need. Pell Grant recipients with the lowest expected family contributions (EFC) will receive priority. The award amount can be between \$100 and \$4,000 per year.

Teacher Education Assistance for College and Higher Education (TEACH) Grant

The TEACH Grant, which began in July 2008, is authorized in the College Cost Reduction and Access Act. Enacted into law in fall 2007, it provides grants of \$16,000 (up to \$4,000 per year) to undergraduate students and \$8,000 for graduate students who intend to teach in hard-to-staff fields in a public or private elementary or secondary school that serves students from low-income families.

Federal Work-Study

The Federal Work-Study Program provides part-time jobs for undergraduate and graduate students with financial need, allowing them to earn money to help pay educational expenses. The program encourages community service employment and work related to the recipient's course of study. Payment is made by the hour for undergraduates. Graduates can be paid hourly or receive a salary. All students must be paid at least the federal minimum wage.

Federal Perkins Loans

Perkins Loans are low-interest (5 percent) loans for undergraduate, graduate and professional students with financial need. These loans are offered through a school's financial aid office, and the school acts as the lender. Up to \$4,000 may be borrowed for each year of undergraduate study, while up to \$6,000 may be borrowed for each year of graduate or professional study.

Federal Subsidized Stafford Loans

Federal Subsidized Stafford Loans are low-interest, need-based loans made to students attending school at least half time. Loans are made by a lender such as a bank, credit union, or savings and loan association. Most loans are insured by a guarantee agency and reinsured by the federal government. Interest is paid by the federal government while the borrower is attending school, during the six-month grace period and during specified loan deferment periods. Repayment begins six months following a borrower's graduation or when the borrower ceases to be enrolled at least half time.

Federal Unsubsidized Stafford Loans

Federal Unsubsidized Stafford Loans are low-interest, non-need-based loans made to students attending school at least half time. Borrowers are responsible for all interest accrued on unsubsidized

loans from the date the loan is disbursed, including the time that the borrower attends school, during the grace period and during periods of deferment. Repayment begins six months following the borrower's graduation or when the borrower ceases to be enrolled at least half time.

Federal PLUS Loans

Federal PLUS Loans are made to parents of dependent undergraduate students and to graduate or professional students. These loans are not based on financial need. The amount that can be borrowed depends on the school's cost of attendance and any other financial aid that the student may receive, including other loans. Applicants with unfavorable credit histories are usually not eligible for a Federal PLUS loan. Repayment varies depending on the type of PLUS loan awarded and the loan's disbursement date.

OKLAHOMA COLLEGE SAVINGS PLAN

The Oklahoma College Savings Plan provides families with a smart, flexible way to save for their children's future. The plan offers a choice of investment options, tax advantages and the flexibility of using the savings at any qualified higher education institution both in the United States and abroad.

Advantages of Using the Oklahoma College Savings Plan to Save for College

Easy to Enroll - New accounts can now be opened online at www.ok4saving.org. Account owners can also make additional contributions or view their account balances online.

Flexibility in Using the Funds - Whether the child decides to go to a private or public college or university, graduate school or any qualified post-secondary institution, funds in the account may be used at any eligible educational institution in the nation and abroad. The savings may be applied toward tuition as well as related expenses, such as books, supplies, required fees, and certain room and board costs.

Choice of Investments - The Oklahoma College Savings Plan offers six investment choices: a core Managed Allocation Option; Guaranteed Option; 100% Equity Option; Diversified Equity Option; Fixed Income Option; and a Balanced Option. These choices vary in their investment strategy and degree of risk, allowing participants to select the option or options that best fit their needs and investment philosophy. A full description of these investment options is provided in the Program Disclosure Booklet available from the Oklahoma College Savings Plan.

No Income Limits - Parents, grandparents, relatives and friends at any income level may open an account and contribute to the plan on behalf of a beneficiary.

Tax Advantages - The amount a person contributes can be deducted from their Oklahoma taxable income up to a maximum of \$10,000 for single filers or \$20,000 married couples filing

jointly. Contributions will grow free from federal and state income taxes, leaving more money than a similar taxable account. Withdrawals used for qualified expenses will also be free from federal and state income taxes.

Low Minimum Contribution - An account may be opened with a \$100 check or money order, electronic funds transfer or automatic contribution plan. Contributions as small as \$15 per investment option per pay period can be made using payroll deduction through participating employers. Each account can have only one account owner and one beneficiary. However, separate accounts can be opened for as many different beneficiaries as the participant may wish.

Contribution Limit - There is no annual limit on the amount that may be contributed to an account. However, a lifetime limit applies. In general, a participant may contribute to an account if at the time of the contribution the total balance of all accounts for the beneficiary does not exceed \$300,000. The account may continue to grow beyond this limit based on the performance of the investment option(s) that have been selected.

Transferability - If the child or beneficiary decides not to attend a post-secondary institution, the account owner can transfer funds in the account to another eligible beneficiary. To avoid penalty and income tax, the new beneficiary must be a member of the family of the original beneficiary, including siblings, a spouse, first cousins, etc. (as described in the Program Disclosure Booklet).

Professional Money Management - The Oklahoma College Savings Plan is administered by a board of trustees chaired by the State Treasurer of Oklahoma. TIAA-CREF Tuition Financing Inc. (TFI) serves as program manager of the Oklahoma College Savings Plan. TFI, an SEC-registered investment advisor, manages the plan's investments and provides investment advisory services. TFI is a wholly owned subsidiary of Teachers Insurance and Annuity Association (TIAA), an insurance company headquartered in New York. TIAA and its companion organization CREF form a nationally recognized financial services organization with more than \$380 billion in assets under management.

Low Cost - An annual asset-based management fee will be paid to TFI to cover the cost of investment management and administrative services. For the Managed Allocation Option and the 100% Equity Option this fee will not exceed 0.65 percent of the average daily net assets so invested, plus the specific investment management fees for the underlying Mutual Funds as disclosed in the Mutual Funds prospectus. For the Guaranteed Option, TFI will be paid a separate expense fee.

For More Information

Oklahoma College Savings Plan
877.OK4SAVING (877.654.7284)
www.ok4saving.org

FEDERAL HOPE (AMERICAN OPPORTUNITY) AND LIFETIME LEARNING TAX CREDITS

If you're paying for your or your dependent's college education, there are two tax credits available for you – the Hope (American Opportunity) and the Lifetime Learning credits. For tax years 2009 and 2010, the federal American Recovery and Reinvestment Act replaced the Hope Credit with the American Opportunity Credit.

What's a Tax Credit?

A tax credit is better than a deduction. A credit is subtracted directly from your federal income tax on a dollar-for-dollar basis. This saves you more money than a deduction, which you subtract from your income before you calculate your tax and which yields much less than dollar-for-dollar savings.

Who Gets to Claim the Credit?

If someone claims the student as a dependent for tax purposes, that person, not the student, may receive the tax credit, even if the student files a tax return. Otherwise, only the student may receive the credit.

What's the Difference Between the Credits?

During 2009 and 2010, the American Opportunity Credit can be claimed for each of the first two years of college or career technology school for classes that lead to a degree or recognized certificate. The student must be enrolled at least half time to qualify for the American Opportunity Credit. The Lifetime Learning Credit is available for any postsecondary education, including graduate and professional school, and unlike the American Opportunity Credit, there is no minimum enrollment. If you qualify for both credits, it will usually be to your advantage to claim the American Opportunity Credit.

What College Costs Qualify?

Qualified expenses include tuition and required fees, minus any grants and scholarships that are received tax-free. Expenses for books and supplies are not included unless they must be paid to the institution as a condition of enrollment. The costs of room and board, insurance, transportation and medical fees (including health fees) are not qualified expenses, even if required for enrollment.

What's the American Opportunity Tax Credit Worth?

The amount of the credit equals 100 percent of the first \$1,100 of qualified expenses plus 50 percent of the second \$1,100, for a maximum of \$1,650.

What's the Lifetime Learning Credit Worth?

Beginning in 2003, the credit equals 20 percent of the first \$10,000 of qualified expenses, for a maximum of \$2,000. Unlike the American Opportunity Credit, this will not be adjusted for inflation.

Is There an Income Limit?

Single tax filers with up to \$47,000 of adjusted gross income (AGI) and joint tax filers with up to \$94,000 of AGI qualify for the full credit. It is gradually phased out for single filers in the \$47,000-\$57,000 range and for joint filers in the \$94,000-\$114,000 range, and it is not available for those whose income exceeds the upper limit of those ranges.

How Is the Phaseout Calculated?

If you are a single filer with an adjusted gross income between \$47,000-\$57,000, or a joint filer in the \$94,000-\$114,000 range, the credit is reduced by the percentage of the phaseout range your income exceeds.

It's Easy to Claim the Credit!

- The college will send the student IRS Form 1098-T, Tuition Payments Statement, which will report the tuition and related expenses paid for the student.
- The person claiming the credit needs to fill out IRS Form 8863 and attach the form to his or her federal tax return. You can call 800.829.3676 to order the form. It is a worksheet that will help to calculate the amount of the American Opportunity or Lifetime Learning credit that will be claimed on the return.

Other Points to Remember

- Married couples must file a joint tax return in order to be eligible for either credit.
- Only one credit may be claimed per student per year.
- A student who has been convicted of a felony drug offense is not eligible for the American Opportunity Credit.
- A student who has benefited from a tax-free distribution from an Education IRA is not eligible for either tax credit.
- A family with more than one student may qualify for more than one credit in a year. An American Opportunity Credit may be claimed for each student who qualifies. However, the Lifetime Learning Credit is claimed on a per taxpayer (family) basis. That means that the Lifetime Learning Credit may be claimed only once per year by a taxpayer, although it may cover more than one student in a family as long as the maximum value of the credit is not exceeded.

For More Information

IRS Help Line

800.829.1040

IRS Publication 970, Tax Benefits for Higher Education

www.irs.gov or consult your tax adviser.

For more information, call the Student Information Hotline at 800.858.1840 (225.9239 in Oklahoma City), e-mail studentinfo@osrhe.edu or visit www.OKcollegestart.org.