



GEAR UP Virginia

2006-2012





GEAR UP Virginia Scholarship

What is the GEAR UP Virginia Scholarship?

A **competitive** college financial aid program available to eligible GEAR UP students who demonstrate high financial need.



What are the eligibility requirements?

To be eligible for consideration for a GEAR UP VA Scholarship, a student must:

- A. Have been a member of the original 7th grade GEAR UP class in 2006-07
- B. Have a signed student information release form on file at SCHEV
- C. Be an active participant in GEAR UP-endorsed activities
- D. Receive a high school diploma from a participating GEAR UP high school by August 31, 2012 and have a cumulative grade point average of 2.0 or above as of the end of fall 2011

Eligibility Requirements cont'd

- E. Submit a completed GEAR UP Virginia award application and all required documents by the determined deadline
- F. Be accepted and enrolled at least half-time in a degree, diploma, or certificate program at an eligible institution no later than the fall 2013 term
- G. Be eligible for the Pell grant as determined by the U.S. Department of Education
- H. Successfully complete a Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) and be awarded a Pell grant



Definition of an Eligible Institution

An eligible institution is one that:

- 1) is physically located in the state of Virginia, accredited, and recognized by SCHEV
- 2) participates in Title IV federal student financial assistance programs
- 3) agrees to participate in the GEAR UP Virginia Scholarship program

Exceptions: Students may receive the scholarship at an otherwise eligible institution located in a state that borders Virginia – NC, TN, KY, WV, and MD (including DC) or students interested in academic programs not offered in Virginia may be eligible to receive the scholarship at an institution that participates in the Academic Common Market (ACM) program and otherwise meets requirements above.



How are scholarship recipients selected?

Applications will be available during senior year. All students who submit an application with required documents by the deadline will first be considered for a scholarship.

A scholarship committee will review each application packet and take into consideration each student's financial need, cumulative GPA through fall 2011, participation record, essay, and recommendation letter to determine recipients.

Scholarship award letters will be mailed to each recipient.

Scholarship Selection Components

Ranked in order of importance:

- 1) Financial need
- 2) Cumulative grade point average
- 3) Participation
- 4) Student essay
- 5) Recommendation letter



Scholarship Length and Award Amount

An eligible recipient may only use this scholarship for up to 5 years or the granting of their first bachelor's degree, whichever comes first.

Students may be eligible to receive a scholarship equal to the maximum Pell grant award as determined by Congress each academic year. This award amount will vary depending on the student's enrollment and financial aid information.



GEAR UP Virginia Achievement Grant

GEAR UP Virginia Achievement Grant

A **one-time grant** available to eligible GEAR UP students who are not eligible to receive the scholarship. Financial need is not required for this grant, but will be considered.





What are the eligibility requirements?

Grant eligibility requirements are the same as the scholarship, except that students do not have to be eligible for a Pell grant to be considered.

Students will still have to attend an eligible institution as defined by GEAR UP to receive this grant.



How are grant recipients selected?

Applications will be available during senior year. All students who submit an application with required documents by the deadline and not eligible to receive the scholarship will automatically be considered for this one-time grant.

The scholarship committee will review each application packet and consider each student's financial need, cumulative GPA through fall 2011, participation record, essay, and recommendation letter to determine recipients.

Award letters will be mailed to each grant recipient.

Grant Selection Components

Ranked in order of importance:

- 1) Financial need (not required)
- 2) Cumulative grade point average
- 3) Participation
- 4) Student essay
- 5) Recommendation letter



Grant Length and Award Amount

Students who are eligible to receive the grant could receive an estimated \$750 one-time award to use during the 2012-13 or 2013-14 academic year of postsecondary education. The award amount may vary depending on the financial aid information verified by the institution.



Frequently Asked Questions About Scholarship and Grant

How do students know if they are eligible for the federal Pell grant?

Pell grant eligibility is determined by the information the student provides on the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA). The Expected Family Contribution (EFC) determines the student's Pell grant eligibility.

Are non-Pell students eligible for this scholarship?

Only students who are eligible to receive a Pell grant are eligible for consideration for a scholarship; however, all students are encouraged to apply as they may be eligible for a GEAR UP Virginia Achievement Grant.

Frequently Asked Questions About Scholarship and Grant

Is the scholarship renewable?

The scholarship is renewable based on the availability of funds, provided that students enroll by the fall 2013 academic term and continue to meet all requirements.

Is the grant renewable?

The grant is not renewable; however, students have the option to use this grant during the 2012-13 or 2013-14 academic year of postsecondary education.

How are scholarship and grants awarded?

Awards will be forwarded directly to participating institutions on behalf of eligible students shortly after verification of enrollment and financial aid information is received from the institution each academic term.



Important Notes



- Scholarships and grants are contingent upon available funding and changes to the federal guidelines and are not guaranteed.
- The number of scholarships and grants awarded will depend upon how many eligible students apply and the availability of funds.
- Scholarships and grants do not have to be repaid.
- Scholarship recipients cannot also receive an Achievement Grant.
- Participation counts! Students are encouraged to participate in all GEAR UP activities. Participation will be based on what is reported by the high school.

Important Notes (cont'd)

- Students will submit one application with required documents and the scholarship committee will determine which award (if any) the student is eligible to receive.
- Students who decide not to enroll at an institution immediately after graduation, but enroll by fall 2013 academic term, are still required to complete a FAFSA (during 2012) for their initial application.
- Students who receive an initial scholarship or grant award letter will be considered *provisionally* eligible until their postsecondary institution completes our verification process of enrollment and financial aid information.

Helpful Links

GEAR UP Virginia – www.gearupva.com

State Council of Higher Education for VA – www.schev.edu

Student Aid on the Web – www.studentaid.ed.gov

FinAid – www.finaid.org

FAFSA – www.fafsa.ed.gov

FastWeb – www.fastweb.com

I am the One – www.i-am-the-one.com

Virginia Wizard – www.vawizard.org

Questions



Contact Information:

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State Council of
Higher Education for Virginia