

# CHAPTER 17

## GEAR UP SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM

### Overview

The Gaining Early Awareness and Readiness for Undergraduate Programs (GEAR UP) Scholarship is a statewide non need-based scholarship program that assists students in the GEAR UP Iowa cohort with the cost of postsecondary education. Recipients must have been in the official GEAR UP Iowa cohort scheduled to graduate high school in Spring 2014. Awards are prorated for students enrolling on a less than full-time basis.

**Date Established:** July 2013

### Funding:

GEAR UP FUNDING HISTORY	
ACADEMIC YEAR	TOTAL FUNDING
2013-14 through 2018-19	\$17,000,000*

\*the total amount of funding for the GEAR UP Iowa Scholarship is anticipated to reach approximately \$17 million. The funding will be spent over consecutive years until depleted.

### A. ELIGIBILITY

#### 1. College and University

Colleges and universities must meet the definition of 'institution of higher education' as defined in section 102 of the Higher Education Act of 1965. Colleges and universities may be located outside of Iowa; out-of-state colleges and universities will be required to complete written enrollment verification prior to disbursement of Scholarship awards.

#### 2. Student

To receive a GEAR UP Scholarship, students must:

- Be United States citizens or nationals, or

- Be U.S. permanent residents or other eligible noncitizens (as stipulated for Federal Student Aid Eligibility).
- Be currently enrolled or planning to enroll at least part-time (3 hours minimum) in a Title IV-eligible diploma, certificate, associate or undergraduate degree program at an institution of higher education.
- File a Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA).
- Be under the age of 22 the first time they receive a GEAR UP Scholarship award.
- Students must be making Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) as defined by college or university standards.
- Students can't be in default on Federal Family Education Loans, Federal Direct Student Loans, Perkins/National Direct/National Defense Student Loans or any other federal student loans, or owe repayment on any Title IV assistance.

## **B. STUDENT APPLICATION PROCESS**

For the 2014-15 academic year, students must file Free Applications for Federal Student Aid (FAFSAs) as described in Chapter 1.

There is no filing deadline for the GEAR UP Scholarship; awards will be made throughout the 2014-15 academic year as student applications are received.

Students attending an out-of-state college or university must contact Iowa College Aid to request a paper application.

## **C. SELECTION OF RECIPIENTS**

Scholarships are awarded by the Commission to applicants who participated in the official GEAR UP cohort and who are attending college during the 2014-15 academic year. The student's participation in the GEAR UP cohort will be verified by GEAR UP Iowa staff located at the Commission.

College and university officials can access a roster of GEAR UP Scholarship recipients by logging in to the Scholarship and Grant Reporting System, clicking on Reports and selecting the GEAR UP Students report. College and university officials should use the awarding instructions in this chapter, in conjunction with general guidance in Chapters 1 – 3, to award GEAR UP Scholarships.

## D. AWARD AMOUNTS AND LIMITS

GEAR UP Scholarship recipients are eligible to receive maximum awards of \$2,600 for academic year 2014-15. The full-time GEAR UP Scholarship award is \$1,300 per semester. For students attending quarter schools, the maximum full-time award is \$867 per quarter. Awards may not exceed cost of attendance. These awards are not subject to the Commission's gift aid regulations (Chapter 2), as the award can cover a recipient's EFC.

Payments are credited to student accounts on a per term basis by college or university officials.

Eligible students who do not receive the maximum award during the 9-month academic year may receive additional funding for summer (up to the maximum annual award).

The following chart provides the maximum GEAR UP Iowa Scholarship allowed per enrollment level based on a maximum annual award of **\$2,600**.

Enrollment level	Semester Program Maximum Award			Quarter Program Maximum Award		
	Fall	Winter	Spring	Fall	Winter	Spring
Full-time	\$1,300	\$0	\$1,300	\$867	\$867	\$866
Three-Quarter Time	\$975	\$0	\$975	\$650	\$650	\$650
Half-Time	\$650	\$0	\$650	\$434	\$433	\$433
Less-than-half-time	\$325	\$0	\$325	\$217	\$217	\$216

## E. AWARD NOTIFICATION

Colleges and universities will provide award notices to GEAR UP Scholarship recipients. Award notices will clearly indicate award amounts and will include the following award notification statement:

**“In the event that available state funds are insufficient to pay the full amount of each approved grant, the Iowa College Student Aid Commission has the authority to administratively reduce the award.”**

## **F. RENEWAL ELIGIBILITY**

The student must file a FAFSA for each year they want to be considered for a GEAR UP Scholarship. Students attending an out-of-state college or university must contact Iowa College Aid to request a paper application.

Students may renew their GEAR UP Scholarship provided they file the appropriate application(s), meet their college/university Satisfactory Academic Progress policies and GEAR UP Scholarship funding remains available.

## **G. CHANGES/CORRECTIONS**

Any award changes must be provided by college and university staff to the Commission electronically via the State Scholarship and Grant Reporting System (see Chapter 3 and Appendix A).

## **H. VERIFICATION/COMPLIANCE**

College officials are responsible for completing required federal verification procedures and for coordinating all aid to ensure compliance with student eligibility and allowable award amounts.

For students selected for federal verification, one disbursement of state-funded student financial aid may be made prior to completing the verification process as long as college or university officials have no reason to believe application information is inaccurate. If students become ineligible for aid due to verification activities, refunds must be made to state-funded programs.