

Robert C. Byrd Honors Scholarship

A scholarship of up to \$1,500* for academically exceptional students who become high school graduates in the same year eligibility is determined. Eligibility is determined by a formula based on standardized test scores and high school performance.

- ▶ **Enrollment requirements** — Full time at the undergraduate level for a maximum of 4 academic years.
- ▶ **Where to use it** — Public and private 2- and 4-year colleges, universities, hospital schools and certain other degree-granting institutions.
- ▶ **When and how to apply** — Illinois high schools automatically certify qualified students.

*Awarding of scholarships subject to federal funding.

Illinois Special Education Teacher Tuition Waiver (SETTW)

A tuition waiver program for individuals pursuing initial certification in any area of special education as public, private, or parochial preschool, elementary or secondary nonprofit school teachers in Illinois. The waiver exempts recipients from paying tuition and mandatory fees if they commit to begin teaching in the field of special education within 1 year of leaving college, and continue to teach at least 2 of the 5 years immediately following. If the teaching commitment is not fulfilled, recipients must repay a prorated amount, plus interest. Students scheduled to graduate from high school must have performed in the upper half of their high school graduating class; additionally, ACT and SAT scores are used in determining their eligibility.

- ▶ **Enrollment requirements** — No minimum enrollment requirements; recipients must be seeking initial certification in any area of special education at the undergraduate or graduate level. The waiver may be received for up to 4 calendar years.
- ▶ **Where to use it** — Illinois public 4-year universities offering programs in special education.
- ▶ **When and how to apply** — Apply using the *Illinois Special Education Teacher Tuition Waiver Application* by March 1st before the academic year for which assistance is requested.

Minority Teachers of Illinois (MTI) Scholarship

A scholarship of up to \$5,000 per year for tuition, fees and room and board charges for students of African American/Black, Hispanic American, Native American, or Asian American origin who plan to become teachers. Recipients must sign a teaching commitment to teach (at a nonprofit Illinois public, private or parochial preschool, elementary or secondary school with at least 30 percent minority enrollment) 1 year for each year assistance is received. If the teaching commitment is not fulfilled, recipients must repay a prorated amount, plus interest.

- ▶ **Enrollment requirements** — At least half time at the undergraduate or graduate level.
- ▶ **Where to use it** — Illinois public and private 2- and 4-year colleges, universities and certain other degree-granting institutions.
- ▶ **When and how to apply** — Apply using the online *Teacher Education Scholarship Programs Application* by March 1st before the academic year for which assistance is requested.

Illinois Future Teacher Corps (IFTC)

A scholarship for academically talented students who plan to pursue careers as preschool, elementary and secondary school teachers in Illinois public, private or parochial nonprofit schools. Students with financial need, minority students and those planning to teach in a teacher shortage discipline and/or in a hard-to-staff school will receive awarding priority. Based on the teaching commitment made, awards may be up to \$5,000 or \$10,000 per year for payment of tuition, fees, room and board. If the teaching commitment is not fulfilled, recipients must repay a prorated amount, plus interest.

- ▶ **Enrollment requirements** — At least half time as juniors or above in a course of study leading to initial teacher certification or in additional courses needed to gain approval to teach.
- ▶ **Where to use it** — Illinois public and private 4-year colleges, universities and certain other degree-granting institutions.
- ▶ **When and how to apply** — Apply using the online *Teacher Education Scholarship Programs Application* by March 1st before the academic year for which assistance is requested.

Nurse Educator Scholarship Program (NESP)

A scholarship that pays tuition and fees, as well as a stipend of up to \$10,000, for nurses and academically talented students pursuing a career in professional or practical nursing education. Recipients must sign an agreement to teach in Illinois in the field of nursing education. If the teaching commitment is not fulfilled, the recipient must repay a prorated amount, plus interest.

- ▶ **Enrollment requirements** — At least half time at the graduate level in a professional or practical nursing education program.
- ▶ **Where to use it** — Illinois colleges with graduate level professional or practical nursing education programs.
- ▶ **When and how to apply** — Apply using the *Nurse Educator Scholarship Program Application* by March 1st before the academic year for which assistance is requested.

Merit Recognition Scholarship (MRS)*

A one-time \$1,000 scholarship for students who had performed in the top 5 percent of their Illinois high school class at the end of the third semester prior to graduation, or who scored in the top 5 percent of Illinois students taking one of the college entrance tests during the same time frame. The award must be used within one year of high school graduation.

- ▶ **Enrollment requirements** — At least half time at the undergraduate level.
- ▶ **Where to use it** — Illinois public and private 2- and 4-year colleges, universities, hospital schools, certain other degree-granting institutions and any of the four approved U.S. Military Service Academies.
- ▶ **When and how to apply** — Illinois high schools automatically certify qualified students.

*Scholarships awarded based on available funding.

Federal Stafford Loan Program (subsidized and unsubsidized)

Subsidized — a need-based loan with annual amounts ranging from \$3,500 for freshmen to \$8,500 for graduate students. The federal government pays the interest during in-school, grace and deferment periods. Repayment begins 6 months after the student drops below half-time attendance.

Unsubsidized — a non-need based loan with annual amounts ranging from \$5,500 for freshmen to \$7,500 for seniors. Independent students (including graduate students), students whose parents don't qualify for a Federal PLUS loan, and students who the financial aid administrator judges to be eligible may borrow annual amounts that range from \$9,500 for freshmen to \$20,500 for graduate students. Repayment of interest is the responsibility of the borrower. Interest begins to accrue on the date of disbursement and can be paid or added to the principal balance of the loan. Repayment of principal begins 6 months after the student drops below half-time attendance.

For both programs — Eligibility for a subsidized loan is determined first, then for an unsubsidized loan. Loan limits apply to a combination of subsidized and unsubsidized loans, may not exceed the amount recommended by the college, and will be lower for undergraduate academic programs which are less than one year. The interest rate on subsidized undergraduate loans is fixed at 5.6%; unsubsidized undergraduate and all graduate loans are fixed at 6.8%. Previous loans at a variable rate will remain variable, with the rate changing every July 1st. Although other payment plans are available, the repayment period is typically up to 10 years.

- ▶ **Enrollment requirements** — At least half time at the undergraduate or graduate level.
- ▶ **Where to use it** — Public and private 2- and 4-year colleges, universities and hospital and vocational schools participating in FFELP.
- ▶ **When and how to apply** — Apply using the FAFSA as soon after January 1st before the academic year as possible.

