

RULES AND REGULATIONS
For Administering the
ARKANSAS HIGH-TECH SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM
Under Act 86, Extraordinary Session of 1983

I. PURPOSE OF PROGRAM

The Arkansas High-Tech Scholarship Program was designed to assist Arkansas' high school graduates who demonstrate superior academic ability and leadership capabilities to attend approved high technology programs at public and private institutions of postsecondary education in Arkansas.

II. AUTHORIZATION

Act 86 of the Extraordinary Session of 1983 provided for the Arkansas High-Tech Scholarship Program and gave administrative responsibility for the program to the Vocational and Technical Education Division of the Arkansas Department of Education.

III. ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

To be eligible to receive the High-Tech Scholarship, a student must meet the following requirements:

- A. The recipient must be accepted for enrollment as a full-time student in an approved high technology program at an Arkansas public or private postsecondary institution.
- B. The student must be a bona fide resident of the State of Arkansas prior to graduation from high school. Preference will be given to students who use their award the same year they graduate from high school.
- C. The student must be a citizen of the United States or a permanent resident alien.
- D. The student must meet minimum qualifications of superior academic ability established for the High-Tech Scholarship Program by the Vocational and Technical Education Division.
- E. The student must demonstrate superior achievement, ability, and leadership capabilities.

The scholarship shall be awarded for one academic year and renewed annually if the student maintains not less than a 3.0 grade point average on a 4.0 scale and meets other criteria as established by the Vocational and Technical Division. No student may utilize these funds for educational purposes beyond completion of the approved technical program in which he/she enrolls. The scholarships will be terminated if the students do not complete the approved technical program in which they enroll within four years from initial entrance.

IV. DEFINITIONS

A. Academic Ability

"Academic ability" means the intellectual standing of a student. In determining superior academic ability, the Division will examine the student's high school records, competitive examination scores, and demonstrated leadership capabilities.

B. Approved High Technology Program

"Approved high technology program" means a course of instruction in a highly technical field offered by a public or private postsecondary education institution, and which has been approved by the Vocational and Technical Education Division of the Department of Education.

C. Approved Institution

"Approved institution" means a public or private postsecondary educational institution offering high technology programs approved by the Vocational and Technical Education Division of the Department of Education. The approved institution shall be nationally or state accredited by North Central Association or the State Board of Vocational Education.

D. Division

"Division" means the Vocational and Technical Education Division of the Arkansas Department of Education.

E. Full-time Student

"Full-time student" means a resident of Arkansas who is in attendance at an approved public or private institution, and who is enrolled in at least twelve (12) semester hours or such other reasonable academic equivalent as defined by the Division.

F. Scholarship

"Scholarship" means an award to an eligible student for matriculation in an approved institution in the State of Arkansas.

G. Competitive Examination

"Competitive examination" means a standardized examination, measuring achievement, that is administered annually on a specified date at a specified location announced publicly.

-2-

H. Arkansas Residency

To be considered an Arkansas resident for this program, a dependent student must have

parents who reside within the state for at least six months directly prior to the deadline date and be classified as residents who pay taxes, vote, and have Arkansas licenses, etc. If a student does not meet this requirement, there are several circumstances under which the student may be classified as an Arkansas resident for High-Tech Scholarship purposes. These circumstances are as follows:

1. If the student graduated from an accredited high school in Arkansas, the student is considered an Arkansas resident if the student's parent (or guardian) is on active military duty in another state or country but entered upon active duty in the United States military service as a resident of the State of Arkansas and if Arkansas continues to be this person's permanent place of residence.
2. The student is considered an Arkansas resident if the student graduates from an accredited high school in Arkansas and the student's parent (or guardian) is stationed and resides in the State of Arkansas while on active duty in the United States military service.

I. United States Citizen or Permanent Resident Alien

To receive this grant, the student must either be a United States citizen or a permanent resident alien. If the student is not a United States citizen but a permanent resident alien, the student must attach a copy of the permanent resident alien form I-151 or I-551 to the application.

V. SCHOLARSHIP AMOUNT

The annual monetary award for the High-Tech Scholarship is five hundred dollars \$500.

VI. DEADLINE DATE

The deadline date for receipt of applications for the High-Tech Scholarship Program is annually on July 1. All applications must be received by the Vocational and Technical Education Division by the established deadline date in order to be considered for the High-Tech Scholarship.

VII. APPLICATION PROCESS

High-Tech Scholarship application forms are provided to high school guidance counselors or principals by the Vocational and Technical Education Division. Application forms may also be obtained by request from the Vocational and Technical Education Division. The application is to be completed by the applicant, the applicant's parent or legal guardian, and the applicant's high school principal or counselor. Specific instructions are printed on the application form.

A. Minimum Academic Standards

1. The student must have achieved a minimum high school grade point average of 2.5 on a 4.0 scale based on seven semesters.
2. The student must either have a minimum ACT composite score of 19; or, at least 730 on the SAT combined verbal and math (if the ACT score is not available); or, be ranked in the upper ten percent of his/her high school graduating class.

B. Submitting Applications

Graduates from accredited Arkansas high schools planning to enroll full-time in an approved high technology program at an Arkansas public or private postsecondary institution who meet the eligibility requirements and minimum academic standards may apply.

C. Selection Criteria

The High-Tech Scholarship selection criteria consists of value points for academic achievement and leadership including but not limited to ACT composite score, grade point average, rank in class, courses taken, and school and community leadership. High school records and competitive examination scores are supplied by high school counselors or principals who verify the scores by signing in their official capacity. ACT examinations may be taken more than one time. The highest composite score from any one examination will be used. After processing the applications, the top twenty students will be named High-Tech Scholarship recipients.

VIII. AWARDING SCHOLARSHIPS

A. Number of Scholarships

The number of High-Tech Scholarships awarded shall not exceed 20 each year.

B. Award Notice

The new applicants who are chosen as High-Tech Scholarship recipients will each be mailed an award notice. The award notice includes the actual amount the student will receive for each semester or quarter of the academic year; the student's high technology program and postsecondary institution choice as indicated on the application form; and the student's name, address and social security number. The award notice also explains disbursement and conditions of the High-Tech Scholarship. One copy of the award notice serves as an acceptance of the High-Tech Scholarship.

C. Acceptance

An acceptance, as provided on the award notice, of the High-Tech Scholarship award must be signed by the student and received by the Vocational and Technical Education Division by the date indicated. If the Division does not receive the signed acceptance of the High-Tech Scholarship by that date, the student will not receive the scholarship. The High-Tech Scholarship will then be offered to the student ranked the highest on the list of alternates.

IX. PAYMENT POLICIES

A. Duration of Scholarships

The scholarship shall be awarded for one academic year and renewed annually for up to three additional academic years if the student maintains not less than a 3.0 grade point average on a 4.0 scale.

NOTE: All funding for scholarships is contingent upon appropriations and funding by the General Assembly.

B. Payment of Scholarships

Warrants payable to High-Tech Scholarship recipients will be sent to the approved institutions of their choice. After verification as to eligibility, the institution will disburse the High-Tech Scholarship to the student according to the individual institution's disbursement procedures. The scholarship will correspond to academic terms, semesters, quarters, or equivalent time periods at the eligible institutions; in no instance may the entire amount of the grant for an educational year be paid to or on behalf of such students in advance.

C. Transfer to an Approved High-Tech Program at Another Postsecondary Institution

A student who has received a High-Tech Scholarship may transfer to an approved program at another postsecondary Arkansas institution, provided that the Vocational and Technical Education Division receives written notification as to the change of status by October 1 for the fall term and by February 1 for the spring term.

D. Change in Status

It is the responsibility of the High-Tech Scholarship recipient to promptly give written notification to the High-Tech Scholarship Program in care of the Vocational and Technical Education Division if there is any change in status. Such responsibility involves notification of withdrawal from school, change of residence, change in institution, name change, or any other change that would bear upon continued award eligibility.

E. Renewal of Scholarship

The High-Tech Scholarship may be renewed annually provided the recipient maintains satisfactory academic progress in an approved high technology program and meets other criteria as established by the Division. Students may not utilize these funds for educational purposes beyond completion of the approved high technology program in which they enroll. The scholarship will be terminated if the student does not complete the high technology program within four years from initial entrance. Scholarships are contingent upon appropriation and funding by the General Assembly.

F. Cancellation/Revocation of the Scholarship

Scholarship recipients may cancel their scholarships. Scholarship recipients who fail to meet all eligibility requirements or fail to give written notification of change of status before appropriate deadline dates will have their High-Tech Scholarships revoked.

G. Satisfactory Academic Progress

Scholarship recipients must maintain a minimum 3.0 grade point average on a 4.0 scale in the program in which they enroll.

H. Disbursement

Warrants payable to individual High-Tech Scholarship recipients will be sent by mail to the approved institutions of their choice as indicated on their accepted award notices. After verifying the High-Tech Scholarship recipient's eligibility, the designated disbursing officer at the institution will sign the DISBURSEMENT VOUCHER and return one copy to the Vocational and Technical Education Division. The institution must maintain records concerning disbursement of checks to individual High-Tech Scholarship recipients.

X. INSTITUTIONAL RESPONSIBILITIES

A. Administrative Agreement

An Administrative Agreement outlining all of the requirements of the institutions participating in the High-Tech Scholarship Program will be obtained from each institution and kept on file in the Vocational and Technical Education Division. This document will be updated as necessary. The institution must comply with the following responsibilities in order to maintain continued eligibility status. The chief executive officer of the eligible institution is responsible for appointing one representative from the financial aid office to act as administrator of the Arkansas High-Tech Scholarship Program and to receive all communications, forms, etc. This representative is responsible for the High-Tech Scholarship disbursement, completing all forms, verification of data, complying with all High-Tech Scholarship rules and regulations.

B. Disbursement Records

In addition to maintaining records, it is the responsibility of the institution to insure that a High-Tech Scholarship recipient's signature acknowledging the amount of scholarship funds awarded and/or received is maintained at the institution. The institution shall maintain information on the student indicating (that he/she does acknowledge) disbursement of these funds.

C. Institutional Information Sheet

The institution is required to complete annually the Institutional Information Sheet for the High-Tech Scholarship Program. The institutional representative must record the refund policy governing all students who completely withdraw from the institution and those who drop below full-time enrollment. The administrator is responsible for designating a certifying official responsible for certifying full-time enrollment and a disbursing official who is responsible for the disbursement of High-Tech Scholarship recipient's checks. This information sheet is due by annually by March 1. Any changes in institutional information after submission of the sheet should be promptly reported to the Division.

D. Notification to Division Concerning Student Ineligibility

The designated administrator of the High-Tech Scholarship Program is asked to notify the Division when a scholarship recipient has completed his/her high technology program, or is in any other way ineligible to receive scholarship support. The reporting of this information is imperative so that awards will be distributed only to those students who meet the necessary eligibility requirements.

E. Institutional Verification

The institution shall provide certification to the Division each semester after registration, giving the names of the High-Tech Scholarship recipients who are officially enrolled as full-time students, who meet the satisfactory academic progress regulations as established by the High-Tech Scholarship Program, and meet all other eligibility criteria as established by the Vocational and Technical Education Division. This information is reported on a verification roster. The person responsible for verification of full-time enrollment and satisfactory progress is the registrar or a member of his/her staff. The chosen certifying official is responsible for completing the verification roster twice a year for those schools on the semester system and three times a year for those schools on the quarter system. The verification roster will be mailed to the financial aid administrator at the time of registration for the semester or quarter. The signed High-Tech Scholarship recipient's verification roster should be returned to the Vocational and Technical Education Division by October 15 for the fall semester and March 15 for the spring semester. The verification roster is an alphabetical listing by institution of all persons receiving the High-Tech Scholarship for a given academic year. Students who do not meet all eligibility requirements in the current term may not receive scholarship benefits in that term period.

F. Deadlines for Check Disbursement

All checks must be disbursed by December 1 for the fall term and May 1 for the winter/spring terms. Any outstanding checks after May 1 must be returned to the Vocational and Technical Education Division for cancellation.

G. Refund Policy

Any student dropping below full-time enrollment or withdrawing from the institution owes a refund to the High-Tech Scholarship Program if the above action occurs before the end of the institutional tuition refund period. It is the institution's responsibility to notify the Division of the name of the person owing a refund, the date of the withdrawal and the refund amount. This information should be placed on the institution's verification roster before returning it to the Division.

H. Due Diligence

The institution will exercise due diligence in providing complete, accurate, and timely information as requested by the Division on any High-Tech Scholarship recipient or former recipient. In addition, the institution will exercise due diligence in complying with all the rules and regulations of the Arkansas High-Tech Scholarship Program.

Approved by the State Board of Vocational Education, October 1, 1993.