



Arkansas Department of Higher Education

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Asa Hutchinson
Governor

Maria Markham, Ph.D.
Director

April 28, 2017

Dear Counselors,

The 2017 legislative session brought about several changes that affect the way high school students receive state grants and scholarships. Because of these changes, the Arkansas Department of Higher Education extended the deadline for the YOUniversal application to June 15.

Arkansas Future (ARFuture), is the newest state grant program. The purpose of this grant is to increase the education and skills of Arkansas's workforce in an affordable manner. The grant applies to students enrolled in STEM or regional high demand areas of study. A list of eligible degree programs will be available on our website soon (scholarships.adhe.edu). In the meantime, students can check with the college or university they plan to attend for a list. The grant will cover tuition and fees for qualifying degree programs at Arkansas' public institutions for eligible students. The grant is available on a first come, first serve basis.

ARFuture includes a mentorship and community service component to encourage student engagement. Applications will be accepted through July 1 (for this grant only) on the YOUniversal application. NOTE: Students who have already completed the YOUniversal application have NOT been identified as being eligible for ARFuture. However, once the YOUniversal application system has been updated to include ARFuture, students will receive a follow-up email with instructions to update their YOUniversal account to determine their eligibility for ARFuture. The GO! Grant has been discontinued and replaced with the new ARFuture Grant Program.

Amendments to the law governing the Academic Challenge Scholarship Program changed the way students can use their Academic Challenge scholarship. Over the last year students may use credit hours earned while in high school to enter the scholarship program at a higher award level. While that is still the case, students now have the option to use their scholarship dollars for graduate school. Students who have concurrent credit and opt to enter the scholarship program at the first year award level of \$1,000 may still have remaining eligibility to use the scholarship towards graduate school. Also, due to ACT 315, our definition of "traditional student" has been expanded. Students who graduated high school and did not receive the Academic Challenge Scholarship in the year following high school graduation have an opportunity to apply for the Academic Challenge Scholarship as a "traditional student". In order to be eligible a student must enroll as a full-time, first-time freshman in the year immediately preceding high school graduation; complete twenty-seven (27) semester hours; and achieve a 2.5 postsecondary GPA.

The timeline for these changes has been ambitious and the implementation gradual. I appreciate your patience and understanding. If you have questions regarding the above mentioned changes, you can email ADHE at finaid@adhe.edu or call 501-371-2000.

Sincerely,

Jonathan Coleman,
Financial Aid Manager