NYS & CSEA Partnership

Finding Ways to Pay for Education

The NYS & CSEA Partnership for Education and Training is committed to helping CSEA-represented NYS employees find ways to fund their educational pursuits. This guide outlines helpful resources available to you for earning college credits and paying for school in more affordable ways.

The Partnership's educational advisors are available toll-free at (800) 253-4332 for individual confidential counseling in the areas of educational planning, alternative approaches to further education, educational financing, and basic education.

Other educational materials are also available on our website at www.nyscseapartnership.org.

We hope you will use these services and resources and wish you good luck in pursuing your educational goals.

Respectfully,

Lynda Scalzo
Co-Director

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Co-Director



Financing Your Education: A Quick Reference Guide

Many financial aid programs used by full-time students today may also be used by adult students who are pursuing degrees on a part-time basis. By combining funds from several programs, you may receive enough help to pay not only tuition but other costs like books, transportation, child care and more. A summary of the types of aid, steps in applying for aid, and other sources of information is provided below.

Types of Financial Aid for Working Adult Students

For these programs, applicants must meet requirements based on a number of factors including income, number of credit hours, grade point average and more. An absolute must when seeking financial aid is to talk with a financial aid counselor at your school to determine those programs for which you should apply.

Federal Grants and Scholarships

- **Federal Pell Grant Program** - This is a federal entitlement program and, if you are economically eligible, you will receive Pell.
- **Federal Supplemental Educational Opportunity Grant (FSEOG)** - This is a form of campus aid and is limited; contact your school Financial Aid Office early. Students who receive a Pell Grant and have the most financial need will receive FSEOG first.
- **Iraq and Afghanistan Service Grant** - For students whose parent or guardian died as a result of military service in Iraq and Afghanistan after September 11, 2001.
- **Teacher Education Assistance for College and Higher (TEACH) Education Grant** - For students who intend to teach in elementary or secondary schools that serve students from low income families or teach in a high-need field.

New York State Grants and Scholarships

- **Aid for Part-Time Study (APTS)** - For New York state residents taking three to 11 credits at participating institutions in New York state. Students should obtain an APTS application from the college they will be attending. Funds are limited, so apply early. Applicants must have resided in New York State for at least 12 continuous months prior to the start of the term and be in good academic standing.
- **Enhanced Tuition Awards** - This program provides tuition awards to state residents attending private colleges full time in New York State, making up to $125,000 annually.
- **Excelsior Scholarship** - A free tuition program for New York State residents attending SUNY or CUNY colleges, full time. Applicants must have a combined Federal adjusted gross income of $125,000 or less.
- **NYS Child Welfare Worker Incentive Scholarship** - This program grants awards for New York State residents who are child welfare workers employed at not-for-profit child welfare agencies licensed by the NYS Office of Children and Family Services (OCFS). Applicants may attend either a public or private college in New York State, full or part-time, and be in an approved program of study. Applicants must have two years of full time child care work experience and agree to work for five years after graduating from college at an OCFS licensed child welfare agency.
- **NYS Part-time Scholarship (PTS) Award** - This program provides scholarship awards up to $1,500 for up to four consecutive semesters to New York State residents who are attending a SUNY or CUNY community college, are taking between six and 11 credits per semester, and have maintained a minimum 2.0 grade point average.
- **Part-time TAP** - For eligible New York State residents attending colleges in New York on a part-time basis and who are taking between 6 and 12 credits per semester. Applicants must also have previously earned 12 credits or more in each of two consecutive semesters. You apply by submitting the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA). Part-time TAP is not the same as Aid for Part-time Study (APTS).
- **Tuition Assistance Program (TAP)** - You must complete the FAFSA and take a minimum of 12 credit hours and attend a college in New York State, and continue to make academic progress as defined by your college.

For more information about any of the above programs, visit www.hesc.ny.gov.

Federal Loans

- **Direct PLUS Loan** - Loans for parents of dependent undergraduate students and for graduate/professional students. Direct PLUS Loans help pay for educational expenses up to the cost of attendance , which have not already been covered by other financial assistance.
- **Federal Direct Loan** - A loan, through the Department of Education, with interest paid by the Federal government during student enrollment (subsidized). Subsidized loans are awarded based on financial need. If unsubsidized, the borrower is responsible for interest payments during enrollment. Unsubsidized loans are not based on financial need.
- **Public Service Loan Forgiveness (PSLF)** - This loan may be available for full-time public service workers who meet the eligibility requirements. After making 120 payments, the remaining balance of the loan may be forgiven. For more information, visit www.studentaid.ed.gov.
- **Direct Consolidation Loan** - Allows you to combine multiple federal education loans into one loan. The result is a single monthly payment instead of multiple payments.

  For more information about Federal Loans, visit https://studentaid.gov/understand-aid/types/loans.
- **Other Types of Private Loans** - Home equity loans, personal loans.

NYS Loan Forgiveness Programs

- **NYS Child Welfare Worker Loan Forgiveness Program** - Provides student loan forgiveness up to $10,000 per year for up to five years for NYS residents who agree to work as a child welfare worker at a child welfare agency licensed by OCFS for five years. Awards can be used to pay both undergraduate and graduate loans; applicants must apply within two years of their college graduation.
- **NYS Get on Your Feet Loan Forgiveness Program** - This program may be available for New York residents who graduated from a college in New York State in December 2014 or after, have an adjusted gross income less than $50,000, have a primary work location in New York (if employed), and are participating in a federal income driven repayment plan. If eligible, up to 24 months of payments may be forgiven. Applicants must apply within two years of their college graduation.

For more information about any of the above programs, visit www.hesc.ny.gov.

Steps in Applying for Federal Student Aid

1. Complete the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA). Applications may be submitted on or after October 1 for the following fall semester. It is recommended that you apply as soon as possible so you do not miss out on other aid. You can obtain the FAFSA form by going online at www.fafsa.ed.gov. Paper applications are available by calling (800) 433-3243 or (800) 730-8913 for hearing impaired.
2. Within three days to three weeks after submitting your FAFSA, you will receive a Student Aid Report (SAR) which summarizes the information you provided on your FAFSA. The SAR provides basic information on your eligibility for federal aid based on your responses on the FAFSA. These responses are entered into a federal formula to determine your Expected Family Contribution (EFC) - the amount of money the federal government has determined that you and your family can contribute to your education for one year. Your school determines the amount of financial aid you will receive for that year.
3. Contact your school to inquire about additional financial assistance programs and complete any supplemental financial aid forms required by your school.

Other Sources for Student Aid Information

- NYS Higher Education Services Corporation (HESC) can provide you with information about state financial aid programs and other grants and scholarships. For more information, visit www.hesc.ny.gov.
- College Goal NY events are held throughout New York State to help students and families complete the FAFSA online. To view the schedule of College Goal NY events, visit www.collegegoalny.org/event-locations.
- The U.S. Department of Education has a wealth of information about federal student aid. For more information, visit www.studentaid.ed.gov.
- The U.S. Department of Veteran's Affairs administers a variety of educational programs for veterans. For more information, visit www.va.gov.
- Public libraries are excellent sources of information on state, local, and private sources of aid. Other sources include: foundations, religious organizations, community organizations, and others from your field of interest. For example, American Medical Association, American Bar Association, and the U.S. Armed Services also offer financial aid opportunities.

Education Tax Credits

- An education tax credit helps defray the cost of higher education by reducing the amount of tax owed on a tax return.

Federal Tax Credits

- **American Opportunity Credit** - You can claim $2,500 for each eligible student for whom you paid at least $4,000 of qualified educational expenses. This is available for the first four years of post- secondary education.
- **Lifetime Learning Credit** - For tuition and fees only, no limit on years, no matriculation required, and no minimum credit requirements. Covers 20% of the first $10,000 of qualified education expenses paid per tax return.
- For more information on these tax credits, call (800) 829-1040 or visit the IRS website at www.irs.gov and download IRS Publication 970, Tax Benefits for Education.

NYS Tax Credit Program

- **College Tuition Credit or Deduction** - Available to New York State residents for undergraduate students, limited to $400 per eligible student for tuition only. For more information, visit www.tax.ny.gov (Form IT 272).

Information on Grants, Loans, and Scholarships

Some useful web resources are:

- www.collegegrants.org - Contains information about federal, state, and local grant programs that offer financial aid
- www.fedmoney.org - A guide to all U.S. government grants and student financial aid programs
- www.studentaid.ed.gov - Funding Your Education: The Guide to Federal Student Aid, U.S. Dept. of Education, Washington D.C.

Non-Traditional Ways to Finance Your Education

Credit-by-Exam Programs – Allows you to take tests and use the results at many schools to obtain college credits.

- College-Level Examination Program (CLEP) - www.collegeboard.com/clep
- DSST Subject Standardized Tests - www.getcollegecredit.com
- Excelsior College Examinations - www.excelsior.edu
- Thomas Edison College Examination Program - www.tesu.edu/degree-completion/testing

Credit for Prior Learning

Some colleges grant college credit for prior learning experience that is equivalent to college level learning. The college that you are getting your degree from makes the decision to award the credit. Contact a representative from your college for their policies about prior learning experiences.

- **National College Credit Recommendation Service (CCRS)** - Evaluates training and education programs outside of the typical classroom and translates them into college credit equivalencies. For more information, visit, www.nysed.gov/content/national-college-credit-recommendation.

Written Resources

- Scholarships, Grants, and Prizes by Peterson's
- Scholarship Handbook by The College Board

Free Matching Services for Scholarships

- College Board - www.collegeboard.org
- Fastweb - www.fastweb.com
- Scholarships.com - www.scholarships.com
- Union Plus - www.unionplus.org

Partnership Educational Advisors

Partnership advisors are available for individual confidential advisement in the areas of tuition benefits, financial aid, basic skills, nursing programs, starting or returning to college, and high school equivalency test preparation.

Advisors can be contacted at (518) 486-7814 , (800) 253-4332, or advisors@nyscseapartnership.org.