

National Scholarship

Frequently Asked Questions and Answers

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NATIONAL
SCHOLARSHIP

A PROGRAM OF THE DREAM.US

Frequently Asked Questions about TheDream.US¹ National Scholarship

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DACA or TPS Eligibility

Do I have to be eligible for DACA or TPS to apply for the Scholarship?

Yes. At this time, we require students to be eligible for the deferred action program in order to apply. You are eligible to apply if you have applied for or received DACA or TPS or if you complete and submit a Declaration of DACA Eligibility. This can be found on our website.

I am worried about applying for DACA because it might be eliminated and I do not want the Department of Homeland Security to have my information. What should I do?

Immigration rights experts **do not recommend** that you apply for DACA as a first-time applicant, since first-time DACA applications are not likely to be processed before the next administration takes office and you may be unnecessarily exposing yourself to the Department of Homeland Security. In place of applying for DACA, you can complete and submit the Declaration of DACA Eligibility as a part of your application.

¹ TheDream.US is a project of New Venture Fund, a 501(c)(3). International Scholarship and Tuition Services, Inc. (ISTS) administers the program. Awards are granted without regard to race, color, creed, religion, sexual orientation, gender, disability or national origin. TheDream.US reserves the right to review the conditions and procedures of this scholarship program and to make changes at any time, including termination of the program.

I am not DACA or TPS eligible. Should I go ahead and apply for DACA or TPS so I can apply for the scholarship?

No. If you are not DACA or TPS eligible you do not qualify for this scholarship and you should not apply for DACA or TPS approval.

If I am selected as a Scholar, do I have to have applied for or received DACA or TPS in order to receive the award?

Yes. You will need to have applied for or received DACA or TPS at the time you receive the award (unless TheDream.US specifically waives this requirement).

What if I receive the scholarship and then I find out that my DACA or TPS approval has been denied or not renewed?

If your DACA or TPS approval is denied or not renewed, you are not eligible for this scholarship. You would be allowed to complete the term in which you are enrolled at the time of the denial and you will not be required to repay any scholarship funds.

Will the scholarship cover the fee for applying for DACA or TPS?

No. Depending on where you live, there are local organizations that have grants and loan programs. See our resource guide.

Do I have to be a state resident in order to attend the Partner College in my state?

You must be eligible for in-state tuition if the college is a public institution. If you are not sure if you are eligible for in-state tuition, you should consult with the appropriate Partner College to determine their eligibility requirements.

High School Graduate or High School Equivalent Certificate

Do I have to be a current high school student to apply?

No. You can be (1) a current high school senior who will graduate with a GPA of 2.5 or greater by the end of the 2016-2017 academic year; (2) a high school graduate with a GPA of 2.5 or greater, or (3) a student who has earned or will earn a general education development diploma by the end of the 2016-2017 academic year with a score that is equivalent to a GPA of 2.5 or greater.

If I am currently attending a college, am I eligible?

No, unless you are enrolled in a pre-college or dual enrollment program.

I have earned college credits as a high school student or after high school. Am I eligible to apply?

Yes. Regardless of how many credits you have earned you are eligible to apply for the scholarship, so long as you have not been enrolled in college in the 2016-2017 academic year.

Do I have to be accepted into a Partner College before I can apply?

No. You can apply to a Partner College at the same time as you are applying for the Scholarship. However, ***in order to receive Scholarship funds you must be accepted and enrolled as an in-state (if applicable) student in that Partner College.***

Community College Graduate

Do I have to be a community college graduate to apply?

No. You can be (1) a current community college student who will graduate with a GPA of 3.0 or greater by the end of the 2016-2017 academic year; or (2) a community college graduate with a GPA of 3.0. You cannot be currently enrolled in a bachelor degree program.

Does it matter what Community College I graduate from?

Yes. The Community College must be an accredited institution of higher learning.

GPA Eligibility

How do I know if I have a GPA of 2.5 (High School Graduate) or 3.0 (Community College Graduate) better?

The 4.00 grading scale is standard at most high schools, colleges and universities. If your school assigns cumulative averages on a 100% scale, ISTS has a chart that can help you estimate your GPA. You may also ask an administrator or adviser at your school for assistance in converting your grades to a 4.00 grading scale.

How do I know if my GED score is the equivalent to a 2.5 (High School Graduate)?

ISTS will determine this after you apply.

Career-Ready Associate or Bachelor's Degree

How do I know whether or not my degree is a "career-ready degree"?

A career-ready degree is a degree that provides you with the knowledge and skills necessary for a career that provides a family-sustaining wage and pathways to advancement. We have not strictly defined this but a general education degree is not sufficient. Your Partner College will work with you to ensure that you choose a degree that will help you be career-ready.

Should I apply for an associate or bachelor's degree? Am I more likely to get the Scholarship if I apply for one or the other?

You should apply for the degree that best fits your educational plan and career goals. Your choice of an associate's or bachelor's degree is not considered in determining the quality of your education plan. What is important is that you have a thoughtful career plan that will enable you to fulfill your career goals.

Eligibility for Renewal

What do I have to do to continue to be eligible for my scholarship?

To continue to be eligible, you must:

- Maintain a cumulative GPA of “B” (3.0/4.0) or better in the program;
- Remain continuously enrolled;
- Remain current on all your college accounts and charges; and
- Remain DACA or TPS eligible and, if required, reapply for DACA or TPS approved status.

Do I have to reapply each year?

No, but you **must** renew your Scholarship each academic year. You will be asked to confirm your continuing eligibility and provide a copy of your official transcript, as well as to identify any other financial aid or scholarships that you are receiving. Note: If you do not renew by the indicated deadline, you will lose your scholarship.

Do I automatically lose my scholarship if my cumulative GPA falls below a 3.0?

If your Cumulative GPA is below a 3.0, you must work with your Scholar Advisor to develop a plan with strategies and resources that will help you improve your GPA. This plan might include an increase in the frequency of meetings and communications with your Scholar Advisor; tutoring; study groups; or other support services.

If your cumulative GPA is below a 3.0 at the time you renew your scholarship in June/July, you will be required to explain what actions you are taking to raise your GPA to a 3.0 or greater. You do not need to otherwise notify or reach out to TheDream.US or ISTS.

We will review your situation with your Scholar Advisor on an annual basis and determine whether you are making adequate progress. Note: If your GPA remains below a 2.0 for more than one academic year, we will terminate your scholarship.

Do I automatically lose my scholarship if I have to take a term off?

Once you have entered college, we expect that you will attend each academic term/semester (not including summers) until you complete your degree. If special circumstances make it necessary or advisable for you to leave college for a period of time, you must immediately notify both ISTS and your Scholar Advisor by email and explain the reason for your leave of absence and the date you will return. You cannot have a break in enrollment for more than two terms.

Your scholarship payments will resume when you return to your studies at the agreed-upon date. Upon your registration, contact ISTS and your Scholar Advisor immediately so that they can process your award and ensure a smooth back-to-school transition. If you do not return at the end of the approved break in enrollment, your Scholarship will be terminated.

Application Process

How do I apply?

To apply, go to <http://www.thedream.us/nationalscholarship/>

When is the last day to apply?

You must submit a complete application, including all required supporting documents by March 8, 2017 by 11:59 p.m. Pacific Standard Time.

How will I know that ISTS has received my application?

ISTS will send you an email receipt of your application. If you do not receive this email receipt within one week after submitted your application, contact ISTS.

Is there a fee to apply?

No.

Selection Process

How will finalists be selected?

We have a rigorous application review process that includes analysis and scoring of your grades, standardized test scores, participation in advanced courses, extracurricular activities including volunteer work and community service, essays, and letter of recommendation.

ISTS reviews and scores all complete and eligible applications. An independent Scholarship Selection Committee made up of national education leaders, leaders of immigration support services organizations, and DREAMers reviews and scores the essays of all finalists. Scholarships are allocated across our Partner Colleges and are awarded to the highest scoring applicants to that college. All applicants agree to accept the decision as final.

When will I find out?

ISTS will notify all applicants by the end of April 2017 as to whether or not they received the scholarship.

Scholarship Awards

What is the difference between TheDream.US National Scholarship and TheDream.US Opportunity Scholarship?

TheDream.US National Scholarship Program is for DREAMers who are eligible for in-state tuition at one of our National Partner Colleges. This scholarship is for up to \$12,500 for an associate's or \$25,000 for a bachelor's degree at one of our National Partner Colleges.

TheDream.US Opportunity Scholarship Program is for DREAMers who live in targeted lock-out states where they are either required to pay out-of-state tuition or prohibited from enrolling in the state's colleges and universities all together. This scholarship is for up to \$80,000 in total for a bachelor's degree at one of our Opportunity Partner Colleges.

What is the amount of the National Scholarship Award?

The amount of your annual award will be based on the cost of tuition and fees based on your enrollment status (i.e., number of credits). We will not reduce the amount of your award by other aid, scholarships, or grants, unless your total financial aid package exceeds the estimated cost of attendance based on your living arrangement (e.g., on campus or off campus). In addition, you may receive an additional amount per year for books, supplies, and transportation.

Will the National Scholarship cover all of my college expenses, including room and board, books and supplies, and transportation?

No. The National Scholarship Award is intended to cover most of the cost of your tuition and fees. If you have received other financial aid or scholarships that help cover the cost of your tuition and fees, the award may be used for books, supplies, transportation, and room and board.

If I receive a scholarship for an associate's degree, do I have to apply again for a scholarship for my bachelor's degree?

No. If you have met your academic and service commitments, you may transfer your scholarship to a four-year Partner College to which you have been accepted. However, you may not receive more than \$25,000 (plus the stipend if applicable) in total from TheDream.US, including the Scholarship Award you received for your associate's degree.

Do I have to attend one of the Partner Colleges or can I use the scholarship at any college to which I am accepted?

You must be accepted to and attend one of the Partner Colleges in order to receive the scholarship.

Can the scholarship be applied toward graduate school?

No. You may only use the scholarship funds for an undergraduate associate or bachelor's degree.

If I transfer to another Partner College, will I lose my scholarship?

You will not lose your scholarship. The scholarship will still be transferred so long as you are accepted to and attending one of our Partner Colleges and you have met your scholarship commitments.

If I receive the scholarship, do I have to start right away?

No. You have up to one year from the date of the notification that you are a Scholarship recipient to apply to and enroll in a Partner College.

Dreamer, Donor, or Teacher?

How can I donate?

Donating to our cause is easy! Simply click the "Donate" link on the right side of our donate page and follow the instructions.

I am a teacher. How can I help?

Reach out as early as possible to all students and encourage them to envision themselves as college material, and if the opportunity arises, let undocumented students know that their citizenship status does not prohibit them from attending college.

For a printable version of TheDream.US flyer visit <http://www.thedream.us/>

I am a parent. How can I help?

Let your child know that their citizenship status does not prohibit them from going to college. Encourage them to search for scholarships and, if you can, help them complete their scholarship applications. Most important, do what you already do: believe in them so that they can believe in themselves.