

Opportunity Scholarship

Program Guide

June 2018



OPPORTUNITY
SCHOLARSHIP

A PROGRAM OF THE DREAM.US

Make Your College Dreams Come True!

TheDream.US Opportunity Scholarship Program Guide

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Introduction to Your Guide

Congratulations on receiving TheDream.US¹ Opportunity Scholarship Award. This guide will help you understand how to receive and manage your award. This guide and the processes set forth herein (including the deadlines) will change from time to time. You should always check TheDream.US website for the most recent version of the Guide.

¹ TheDream.US Scholarship Program is a project of the New Venture Fund, a 501(c)(3).

Your Scholar Commitments

As a Scholar of TheDream.US, I commit to:

To believe in my future and myself.

- I will thank the donors who have made it possible for me to go to college by sending a note of appreciation to: TheDream.US Opportunity Scholarship Program, 1300 N. 17th Street, Rosslyn, VA 22209

To enroll in college.

- I will enroll in my Partner College in the Fall term after the receipt of my award and strive to maintain a full time-status, regular attendance, and a cumulative GPA of 3.0 or better.
- I will sign up to receive text messages from TheDream.US and I will respond to emails, text messages, and other communications from TheDream.US Opportunity Scholarship Program within two days of receipt.

To persevere while I am in college.

- I will build and maintain a relationship with my Scholar Advisor by checking-in at least once per term to review my progress.
- I will work with my Scholar Advisor to develop and use an educational plan with goals for the completion of my degree. I will review and update this plan with my Scholar Advisor at the end of each term.
- If I am struggling to meet my commitments, I will work with my Scholar Advisor to develop a plan to get on track to complete college.
- I will work with my Scholar Advisor to identify and participate in available academic support programs (e.g., tutoring, study workshops, etc.) as I need them.

To “pay it forward” by supporting other DREAMers who want to go to college.

- I will complete 10 hours of community service per term by either supporting and mentoring fellow and new DREAMer Scholars or through other service at my college or the community.
- I will support and help improve TheDream.US Program by providing feedback through surveys and online discussions and by helping promote the program to friends and family.

I commit to graduate and join the workforce to contribute to the economic prosperity and social richness of this country and the world.

- I will keep TheDream.US Scholarship Program informed as to how I have used my education to help others and myself.

Eligibility Criteria

You must meet the following criteria to be eligible for your Scholarship:

- Be enrolled full-time (at least 12 credits) for each consecutive academic term (except the summer term) unless you have a confirmed break in enrollment;
- Maintain a cumulative GPA of 2.5 or higher;
- Remain current on all your college accounts and charges;
- Maintain your DACA or TPS status and or meet the immigration eligibility criteria required for the program; and
- Meet all your Scholar Commitments set forth above.

We recognize that there are sometimes life circumstances beyond your control that may impact your ability to meet these criteria. If this happens, you must work with your Scholar Advisor as described below. We will review your situation with your Scholar Advisor on an annual basis and determine whether you are making adequate progress toward your degree.

If your Cumulative GPA is below a 2.5:

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 2.5 at the time you renew your scholarship, you will be required to explain what actions you are taking to raise your GPA to a 2.5 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.

Important Note: If your GPA remains below a 2.0 for more than one academic year, we will terminate your scholarship.

If you need to take a leave of absence:

Once you have entered college, we expect that you will attend each academic term (not including summers) until you complete your degree. If special circumstances make it necessary or advisable for you to take a term off, **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.** ISTS will confirm your break in enrollment. **If you do not report your break in enrollment, you risk losing your scholarship.**

You cannot have a break in enrollment for more than two terms (or three if you attend a quarterly-based institution).

If you failed to notify ISTS of a break in enrollment or you have an extenuating circumstance that requires more than two terms off, you must (1) meet with your Scholar Advisor to develop a plan for completing your degree; and (2) submit an appeal to ISTS by email with a copy to your Scholar Advisor:

- Explaining the extenuating circumstance; and
- Summarizing the plan you have developed with your Scholar Advisor.

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 reported break in enrollment, your Scholarship will be terminated.

If you become a permanent resident or gain legal status:

While you are applying to change your immigration status, you are still eligible to receive our Scholarship. Once you obtain permanent residency status, you will be eligible to apply for federal financial aid that includes the Pell Grant, federal loans, and federal work study. You should submit a FAFSA - Free Application for Federal Student Aid - as soon as you receive legal status. When you receive your legal status, send an email to ISTS Customer Care and your Scholar Advisor and Financial Aid Advisor to notify them of your change in status. You will continue to be eligible for our scholarship, but the amount of the award will be reduced by the amount of the Pell Grant that you receive each year.

The Amount of Your Award

Amount of Your Annual Award:

The amount of your annual award will be up to \$20,000 per year for tuition, fees, and on-campus housing and meals at your Partner College. We expect you to apply for other available financial aid and actively seek other scholarships and grants to help cover the other costs of attendance (e.g., books, supplies, transportation and personal expenses)

Maximum Award for Opportunity Scholarship Recipients: You are eligible to receive up to \$80,000 for tuition, fees, and on-campus housing and meals which can be used over a four-year period for a bachelor's degree.

Receiving and Using Your Award

Receiving Your Payment:

At the beginning of the academic year, your Partner College will confirm your enrollment. ISTS will then send your award payment to your Partner College for deposit in your account – generally no later than the end of October. In the meantime, your Partner College will put a hold on your account, so your classes are not dropped. If you have any questions, contact your [Scholar Advisor or your Financial Aid Advisor](#).

Using Your Award:

Your Partner College will divide your award evenly between academic terms and apply the award for any tuition, fees, and on-campus housing and meals for the term.

The funds cannot be used for:

- ✓ Books, transportation, supplies, or personal costs;
- ✓ Costs incurred before you received your award;
- ✓ Any additional costs like “lab fees” for majors like aviation, etc.;
- ✓ Courses that do not count toward your degree, including remedial and development courses;
- ✓ Summer courses; or
- ✓ Additional costs for courses that you are required to retake due to failure or withdrawal or additional courses required for a minor or a double major.

Unused Funds:

If you have graduated or are no longer attending a Partner College, The Partner College will refund any unused funds to TheDream.US and the funds will no longer be available to you.

Study Abroad:

Because advance parole to travel abroad is no longer available to current DACA recipients, our Scholarship cannot be used for study abroad programs.

Renewing Your Scholarship Award

You must renew your Scholarship for each academic year. You must meet the continuing eligibility requirements (see above). If you have exhausted your maximum award amount or you have been enrolled beyond the maximum allowed time, you will no longer be able to receive the scholarship.

ISTS will send you a link to a renewal form in mid-June of each year. ***You must complete the form by the due date.*** If you do not renew your scholarship by the deadline, you will no longer be eligible, and we will terminate your scholarship. The form will ask you to provide:

- Confirmation of your intent to return to your Partner College of record;
- A copy of your most recent unofficial transcript that includes your name, your Partner College name, your cumulative grade point average, and your cumulative credits;
- Confirmation of your DACA or TPS status, including renewal documents, if applicable; and
- Confirmation of your fulfillment of your Scholar Commitments.

Important Note: If you do not renew your scholarship by the deadline, you will lose your scholarship!

Immigration Eligibility Criteria

As part of the renewal process you will be required to attest, under the penalty of perjury, that you have DACA, TPS, or that to the best of your knowledge you meet the following immigration eligibility criteria:

- You were under the age of 31 as of June 15, 2012;
- You came to the United States before reaching your 16th birthday;

- You have continuously resided in the United States since June 15, 2007, up to the present time;
- You were physically present in the United States on June 15, 2012 and had no lawful status;
- You are currently in school, have graduated or obtained a certificate of completion from high school, have obtained a general education development (GED) certificate, or are an honorably discharged veteran of the Coast Guard or Armed Forces of the United States; and
- You have not been convicted of a felony, significant misdemeanor, or three or more other misdemeanors in the categories which would have disqualified you for DACA, and do not otherwise pose a threat to national security or public safety; and
- You will apply for lawful presence or legal status as soon as the laws allow you to do so.

Scholarship Expiration:

You are eligible to renew your scholarship until:

- You graduate with a bachelor's degree;
- You have exhausted your scholarship funds; or
- You have completed your fourth year of enrollment.

NOTE: Renewal of your Scholarship is contingent on TheDream.US' continuation of the scholarship program.

Transferring

We do not allow transfers to another Partner College unless there are extenuating circumstances. Please reach out to TheDream.US for more information.

Modification or Termination of the Scholarship

TheDream.US may terminate your scholarship if, in its sole discretion, you do not fulfill eligibility requirements or your Scholar Commitments or upon the request of the Partner College.

TheDream.US may modify the terms and conditions for this scholarship program at any time, including termination of the program.

Questions: Who to Go to for What

Questions about your Scholarship Award: Contact ISTS Customer Care at the email or phone number below; indicate that you are calling about TheDream.US Scholarship Program and share your name and the Partner College you are attending.

Email: TheDream.US@applyISTS.com

Call: 1-(855) 670-ISTS (4787) and ask for the TheDream.US Opportunity Scholarship Program

Questions about the TheDream.US programs beyond our Scholarship Award: Contact Tania Wilcox, TheDream.US Program Director; share your name and the Partner College you are attending.

Email: Tania.Wilcox@thedream.us

Call: 650-619-7272 (CA-based)

Questions about your Partner College's disbursement of your funds or your academic plan: Contact your Partner College Financial Aid Advisor or Scholar Advisor listed in in the Scholar Directory on the Scholar Hub: [TheDream.US Opportunity Scholars PC Directory](#)