

# Opportunity Scholarship

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## 2020-21 Application Guidelines

**November 2019**



OPPORTUNITY  
SCHOLARSHIP

A PROGRAM OF THE DREAM.US

# Make Your College Dreams Come True

## TheDream.US Opportunity Scholarship for DREAMers in Locked-Out States

TheDream.US Opportunity Scholarships are for DREAMers<sup>1</sup> who live in states where they effectively have no access to college – either because they face paying out-of-state tuition or because their state will simply not admit them into its universities. We call these “locked-out states.”



You may be eligible for our Opportunity Scholarship if you (1) live in and you have or will soon graduate from a high school in one of the locked-out states shown here, and (2) are DACA or TPS eligible or meet our immigration eligibility criteria.

***Read more about our eligibility criteria below!***

### Our Scholars

Our Scholars have what it takes to succeed in college and in life. While we consider your GPA and test scores, we place great emphasis on your commitment to community service and your demonstrated ability to overcome the barriers and challenges that DREAMers face each and every day.

### Our Award

The Opportunity Scholarship Award will cover your tuition, fees, and on-campus housing and meals at one of our Partner Colleges up to a maximum of \$80,000 for a bachelor's degree. You can renew the Award each year so long as you meet the continuing eligibility criteria.

### Important Dates

- November 1, 2019 - Application Opens

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<sup>1</sup> DREAMers are undocumented immigrant youth who came to the United States as minors, have graduated from U.S. high schools or earned a U.S. high school equivalency but lack a legal status. This prevents them from accessing any federal aid to help pay for their college education. To receive TheDream.US Scholarship, DREAMers must have DACA (Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals), TPS (Temporary Protected Status) or certify that they meet TheDream.US immigration eligibility criteria.

- **January 30, 2020 - Application Closes**
- Mid- March 2020 – Awardees Notified

## More Than a Scholarship – A College Committed to Your Success

If you receive the Opportunity Scholarship, you can use it to attend one of our Opportunity Partner Colleges listed below. These colleges are committed to serving DREAMers and prepared to offer you the support services you need to help you successfully navigate your college life. Each of our Partner Colleges designates a Scholar Advisor to work with our Scholars – individually and as a group. You will not be alone!

Please research each of these colleges (majors offered, proximity to home, cultural fit, etc.) prior to selecting your 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> choices on the application. **You will not be allowed to switch colleges unless there are extenuating circumstances.**

- Delaware State University, Dover, Delaware
- Eastern Connecticut State University, Windham, Connecticut
- Christian Brothers University, Memphis, Tennessee
- Trinity Washington University (women’s college), Washington, D.C.

**And good news!** Your application for TheDream.US Scholarship Application will also serve as your application to our Opportunity Partner Colleges. You do not need to complete the Partner College application for admission.

**Note:** If you have received TheDream.US Scholarship in the past, you may not reapply.

### Step 1: Determining Your Eligibility

Before you apply for the Opportunity Scholarship, you need to confirm that you meet the eligibility criteria.

**Please note: You are not eligible to apply for or receive TheDream.US Scholarship if you are currently or have ever been enrolled in a 4-year institution or a 4-year program.**

You are eligible to apply if you:

1. Live in and have graduated or will graduate from high school in a locked out-state by the end of the 2019-2020 academic year;
2. Graduated or will graduate with a GPA of 2.8 or better on a 4.0 scale;
3. Have taken the SAT or ACT;

4. Are not and have not previously enrolled in a four-year institution or a four-year bachelor's degree program;
5. Intend to relocate to and enroll full-time in a bachelor's degree program at an Opportunity Partner College in the Fall term of the 2020-2021 academic year;
6. Came to the United States before reaching your 16th birthday;
7. Have a current DACA or TPS authorization or can certify that you meet the DACA immigration eligibility criteria set forth below;
8. Have significant unmet financial need.

### **TheDream.US Immigration Eligibility Criteria**

As part of the application you will be required to attest, under the penalty of perjury, that you

1. Have a current DACA or TPS authorization and provide your Employment Authorization Document (EAD) card number and expiration date, or
2. Meet TheDream.US immigration eligibility criteria and you will apply for lawful presence or legal status as soon as the federal law allows you to do so.

TheDream.US criteria are as follows:

- Came to the United States before the age of 16;
- Have continuously resided in the United States since November 1, 2014 up to the present time and have had no lawful status;
- Are currently in high school or have graduated from a United States high school; and
- 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.

### **Step 2: Completing the Application**

You can apply for the Opportunity Scholarship by going to our website: [Opportunity Scholarship](https://www.opportunity-scholarship.com). If prompted, the Program Key is: DreamOpportunity.

Good news! You can use this same application to apply for our Scholarship AND apply to our Partner Colleges at the same time.

**Application Deadline: January 30, 2020, 11:59 P.M. Pacific Standard Time**

***Seriously – don't miss the deadline! If you do, we cannot consider your application.***

Our application is simple and straight forward. Below is an overview.

If you have any difficulties in completing the application, reach out ISTS (our scholarship management provider):

**Email:** TheDream.US@applyISTS.com

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

## Demographic Information

You will provide us the same demographic information that you will include in most of your college applications.

You will be required to certify that you:

1. **Have current DACA or TPS authorization** and that you will renew it if you are legally able to do so and provide your Employment Authorization Document Number (EAD) and the expiration date; or
2. **Meet each of TheDream.US immigration eligibility criteria** and you will apply for lawful presence or lawful status as soon as you are legally able to do and provide any requested data to confirm your eligibility.

We DO NOT ask for your home address and you DO NOT have to upload your DACA or TPS documents.

## Academic Information

You will select your 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> choice Partner Colleges in this section.

Please research each of these colleges (majors offered, proximity to home, cultural fit, etc.) prior to selecting your 1st and 2nd choices. **You will not be allowed to switch Partner Colleges unless there are extenuating circumstances.**

You will also provide your high school academic information (and community college information if you have attended community college).

### Transcripts:

You will be required to upload the following documents **by January 30, 2020 by 11:59 p.m. PST:**

- A copy of your official or unofficial high school transcript showing grades and cumulative GPA through Fall 2019,
- SAT or ACT test scores, and
- A transcript for any community college credits earned after high school.

## Financial Information

Our scholarship is available to low-income students who cannot otherwise afford to go to college. To assess this, we need to understand your financial situation.

- If you're a dependent student, we need your parents' and your financial information to get a full picture of the family's financial strength.
- If you're an independent student, we only need your financial information (and, if you're married, your spouse's) to assess your financial strength.

You indicate whether you are a dependent or an independent student and then, based on your status, provide:

- Annual household Income;
- Number in the household supported by this income; and
- Number of dependents supported by this income who will attend college in 2020-2021.

**You DO NOT have to upload any financial records.**

## Responsibilities

While we consider your academic achievements and potential, we also focus on your volunteer, community service, and home responsibilities as these are indicators of your motivation and determination to succeed. We know that many DREAMers have significant home responsibilities so please do not overlook this section.

## Essays

While we will consider your academic record and volunteer and community service activities in selecting finalists, the most important part of your application is your two essays. This is your opportunity to let the Selection Committee know that you have the motivation and persistence to exceed in college and in life.

The essay prompts are:

- 1. Your Educational and Career Goals - 750 words max:**
  - Describe your educational and career goals and explain what or who has inspired or helped shape these goals.
  - Excluding financial needs, what are the most significant challenges you expect to face in successfully completing college? How will you overcome these challenges?

## 2. **Overcoming Adversity** - 750 words max:

- Describe a challenging family or personal circumstance that has affected your achievement or participation in school, work, or community activities.
- How did you overcome this challenge and what did you learn from the experience above?

## Step 3: Submitting and Monitoring the Status of Your Application

**Don't forget!** You must submit your application and upload the required documents **by January 30, 2020 by 11:59 p.m. PST:**

- A copy of your official or unofficial high school transcript and test scores and information detailing your previously earned college credits (if applicable).
- For community college graduates, a copy of your official or unofficial community college transcript will also be required.

**Your application is not complete until all required documents are uploaded.**

WE CANNOT CONSIDER INCOMPLETE APPLICATIONS.

It is your responsibility to monitor the status of your application and attachments and make sure your application is complete.

You may monitor the status of your application on your home page at <https://aim.applyISTS.net>. Allow 5 to 7 business days after submitting or uploading attachments for your online status to update.

- **Started:** Items are needed or are being processed. To see the items, click the 'Started' tile. This will open a box listing all required items and the current status of each.
- **Complete:** All required forms and documents have been received and verified and your application will be considered for the scholarship.

You may also monitor the status of your documents:

- Not Received:** the attachment has either not been received or has been rejected.
- Processing:** the attachment has been received and is being reviewed.
- Rejected:** the attachment has been rejected – you can see the reason.
- Accepted:** the attachment has been verified and accepted by ISTS.

If a document has been rejected, you will receive an email letting you know why. You should submit the correct document ASAP. If you have questions or difficulties, reach out to ISTS at:

**Email:** TheDream.US@applyISTS.com

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

## Step 4: Award Notification

ISTS will notify you by email in mid-March 2020 as to whether or not you have received a scholarship. If you receive a scholarship, your next step is to accept the award!

Make sure that you have added ISTS to your contact list as a safe sender. ***We have had awardees who missed their award because the ISTS email went to spam!***

## Step 5: Accepting the Award

ISTS will send you an email with a link to the acceptance form. ***You must accept the award by the deadline*** or you will lose the Scholarship.

If you decide not to accept our award, please indicate this on the form and let us know why.

## Step 6: Taking the Pledge

Being selected as a DREAMer Scholar is an honor and a privilege. You will become a member of a community of over 4,000 DREAMer Scholars. With them, you will commit to your own academic success and to supporting the academic success of other DREAMer Scholars. And we will be with you every step of the way.

## Questions? We're Here to Help!

Email: [TheDream.US@applyISTS.com](mailto:TheDream.US@applyISTS.com) (reference TheDream.US Opportunity Scholarship Program)  
Telephone: 1(855) 670-ISTS (4787) and ask for the TheDream.US Opportunity Scholarship Program

## The Fine Print

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.