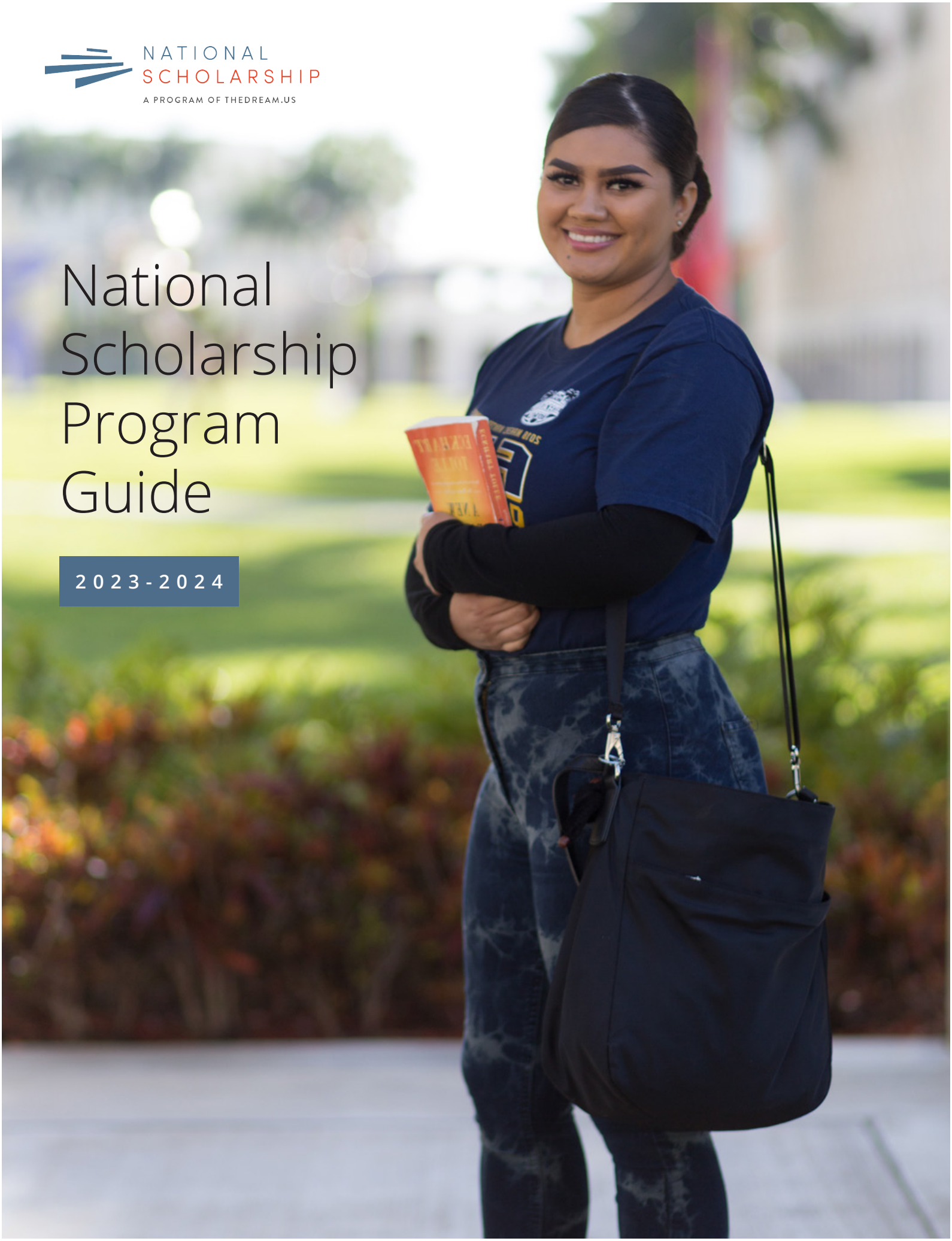
NATIONAL SCHOLARSHIP

A PROGRAM OF THEDREAM.US

National Scholarship Program Guide

2023-2024



TheDream.US is more than a scholarship; it is a community of people committed to supporting you throughout your college journey.

You are part of a community of over 10,000 Scholars and graduates across the country. This handbook serves as a reference manual for National Award recipients. We expect you to review the contents, as the materials provide information you need to be a successful and full participant in our scholarship program.

This guide will help you understand how to receive and manage your award. Please note, this guide is subject to change. Check the Scholar Hub for the most recent version.

To quickly find answers to your questions:

- **This Guide serves two types of TheDream.US Recipients.** Headers in **ORANGE** font pertain to Scholars who were awarded the Scholarship between 2013 and 2022. Headers in **RED** font pertain to Scholars who were awarded the Scholarship in 2023 and onwards. Headers in **BLUE** font or otherwise pertain to all cohorts.
- If you do not see what you need in the Table of Contents – do a word search.
- If the answer to your question is not found in the Guide – reach out to ISTS Program Support and ask about TheDream.US National Scholarship Program:

  TheDream.US@applyISTS.com

  1-(855) 376-7076

Pay attention to marked **tips** and **important information** sprinkled throughout the guide.

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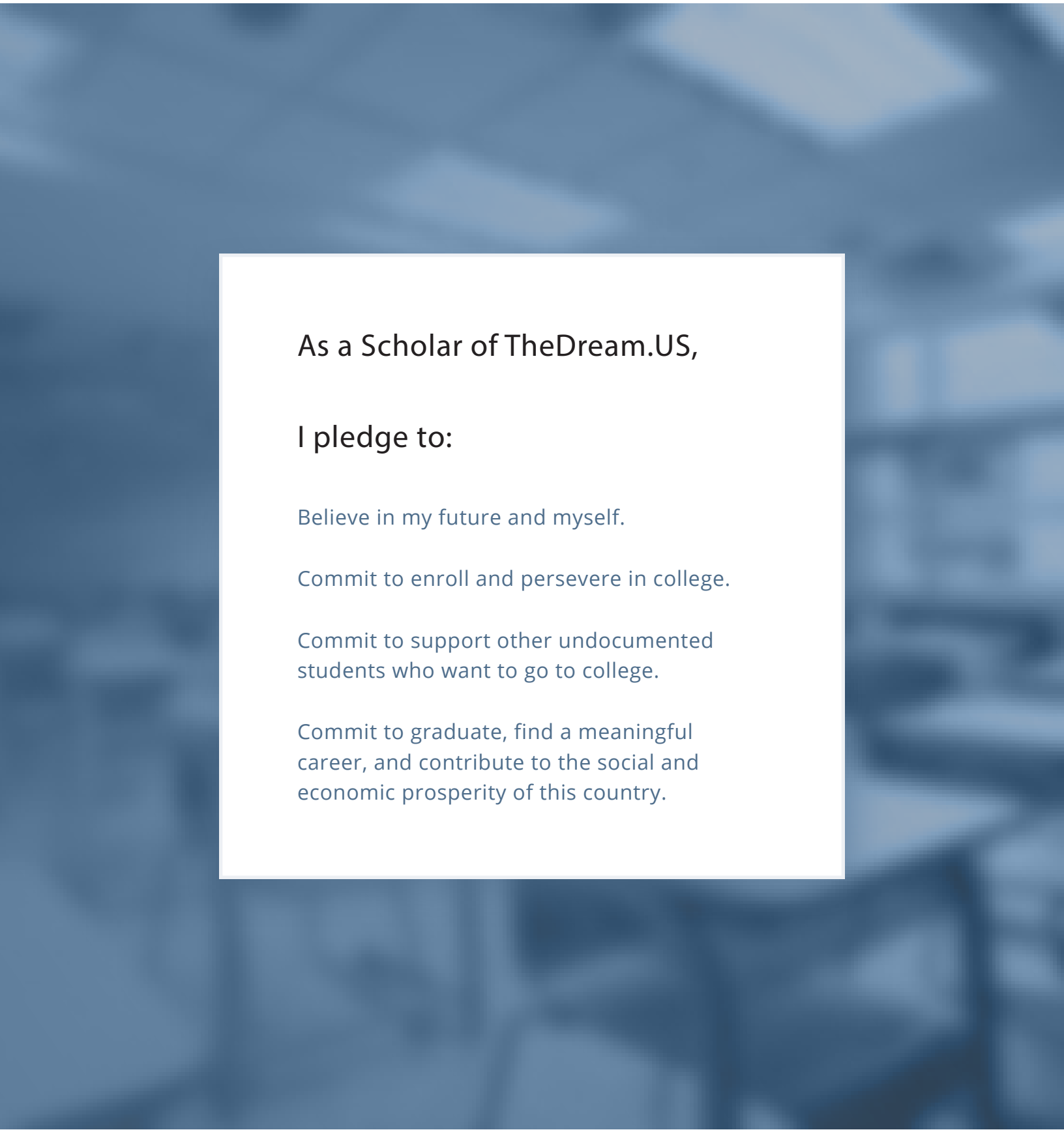

As a Scholar of TheDream.US,

I pledge to:

Believe in my future and myself.

Commit to enroll and persevere in college.

Commit to support other undocumented students who want to go to college.

Commit to graduate, find a meaningful career, and contribute to the social and economic prosperity of this country.

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Your Scholar Commitments

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

Believe in my future and myself.

- [ ] I will thank the donors who have made it possible for me to go to college.

Enroll in college.

- [ ] I will enroll in my Partner College and strive to maintain full time-status, regular attendance, and a cumulative GPA of 2.5 or better.
- [ ] I will renew or decline my Scholarship each summer before the deadline.
- [ ] I will join the Scholar Facebook Community and ensure that I ensure that I receive and read emails and text messages from TheDream.US. I will not unsubscribe or opt out of any communications from TheDream.US.

Stay in college and prepare for my career.

- [ ] I will build and maintain a relationship with my Scholar Advisor by checking-in at least once per term to review my progress towards graduation.
- [ ] If my GPA falls below a 2.5 or I am not able to enroll in 12 or more credits, I will meet with my Scholar Advisor to help me develop a plan to stay on track to complete my degree.
- [ ] If I am struggling, I will work with my Scholar Advisor to get the resources I need.
- [ ] I will participate in at least one career development opportunity each year to prepare for my career.

Graduate, find a meaningful career, and contribute to the social and economic prosperity of this country.

- [ ] I will join TheDream.US Alumni Network to connect with fellow graduates and take advantage of career resources.
- [ ] I will keep TheDream.US Scholarship Program informed as to how I have used my education to help others and myself.

"Pay it forward" by supporting other undocumented students who want to go to college.

- [ ] I will pay it forward by supporting and mentoring fellow Undocumented students at my college or in my community.
- [ ] I will support and help improve TheDream.US Program by providing feedback through surveys and helping promote the Scholarship program.

Meet Your Support System

Introduction to Your Scholar Advisor

Your college has designated a Scholar Advisor to work with you and your fellow Scholars. You will not be alone!
We require that you meet with your Scholar Advisor at least once per term.

See our Scholar Directory to find your Advisor's contact information.

Introduction to Your Financial Aid Advisor

Your college has also designated a Financial Aid Advisor to assist you in applying to all aid available to you and answer questions related to paying for your education.

See our Scholar Directory to find your Financial Advisor's contact information.

Introduction to ISTS

We contract with International Scholarship and Tuition Services, Inc. (ISTS) to manage our scholarship award payment and renewal processes. The ISTS Program Support team is there to answer your questions about our scholarship that are not answered here.

TheDream.US@applyISTS.com
1-(855) 376-7076

> "To my fellow Scholars, you are not alone."
>
> YULISSA, GRADUATE, BARUCH COLLEGE

Where To Go For What

Your ISTS Scholar Portal

- Update your email address and cell phone number
- Scholar status and application ID
- Maximum Award
- Total amount used so far and amount remaining
- Date and amount of last payments
- Final term that your Scholarship will be available to you
- Approved breaks in enrollment
- Determine your renewal status
- **TheDream.US Request Form**

Login (dream.applyists.net)

Your Scholar Hub

- Your Scholarship Program Guide
- Your Partner College Directory
- Latest News/Emails
- Scholar Resources (career, immigration, mental health, etc.)
- Graduate Loan Program

Scholar Hub (thedream.us/for-scholars)

ISTS Program Support

- Get help with Scholarship issues not covered by this Guide
- Get help with the Renewal form (returning Scholars)

TheDream.US@applyISTS.com

1-(855) 376-7076

Your Facebook Community

- Private, closed
- Connect with scholars around the country
- Ask questions and get answers
- Share important events/announcements
- Get together on campus
- Help and support each other

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Managing Your Award

2013 - 2022 Cohorts:

How much is my award?

The amount of your award varies by your state; whether you received our award as a high school or community college graduate; and whether you are enrolled in a two or four-year college. To determine your maximum term award, see the table in Appendix A.

There are three caps on your award:

1. Your award will never be more than your actual cost of tuition and fees for the term after the application of state aid;*
2. Your award will never be more than the maximum award for the term; and
3. Your award will never be more than your unmet need after applying all other state, institutional, and scholarship aid.

* *You must apply for any available state aid if you are eligible. In Colorado, Illinois, New Jersey, New York, and Virginia, we will determine your award after the application of state aid. In California, Texas, Oregon, or Washington State we will not consider your state aid in calculating your award.*

2023 and Beyond Cohorts:

How much is my award?

The amount of your annual award will be up to $8,250 per year for your tuition and mandatory fees. We expect you to apply for other available financial aid and actively seek other scholarships and grants to help cover the full cost of attendance (e.g. living expenses, transportation, personal expenses).

There are three caps on your award:

1. Your award will never be more than your actual cost of tuition and fees for the term after the application of state aid;*
2. Your award will never be more than the maximum award for the term; and
3. Your award will never be more than your unmet need after applying all other state, institutional, and scholarship aid.

* *You must apply for any available state aid if you are eligible. In Colorado, Illinois, New Jersey, New York, and Virginia, we will determine your award after the application of state aid. In Texas and Oregon we will not consider your state aid in calculating your award.*

How do I track my award?

You can track your award in your ISTS Scholar Portal. Your Scholar Portal will give you the important information you need about your scholarship including:

- The **maximum award** *(the total amount you can receive)*
- The amount you have used
- Your most recent payment
- The amount you have remaining
- Any breaks in enrollment

Bookmark this link: Dream.applyISTS.net/
Log in to your ISTS Scholar Portal at the beginning and end of each term to get up to date information on your award. *Here is an example of what you may see*:

When will I receive my award?

We calculate and pay your award each term. We will send your award to your college for deposit in your account no later than **the middle of each term** you are enrolled.

Managing Your Award *(continued)*

What do I need to do to receive my award each term?

Financial Aid offices will send you notices that your tuition is due by a certain date - do not panic! Your Advisors are aware that TheDream.US award comes in *later in the term*.

At the beginning of each term your Partner College Advisors and ISTS will take these steps:

- ☐ Your Partner College will confirm your enrollment and will put a note on your account, so your classes are not dropped;
- ☐ ISTS will calculate your award amount and send the funds to your Partner College; and
- ☐ Your Partner College will deposit the money in your account.

You may check in with your Advisors to confirm that they have done the steps above, and then check your Scholar Portal to see if you have received your award. If your Portal shows that the award has been sent but it is not yet applied to your account, reach out to your Scholar or Financial Aid Advisor.

> "I appreciate every single door that this scholarship opened for me. I am so grateful to have been a scholar."
>
> KARLA, GRADUATE, UNIVERSITY OF NORTH TEXAS AT DALLAS

Managing Your Award *(continued)*

What types of expenses will my award cover?

You can use your award for:

- **Your tuition** for the term; and
- **Mandatory fees** for the term (such as Athletic Fee, Technology Fee, Student Activity Fee, etc. This does not include lab fees or fees for health insurance plans).

What is not covered?

You cannot use your award for:

- Costs incurred before you received your award;
- Courses that do not count toward your degree (including remedial or developmental courses).

Can the scholarship be used for a minor or double major?

You may seek a minor if it does not require additional credits beyond those required for your degree.[2] The scholarship cannot be used for a double major or second degree. If you chose to earn a double major or second degree, you will be responsible for covering the costs required for those classes.

Will my award be reduced by other financial aid?

If you are going to a Partner College in Colorado, Illinois, New Jersey, New York, or Virginia we will reduce your award by the amount of state aid. We will not reduce your award by other financial aid.

Your award cannot exceed your "unmet need". For example, if your college's estimated cost of attendance (e.g., tuition, fees, books, supplies, housing, and meals) is $28,000/year and you have other financial aid that totals $25,000/year, your "unmet need" is $3,000. Our award will not exceed this amount.

2. At some colleges you are required to enroll in a joint bachelor's/master's degree program that requires a fifth year. You may only use your funds for this dual degree program with the permission of TheDream.US.

Will I lose my scholarship if my financial aid covers my full costs to attend college?

No! You will get what we refer to as a "zero" award for that year. So long as you continue to renew your scholarship, you can use your award in future terms and you will continue to be one of our Scholars, have access to your Scholar Advisor, and be able to participate in our Scholar Community.

We expect you to apply for all available state and institutional financial aid and actively seek other scholarships and grants to cover your entire cost of attendance. See here.

Will I get a stipend for books, supplies, and transportation?

Most of our scholars receive a $1,500/year award for books, supplies, and transportation (called a "stipend"). You are eligible for the stipend unless you live in California or Washington State or you are a Purdue Global University Scholar.

You should keep receipts for all expenses in case this is required by the IRS. Also, consult with your college's financial aid office or with an accountant to determine whether any portion of your award is taxable income that needs to be reported to the IRS.

> "When I found out I received TheDream.US Scholarship, my goals changed; they became bigger."
>
> BRIAN, SCHOLAR

Managing Your Award *(continued)*

When and how will I receive my stipend?

We pay the stipend on a term by term basis. Each Partner College manages disbursement of the stipend differently. Check with your Scholar or Financial Aid advisor to find out how and when your Partner College will disburse your stipend.

What happens if I do not use the maximum award?

We use these funds to help other undocumented students achieve their dream of a college education. Once you graduate or are no longer enrolled in a Partner College, you are no longer able to receive the scholarship – even if you have not used the maximum award.

What happens if I get permanent residency?

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 no longer be eligible for the scholarship because you will be able 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 to ensure a smooth transition from our Scholarship to federal financial aid. Upon receiving your legal status, send an email to ISTS Program Support and your Scholar Advisor and Financial Aid Advisor to notify them of your change in status. ISTS will confirm with your Partner College the term in which you become eligible for federal aid.

Can I use my award to study abroad?

Scholars with DACA or TPS can study abroad and return to the United States if they request and are granted advance parole by the United States Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS), using "educational" purposes as the reason for travel. There is a cost to apply for advance parole which is not covered by the Scholarship. Some students have had no issues applying for advance parole, going abroad and coming back. Others have had a difficult time getting back into the U.S. with advance parole.

The Scholarship may be applied toward tuition and fees associated with study abroad if:

- You are in good academic standing, i.e., you have a 3.0 GPA or greater and are enrolled full-time (12 or more credits);
- The tuition and fees for the study abroad courses are the same as your on-campus tuition and fees;
- The study abroad courses are part of your educational plan you created with your TheDream.US Scholar Advisor; and
- The study abroad program is offered by your college and not a third party.

The Scholarship does not cover funding for traveling abroad.

Managing Your Award *(continued)*

Can I use my award for summer classes?

You can use your award for summer classes if you are attending one of the Partner Colleges below. You will also receive a $750 stipend for books, supplies, and transportation costs (CA, WA, or Purdue Global University Scholars do not receive a stipend).

State	University
AR	Arkansas Tech University
AZ	Northern Arizona University, Phoenix College
CA	All 4-year Public Partner Colleges
CO	All CO Partner Colleges, except CSU-Pueblo
FL	All FL Partner Colleges
IL	National Louis University, Roosevelt University
NJ	Rutgers University – Newark
NV	All NV Partner Colleges
NY	All CUNY Partner Colleges, Farmingdale State
OR	Portland State University
TX	All TX Partner Colleges
UT	All UT Partner Colleges
VA	NOVA; George Mason University

To ensure that your summer classes are covered, take these steps:

- ☐ Notify your Scholar and Financial Aid Advisors that you are enrolled in summer classes;
- ☐ They will confirm your enrollment and summer tuition and fees with ISTS;
- ☐ ISTS will calculate and send the funds (and your stipend, if applicable) to your Partner College.

These funds, including the summer stipend, will be deducted from your overall Scholarship award total.

2013 - 2022 Cohorts: Time to Complete My Degree

If you do not complete your degree within the maximum number of years, you will no longer be eligible for the scholarship. Check the table below to determine how much time you have.

Where you started with our Award	Maximum # of Years
Started at a Partner Community College as a High School Graduate	Up to three (3) years to earn an associate degree or transfer to a 4 YR Partner College; plus up to an additional three (3) years to complete your bachelor's degree
Started at a 4 YR Partner College as a High School Graduate	Up to six (6) years to earn a bachelor's degree
Started at a 4 YR Partner College as a Community College Graduate	Up to (3) years to earn a bachelor's degree.

2023 and Beyond Cohorts: Time to Complete My Degree

If you do not complete your degree within the maximum number of years, you will no longer be eligible for the scholarship. Check the table below to determine how much time you have.

Where you started with our Award	Maximum # of Years
Started at a Partner Community College with TheDream.US Scholarship	Up to three (3) years to earn an associate degree and/or transfer to a 4 YR Partner College; plus up to an additional three (3) years to complete your bachelor's degree
Started at a 4 YR Partner College with TheDream.US Scholarship	Up to six (6) years to earn a bachelor's degree or finish the bachelor's degree you are currently working on.

Work with your Scholar Advisor to develop a plan to complete your degree on time and to ensure that you do not run out of funds before you are able to graduate.

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How do I renew my award?

You must renew your Scholarship in June of each year. We require this so that we can verify your continuing eligibility and approve your funding for the upcoming academic year. ISTS will send you an email in early June with instructions on how to open and complete your renewal form in your ISTS Scholar Portal. **You must complete the form by the due date.**

You will need to:

- ✓ Confirm your Partner College for the next academic year;
- ✓ Upload 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;
- ✓ Confirm your immigration status.*

You will **not** be able to renew if:

- ✗ Your GPA has been below a 2.0 for more than one academic year;
- ✗ You exhausted your maximum award amount; or
- ✗ You have been enrolled beyond the maximum allowed time.

★ **If you do not renew your scholarship by the deadline, you may lose your scholarship.**

* Note: As long as DACA or TPS is in effect, you must continue to renew your authorization to remain eligible for the scholarship.

What to Do If I Struggle

We encourage you to maintain full-time, continuous enrollment (12 or more credits) in order to complete your degree on time and to maintain a GPA of 2.5 or better.

We recognize, however, that there are life circumstances beyond your control that may impact your ability to meet these criteria.

If this happens, meet with your Scholar Advisor to develop a plan to get back on track.

Click here to get the Scholar Partner College Directory

> "I didn't quite get it right the first semester... By speaking with my TheDream.US advisors and letting them know I was struggling, they supported me and helped me come up with a plan to fulfill my graduation requirements."
>
> JOSIE, GRADUATE, BOROUGH OF MANHATTAN COMMUNITY COLLEGE (AA) & HUNTER COLLEGE (BA)

Can I take a term off (break in enrollment)?

Yes. We understand that special circumstances may require you to take a term off. You cannot take off more than two terms (or three if you are on the quarter system).

Your time off will be included in the maximum time you have to use your award (pg. 13).

Follow these steps to request a break in enrollment:

- ☐ *Complete **TheDream.US Request Form** in your ISTS Portal (orange button located at the top right when you log in - see page 17);*
- ☐ ***Notify your Scholar Advisor** by email and explain the reason for your break in enrollment and the date you will return;*
- ☐ *Upon your return, **meet with your Scholar Advisor** to develop a plan for completing your degree on time (3 years if an associate degree; 6 years if a bachelor's degree).*

You must notify ISTS of your break in enrollment via *TheDream.US Request Form* or you risk losing your Scholarship.

What to Do If I Struggle *(continued)*

Can I enroll less than full time?

Yes. If special circumstances require that you enroll in less than 12 credits, **contact your Scholar Advisor** to discuss the circumstances and develop a plan for completing your degree on time. You do not need to notify ISTS or TheDream.US staff.

What happens if I fail or drop a class?

If you fail or drop a class and need to retake it, you do not have to reimburse us for the costs of those classes. The amount paid for those classes will be deducted from your maximum award amount which means you will have less funds available to complete your degree. You do not need to notify ISTS or TheDream.US staff.

If you drop a course before the add/drop deadline, your college may refund some or all of your tuition and fees for the class.

What do I do if my cumulative GPA falls below a 2.5?

If your cumulative GPA falls below a 2.5, you will not lose your scholarship. We require that you 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. You do not need to notify TheDream.US or ISTS.

However, if your cumulative GPA is below a 2.5 at the time you renew your scholarship, you will be asked to explain what actions you are taking to raise your GPA.

If your cumulative GPA is below a 2.0 for more than one academic year, you will lose your scholarship.

Can I transfer my Scholarship to another Partner College?

You may be able to transfer your Scholarship to another Partner College in your state.

You must have the advance approval of TheDream.US to transfer to any of the following Partner Colleges (see table)

If you want to transfer, you will need to complete each of these steps:

1. Apply and be accepted to the Partner College you want to transfer to;

2. Be eligible for in-state tuition if it is a public college;

3. Contact your Scholar and Financial Advisors at your current and new Partner Colleges to let them know that you are transferring; and

4. Complete TheDream.US Request Form in your ISTS Portal (orange button located at the top right when you log in - see page 15)

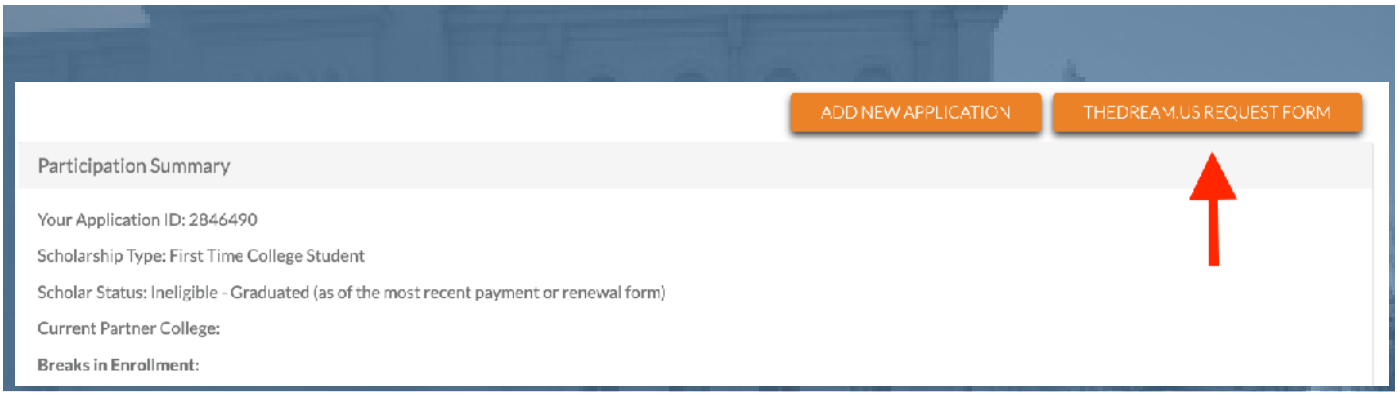
Important: If you do not complete *TheDream.US Request Form* to notify ISTS that you are transferring, you will not receive your award payment!

TRANSFER ONLY WITH THE ADVANCE APPROVAL OF THEDREAM.US

- **Illinois:** All Partner Colleges except *National Louis University and Roosevelt University*
- **New Jersey:** All Partner Colleges
- **Virginia:** George Mason University, Marymount University

How do I use TheDream.US Request Form?

You may face special circumstances that require you to request a break in enrollment or an exception to our Guidelines, or to appeal the loss of your award. If so, use ***TheDream.US Request Form*** in your ISTS Portal (orange button located on the top right when you log in - see below) to make your request.



You can only have one open Request at a time.

You can use ***TheDream.US Request Form*** if:

- **You need a break in enrollment** (if you took or need to take a term off, or you need more than two terms off);
- **You want to transfer to another PC including those that require permission** (list can be found on page 16);
- **You have scholarship funds remaining and need additional time to complete your degree (this is only granted in exceptional circumstances)*;**
- **You have one term and 15 or fewer credits remaining and need bridge funding to complete your degree (this is only granted in exceptional circumstances)*;**
- **Your Scholarship renewal was denied** because
    - Your GPA was under 2.0 for more than one year*
    - You have maxed out on allowed time to complete your degree (this is only granted if you have additional funds remaining)*
    - You have maxed out on your scholarship funds (this is granted only if you have one term and 15 or fewer credits remaining)*
    - You did not complete the annual Renewal form by the deadline;
- **Your Scholarship was withdrawn.**

**For these exceptions, you will be required to provide a copy of your most recent transcript and a degree audit showing the number of*

We will notify you of our decision by email within 2-3 weeks. Not all requests will be granted, and our decision is final.

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.

2013 - 2022 Cohorts: Appendix A

How to Determine your Maximum Scholarship Award and Maximum Number of Years

What is my maximum scholarship award to pay for my tuition and fees?
(Does not apply to CA, CO, IL, NJ, NY, WA, or Purdue Scholars – see below)

I received TheDream.US Scholarship as a …	And I am attending a …	My max. annual award is:	My max. total award is:	Max. award may be used over:
High school graduate	Community college	Up to $8,250	Up to $16,500	3 Years
High school graduate	4-Year institution	Up to $8,250	Up to $33,000	6 Years
Community college graduate	4-Year institution	Up to $14,500*	Up to $29,000	3 Years

**** $8,250 at Grand Canyon University***

What is my maximum scholarship award to pay for my tuition and fees?
California, Washington, or Purdue University Global Scholars

I received TheDream.US Scholarship as a …	And I am attending a …	My max. annual award is:	My max. total award is:	Max. award may be used over:
California – High School Graduate	Community College	Up to $2,000	Up to $4,000	3 years
California or Purdue – High School Graduate	4 – year institution	Up to $8,250	Up to $33,000	6 years
California, Purdue, or Washington Community College Graduate	4 – year institution	Up to $7,250	Up to $14,500	3 years

What is my maximum scholarship award to pay for my tuition and fees?
Colorado, Illinois, New Jersey, and New York Scholars

I received TheDream.US Scholarship as a …	And I am attending a …	My max. annual award is cost of tuition and fees *after applying state aid* ..	My max. total award is:	Max. award may be used over:
High school graduate	Community College	Up to $8,250	Up to $16,500	3 years
High school graduate	4 – year institution	Up to $8,250	Up to $33,000	6 years
Community college graduate	4-year institution	Up to $14,500	Up to $29,000	3 years