

Dept. of Financial Institutions: Gov. Evers proclaims November as National Scholarship Month

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MADISON, Wis. – Today the [Wisconsin Department of Financial Institutions \(DFI\)](#) and the [Wisconsin Higher Educational Aids Board \(HEAB\)](#) announced Gov. Tony Evers proclaimed the month of November as [National Scholarship Month](#) in Wisconsin. The proclamation is part of a nationwide effort to raise awareness about the vital role that scholarships play in reducing student loan debt and expanding access to higher education.

“Every Wisconsinite deserves the opportunity to access a high-quality, affordable education from early childhood to technical colleges and universities,” said Gov. Evers. “As the cost of higher education continues to rise, students and their families are faced with the ever-increasing burden of paying for their education. Scholarships can reduce that financial burden while celebrating our students’ unique talents and helping them gain access to critical educational opportunities they might not otherwise be able to without additional support.”

“Scholarships play an essential role in paying for college by providing free funds for students that can help minimize student loan debt,” said DFI Secretary Kathy Blumenfeld. “Many students end their college years with thousands of dollars in student loan debt. Although loans are sometimes necessary, students don’t want to graduate with the burden of excessive debt, so it’s important to take time now to research and apply for scholarships. It will be time well spent.”

“Scholarships are considered gift aid meaning they do not need to be repaid, and

unlike grants, eligibility for scholarships is usually based on merit or achievement, rather than financial need,” said HEAB Executive Secretary Connie Hutchison. “Scholarships are widely available through local schools, clubs and organizations, faith-based institutions, and employers, and the state of Wisconsin strives to assist students and families with identifying and accessing available resources as well.”

Gov. Evers, DFI Secretary Blumenfeld, and HEAB Executive Secretary Hutchison offer the following tips to help students and families secure scholarships for higher education:

- **Start with completing the FAFSA.** In order to qualify for federal student financial aid, including scholarships, students and families should complete the [Free Application for Federal Student Aid \(FAFSA®\)](#) as soon as possible.
- **Don't assume you won't qualify.** Scholarships aren't just for athletes and valedictorians. There are scholarships for nearly every interest, hobby, or background. Search for scholarships on DFI's [LookForwardWI.gov](#) website and HEAB's [website](#).
- **Scholarships aren't just for incoming freshmen.** Many scholarships are for students already enrolled. Whether a high school senior, current college student, or graduate school student, research and apply for scholarships each year.
- **Every dollar counts.** Not every scholarship is going to provide a full ride, but every little bit helps. Remember: every scholarship dollar used to pay for college is a dollar that doesn't need to come out of pocket or be borrowed. No scholarship is too small.
- **Avoid the scams.** Never pay for scholarships, be wary of “guaranteed” money, and don't be lured in by sites or organizations that charge a fee to

access scholarship applications.

For additional information on finding and applying for scholarships, college affordability, and the Wisconsin 529 College Savings Program, visit DFI's [website](#).

For information on Wisconsin's financial aid, including scholarship, grant, and loan programs, tuition reciprocity agreements, and tuition capitation contracts, visit HEAB's [website](#).