

# GEAR UP Connecticut Scholarship



## Frequently Asked Questions

As a GEAR UP participant, you are eligible for a GEAR UP Connecticut Scholarship in addition to other scholarships you may receive. Here are some frequently asked questions about what you need to do to be eligible for a GEAR UP Connecticut Scholarship.

**Q** *How do I apply for the GEAR UP Connecticut Scholarship?*

**A** Fill out the Free Application for Federal Student Aid, also known as the FAFSA, by going to [www.fafsa.ed.gov](http://www.fafsa.ed.gov). You must fill out the FAFSA every year beginning with your senior year of high school. The FAFSA is the application required for all kinds of college financial aid, including the GEAR UP Connecticut Scholarship. The FAFSA is available each year beginning in October. Each college will have a deadline by which they want the FAFSA completed - be sure to find out about your college's deadline! Otherwise, you might not be considered for all the aid your college offers.

**Q** *How much will the GEAR UP Connecticut Scholarship be?*

**A** The exact amount of the scholarship may vary from year to year. It depends on the number of GEAR UP students who fill out the FAFSA and go to college. In Year 1 (2018-2019 academic year), we estimate that the amount will be between \$800 and \$1,000. The amount you receive cannot exceed the cost of attendance at the college you select to attend - that means that the amount of the GEAR UP Connecticut Scholarship, added to the other grants and scholarships you may receive, cannot exceed the total cost of attendance. The cost of attendance is determined by the college you attend and includes things like transportation and books, that go beyond tuition and fees.

**Q** *How can I use the scholarship money?*

**A** The money can be used for tuition and fees, books and supplies, room and board, and personal expenses that are included in your cost of attendance. Money will first be applied toward any outstanding balance you have with the college. If your balance is paid in full, any leftover scholarship money can be refunded to you in accordance with the college's refund policy.

**Q** *How do I know if my college is eligible?*

**A** In order to be eligible for the GEAR UP Connecticut Scholarship, you must attend a Title IV college. A Title IV college/university is one that participates in Federal Student Aid programs. You can search for Title IV institutions on the [Federal Student Aid](http://www.fafsa.ed.gov) website by entering information about the college (state, city, and/or name.) If your college appears in the Search Results, then it is a Title IV college and you can receive GEAR UP scholarship funds while you are enrolled there.

**Q** *Can I go to a college outside of Connecticut?*

**A** Yes. As long as the college is eligible, you can receive a GEAR UP Connecticut Scholarship.

**Q** *Do I have to do anything besides fill out the FAFSA to be eligible?*

**A** In addition to your college being eligible, you must also be enrolled in a degree program to be eligible for federal aid.

**Q** *How does the money get to my college?*

**A** Money is automatically sent to your college once they confirm that you are enrolled. Half of the funds will be sent in the fall and the other half will be sent in the winter for the spring semester.

**Q** *How do I apply for the GEAR UP Connecticut Scholarship again?*

**A** As stated above, you have to complete and submit a FAFSA every year starting in your senior year of high school, or you will not be eligible for that year.

**Q** *What if I don't go to college right away after graduating high school?*

**A** You can still use the scholarship even if you do not go to college right away. The rules of the GEAR UP scholarship state that you must be under the age of 22 the first time you receive a GEAR UP scholarship. As long as you enroll in college and receive your first GEAR UP Connecticut Scholarship before you turn 22, you may still be eligible.

**Q** *What if my parents make a lot of money?*

**A** A family's income is not used to determine eligibility for the GEAR UP Connecticut Scholarship.

**Q** *What if my high school G.P.A. (grade point average) is low?*

**A** High school G.P.A. is not considered when awarding the GEAR UP Connecticut Scholarship.

**Q** *Can I use the scholarship for a master's degree/graduate school?*

**A** No. The GEAR UP Connecticut Scholarship is only for undergraduate studies.

**Q** *Can I use the scholarship if I am going into the military right after high school graduation?*

**A** The GEAR UP Connecticut Scholarship can only be used to pay for expenses associated with attending college. We cannot award the GEAR UP Connecticut Scholarship for military service, but you can still be eligible for the scholarship. As long as you enroll in college and receive your first GEAR UP Connecticut Scholarship before you turn 22, you may still be eligible.

**Q** *What if I move out of Connecticut while I am in college? Am I still eligible for the GEAR UP Connecticut Scholarship?*

**A** Yes. Be sure to check with BOTH the financial aid office at the college you are leaving and the one you are transferring to so that appropriate steps can be taken to maintain the scholarship at your new college.

**Q** *I want to go to one of the three GEAR UP colleges (Manchester Community College, Naugatuck Valley Community College, Southern Connecticut State University) and I have been told that they will waive tuition and fees if I am accepted. Do I still need a scholarship?*

**A** YES! GEAR UP participants who are accepted to Manchester, Naugatuck Valley, or Southern will have their tuition and fees waived, but that does not cover room and board and other costs of attendance. You should fill out the FAFSA, and the GEAR UP Connecticut Scholarship can be applied to those other costs.

**Q** *Will I still be eligible for the GEAR UP Connecticut Scholarship if I go to college part-time?*

**A** Yes. The scholarship amount will be pro-rated to reflect your part-time status.

For additional questions and information contact Waterbury GEAR UP:



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