

## **Washington STEM Scholarships Deadline Approaching**

### **Local News**

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OLYMPIA, Wash. - The Washington State Opportunity Scholarship helps low- and middle-income Washington State residents earn first bachelor's degrees in science, technology, engineering, mathematics (STEM) and health care.

The application period is March 1 through April 16, 2012. Three thousand students will be selected and awards will be made for the 2012-13 academic year. High school seniors through college seniors who plan to attend colleges and universities in Washington State for the entire 2012-13 academic year are eligible to apply. A student must be a Washington State resident, have a 2.75 GPA or higher and have completed a 2012-2013 Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) to submit an application. These scholarships are \$1,000 per year which will be renewable for up to five years for entering college freshmen. Renewal of the scholarship will depend on class standing and meeting [renewal criteria](#).

The newly-created Washington State Opportunity Scholarship is now accepting applications for the 2012-13 academic year, the Washington Opportunity Scholarship Board and the College Success Foundation announced today.

The scholarship is a public-private partnership created by the Legislature in 2011, with the support of Boeing and Microsoft. The scholarship aims to help low- and middle- income

Washington residents earn bachelor's degrees in high employer demand fields, and to encourage scholarship recipients to work in Washington state once they complete their degrees.

A seven-member governance Board appointed in December 2011 by Governor Chris Gregoire approved the components of the Opportunity Scholarship for the first year at their inaugural board meeting on Feb. 14 at the Microsoft campus in Redmond. At the meeting, the Board approved the scholarship model and named the College Success Foundation as program administrator.

"The future of our state relies on the opportunity our students have to train for high demand careers," said Governor Chris Gregoire. "The Opportunity Scholarship is a commitment from both the business community and the state to help our students earn the degrees that prepare them for these demanding and rewarding careers."

"It's important to ensure that college is accessible to hard-working students of all economic backgrounds," said Brad Smith, Microsoft executive vice president and chair of the Opportunity Scholarship Board. "The new Opportunity Scholarships will help make college a reality for more families across our state, and we want to encourage all eligible students to apply." "The College Success Foundation is proud to partner with Boeing, Microsoft and the state of Washington in this public-private partnership," said Bob Craves, chair and CEO of the non profit College Success Foundation. "This is a great opportunity for students going into STEM fields and health care." Scholarships for \$1,000 will be awarded to three thousand students for the 2012-13 academic year, and are renewable for up to five years for entering college freshmen. High school seniors through college seniors who plan to attend colleges and universities in Washington for the entire 2012-13 academic year are eligible to apply. A student must be a Washington resident, have a 2.75 GPA or higher and have completed a 2012-2013 Free Application

for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) to submit an application.

The Opportunity Scholarship is available to students in families who earn up to 125 percent of the median family income. This expands college financial aid to a greater group of young people beyond the current state need grant, which only reaches families with 70 percent of the median family income.

In the summer of 2011, Boeing and Microsoft each pledged \$25 million over the next five years to the public-private Opportunity Scholarship endowment fund. The state allocated \$5 million in seed money to the fund, and set an immediate goal of matching these private sector pledges to bring the endowment's total to \$100 million. The Board, which oversees the fund, has set a goal to raise \$1 billion from both the public and private sectors by 2020. Opportunity Scholarship Board members include:

- o Jim Albaugh, executive vice president of The Boeing Company and president and chief executive officer of Boeing Commercial Airplanes;
  - o Theresa Gillespie, co-founder and managing director of Trilogy Partnership;
  - o Jerry Grinstein, co-founder and strategic director of Madrona Investment Group, and former chief executive officer of Delta Air Lines;
  - o Kimberly Harris, president and chief executive officer of Washington-based Puget Sound Energy, the utility subsidiary of Puget Energy;
  - o Mack Hogans, former Weyerhaeuser Company senior vice president;
  - o Jim Sinegal, founder, president and chief executive officer of Costco Wholesale Corporation; and
  - o Brad Smith, (Board chair) general counsel and executive vice president of Legal and Corporate Affairs at Microsoft.
- The Opportunity Scholarship application window closes on April 16, 2012 and applicants and colleges will be notified beginning May 1 of selection decisions. Students wishing to learn more and apply are encouraged to visit [www.waopportunityscholarship.org](http://www.waopportunityscholarship.org) or phone toll-free 877-899-5002.