



INDIANA COMMISSION for
HIGHER EDUCATION

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June 30 Deadline Approaching for 21st Century Scholarship Enrollment

Indiana seventh-, eighth-grade students encouraged to enroll in early college promise program

(INDIANAPOLIS) – Indiana seventh- and eighth-grade students can still apply for the [21st Century Scholars](#) program, but the June 30 deadline is quickly approaching. Led by the [Indiana Commission for Higher Education](#), the 21st Century Scholarship is the state’s early college promise program that provides up to four years of undergraduate tuition and fees for eligible students at Indiana colleges and universities.

To qualify, students must apply during their seventh- or eighth-grade year (students cannot apply past June 30 of their eighth-grade year). Most students who qualify for the federal free and reduced lunch guidelines will qualify for the 21st Century Scholars program.

“The 21st Century Scholars Program created the opportunity for me to strive and excel throughout my college career. It gave me the chance to be a first-generation college graduate,” said IUPUI graduate and 21st Century Scholars alum Melissa Aceves. “Through the Scholars program, I gained mentors who guided me, a scholarship for my tuition, a community of fellow Scholars and happiness because I had the opportunity to focus on my education as well as create an impact on the community.”

For 30 years, the Indiana General Assembly has provided bipartisan support for the 21st Century Scholars program. Since its inception in 1990, more than 45,000 students have earned a degree or credential through the 21st Century Scholars program and there are more than 100,000 students enrolled between seventh grade and college seniors today. The Commission published a [report](#) about the program and its impact for Indiana earlier this year.

“The 21st Century Scholars program is a transformative opportunity for students,” said Indiana Commissioner for Higher Education Chris Lowery. “This scholarship is one of the many ways Indiana has committed to ensuring students can access education and training beyond high school. It continues to be one of the proven tools to close educational equity gaps and help Hoosier students succeed.”



*Melissa Aceves, IUPUI graduate and
21st Century Scholar*

Students in the 21st Century Scholars program go to college at much higher rates than the statewide average, with 81 percent of students who meet the program requirements enrolling in college, compared to the statewide average of 53 percent. The Commission’s 2022 [College Readiness Report](#) also highlights how the program closes the race and ethnicity equity gap for low-income students.

However, opportunities exist to increase program utilization. Awareness of the 21st Century Scholars program remains a barrier to increasing participation. Currently, four in 10 high school graduates are financially eligible for the 21st Century Scholars program, but less than half enroll. The Commission is recommending all eligible students in seventh and eighth grade be automatically enrolled in the Scholars program.

“There are many organizations and volunteers that help enroll students into the 21st Century Scholars program. Indiana’s middle school counselors and educators are working on this effort, and the Commission has an outreach team dedicated to this goal. All of that is still not enough, however. Enrolling all students who are eligible will clear a barrier for Hoosiers and would enable everyone to shift resources toward ensuring students are succeeding in high school and college and beyond,” Lowery said.

Help with enrollment available

To best serve students, the Commission has split the state into eight outreach regions; and the Commission’s outreach coordinators are available via phone or email. A full list of counties and associated numbers is available [here](#).

Help is also available in Spanish by calling 317-232-1072 or 317-617-0318. Additionally, the Commission’s [Padres Estrellas](#), or “Star Parents” are available. Padres Estrellas work with community organizations focused on empowering Hoosier Hispanic and Latino communities to provide college and career support to students and families across the state.

¿Necesitas ayuda en español? Llame al 317-232-1072 o 317-617-0318.

Learn more and apply at www.Scholars.in.gov/enroll.

Are you a 21st Century Scholars alumni?

Please take a few minutes to complete the Commission’s [alumni survey](#) and share how the 21st Century Scholarship impacted you personally and professionally. Your story can help inspire others.

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About the Indiana Commission for Higher Education

Created in 1971, the Indiana Commission for Higher Education plans, coordinates and defines Indiana’s postsecondary education system to align higher learning with the needs of students and the state. The Commission also administers Indiana’s financial aid programs, including the [21st Century Scholars](#) early college promise scholarship, which celebrated 30 years in 2020.

About 21st Century Scholars

Indiana’s 21st Century Scholars program is an early college promise program designed to help ensure that every Hoosier student can afford the opportunity provided by a high-quality postsecondary degree or credential. Income-eligible students who maintain the Scholar Pledge through excellence in school and life can receive a scholarship for up to 100 percent of tuition at an eligible Indiana college or university upon graduation from high school. The program was created in 1990 and celebrated 30 years of success in 2020.