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**Colorado Opportunity Scholarship Initiative approves 10 new local scholarship proposals**

DENVER, Nov. 28, 2016 – The Colorado Scholarship Initiative board approved 10 local scholarship proposals, which will grow into \$4.2 million in scholarships for Colorado students.

The board awarded \$2.1 million to the groups (counties, institutions of higher education, and workforce development organizations) to form local scholarship programs, with the expectation that the groups will match the funds 1:1.

“Applicants from last year have matched their funds and are applying for more in this round,” said Jay Hardy, chair of the Colorado Opportunity Scholarship Initiative Advisory Board. “This is the impact we envisioned. The state’s funds are doubling, community and industry are coming together, and students are receiving critical support so they can get to the finish line. It is a win-win for everyone.”

This is the first of three proposal review periods for 2016-2017. The next opportunities to apply are in January and March of 2017. The goal is to leverage \$7 million in state funds to generate \$14 million in new scholarship funds for Colorado students this year.

The 10 awards represent seven counties (\$1,152,667), 16 institutions of higher education (\$757,567), and three workforce programs (\$228,521). Scholarships are multi-year awards ranging from \$1,000-\$5,000 depending on program and financial need. The majority of the funds are available to students over the next two to four years.

“This year, as we roll out the COSI scholarships, we are slated to award \$900K – nearly doubling the financial support our students are receiving,” said Lisa James, executive director at the Pikes Peak Community College Foundation. “Our board is actively engaged in the fundraising process for the first time. This has been a transformative process for the foundation – and our community is responding generously to the efforts to increase our workforce with well-qualified graduates from PPCC.”

**Recipients and award amounts**

**County-based awards:**

- Colorado Mesa University Foundation on behalf of Mesa County - \$173,404
- Colorado Mesa University Foundation on behalf of Montrose County - \$57,004
- Denver Scholarship Foundation on behalf of the City and County of Denver - \$606,850
- Greeley-Weld Urban Enterprise Zone Fund on behalf of Weld County - \$303,076
- Red Rocks Community College Foundation on behalf of Clear Creek, Gilpin, and Park Counties - \$12,333

**Institutions of higher education:**

- Emily Griffith Foundation on behalf of Emily Griffith Technical College - \$8,072
- Foundation for Colorado Community Colleges on behalf of:
  - Arapahoe Community College - \$55,254
  - Colorado Mesa University - \$67,679
  - Colorado Northwestern Community College - \$4,986

- Community College of Aurora - \$63,636
- Community College of Denver - \$93,230
- Delta Montrose Technical College - \$1,402
- Front Range Community College - \$150,007
- Lamar Community College - \$4,959
- Morgan Community College - \$10,175
- Northeastern Junior College - \$11,455
- Otero Junior College - \$10,363
- Pikes Peak Community College - \$136,369
- Pueblo Community College - \$61,143
- Red Rocks Community College - \$64,862
- Trinidad State Junior College - \$13,975

**Workforce:**

- Colorado Mesa University Foundation on behalf of Colorado Mesa University Center for Teacher Education - \$73,521
- Emily Griffith Foundation on behalf of Emily Griffith Technical College - \$80,000
- Project Self-Sufficiency of Loveland-Fort Collins on behalf of Larimer County Workforce Center and Project Self-Sufficiency - \$75,000

Counties, workforce programs, and institutions of higher education interested in applying for matching funds can find application materials, dates, and available amounts at:

[www.coloradoscholarshipinitiative.org/matching-scholarships](http://www.coloradoscholarshipinitiative.org/matching-scholarships).

**About the Colorado Opportunity Scholarship initiative**

The Colorado Opportunity Scholarship Initiative (Scholarship Initiative) was created to increase the attainment of postsecondary credentials and degrees for underserved students in Colorado. The project addresses this challenge in two ways: accessibility and affordability. To increase accessibility, the Scholarship Initiative funds programs that will help prepare students for postsecondary education, as well as support them through completion. To increase affordability, the Scholarship Initiative will provide tuition support via matching funds for community scholarships.

The Colorado Department of Higher Education is committed to reducing the “attainment gap,” which is the gap between Coloradans who traditionally go to college and Coloradans who are historically less likely to go to college. The Dept. of Higher Education is working toward that goal through a variety of ways, including addressing college affordability through programs like the Colorado Opportunity Scholarship Initiative.

To inquire about forming a scholarship partnership, please contact Shelley Banker at 303-974-2673 or [shelley.banker@dhe.state.co.us](mailto:shelley.banker@dhe.state.co.us).

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