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Colorado Opportunity Scholarship Initiative approves \$1.3 million in scholarships, which will be matched 1:1

DENVER – December 1, 2015: The Colorado Scholarship Initiative board approved seven local scholarship proposals, which will grow into \$2.6 million in scholarships for Colorado students.

The Scholarship initiative seeks to partner with counties, institutions of higher education, and workforce development organizations to form local scholarship programs throughout the state.

This is the first of four proposal review periods for fiscal year 2015-2016. The goal is to leverage \$7 million in state funds in order to generate a total of \$14 million in new scholarship funds for Colorado students.

The November round resulted in the board accepting seven proposals for a total of \$1,317,407 in 1:1 scholarship matches. The seven proposals represent four counties (\$346,472), 17 institutions of higher education (\$970,935), and one workforce development project (\$40,000).

- More than 800 students will benefit from this round of scholarships.
- Scholarships are multi-year awards ranging from \$1,000-\$5,000 depending on program and financial need.

This review period represents approximately 20 percent of the funds available through the Scholarship initiative.

In the next phase of the process, the Scholarship Initiative will craft agreements with counties and institutions of higher education based on the projected matches, and distribute funds after new scholarship matches are raised by the local partner (county, institution of higher education, or workforce organization). The majority of the funds will be available to students over the next two to four years.

“These proposed local scholarship programs are key to helping the state achieve its goal of ensuring that all Coloradans have access to higher education, and that the state grows the percentage of Coloradans who attain a postsecondary credential or degree,” said Lt. Governor Joe Garcia, executive director of the Colorado Department of Higher Education. “The differences between each of the proposed programs will help us make sure that we are meeting the unique needs of each community and its workforce demands, while building on existing efforts to support students.”

Here is a list of all the recipients and award amounts:

- Aspen Community Foundation on behalf of Garfield County - \$77,534
- Boulder I Have a Dream Foundation on behalf of Boulder County - \$250,019
- Colorado Community College System Foundation applying on behalf of:
 - Arapahoe Community College - \$59,183

- Colorado Mesa University - \$68,170
- Colorado Northwestern Community College - \$4,632
- Community College of Aurora - \$64,090
- Community College of Denver - \$94,052
- Delta Montrose Technical College - \$1,469
- Front Range Community College - \$154,741
- Lamar Community College - \$5,309
- Morgan Community College - \$10,920
- Northeastern Junior College - \$10,996
- Otero Junior College - \$12,615
- Pike Peak Community College - \$139,114
- Pueblo Community College - \$65,697
- Red Rocks Community College - \$66,162
- Trinidad State Junior College - \$14,347
- Colorado Northwestern Community College Foundation on behalf of Moffat County - \$11,210
- Colorado Northwestern Community College Foundation on behalf of Rio Blanco County - \$7,709
- Emily Griffith Foundation - \$7,079
- Emily Griffith Foundation (Workforce programs) - \$40,000
- Metropolitan State University of Denver - \$192,359

About the Colorado Opportunity Scholarship initiative:

The State established the Colorado Opportunity Scholarship Initiative a year ago with the goal of establishing a statewide network of student support and scholarship programs. Leveraging \$7 million of start-up funds, the Initiative will partner with the local programs, matching scholarships 1:1. The local programs will then distribute the scholarships to Colorado students who attend Colorado public institutions of higher education.

Last fall, the Colorado Opportunity Scholarship Initiative granted \$3.4 million to organizations across the state that work with students to improve access, persistence, and completion.

The Colorado Dept. 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.

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