

Postsecondary Education is Affordable

South Dakota Opportunity Scholarship

Earn a reward (up to \$5,000) for taking the right courses!

- \$ Resident of South Dakota at time of high school graduation.
- \$ ACT composite score of 24 or higher or an equivalent score as determined by the Board of Regents on the SAT.
- \$ Complete the **Distinguished Graduation Requirements** set by the Department of Education with no final grade below a C (2.0 on a 4.0 scale) and a cumulative high school GPA of 3.0 on a 4.0 scale (grade of B). This includes the following specific courses:
 - 4 units of English
 - 3 units of social studies
 - 4 units of algebra or higher mathematics
 - 4 units of science, including 3 units of approved laboratory science
 - 1/2 unit of computer science
 - 1 unit of fine arts
 - 2 units of the same modern or classical language
- \$ Attend a university, college, or technical school accredited by the North Central Association (NCA) and that provides instruction from a campus located in South Dakota.
- \$ Enter into a program within 5 years of high school graduation.
- \$ May participate in South Dakota Opportunity Scholarship Program for the equivalent of four academic years (eight consecutive fall and spring terms), or until attaining a baccalaureate degree, whichever comes first. Students completing a technical or associate degree program are eligible for continued funding.



American Opportunity Tax Credit

Another opportunity to make postsecondary education affordable, the American Opportunity Tax Credit replaces what we have known as the HOPE Credit in 2009 and 2010. With the replacement come many improvements:

- The tax credit has increased to \$2,500 a year to cover higher education expenses.
- The cost of books and other course materials may be added to tuition and fees to determine your eligible expenses.
- The American Opportunity Tax Credit is valid for the first four years of college, while the HOPE was only valid for two years. This means a potential difference of over \$6,000 more returned to you.
- The income limits for eligibility are now much higher.

306 East Capitol Avenue, Suite 200
Pierre, South Dakota 57501-2545

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Don't pass on these opportunities!

**Important information for students and
parents about preparing and paying for
postsecondary education**

