



IowaCollegeAid.gov

NEWS RELEASE

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First GEAR UP Iowa Scholarship awarded to early DMPS graduate
Carly Callison will be the first to receive \$2,600 a year towards postsecondary education

Des Moines, IA., November 14, 2013 – The Iowa College Student Aid Commission (Iowa College Aid) announced today, the first recipient of a GEAR UP Iowa Scholarship, Carly Callison. She is attending the Aveda Institute in Des Moines to pursue a Diploma in Cosmetology. The scholarship, worth \$2,600 a year, will aid Carly in paying for tuition and fees, and can be applied to additional educational expenses. GEAR UP Iowa is funded by a federal grant to significantly increase the number of students prepared to enter and succeed in postsecondary education. Unique to the GEAR UP Iowa grant is the GEAR UP Iowa Scholarship; a \$16.8 million scholarship fund available to GEAR UP Iowa students upon graduation from high school. Most of the GEAR UP Iowa students are currently high school seniors. By graduating a year early, Carly became the first GEAR UP Iowa student to receive the scholarship.

“Receiving the GEAR UP scholarship was truly a blessing for me as an early graduate of the Des Moines Public Schools, and a new cosmetology student at the Aveda Institute Des Moines. It was a pleasant surprise that came at the perfect time and positively impacted my life and education,” said scholarship recipient Carly Callison. “I am thankful that I was able to receive the GEAR UP Scholarship to pursue a career path that best suits my passion and creativity. The GEAR UP Scholarship is helping me pave my way into a career that I will love for the rest of my life and for that, I will always be thankful.”

The GEAR UP Iowa grant, administered by Iowa College Aid, began serving a cohort of seventh grade students during the 2008-2009 academic year. Schools with over 50 percent of their student population participating in the federal Free and Reduced Price Lunch Program were selected as partner schools. The purpose of the grant is to create a college-going culture throughout the state of Iowa. The approximately 7,000 GEAR UP Iowa students, many of whom are from economically disadvantaged or academically at-risk backgrounds, are in more than 150 high schools across the state. GEAR UP Iowa has worked with the partner schools over the past six years to help prepare the students to be successful as they pursue educational opportunities beyond high school.

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GEAR UP Iowa students who graduate from high school, earn a GED or high school diploma and meet other criteria, are eligible for a renewable scholarship of up to \$2,600 each year to use towards undergraduate enrollment costs at eligible colleges and universities. To apply, GEAR UP Iowa students simply need to complete the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA).

“The GEAR UP scholarship will cover 25% of Carly's tuition. Because of this, not only will Carly's loan debt be lessened after graduation, but she will be able to have a fantastic career in the field of Cosmetology Arts and Sciences, explained Jenna Van Polen, Aveda Institute Financial Aid Administrator. “As a licensed professional, Carly will use the skills from school to help guests with nails, skincare, retailing, hair and building lifelong relationships.”

“We are very excited to distribute the first GEAR UP Iowa Scholarship,” said Karen Misjak, executive director of Iowa College Aid. “We congratulate Carly on her early graduation from high school and wish her the best as she continues her education at the Aveda Institute. As we continue to encourage all GEAR UP students to apply for college, we hope that this scholarship will make their postsecondary education plans possible.”

To learn more about GEAR UP Iowa, visit <http://www.gearupiowa.gov/>. For more information about the resources and services provided by Iowa College Aid to help Iowa families plan, prepare and pay for college, visit www.IowaCollegeAid.gov or contact Iowa College Aid at 877-272-4456.

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About the Iowa College Student Aid Commission

Iowa College Aid provides college access, financial literacy, and outreach services to Iowa's students and families as they prepare, plan and pay for college. Iowa College Aid also administers state scholarship, grant, work study, and loan forgiveness programs totaling over \$68.0 million annually, administers the Federal Family Education Loan Program (FFELP) program, provides borrowers with assistance to avoid the serious consequences of default, conducts research and distributes higher education data, and offers Iowans assistance in obtaining student financial aid and college-related information. Through its role, Iowa College Aid also serves as the state-designated administrator of the U.S. Department of Education's College Access Challenge Grant, which is designed to increase the college-going culture in Iowa. Additionally, Iowa College Aid is the administrator of the Federal GEAR-UP Grant, a multi-year state-wide grant which is being utilized to provide early awareness programming and outreach initiatives to thousands of Iowa's students and families. More information is available at www.IowaCollegeAid.gov.

About GEAR UP Iowa

GEAR UP Iowa, administered by the Iowa College Student Aid Commission and funded by a \$16.8 million federal Gaining Early Awareness and Readiness for Undergraduate Programs (GEAR UP) grant, to increase the number of academically at-risk and economically disadvantaged students who are prepared to enter and succeed in postsecondary education. GEAR UP Iowa works to create and sustain a college-going culture through statewide and school-based services provided to a cohort of approximately 7,000 high school students from the class of 2014 in more than 200 Iowa high schools. All students in the GEAR UP Iowa cohort will be eligible to receive a GEAR UP Iowa scholarship upon high school graduation to help pay higher education costs. More information is available at www.GEARUPIowa.gov.