

Chicago GEAR UP Scholarship Program Information for Applicants and Counselors

Eligible Applicants

1. The Chicago GEAR UP Scholarship Program supports students who attended GEAR UP schools during specific years. **The list of eligible schools and the years of attendance are listed in Appendix 1.** Students are eligible if they attended 7th and/or 8th grade in a GEAR UP school between Fall 1999 and Spring 2005 **or** attended one of the 5 GEAR UP high schools as listed in Appendix 1 between Fall 2004 and Spring 2006.
2. Applicant must be admitted as a student in a degree-granting institution, a proprietary institution of higher education as defined by the Higher Education Act of 1965, or in a trade or technical school in the United States.
3. Applicants may be high school or college students when they apply, or have earned their GED.
4. Applicants must be less than 22 years of age at the time they receive their first scholarship or award.
5. There is no minimum GPA required for first-time application, but students must maintain an average GPA of 2.5 to be considered for scholarship renewal.
6. Applicants who are eligible for a Pell grant will be given priority consideration for receipt of a Chicago GEAR UP Alliance Scholarship. If eligible, applicants must accept a federal Pell grant and/or Monetary Award Program grant from the Illinois Student Assistance Commission.
7. Students who are not eligible for a Pell or Monetary Award Program grant may receive a Chicago GEAR UP Alliance Scholarship.

Priority Consideration

Applicants who have been admitted to a Chicago GEAR UP Alliance partner institution will be given priority consideration for scholarships. Partner institutions are: Northeastern Illinois University, Roosevelt University, DePaul University, Loyola University – Chicago, The University of Chicago, Truman College – City Colleges of Chicago, and National-Louis University.

Amount of GEAR UP Scholarships

Scholarships (including renewals) will range from \$0 to \$ 4,050 annually. The specific amount will be determined exclusively on the basis of that year's financial need as established at the time of application.

Eligibility for Renewal of Scholarships

1. Scholarships will generally be conferred for eight (8) semesters or the equivalent. Requests for an extension beyond eight semesters will be considered on a case-by-case basis.
2. Scholarship recipients are required to maintain a minimum cumulative grade point average of 2.5 (on a 4.0 point scale) or the equivalent to be considered for renewal scholarships.
3. GEAR UP Scholarships will be distributed until all available funds are exhausted.
4. Scholarship recipients who transfer from one postsecondary institution to another remain eligible for a renewal of their scholarships.
5. Students who take a leave from their postsecondary programs remain eligible for their scholarship as long as they are absent no longer than one academic year and meet all eligibility requirements when returning to their studies.

Use of Scholarship Funds

1. The amount of the Chicago GEAR UP Scholarships will not exceed the maximum amount available through the Pell grant program.
2. The total amount of financial aid from all sources, including the Chicago GEAR UP Scholarship Program shall not exceed the student's *total cost of attendance*.
3. Chicago GEAR UP Scholarship Program funds will only be distributed to postsecondary institutions.
4. The Chicago GEAR UP Scholarship Program funds may be used to meet the remaining financial need after the (1) federal Pell Grant, (2) public and private grants, (3) scholarships and/or tuition discounts have been taken into consideration.
5. If a student who applied as a full-time student is awarded a Chicago GEAR UP Scholarship Program then attends a postsecondary institution on a part-time basis during any academic year, the Chicago GEAR UP Scholarship Program amount will be reduced proportionately.

Application Process

1. Applicants must complete the GEAR UP Scholarship Application Form which may be obtained online at www.chicagogearup.org.
2. Scholarships will be available for the first time for 2008-2009 academic year.
3. Application requirements are similar for both high school and college applicants. Please review the application carefully and make certain that all required attachments are included.

Complete

- a. Biographical information: name and contact information
- b. GEAR UP background: list of elementary and high schools attended and dates of attendance
- c. 250 – 500 word essay: Impact of GEAR UP on my life

Include required attachments

- a. Proof of attendance at a GEAR UP school during eligible time period
 - b. Postsecondary acceptance letter
 - c. Documentation of financial need: All official documentation related to cost and aid from the postsecondary institution and private scholarships/grants is required.
4. **Completed applications must be submitted in a sealed envelope by June 27, 2008, at 4:30 PM to the following address.** Only completed applications with all the required attachments will be considered.

Chicago GEAR UP Scholarship Program
Scholarship Selection Committee
Chicago Teachers' Center
770 N. Halsted – 4th Floor
Chicago, IL 60622

5. Questions may be directed to the GEAR UP Scholarship Program helpline at 312-563-7258.

Role of the Chicago GEAR UP Alliance

1. Chicago GEAR UP Alliance will award Chicago GEAR UP Scholarships until all available funds are exhausted and will avoid conflicts of interest in doing so.
2. Chicago GEAR UP Alliance shall not make eligibility for a scholarship contingent on a student's selection of any particular postsecondary institution or program.
3. A volunteer Scholarship Selection Committee will identify appropriate candidates for GEAR UP scholarships. The Scholarship Selection Committee will be composed of financial aid and admissions professionals from the Chicago GEAR UP Alliance partner institutions. The Scholarship Selection Committee will evaluate applications using a scoring rubric that considers eligibility, need, and completeness. In the event of a tie, the applicants' cumulative GPA will be the deciding factor.