

CALIFORNIA GEAR UP EDUCATION TRUST AWARDS FACT SHEET

Points of Contact:

How do I communicate with the California GEAR UP and The Student Aid Commission?

▶When you need to contact the Commission, please include your name, social security number, address, and phone number and refer to the GEAR UP Education Trust Account program. *(Make and keep a copy of any letters and documents that you mail to the Commission.)*

If I need to mail something what is the mailing address I need to use?

▶California Student Aid Commission
Specialized Programs Unit - GEAR UP
P. O. Box 419029
Rancho Cordova, CA 95741-9029

What if I change my address? How do I correct it?

(VERY IMPORTANT, Missed communications could result in the loss of your award!!)

▶California GEAR UP will contact you once a year to give you a statement of the status of your account. If you change your permanent mailing address, you must *immediately* inform California GEAR UP.

What if I want to call the California GEAR UP? What is the telephone number?

▶Call us at (916) 551-1757.

What are other ways of getting in contact with the California GEAR UP?

▶If you need to fAX us a document the fax number is (916) 551-1759.

▶You can also communicate with us through Email at Gear-Up@csac.ca.gov

Questions and Answers:

What is a GEAR UP Education Trust Account award? ▶A GEAR UP Education Trust Account award is a ScholarShare account held in trust for you by the Student Aid Commission. The account will earn interest until you withdraw the funds. To withdraw funds, you must graduate from high school (or the equivalent) and enroll in college within one year (12 months) of your high school graduation.

(turn over for more questions and answers)

Do I have to remain in a Gear Up or Talent Search project to retain the award? ► No.

What is an eligible institution? ► Post-secondary institutions participating in Federal Title IV student financial aid programs are eligible institutions.

Do I have to enroll in a four year school? ► No. ***Can I attend a Community College or vocational or proprietary college?*** ► Yes.

Do I have to attend a college in California? ► No..

How do I withdraw funds from the account? ► You can download the Qualified Funds Withdraw Form (QFWF) from the GEAR UP website: <http://www.castategearup.org>.

Can I withdraw the entire balance at once or small amounts over time or both? ► Yes, both, depending on the qualified higher education expenses incurred.

What if I do not draw all monies out at once and then do not continue in college? Is remainder forfeited? ► You must withdraw all funds within six years and provide proof of enrollment in college. If you no longer continue in college and your six years has passed, your money is forfeited.

What kind of expenses does my GEAR UP Award cover? ► It covers qualified higher education expenses, which include tuition, fees, books, supplies, and equipment required for the student's enrollment or attendance at an eligible educational institution. This also includes expenses for special needs services in the case of special needs students.

Do I have to be enrolled at a certain level? Half-time, full-time? ► No.