**December Financial Aid**

(source: <http://www.arizonamentor.org/FinAid/step4.asp>)

## Arizona Financial Aid Programs

The state of Arizona offers several financial aid opportunities to assist Arizona residents who are pursuing a higher education.

**Private Postsecondary Education Student Financial Assistance Program**
Arizona public community college graduates who have financial need may receive an annual $1,500 grant (renewable for one year and limited to a total of $3,000) to attend a private college in Arizona. You must have an associate degree and plan to attend a baccalaureate degree program full time at an independent college in Arizona. The grants are awarded on a first-come, first-served basis. If you don't graduate with your bachelor's degree within three years of receiving a grant, you must pay back the full amount of your award. To learn more and to get an application, contact a participating independent college or go to [www.azhighered.gov](http://www.azhighered.gov/home.aspx). You must also file the FAFSA.

**Leveraging Educational Assistance Partnership**
This program provides grants to approximately 5,000 undergraduate and graduate students each year who have financial need and are Arizona residents. The grants may be used at participating public and independent postsecondary institutions in Arizona. Award amounts vary between $100 to $2,500 depending on the college, your financial need and other factors. For an application and to determine your eligibility, contact each college's financial aid office when applying for admission.

**Educational Opportunity Centers**
The Educational Opportunity Centers are a federally funded program that assists individuals in achieving their higher education goals. The program's counselors are dispersed throughout Arizona at high schools, community colleges, and social services agencies. The counselors assist participants with the financial aid application process, GED and scholarship information, and college admissions requirements, and provide academic and career counseling. To learn more, call 800.628.4494 (Northern Arizona) or 480.894.8451 (Maricopa County).

**Foster Youth Grants**
Up to $5,000 a year is available for college or vocational training for foster youth who have aged out of foster care or who were adopted after age 16. To learn more about federal Chafee grants for education, talk to your independent living coordinator, your college's financial aid office, or go online to [www.statevoucher.org](http://www.statevoucher.org) and click on "Arizona."

In addition, Arizona offers education assistance for former foster youth (who were in foster care in Arizona when they were 16, 17 or 18 years old) and for youth who aged out of other states' foster care systems through the Transitional Independent Living services.

**WICHE Student Exchanges**
You may be able to achieve your educational goals through WICHE, the Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education. Through the WICHE Undergraduate, Graduate, and Professional exchange programs, Arizona residents can attend selected out-of-state colleges at reduced tuition rates. To participate, you must be a U.S. citizen, have been a legal resident of Arizona for at least five years, and have maintained at least average (2.5 GPA) grades. Admission deadlines and requirements vary by school. To learn more, go to [www.abor.asu.edu](http://www.abor.asu.edu) (click on "Special Programs"), or go to [www.wiche.edu](http://www.wiche.edu).

**Arizona Family College Savings Plan**
The Arizona Family College Savings Plan is a state-sponsored college savings plan in which earnings grow tax-free if the money is later used for college costs. The plan has no income limit to qualify and offers the flexibility to use the funds at any postsecondary school nationwide. Anyone can open an account to save money for a family member or friend who will be attending college in the future. For more information, go to [www.azhighered.gov](http://www.azhighered.gov/home.aspx).

**Arizona Residency for In-State Tuition**

## There are three minimum requirements for establishing residency to be eligible for state tuition rates at the three Arizona state universities — 12 months of continuous physical presence immediately prior to the start of school, evidence of your intent to establish residence, and financial independence. The following actions are used to determine intent to establish residency and must be done at the start of the 12-month period: obtaining an Arizona driver's license; registering your car in Arizona; having an employment history in Arizona; filing state and federal income tax returns as an Arizona resident; registering to vote in Arizona; and having an Arizona permanent address on all pertinent records. For Arizona residency, you're considered to be financially independent if you are a veteran of the U.S. Armed Forces or were not claimed as an income tax deduction by your parents or any other individual for two tax years, and can demonstrate evidence of self-support for the two years immediately prior to the start of school. In addition, you may be considered an Arizona resident if you're a dependent student and your parents live in Arizona; if you were transferred to Arizona by your employer; or if you, your spouse or one of your parents is a member of the U.S. Armed Forces stationed in Arizona. Residency for those under the age of 18 is based on the residency status of their parents or legal guardians. More Online Resources

If you think you'll need financial help, apply for it. For more information, contact your high school counselor or college financial aid administrator or go to:

 [www.azhighered.gov](http://www.azhighered.gov/home.aspx%22%20%5Ct%20%22_blank)
The Arizona Commission for Postsecondary Education, for more on state financial aid. You can write to the Commission at 2020 North Central, Suite 550, Phoenix, AZ 85004 or call 602.258.2435.

 [www.wiche.edu](http://www.wiche.edu" \t "_blank)
The Arizona Board of Regents, to learn more about the WICHE student exchange programs. The address is 2020 North Central, Suite 230, Phoenix, AZ 85004 or call 602.229.2563.

 [www.edfund.org](http://www.edfund.org)
EDFUND, for information on low-interest federal loans, college and financial planning, strategies for managing loans and more. Or call toll free 877.2EDFUND (that's 877.233.3863).

 [www.studentaid.ed.gov](http://www.studentaid.ed.gov)
The Federal Student Aid Information Center, for more on Pell Grants, other federal grants and loans, and applying for federal and state aid. Or call toll free 800.4FED.AID (that's 800.433.3243).