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REPORTS:

No

HEARINGS:

No

NEWSPAPER ARTICLES:

Yes

- "McGreevey Oks community college tuition plan," 6-30-2004 Courier Post, p.B1
- "Community colleges to test best for free," 6-30-2004 Home News, pA3
- "McGreevey inaugusrates free tuition program," 6-30-2004 Philadelphia Inquirer, p.B6
- "Community college scholarship program begins," 6-30-2004 The Press, p.C1

P.L. 2004, CHAPTER 59, *approved June 29, 2004*
Senate, No. 1192 (*Second Reprint*)

1 **AN ACT** establishing the NJ STARS Program for county college
2 students, supplementing chapter 71B of Title 18A of the New
3 Jersey Statutes ¹[and making an appropriation]¹.

4
5 **BE IT ENACTED** by the Senate and General Assembly of the State
6 of New Jersey:

7
8 1. This act shall be known and may be cited as the "New Jersey
9 Student Tuition Assistance Reward Scholarship (NJ STARS) Program
10 Act."

11
12 2. The Legislature finds that it is necessary for the State's citizens
13 to acquire an education beyond the secondary level in order to succeed
14 during the 21st century. A well-trained and educated population,
15 moreover, is vital to New Jersey's efforts to attract and retain highly
16 skilled businesses, and to ensure the State's continued economic well-
17 being. It is therefore incumbent upon the Legislature to institute a
18 program which will help high achieving students to pursue a post-
19 secondary education.

20
21 3. As used in this act:

22 "Authority" means the Higher Education Student Assistance
23 Authority established pursuant to N.J.S.18A:71A-3.

24 ¹"Full-time course of study" in any semester means a course of
25 study, leading to a degree from the county college of enrollment, that
26 includes at least 12 credit hours, not including any credit hours in a
27 remedial or developmental curriculum.¹

28 "Program" means the New Jersey Student Tuition Assistance
29 Reward Scholarship (NJ STARS) Program for county college
30 students.

31
32 4. There is hereby created the New Jersey Student Tuition
33 Assistance Reward Scholarship (NJ STARS) Program for county
34 college students. It shall be the duty of the Higher Education Student

EXPLANATION - Matter enclosed in bold-faced brackets [thus] in the above bill is not enacted and intended to be omitted in the law.

Matter underlined thus is new matter.

Matter enclosed in superscript numerals has been adopted as follows:

¹ Senate SBA committee amendments adopted March 8, 2004.

² Senate floor amendments adopted March 22, 2004.

1 Assistance Authority to administer the program.

2

3 5. a. A scholarship under the NJ STARS Program shall cover the
4 full cost of tuition ¹[of] and fees, ²subject to the prior application of
5 other grants and scholarships against those costs as provided under
6 paragraph (2) of subsection c. of this section, ² for up to 15 credit
7 hours in any semester, for ¹ an eligible student enrolled in ¹
8 ¹[attendance] a full-time course of study ¹ at ¹[a] the ¹ New Jersey
9 county college ¹[on a full-time basis in a curriculum leading to a
10 degree] servicing the student's county of residence. An otherwise
11 eligible student who demonstrates to the authority, in accordance with
12 such criteria and by means of such documentation as the authority
13 shall establish by regulation, that the county college servicing the
14 student's county of residence does not offer the curriculum that the
15 student chooses to study shall be eligible for such scholarship at
16 another New Jersey county college offering that curriculum. The
17 amount of any scholarship allowed hereunder to a student at a county
18 college serving a county other than the student's county of residence
19 shall be computed as though the student were a resident of the county
20 served by that college, and the college shall ²[not require payment]
21 likewise compute the amount ² of any additional ²[amount] payment,
22 required ² with respect to the enrollment of that student ¹ ²for credit
23 hours of study during a semester in which the scholarship is awarded
24 that are not covered by that scholarship, as though the student were
25 a resident of the county ². ²[¹[The] For all students, the ¹ scholarship
26 amount shall not, when combined with any other financial assistance,
27 exceed the student's actual ¹[cost of attendance] tuition and fee
28 charges ¹ at the county college where the scholarship is used.] ²

29 b. A student shall be eligible for a scholarship under the NJ STARS
30 Program for up to ¹[two years] five semesters ¹. The scholarship shall
31 be payable for the first year of enrollment in a county college to a
32 student who graduated in the top 20% of the student's high school
33 graduating class ¹, provided that in the case of students graduating
34 from high schools that do not calculate the class rank of their students,
35 ²[the authority shall determine a student's standing in the student's
36 graduating class in accordance with such standards and criteria as the
37 authority shall adopt by regulation ¹] the student's ranking shall be
38 determined by the high school in consultation with the authority ².
39 ¹[In] During a student's enrollment in a county college after ¹ the
40 ¹[second] first ¹ year of enrollment, the scholarship shall be payable to
41 ¹[a] that ¹ student ¹[who] if ², based on the student's performance in
42 the first year of enrollment, ² the student ¹ was ranked in the top 20%
43 of ¹[the] all ²first-time ² students ²[who commenced enrollment]
44 enrolled ² in a ¹ full-time ¹[degree seeking students enrolled] course of
45 study ¹ at the county college ²[¹at the commencement of the student's

1 enrollment at the college who continue to be so enrolled¹ upon
2 completion of] during² the student's initial year of county college
3 ¹[attendance] enrollment¹.

4 c. To be eligible to receive a scholarship under the NJ STARS
5 Program a student shall:

6 (1) be a State resident pursuant to guidelines established by the
7 authority;

8 (2) have applied for all other available forms of State and federal
9 ¹[financial aid] need-based grants and merit scholarships¹, exclusive
10 of loans¹, the full amount of which grants and scholarships shall be
11 applied to tuition and fee charges to reduce the amount of any
12 scholarship that the student shall receive under the provisions of this
13 act¹; ¹[and]¹

14 (3) be enrolled ¹[for] in¹ a ¹[minimum of 15 credit hours per
15 semester at the county college, not including any credit hours in a
16 remedial or developmental curriculum] full-time course of study at a
17 New Jersey county college;

18 (4) have graduated from high school in 2004 or later, and not
19 earlier than the calendar year two years prior to the first calendar year
20 in which a scholarship payment is to be made; and

21 (5) maintain continuous enrollment in a full-time course of study,
22 unless on medical leave due to the illness of the student or a member
23 of the student's immediate family or emergency leave because of a
24 family emergency, which medical or emergency leave shall have been
25 approved by the county college¹.

26 d. A student who is dismissed for academic or disciplinary reasons
27 from a county college shall ¹no longer¹ be ¹[ineligible] eligible¹ for a
28 scholarship under this act. ¹[The eligibility of a student for the
29 program shall not be affected by the student's withdrawal from a
30 county college due to the illness of the student or a member of the
31 student's immediate family or because of a family emergency.

32 e.]¹ If a student participating in the program is dismissed for
33 disciplinary reasons, the student shall repay in full all ¹[amount]
34 amounts¹ received under the program. ²[In addition to any ¹[other]¹
35 collection procedure permitted by law, the authority may use ¹[the]
36 such other¹ collection procedure ¹[set forth under N.J.S.18A:71C-19]
37 as the authority may adopt by regulation¹ to collect any State awards
38 which are overpayments or any State awards for which the student is
39 ineligible in whole or in part ¹or required hereunder to repay¹.] The
40 county college shall be responsible for collecting the repayment, or the
41 amount of any overpayment or other improper payment, of any State
42 awards under the program, in accordance with the provisions of
43 N.J.S.18A:71B-10.²

44 ¹[f.] e.¹ A student ¹[may renew a]¹ scholarship under the NJ
45 STARS Program ¹may be renewed¹ upon ¹the student's¹ filing ¹of¹ a

1 renewal ¹financial aid¹ application ¹[with the authority]¹ and
2 providing evidence ¹[as required by the authority]¹ that the student
3 has ²[achieved the appropriate class ranking ¹or, in appropriate cases,
4 appropriate class standing under regulations adopted pursuant to
5 subsection b. of this section¹] satisfied the requirements pursuant to
6 subsection b. of this section².

7
8 6. ¹a. Not later than ²[July 15,] September 30,² 2006, the Higher
9 Education Student Assistance Authority shall prepare and submit to
10 the Legislature and the Governor a report on the implementation of
11 the NJ STARS Program at the several county colleges. The report
12 shall, for each college, set forth statistics on and include an analysis of
13 student participation in the program at the college, the amounts of
14 funding provided under the program to students enrolled at the
15 college, the amounts of funding made available to those participating
16 students from ²State² sources other than the NJ STARS Program ²and
17 from federal and institutional sources², and such other factors as the
18 authority deems to be necessary or useful to the evaluation of the
19 program.

20 b.¹ The Higher Education Student Assistance Authority shall
21 administer the provisions of this act and shall establish appropriate
22 criteria, procedures, and guidelines for awarding New Jersey Student
23 Tuition Assistance Reward Scholarships to eligible students in
24 accordance with the provisions of this act. The authority shall² adopt
25 in accordance with the "Administrative Procedure Act," P.L.1968,
26 c.410 (C.52:14B-1 et seq.), rules and regulations as may be necessary
27 to implement the provisions of this act.

28
29 ¹[7. There is appropriated to the Higher Education Student
30 Assistance Authority from the General Fund \$15,000,000 to effectuate
31 the purposes of this act.]¹

32
33 ¹[8.] 7.¹ This act shall take effect on July 1, 2004.

34
35
36
37
38 Establishes NJ STARS Program to provide scholarships for county
39 college students.

SENATE, No. 1192

STATE OF NEW JERSEY
211th LEGISLATURE

INTRODUCED FEBRUARY 24, 2004

Sponsored by:

Senator WAYNE R. BRYANT

District 5 (Camden and Gloucester)

Senator RICHARD J. CODEY

District 27 (Essex)

Co-Sponsored by:

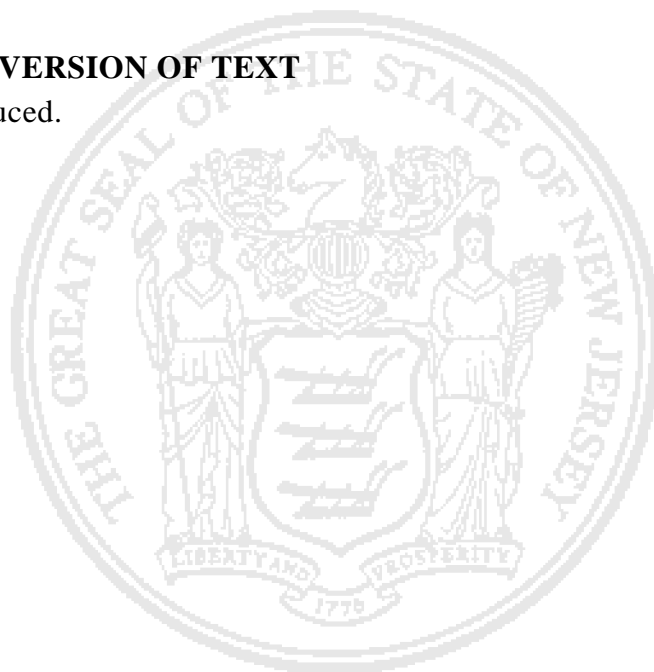
**Senators Madden, James, Buono, Coniglio, Cunningham, Kenny, Sarlo,
Sweeney, Turner, Bark, Bucco, Kavanaugh, T.Kean, Lance and Littell**

SYNOPSIS

Establishes the NJ STARS Program to provide scholarships for county college students; appropriates \$15 million.

CURRENT VERSION OF TEXT

As introduced.



(Sponsorship Updated As Of: 3/9/2004)

1 AN ACT establishing the NJ STARS Program for county college
2 students, supplementing chapter 71B of Title 18A of the New
3 Jersey Statutes and making an appropriation.

4

5 **BE IT ENACTED** by the Senate and General Assembly of the State
6 of New Jersey:

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8 1. This act shall be known and may be cited as the "New Jersey
9 Student Tuition Assistance Reward Scholarship (NJ STARS) Program
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12 2. The Legislature finds that it is necessary for the State's citizens
13 to acquire an education beyond the secondary level in order to succeed
14 during the 21st century. A well-trained and educated population,
15 moreover, is vital to New Jersey's efforts to attract and retain highly
16 skilled businesses, and to ensure the State's continued economic well-
17 being. It is therefore incumbent upon the Legislature to institute a
18 program which will help high achieving students to pursue a post-
19 secondary education.

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21 3. As used in this act:

22 "Authority" means the Higher Education Student Assistance
23 Authority established pursuant to N.J.S.18A:71A-3.

24 "Program" means the New Jersey Student Tuition Assistance
25 Reward Scholarship (NJ STARS) Program for county college
26 students.

27

28 4. There is hereby created the New Jersey Student Tuition
29 Assistance Reward Scholarship (NJ STARS) Program for county
30 college students. It shall be the duty of the Higher Education Student
31 Assistance Authority to administer the program.

32

33 5. a. A scholarship under the NJ STARS Program shall cover the
34 full cost of tuition of an eligible student in attendance at a New Jersey
35 county college on a full-time basis in a curriculum leading to a degree.
36 The scholarship amount shall not, when combined with any other
37 financial assistance, exceed the student's actual cost of attendance at
38 the county college where the scholarship is used.

39 b. A student shall be eligible for a scholarship under the NJ STARS
40 Program for up to two years. The scholarship shall be payable for the
41 first year of enrollment in a county college to a student who graduated
42 in the top 20% of the student's high school graduating class. In the
43 second year of enrollment, the scholarship shall be payable to a student
44 who was ranked in the top 20% of the full-time degree seeking
45 students enrolled at the county college upon completion of the
46 student's initial year of county college attendance.

1 c. To be eligible to receive a scholarship under the NJ STARS
2 Program a student shall:

3 (1) be a State resident pursuant to guidelines established by the
4 authority;

5 (2) have applied for all other available forms of State and federal
6 financial aid, exclusive of loans; and

7 (3) be enrolled for a minimum of 15 credit hours per semester at the
8 county college, not including any credit hours in a remedial or
9 developmental curriculum.

10 d. A student who is dismissed for academic or disciplinary reasons
11 from a county college shall be ineligible for a scholarship under this
12 act. The eligibility of a student for the program shall not be affected
13 by the student's withdrawal from a county college due to the illness of
14 the student or a member of the student's immediate family or because
15 of a family emergency.

16 e. If a student participating in the program is dismissed for
17 disciplinary reasons, the student shall repay in full all amount received
18 under the program. In addition to any other collection procedure
19 permitted by law, the authority may use the collection procedure set
20 forth under N.J.S.18A:71C-19 to collect any State awards which are
21 overpayments or any State awards for which the student is ineligible
22 in whole or in part.

23 f. A student may renew a scholarship under the NJ STARS
24 Program upon filing a renewal application with the authority and
25 providing evidence as required by the authority that the student has
26 achieved the appropriate class ranking.

27

28 6. The Higher Education Student Assistance Authority shall adopt
29 in accordance with the "Administrative Procedure Act," P.L.1968,
30 c.410 (C.52:14B-1 et seq.), rules and regulations as may be necessary
31 to implement the provisions of this act.

32

33 7. There is appropriated to the Higher Education Student
34 Assistance Authority from the General Fund \$15,000,000 to effectuate
35 the purposes of this act.

36

37 8. This act shall take effect on July 1, 2004.

38

39

40

STATEMENT

41

42 This bill establishes the New Jersey Student Tuition Assistance
43 Reward Scholarship (NJ STARS) Program for students attending New
44 Jersey county colleges on a full-time basis in curriculums leading to a
45 degree. The scholarships awarded pursuant to the program will cover
46 the full cost of tuition. The program will be administered by the

S1192 BRYANT, CODEY

4

1 Higher Education Student Assistance Authority.

2 It is the belief of the Legislature that students who compete at a
3 high educational level in their school system should be rewarded for
4 their academic efforts. Under the NJ STARS Program, to be eligible
5 to receive a scholarship in the first year of enrollment at a county
6 college, a student must graduate in the top 20% of his high school
7 class. To be eligible for a scholarship award in the second year of
8 enrollment, a student must rank in the top 20% of the full-time degree
9 seeking students enrolled at the county college upon completion of the
10 student's initial year of county college attendance. A student, under
11 this program, would only be eligible for a scholarship award for two
12 years. Other eligibility criteria provided for in the bill are: being a
13 State resident; having applied for all other available forms of State and
14 federal financial aid, exclusive of loans; and being enrolled for a
15 minimum of 15 credit hours per semester, not including any credit
16 hours in a remedial or developmental curriculum. A student may
17 renew the scholarship upon providing the authority with evidence that
18 he has achieved the necessary class rank.

19 This bill includes a \$15,000,000 appropriation.

ASSEMBLY EDUCATION COMMITTEE

STATEMENT TO

[Second Reprint]
SENATE, No. 1192

STATE OF NEW JERSEY

DATED: MAY 6, 2004

The Assembly Education Committee favorably reports Senate Bill No. 1192 (2R).

This bill establishes the New Jersey Student Tuition Assistance Reward Scholarship (NJ STARS) Program for students attending New Jersey county colleges on a full-time basis in a curriculum leading to a degree. Scholarships awarded under the program will cover the cost of tuition and fees for a full-time course load. The program will be administered by the Higher Education Student Assistance Authority.

Under the NJ STARS Program, to be eligible to receive a scholarship in the first year of enrollment at a county college, a student must have graduated in the top 20% of the student's high school class. A scholarship will be payable to the student during the student's enrollment in the county college after the first year of enrollment if, based on the student's performance in the first year of enrollment, the student ranked among the top 20% of all first-time students enrolled in a full-time course of study during the student's initial year of county college enrollment. Other eligibility criteria provided for in the bill are (i) being a State resident, (ii) having applied for all other available forms of State and federal need-based grants and merit scholarships, exclusive of loans, (iii) being enrolled in a minimum of 12 credit hours per semester, not including any credit hours in a remedial or developmental curriculum, (iv) having graduated from high school in 2004 or later, and not earlier than the calendar year two years prior to the first calendar year of scholarship payment, and (v) maintaining continuous enrollment in a full-time course of study, except for approved leave for medical reasons or family emergency. A student would only be eligible for a scholarship award for five semesters. A scholarship may be renewed upon filing by the student of a renewal application with the authority, accompanied by evidence that the student has achieved the necessary class rank or standing.

This bill is identical to the Assembly Committee Substitute for Assembly Bill Nos. 500 & 2463.

ASSEMBLY BUDGET COMMITTEE

STATEMENT TO

[Second Reprint]

SENATE, No. 1192

STATE OF NEW JERSEY

DATED: JUNE 15, 2004

The Assembly Budget Committee reports favorably Senate Bill No. 1192 (2R).

Senate Bill No. 1192 (2R) establishes the New Jersey Student Tuition Assistance Reward Scholarship (NJ STARS) Program for students attending New Jersey county colleges on a full-time basis in a curriculum leading to a degree. Scholarships awarded under the program will cover the cost of tuition and fees for a full-time course load. The program will be administered by the Higher Education Student Assistance Authority.

Under the NJ STARS Program, to be eligible to receive a scholarship in the first year of enrollment at a county college, a student must have graduated in the top 20% of the student's high school class. To be eligible for a scholarship award after the first year of enrollment, a student must have ranked among the top 20% of all full-time students, commencing enrollment at the county college at the same time as the student did, who remained enrolled as full-time students at the completion of the student's initial year of enrollment (i.e., the student's full-time college freshman class cohort). Other eligibility criteria provided for in the bill are (i) being a State resident, (ii) having applied for all other available forms of State and federal need-based grants and merit scholarships, exclusive of loans, (iii) being enrolled in a minimum of 12 credit hours per semester, not including any credit hours in a remedial or developmental curriculum, (iv) having graduated from high school in 2004 or later, and not earlier than the calendar year two years prior to the first calendar year of scholarship payment, and (v) maintaining continuous enrollment in a full-time course of study, except for approved leave for medical reasons or family emergency. A student would only be eligible for a scholarship award for five semesters. A scholarship may be renewed upon filing by the student of a renewal application with the authority, accompanied by evidence that the student has achieved the necessary class rank or standing.

As reported by the committee, this bill is identical to Assembly Bill Nos. 500 and 2463 (ACS) as also reported by the committee.

FISCAL IMPACT

A summary of the Executive's budget proposal for FY2004-05 indicates that the Administration will recommend that the NJ STARS program receive \$10,000,000 in funding for the forthcoming fiscal year. This bill was not certified as requiring a fiscal note.

SENATE BUDGET AND APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE

STATEMENT TO

SENATE, No. 1192

with committee amendments

STATE OF NEW JERSEY

DATED: MARCH 8, 2004

The Senate Budget and Appropriations Committee reports favorably and with committee amendments Senate Bill No. 1192.

This bill establishes the New Jersey Student Tuition Assistance Reward Scholarship (NJ STARS) Program for students attending New Jersey county colleges on a full-time basis in a curriculum leading to a degree. Scholarships awarded under the program will cover the cost of tuition and fees for a full-time course load. The program will be administered by the Higher Education Student Assistance Authority.

Under the NJ STARS Program, to be eligible to receive a scholarship in the first year of enrollment at a county college, a student must have graduated in the top 20% of the student's high school class. To be eligible for a scholarship award after the first year of enrollment, a student must have ranked among the top 20% of all full-time students, commencing enrollment at the county college at the same time as the student did, who remained enrolled as full-time students at the completion of the student's initial year of enrollment (i.e., the student's full-time college freshman class cohort). Other eligibility criteria provided for in the bill are (i) being a State resident, (ii) having applied for all other available forms of State and federal need-based grants and merit scholarships, exclusive of loans, (iii) being enrolled in a minimum of 12 credit hours per semester, not including any credit hours in a remedial or developmental curriculum, (iv) having graduated from high school in 2004 or later, and not earlier than the calendar year two years prior to the first calendar year of scholarship payment, and (v) maintaining continuous enrollment in a full-time course of study, except for approved leave for medical reasons or family emergency. A student would only be eligible for a scholarship award for five semesters. A scholarship may be renewed upon filing by the student of a renewal application with the authority, accompanied by evidence that the student has achieved the necessary class rank or standing.

COMMITTEE AMENDMENTS

Committee amendments to this bill:

- (1) Reduce from 15 to 12 the number of credit hours, exclusive of

credits earned in remedial and developmental courses, that are necessary to meet the full-time course load requirement for eligibility for an NJ STARS award, while clarifying that those credits must be accrued in a course of study leading to a degree;

(2) Lengthen the period of time for which a student may receive an NJ STARS award from two years to five semesters, while limiting to 15 the number of credit hours for which an award will be payable in any given semester;

(3) Clarify that the college costs covered by the award program include fees, as well as tuition;

(4) Require generally that a student will be eligible for an award only for study at the county college serving the student's county of residence, but (a) permit a student who can demonstrate that the curriculum that the student wishes to study is unavailable at the county college serving the county of residence to be eligible for an award for study at another county college that does offer that curriculum, and (b) prohibit that other county college from charging any more for enrollment of that student than it does for county residents;

(5) Allow the authority to adopt and apply a non-class rank system to establish, for purposes of determining eligibility for the NJ STARS award in the first year of college enrollment, the high school class standing of a student graduating from a high school that does not compute class rank;

(6) Incorporate the requirement that participants in the program have graduated from high school after 2003 and not earlier than two calendar years before scholarship payments commence;

(7) Clarify a provision allowing the authority to use such collection procedures as it may require to obtain reimbursement of awards that were improperly paid or forfeited;

(8) Require the authority to report, after two years' experience with the NJ STARS Program, on participation rates, costs and other factors necessary and useful for an evaluation of the program; and

(9) Eliminate an appropriation in the amount of \$15,000,000.

FISCAL IMPACT

A summary of the Executive's budget proposal for FY2004-05 indicates that the Administration will recommend that the NJ STARS program receive \$10,000,000 in funding for the forthcoming fiscal year.

STATEMENT TO
[First Reprint]
SENATE, No. 1192

with Senate Floor Amendments
(Proposed By Senators BRYANT and CODEY)

ADOPTED: MARCH 22, 2004

These amendments to this bill, which establishes the NJ STARS Program to fund full-time attendance by qualified students at New Jersey community colleges, make the following changes to the bill:

(1) Revise subsection a. of section 5 to clarify the bill's limitation of any NJ STARS award to the amount necessary to defray tuition and fee costs for a full-time course load and, in conjunction with that revision, delete potentially redundant language;

(2) Clarify language requiring colleges that accept for enrollment non-resident students qualifying for an NJ STARS award to charge tuition at in-county rates;

(3) Provide that the establishment (for purposes of determining academic eligibility for an award) of a student's academic standing in high schools that do not compute class rank shall be determined by the high school in consultation with the Higher Education Student Assistance Authority (HESAA) and, in conjunction with that change, prescribe more explicitly HESAA's responsibility for the administration of the NJ STARS program;

(4) Expand slightly the "college freshman cohort" group against whom a student's academic performance in the first year of college would be measured for purposes of determining eligibility for an NJ STARS award after that year;

(5) Transfer primary responsibility for collecting repayments and amounts of overpayments of NJ STARS scholarships from HESAA to the appropriate county college and provide that collection procedures shall be in accordance with those prescribed under the "Higher Education Student Assistance Authority Law";

(6) Postpone the date by which HESAA is required to submit its report on the implementation of the NJ STARS program from July 15 to September 30, 2006; and

(7) Clarify the bill's intent that the report's information regarding scholarship recipients' non-NJ STARS sources of funding cover only other State sources and federal and institutional sources (i.e., not private sources).

ASSEMBLY, No. 500

STATE OF NEW JERSEY

211th LEGISLATURE

INTRODUCED MARCH 4, 2004

Sponsored by:

Assemblyman ALBIO SIRES

District 33 (Hudson)

Assemblywoman BONNIE WATSON COLEMAN

District 15 (Mercer)

Assemblyman ROBERT GORDON

District 38 (Bergen)

Assemblywoman LINDA R. GREENSTEIN

District 14 (Mercer and Middlesex)

Co-Sponsored by:

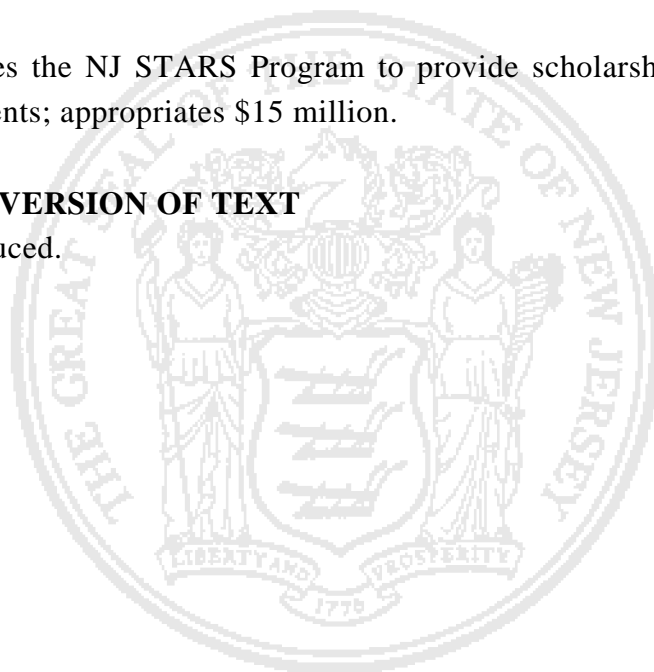
Assemblyman Diegnan

SYNOPSIS

Establishes the NJ STARS Program to provide scholarships for county college students; appropriates \$15 million.

CURRENT VERSION OF TEXT

As introduced.



(Sponsorship Updated As Of: 3/12/2004)

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15 moreover, is vital to New Jersey's efforts to attract and retain highly
16 skilled businesses, and to ensure the State's continued economic well-
17 being. It is therefore incumbent upon the Legislature to institute a
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36 The scholarship amount shall not, when combined with any other
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44 who was ranked in the top 20% of the full-time degree seeking
45 students enrolled at the county college upon completion of the
46 student's initial year of county college attendance.

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2 Program a student shall:

3 (1) be a State resident pursuant to guidelines established by the
4 authority;

5 (2) have applied for all other available forms of State and federal
6 financial aid, exclusive of loans; and

7 (3) be enrolled for a minimum of 15 credit hours per semester at
8 the county college, not including any credit hours in a remedial or
9 developmental curriculum.

10 d. A student who is dismissed for academic or disciplinary reasons
11 from a county college shall be ineligible for a scholarship under this
12 act. The eligibility of a student for the program shall not be affected
13 by the student's withdrawal from a county college due to the illness of
14 the student or a member of the student's immediate family or because
15 of a family emergency.

16 e. If a student participating in the program is dismissed for
17 disciplinary reasons, the student shall repay in full all amount received
18 under the program. In addition to any other collection procedure
19 permitted by law, the authority may use the collection procedure set
20 forth under N.J.S.18A:71C-19 to collect any State awards which are
21 overpayments or any State awards for which the student is ineligible
22 in whole or in part.

23 f. A student may renew a scholarship under the NJ STARS
24 Program upon filing a renewal application with the authority and
25 providing evidence as required by the authority that the student has
26 achieved the appropriate class ranking.

27

28 6. The Higher Education Student Assistance Authority shall adopt
29 in accordance with the "Administrative Procedure Act," P.L.1968,
30 c.410 (C.52:14B-1 et seq.), rules and regulations as may be necessary
31 to implement the provisions of this act.

32

33 7. There is appropriated to the Higher Education Student
34 Assistance Authority from the General Fund \$15,000,000 to effectuate
35 the purposes of this act.

36

37 8. This act shall take effect on July 1, 2004.

38

39

40

STATEMENT

41

42 This bill establishes the New Jersey Student Tuition Assistance
43 Reward Scholarship (NJ STARS) Program for students attending New
44 Jersey county colleges on a full-time basis in curriculums leading to a
45 degree. The scholarships awarded pursuant to the program will cover
46 the full cost of tuition. The program will be administered by the
47 Higher Education Student Assistance Authority.

A500 SIRES, WATSON COLEMAN

1 It is the belief of the Legislature that students who compete at a
2 high educational level in their school system should be rewarded for
3 their academic efforts. Under the NJ STARS Program, to be eligible
4 to receive a scholarship in the first year of enrollment at a county
5 college, a student must graduate in the top 20% of his high school
6 class. To be eligible for a scholarship award in the second year of
7 enrollment, a student must rank in the top 20% of the full-time degree
8 seeking students enrolled at the county college upon completion of the
9 student's initial year of county college attendance. A student, under
10 this program, would only be eligible for a scholarship award for two
11 years. Other eligibility criteria provided for in the bill are: being a
12 State resident; having applied for all other available forms of State and
13 federal financial aid, exclusive of loans; and being enrolled for a
14 minimum of 15 credit hours per semester, not including any credit
15 hours in a remedial or developmental curriculum. A student may
16 renew the scholarship upon providing the authority with evidence that
17 he has achieved the necessary class rank.

18 This bill includes a \$15,000,000 appropriation.

ASSEMBLY, No. 2463

STATE OF NEW JERSEY 211th LEGISLATURE

INTRODUCED MARCH 4, 2004

Sponsored by:

Assemblywoman MARY T. PREVITE

District 6 (Camden)

Assemblyman DAVID R. MAYER

District 4 (Camden and Gloucester)

Assemblyman JOHN J. BURZICHELLI

District 3 (Salem, Cumberland and Gloucester)

Assemblywoman JOAN VOSS

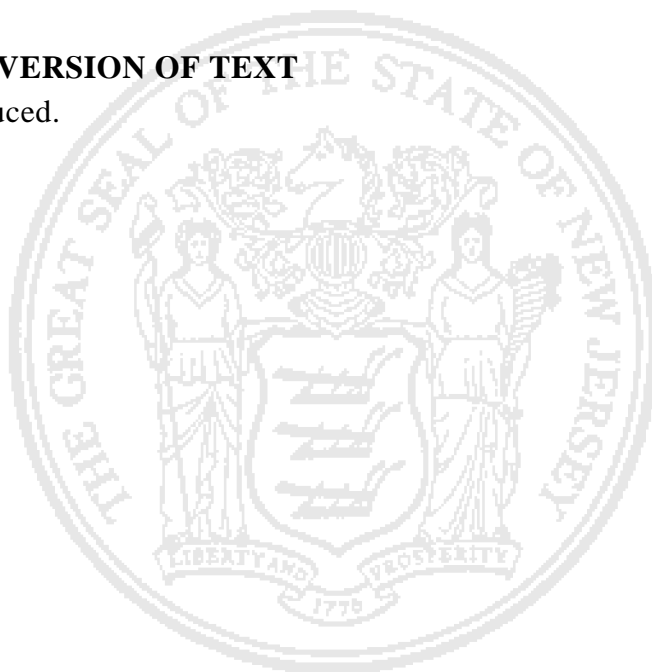
District 38 (Bergen)

SYNOPSIS

Establishes the NJ STARS Scholarship Program for county college students; appropriates \$10 million.

CURRENT VERSION OF TEXT

As introduced.



1 AN ACT establishing the NJ STARS Scholarship Program for county
2 college students, supplementing chapter 71B of Title 18A of the
3 New Jersey Statutes and making an appropriation.

4
5 **BE IT ENACTED** by the Senate and General Assembly of the State
6 of New Jersey:

7
8 1. This act shall be known and may be cited as the "NJ STARS
9 Scholarship Program Act."

10
11 2. The Legislature finds that it is necessary for the State's citizens
12 to acquire an education beyond the secondary level in order to succeed
13 during the 21st century. A well-trained and educated population,
14 moreover, is vital to New Jersey's efforts to attract and retain highly
15 skilled businesses, and to ensure the State's continued economic well-
16 being. It is therefore incumbent upon the Legislature to institute a
17 program which will help high achieving students to pursue a post-
18 secondary education.

19
20 3. As used in this act:

21 "Authority" means the Higher Education Student Assistance
22 Authority established pursuant to N.J.S.18A:71A-3.

23 "Program" means the NJ STARS Scholarship Program for county
24 college students.

25
26 4. There is hereby created the NJ STARS Scholarship Program for
27 county college students. It shall be the duty of the Higher Education
28 Student Assistance Authority to administer the program.

29
30 5. a. A NJ STARS Scholarship shall cover the full cost of tuition
31 of an eligible student in attendance at a New Jersey county college on
32 a full-time basis in a curriculum leading to a degree. The scholarship
33 amount shall not, when combined with any other financial assistance,
34 exceed the student's actual cost of attendance at the county college
35 where the scholarship is used.

36 b. A student shall be eligible for a NJ STARS Scholarship for up
37 to two years. A NJ STARS Scholarship shall be payable for the first
38 year of enrollment in a county college to a student who graduated in
39 the top 20% of his high school graduating class. In the second year of
40 enrollment, a NJ STARS Scholarship shall be payable to a student who
41 was ranked in the top 20% of the full-time degree seeking students
42 enrolled at the county college upon completion of the student's initial
43 year of county college attendance.

44 c. To be eligible to receive a NJ STARS Scholarship a student
45 shall:

46 (1) be a State resident pursuant to guidelines established by the

1 authority;

2 (2) have applied for all other available forms of State and federal
3 financial aid, exclusive of loans; and

4 (3) be enrolled for a minimum of 12 credit hours per semester at
5 the county college, not including any credit hours in a remedial or
6 developmental curriculum.

7 d. A student may renew a NJ STARS Scholarship upon filing a
8 renewal application with the authority and providing evidence as
9 required by the authority that the student has achieved the appropriate
10 class ranking.

11

12 6. The Higher Education Student Assistance Authority shall adopt
13 in accordance with the "Administrative Procedure Act," P.L.1968,
14 c.410 (C.52:14B-1 et seq.), rules and regulations as may be necessary
15 to implement the provisions of this act. The rules and regulations
16 adopted pursuant to this section shall provide that: a student who is
17 dismissed for academic or disciplinary reasons from a county college
18 shall be ineligible for a scholarship under this act; the eligibility of a
19 student for a scholarship shall not be affected because the student
20 withdraws from a county college due to the illness of the student or
21 a member of the student's immediate family or because of a family
22 emergency; a student who becomes ineligible for a scholarship because
23 the student has been dismissed for disciplinary reasons shall repay in
24 full all amounts received under the program; and a student who fails
25 to repay any amount due and who is the holder of any professional
26 license issued by the State of New Jersey shall be subject to discipline
27 by the board regulating that profession, which may include revocation
28 of the license or suspension of the license until payments are made
29 pursuant to a schedule approved by the authority.

30

31 7. There is appropriated to the Higher Education Student
32 Assistance Authority from the General Fund \$10,000,000 to effectuate
33 the purposes of this act.

34

35 8. This act shall take effect July 1, 2004.

36

37

38

STATEMENT

39

40 This bill establishes the NJ STARS Scholarship Program for
41 students attending New Jersey county colleges on a full-time basis in
42 curriculums leading to a degree. The program will be administered by
43 the Higher Education Student Assistance Authority which is located
44 in, but not of, the Department of State.

45 A NJ STARS Scholarship awarded for study at a county college
46 will cover the full cost of tuition. To be eligible to receive a

A2463 PREVITE, MAYER

4

1 scholarship in the first year of enrollment at a county college, a student
2 must graduate in the top 20% of his high school class. To be eligible
3 for a scholarship award in the second year of enrollment a student
4 must rank in the top 20% of the full-time degree seeking students
5 enrolled at the county college upon completion of the student's initial
6 year of county college attendance. A student, under this program,
7 would only be eligible for a scholarship award for two years. Other
8 eligibility criteria provided for in the bill are: being a State resident;
9 having applied for all other available forms of State and federal
10 financial aid, exclusive of loans; and being enrolled for a minimum of
11 12 credit hours per semester, not including any credit hours in a
12 remedial or developmental curriculum. A student may renew the
13 scholarship upon providing the authority with evidence that he has
14 achieved the necessary class rank.

15 This bill includes a \$10,000,000 appropriation.

ASSEMBLY EDUCATION COMMITTEE

STATEMENT TO

ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE SUBSTITUTE FOR **ASSEMBLY, Nos. 500 and 2463**

STATE OF NEW JERSEY

DATED: MAY 6, 2004

The Assembly Education Committee favorably reports an Assembly Committee Substitute for Assembly Bill Nos. 500 and 2463.

This committee substitute establishes the New Jersey Student Tuition Assistance Reward Scholarship (NJ STARS) Program for students attending New Jersey county colleges on a full-time basis in a curriculum leading to a degree. Scholarships awarded under the program will cover the cost of tuition and fees for a full-time course load. The program will be administered by the Higher Education Student Assistance Authority.

Under the NJ STARS Program, to be eligible to receive a scholarship in the first year of enrollment at a county college, a student must have graduated in the top 20% of the student's high school class. A scholarship will be payable to the student during the student's enrollment in the county college after the first year of enrollment if, based on the student's performance in the first year of enrollment, the student ranked among the top 20% of all first-time students enrolled in a full-time course of study during the student's initial year of county college enrollment. Other eligibility criteria provided for in the substitute are (i) being a State resident, (ii) having applied for all other available forms of State and federal need-based grants and merit scholarships, exclusive of loans, (iii) being enrolled in a minimum of 12 credit hours per semester, not including any credit hours in a remedial or developmental curriculum, (iv) having graduated from high school in 2004 or later, and not earlier than the calendar year two years prior to the first calendar year of scholarship payment, and (v) maintaining continuous enrollment in a full-time course of study, except for approved leave for medical reasons or family emergency. A student would only be eligible for a scholarship award for five semesters. A scholarship may be renewed upon filing by the student of a renewal application with the authority, accompanied by evidence that the student has achieved the necessary class rank or standing.

As reported by committee, this substitute is identical to Senate Bill No. 1192 (2R).

ASSEMBLY BUDGET COMMITTEE

STATEMENT TO

ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE SUBSTITUTE FOR **ASSEMBLY, Nos. 500 and 2463**

STATE OF NEW JERSEY

DATED: JUNE 15, 2004

The Assembly Budget Committee reports favorably Assembly Bill Nos. 500 and 2463 (ACS).

Assembly Bill Nos. 500 and 2463 (ACS) establishes the New Jersey Student Tuition Assistance Reward Scholarship (NJ STARS) Program for students attending New Jersey county colleges on a full-time basis in a curriculum leading to a degree. Scholarships awarded under the program will cover the cost of tuition and fees for a full-time course load. The program will be administered by the Higher Education Student Assistance Authority.

Under the NJ STARS Program, to be eligible to receive a scholarship in the first year of enrollment at a county college, a student must have graduated in the top 20% of the student's high school class. A scholarship will be payable to the student during the student's enrollment in the county college after the first year of enrollment if, based on the student's performance in the first year of enrollment, the student ranked among the top 20% of all first-time students enrolled in a full-time course of study during the student's initial year of county college enrollment. Other eligibility criteria provided for in the substitute are (i) being a State resident, (ii) having applied for all other available forms of State and federal need-based grants and merit scholarships, exclusive of loans, (iii) being enrolled in a minimum of 12 credit hours per semester, not including any credit hours in a remedial or developmental curriculum, (iv) having graduated from high school in 2004 or later, and not earlier than the calendar year two years prior to the first calendar year of scholarship payment, and (v) maintaining continuous enrollment in a full-time course of study, except for approved leave for medical reasons or family emergency. A student would only be eligible for a scholarship award for five semesters. A scholarship may be renewed upon filing by the student of a renewal application with the authority, accompanied by evidence that the student has achieved the necessary class rank or standing.

As reported by the committee, this substitute is identical to Senate Bill No. 1192 (2R) as also reported by the committee.

FISCAL IMPACT:

A summary of the Executive's budget proposal for FY2004-05 indicates that the Administration will recommend that the NJ STARS program receive \$10,000,000 in funding for the forthcoming fiscal year. This bill was not certified as requiring a fiscal note.

SENATE BUDGET AND APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE

STATEMENT TO

SENATE, No. 1192

with committee amendments

STATE OF NEW JERSEY

DATED: MARCH 8, 2004

The Senate Budget and Appropriations Committee reports favorably and with committee amendments Senate Bill No. 1192.

This bill establishes the New Jersey Student Tuition Assistance Reward Scholarship (NJ STARS) Program for students attending New Jersey county colleges on a full-time basis in a curriculum leading to a degree. Scholarships awarded under the program will cover the cost of tuition and fees for a full-time course load. The program will be administered by the Higher Education Student Assistance Authority.

Under the NJ STARS Program, to be eligible to receive a scholarship in the first year of enrollment at a county college, a student must have graduated in the top 20% of the student's high school class. To be eligible for a scholarship award after the first year of enrollment, a student must have ranked among the top 20% of all full-time students, commencing enrollment at the county college at the same time as the student did, who remained enrolled as full-time students at the completion of the student's initial year of enrollment (i.e., the student's full-time college freshman class cohort). Other eligibility criteria provided for in the bill are (i) being a State resident, (ii) having applied for all other available forms of State and federal need-based grants and merit scholarships, exclusive of loans, (iii) being enrolled in a minimum of 12 credit hours per semester, not including any credit hours in a remedial or developmental curriculum, (iv) having graduated from high school in 2004 or later, and not earlier than the calendar year two years prior to the first calendar year of scholarship payment, and (v) maintaining continuous enrollment in a full-time course of study, except for approved leave for medical reasons or family emergency. A student would only be eligible for a scholarship award for five semesters. A scholarship may be renewed upon filing by the student of a renewal application with the authority, accompanied by evidence that the student has achieved the necessary class rank or standing.

COMMITTEE AMENDMENTS

Committee amendments to this bill:

- (1) Reduce from 15 to 12 the number of credit hours, exclusive of

credits earned in remedial and developmental courses, that are necessary to meet the full-time course load requirement for eligibility for an NJ STARS award, while clarifying that those credits must be accrued in a course of study leading to a degree;

(2) Lengthen the period of time for which a student may receive an NJ STARS award from two years to five semesters, while limiting to 15 the number of credit hours for which an award will be payable in any given semester;

(3) Clarify that the college costs covered by the award program include fees, as well as tuition;

(4) Require generally that a student will be eligible for an award only for study at the county college serving the student's county of residence, but (a) permit a student who can demonstrate that the curriculum that the student wishes to study is unavailable at the county college serving the county of residence to be eligible for an award for study at another county college that does offer that curriculum, and (b) prohibit that other county college from charging any more for enrollment of that student than it does for county residents;

(5) Allow the authority to adopt and apply a non-class rank system to establish, for purposes of determining eligibility for the NJ STARS award in the first year of college enrollment, the high school class standing of a student graduating from a high school that does not compute class rank;

(6) Incorporate the requirement that participants in the program have graduated from high school after 2003 and not earlier than two calendar years before scholarship payments commence;

(7) Clarify a provision allowing the authority to use such collection procedures as it may require to obtain reimbursement of awards that were improperly paid or forfeited;

(8) Require the authority to report, after two years' experience with the NJ STARS Program, on participation rates, costs and other factors necessary and useful for an evaluation of the program; and

(9) Eliminate an appropriation in the amount of \$15,000,000.

FISCAL IMPACT

A summary of the Executive's budget proposal for FY2004-05 indicates that the Administration will recommend that the NJ STARS program receive \$10,000,000 in funding for the forthcoming fiscal year.

Office of the Governor

News Releases

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Governor Signs NJ STARS into Law, Opening Doors for 9,000 Students

The program will include 2004's high school graduates

(CAMDEN)—Governor James E. McGreevey today opened doors of opportunity for thousands of students by signing NJ STARS, the New Jersey Tuition Assistance Reward Scholarship program, into law (Bill number S1192, A500).

The bill signing was held at the Learning Theater in Camden Community College's Camden Technology Center. Camden Community College President Phyllis Della Vecchia joined Governor McGreevey, along with students who will benefit from the program, and State and local officials.

Under the program, the State will pay full tuition and fees at New Jersey community colleges for all Garden State seniors who graduate at the top 20 percent of their high school class. The program will start retroactively for 2004's high school graduates. Governor McGreevey unveiled the NJ STARS plan on February 24, during his Fiscal Year 2005 Budget Address.

"Unfortunately, there are many bright, hardworking students who cannot afford to go to college. Today we're righting that wrong. For the first time, New Jersey is guaranteeing that every student at the top of their class will have access to a college education," Governor McGreevey said. "NJ STARS poses a challenge to our high school students: You work hard and make the grades, and we will cover the cost of your education."

The Governor pointed out that community colleges play an invaluable role. Students with an associate degree earn up to \$400,000 more over their lifetime. New Jersey's annual workforce earnings are \$6.3 million greater – the equivalent of 135,000 jobs – due to community colleges. For every tax dollar invested in New Jersey's community colleges, over \$18 returns to the State. Community colleges serve nearly 300,000 students, and 95 percent of community college students stay in New Jersey.

New Jersey's high school students are outperforming most of their counterparts around the nation. The Garden State's high schools have been recognized nationally as among the top five in preparing students for college, and the State's 88 percent high school completion rate is among the best in the nation.

Despite these facts, many well-prepared students are unable to obtain a college education. Tuition has climbed at more than twice the rate of inflation for the last decade, pushing college out of reach for many of today's top high school graduates.

By helping hardworking students earn a two-year degree, NJ STARS will give those students a leg up in entering the workforce or transferring to a four-year college. The program will be funded by \$10 million in the State's Fiscal 2005 budget, and will create opportunities for 9,000 students.

"We at the Department of Education are so very pleased that the Governor has officially launched the NJ STARS program," said Commissioner of Education William L. Librera. "We understand, and the Governor understands, that a Community College's role in educating our students is invaluable. This Administration also understands that preparing a workforce that can compete at the highest levels is invaluable.

"We believe that NJ STARS is one more example that shows Governor James E. McGreevey has his fingers on the pulse of the education community, and that his leadership is essential in creating and maintaining the types of diverse programs that lead to sustained success for all of our students," Commissioner Librera continued.

"This program offers an opportunity to New Jersey's real stars in education to continue the route to academic and professional success, regardless of their parents' economic situation," said Senator Wayne R. Bryant, D-Camden and Gloucester. "It provides a chance to excel where before, there was none. Under this law, New Jersey's stars will shine brighter than ever before."

"There are thousands of kids in New Jersey who work hard in school and come from middle-income families so they don't qualify for financial aid for college," said Senate President Richard J. Codey. "I think any student who works hard enough to graduate in the top fifth of his or her class deserves the chance to go to college, regardless of family income. And that's exactly what NJ STARS is all about."

"New Jersey has a national reputation for turning out some of the best students in the country," Assemblyman Albio Sires (D-Hudson) said. "NJ STARS represents an extension of our commitment to all students. There is no reason for us not to help those who worked hard to finish in the top of their class but can't afford a four-year college."

"Few sights are as disappointing as seeing good students who aspire to attend college but can't because their families cannot afford the cost," Assemblywoman Bonnie Watson Coleman (D-Mercer) said. "In many communities, county colleges serve as the sole bridge of opportunity for low-income students who seek a continued education and better career prospects."

NJ STARS is just one program by which Governor McGreevey has worked to hold the line on rising tuition.

The Governor also increased funding to State colleges and universities by \$70 million; increased the Tuition Assistance Grant (TAG) program by \$33.7 million to create 6,000 new awards; established the Part-Time TAG program which helps more than 8,000 students; increased funding for the Outstanding Scholars Recruitment Program by \$1.8 million, creating an additional 685 awards; and increased funding for the NJCLASS student loans by \$39 million.

Governor McGreevey is also expanding job-training opportunities at New Jersey's community colleges, which are the



backbone for the State's workforce development efforts. Last year, the colleges provided New Jersey Department of Labor-funded training for more than 50,000 workers at more than 500 companies.

The Governor plans to give community colleges the resources to do even more, by increasing the amount the State and counties can borrow to launch capital construction projects at the colleges. The additional \$200 million limit would let the colleges build enough classroom and lab space to train an additional 30,000 workers.

Under the New Jersey Community Colleges compact, the colleges are working with the Department of Labor, the Commerce and Economic Growth Commission and the Department of Education on programs that will make job training more accessible.

State of New Jersey Governor's Office

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