Class of 2022
Mentor Handbook

In partnership with:
TENNESSEE Promise
Dear tnAchieves Mentor,

Thank you for your commitment to the thousands of students across our state, but particularly to those you will serve in your community. In its inaugural year, TN Promise accepted more than 58,000 students statewide from the Class of 2015, leading to an unprecedented 4.6 percent increase in our state's college-going rate. Since then, TN Promise students have outpaced their peers in retention and graduation rates by 13 and 10 percentage points respectively. While the funding is critical, at tnAchieves, we believe supports matter. With more than 60,000 students applying from the Class of 2022, your support means every student has someone in their corner. We simply cannot do this work without you!

You will serve as the conduit between the program and the students. You may be the person the student calls at the last minute before a deadline when they do not understand a form or when they are ready to give up. Stay positive! Working with high school students is not always easy. I always say, "Don't let the 18-year-old hurt your feelings!" This simply means remember why you are doing this and continue to dig in even when they are non-responsive.

Remember, we pair our mentors with an average of 7 students which feels like a heavy load; however, most likely you will be working with 1-2 students. Celebrate the ONE student – this is human work. ONE student is BIG deal at tnAchieves.

Please reach out to tnAchieves when you need help as we certainly do not expect you to know all the answers or understand how to navigate all situations! Lean on us.

Thank you again for your time and effort as we work to change lives and transform communities. You are making a dent in the universe and we are so thankful for you!

Best regards,

Krissy DeAlejandro
tnAchieves Executive Director

This handbook outlines the steps you will take to complete the college process and begin your journey as a tnAchieves Scholar.

2022 tnAchieves Mentor Checklist

- **By February 18, 2022**: Complete tnAchieves mentor training.
- **By March 1, 2022**: Receive list of assigned tnAchieves students.
- **By April 5, 2022**: Meet with students in-person or virtually to learn more about their college goals and career aspirations. Learn more about meeting with your students on page 13.
- **By August 15, 2022**: Via virtual or face-to-face meeting, ensure each student is prepared to begin classes.
- **By October 14, 2022**: VIA virtual or face-to-face meeting, ensure each student is finding success during their first semester.
- **By December 9, 2022**: Wish your students the best of luck on their college journey!
requirements and steps.

Please know that tnAchieves is here to serve as your resource for you as you serve your assigned students. Mentors can utilize tnAchieves CONNECT to engage with our team and access other valuable information. Visit pages 7-8 of this handbook for more information about utilizing tnAchieves CONNECT! Please know that tnAchieves is here to serve as a resource for you as you serve your assigned students. We will maintain regular communication with you to ensure you are aware of upcoming requirements and steps.

Mondays

Check your email every Monday for an update from tnAchieves. We will be in touch regarding upcoming meeting requirements, college requirements, community service opportunities and other important information. If you do not receive your tnAchieves Monday email, please email tnachieves@tnachieves.org so we can update your email address. You can reply to our weekly email if you have any questions!

Text Messaging

We will send text messages regarding various TN Promise requirements. You will receive messages reminding you of your upcoming meeting requirements, the FAFSA filing and community service deadlines as well as other important topics. You can reply to our texts and someone will respond!

CONNECT

We will utilize tnAchieves CONNECT, our online mentoring platform, to send reminders, post resources and provide a platform for discussion. Our team is also available to message or video chat through CONNECT. You will be expected to log into CONNECT regularly to stay up to date on your scholarship requirements and engage with your tnAchieves mentor. Learn more about CONNECT on pages 7-8!

The Team

Krispy DeAlejandro  
Executive Director  
(865) 621-9223, krispy@tnachieves.org

Maegan Tribble  
Senior Director of Finance & Administration  
(502) 345-1790, maegan@tnachieves.org

Jessica Macey  
Senior Director of Student Impact  
(865) 910-0930, jessica@tnachieves.org

Ellie Sieverman  
Director of COMPLETE  
(865) 479-0722, ellie@tnachieves.org

Leslie Felden  
Managing COMPLETE Coach  
(865) 388-2539, leslie@tnachieves.org

Sumner Deason  
Managing COMPLETE Coach  
(865) 297-8010, sumner@tnachieves.org

Allison Johnson  
COMPLETE Coach  
(865) 297-8010, allison@tnachieves.org

Emily Jones  
Transfer Coach  
(865) 779-8577, emily@tnachieves.org

Rosa Vitti  
COMPLETE Coach  
(865) 910-6582, rosa@tnachieves.org

John Hardebeck  
COMPLETE Coach  
(865) 910-6269, john@tnachieves.org

Graham Thomas  
Deputy Director of Partnerships & Gov’t Relations  
(615) 604-1306, graham@tnachieves.org

Amy Bai  
Senior Director of Post-Secondary Impact  
(714) 931-2172, amy@tnachieves.org

Matthew Otero  
Senior Director of Data  
(505) 396-9756, matthew@tnachieves.org

Tyler Ford  
Director of Mentors  
(309) 945-3448, tyler@tnachieves.org

Esther Ro-Agnew  
COMPLETE Coach  
(901) 236-8260, esther@tnachieves.org

Dalen Sawyer  
COMPLETE Coach & Data Manager  
(615) 313-4606, dalton@tnachieves.org

Galyea Villagran  
COMPLETE Coach  
(615) 779-8636, galyea@tnachieves.org

Laken Dye  
COMPLETE Coach  
(865) 321-8022, laken@tnachieves.org

Colbie Simmons  
COMPLETE Coach  
(865) 910-6579, colbie@tnachieves.org

Taylor Youell  
COMPLETE Coach  
(865) 297-8826, taylor@tnachieves.org

Jackie McDonald  
Deputy Director of Research & Operations  
(615) 405-9745, jackie@tnachieves.org

Ben Sterling  
Senior Director of Content  
(865) 567-1140, ben@tnachieves.org

Chastity Roberson  
Managing COMPLETE Coach  
(865) 236-8260, chastity@tnachieves.org

Christine Stevenson  
Managing Transfer Coach  
(901) 236-8257, christine@tnachieves.org

Emily Mason  
COMPLETE & Grants Manager  
(865) 356-2190, emily@tnachieves.org

Baylor Williamson  
Lead Transfer Coach  
(865) 321-2234, baylor@tnachieves.org

Meghan Byrne-Monkhouse  
COMPLETE Coach  
(615) 313-9334, monkhouse@tnachieves.org

Makenzi Coleman  
COMPLETE Coach  
(865) 910-6272, makenzi@tnachieves.org

Blair Atkinson  
COMPLETE Coach  
(615) 491-7708, blair@tnachieves.org

Hayley Clark  
COMPLETE Coach  
(865) 321-3133, hayley@tnachieves.org

Mentors Like students, mentors will receive an email from tnAchieves every Monday. This email intends to highlight important dates, requirements and other information that brings value to your mentoring experience. If you do not receive the tnAchieves Monday Email, please email mentors@tnachieves.org to resolve the problem. In addition to the Monday Email, tnAchieves may use text messaging to keep you updated on important steps in the program. Mentors can utilize tnAchieves CONNECT to engage with our team and access other valuable resources. Visit pages 7-8 of this handbook for more information about utilizing tnAchieves CONNECT!

CONNECT WITH US

Stay Connected to tnAchieves

tnAchieves is a nonprofit partnering organization to TN Promise. tnAchieves works directly with students as they complete the scholarship requirements, including attending mandatory meetings, completing the FAFSA, working with a mentor and submitting community service hours. tnAchieves supports TN Promise students from high school to a college credential.

Board Members

Randy Boyd  
Founder of Radio Systems Corporation, the former Commissioner of the TN Department of Economic and Community Development, Chairman of tnAchieves and President of the University of Tennessee. He received a bachelor’s degree from the University of Tennessee in Industrial Management in 1979 and a master’s degree in Liberal Studies from Oxford University in 1986.

Bill Haslam  
49th Governor of Tennessee. Before being elected Governor, he served as the President of Frito-Lay and the Mayor of Knoxville. He also served on the tnAchieves board of directors when the program launched in 2008. Governor Haslam holds a bachelor’s degree from Emory University.

Dr. Linda Martin  
Vice President for Academic Affairs and Student Success for the University of Tennessee System. Linda earned a bachelor’s degree from Ohio State, a master’s degree from Virginia Tech and a doctorate from Colorado State University—all in animal science.

Mike Ragsdale  
Partner in a consulting company, Tennessee Strategies, LLC. He was elected to serve as Knox County mayor in 2002 and again in 2006. The first in his family to attend college, he completed a doctorate in education at the University of Tennessee where he also received the Torchbearer award as an undergraduate student.

Tim Williams  
Co-founder and CEO of 21st Mortgage Corporation. 21st Mortgage is the highest volume lender in the manufactured home industry. In 2003, 21st Mortgage was acquired by Berkshire Hathaway Company. Tim holds a bachelor’s degree and master’s of business administration from the University of Tennessee.

PARTNERSHIP

The Tennessee Student Assistance Corporation (TSAC) is a governmental financial aid agency that handles state and federal aid for Tennessee students. It administers TN Promise funds directly to post-secondary institutions.

The tnAchieves Story

tnAchieves began as knoxAchieves in 2008, launched as an economic development and student success initiative by former Knox County Mayor Mike Ragsdale, then Knoxville Mayor Bill Haslam and businessmen Randy Boyd, Rich Ray and Tim Williams. Because of its success, knoxAchieves was charged with expanding the program statewide, thus tnAchieves was launched in 2011. tnAchieves ultimately seeks to build a strong workforce by increasing educational attainment opportunities across the state. More importantly, we hope to improve students’ quality of life, increase the value of education in Tennessee and create more lifelong learners. Today, tnAchieves partners with TN Promise in 83 of the 95 Tennessee counties.

TN Promise is a last-dollar scholarship that funds tuition and mandatory fees for up to five semesters at a community college or eligible four-year institution or eight trimesters at a Tennessee College of Applied Technology (TCAT).

As a last-dollar scholarship, TN Promise covers a student’s tuition and mandatory fees not paid by federal or state funds (i.e., the Pell Grant, HOPE Scholarship, Tennessee Student Assistance Award and Wilder-Naifeh Technical Skills Grant).

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STUDENT CHECKLIST

Use the checklist below to stay on track to receive your TN Promise scholarship!

TN Promise eligibility requirements are listed in green.

☑ By NOVEMBER 1, 2021
Completed the 2022 TN Promise application. 
Visit www.TNPromise.gov.

☑ FALL 2021
tnAchieves handbook will be mailed to home address.

☑ By MARCH 1, 2022
Create your tnAchieves CONNECT account.

☑ By MARCH 1, 2022
View Mandatory TN Promise Webinar
Students access the mandatory webinar on tnAchieves CONNECT.

☑ By MARCH 1, 2022
File the 2022-2023 Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA).
Visit www.studentaid.gov. See pages 6-8 of the student handbook for helpful instructions and tips.

☑ By APRIL 1, 2022
Apply to an eligible TN Promise institution.
A list of eligible institutions can be found on page 16.

☑ SPRING 2022
Meet with tnAchieves mentor either in-person or via tnAchieves CONNECT. 
Learn more about tnAchieves CONNECT on pages 7-8. (Pages 9-10 of the student handbook.)

☑ MAY 1, 2022
Submit all requested admissions documents to anticipated college. 
Check your college email for admissions updates.

☑ By JUNE 1, 2022
Complete and submit 8 hours of community service. 
Submit by 11:59 PM CT at www.tnachieves.org. See pages 22-23 for future deadlines.

☑ By JULY 1, 2022
Complete financial aid verification, if selected. 
Verification is completed through your college's financial aid office. See page 21 for details.

☑ By JULY 1, 2022
Ensure your college is listed on your TSAC Portal and FAFSA. 
See pages 19-20 for instructions on how to update your TSAC Portal and FAFSA, if needed.

☑ FALL 2022
Enroll as a full-time student at a TN Promise eligible institution. 
Students must be enrolled in a minimum of 12 credit hours at a community college, eligible four-year college or in a full-time program at a Tennessee College of Applied Technology (TCAT).

☑ FALL 2022
Connect with tnAchieves Mentor 
Learn more about tnAchieves CONNECT on pages 7-8. (Pages 9-10 of the student handbook.)

☑ ONGOING
Stay in communication with your tnAchieves mentor. 
See pages 9-10 (pages 12-14 in the student handbook) to learn more about your mentor and their role.

☑ ONGOING
Check your email every Monday for weekly updates from tnAchieves. 
tnAchieves will send you weekly emails containing important information regarding your participation in the program.

MENTOR TIP
"Encourage students to fulfill all TN Promise requirements regardless of other communication they are receiving; in case they were misinformed by another person." 
Mary Lou, Stewart County Mentor

Every year, tnAchieves mentors find their students to be unique in their goals and college-going plans. While many of your students will consider TN Promise to be their primary college plan, others will have plans to enroll at an ineligible 4-year institution, join the workforce or enlist in the military.

Most mentors find that by the fall they are working consistently with two to three of their assigned students. Please know that this is normal and expected! We encourage all mentors to focus on their students that are engaged and responsive.

We hope you will not become discouraged if you are only hearing back from a few of your assigned students. This is not a reflection of your work as a mentor. Even just one student impacted through this work is a significant win for you, that student, our program and the state!

The graphic below is an example of a mentor’s assigned student group. In most instances, students that plan to utilize the TN Promise scholarship are the most receptive to mentor communication, however it is important to note that each student presents an opportunity to make an impact!
What is tnAchieves CONNECT?
Through the generous support of Bank of America, tnAchieves CONNECT is a new tool that allows students and mentors to interact in a safe, online platform. You will be paired with your tnAchieves mentor on tnAchieves CONNECT, which allows you to easily communicate with one another. Our team will also use the platform to share useful resources, tips and other information that will ensure you are successful transitioning to and through college.

Why is tnAchieves CONNECT important?
We strongly believe in the power of a tnAchieves mentor (learn more about your tnAchieves mentor on page 12) and the value they bring to a student's college access process. To ensure students and mentors still have the opportunity to meet face-to-face without our traditional in-person meetings, we invested in an online mentoring platform that includes video conferencing and instant messaging. tnAchieves CONNECT gives students and mentors the ability to build a relationship virtually and remain in consistent contact.

Ensuring that students remain connected to our program when we are not able to meet in person is a priority for our team, and tnAchieves CONNECT helps keep you in the loop! Use the platform to connect with your mentor and the tnAchieves team as well as gain access to valuable resources!

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In March, you will be assigned a mentor who has made the commitment to encourage and support you as you transition from high school to college. This is one of the most valuable resources you have with TN Promise.

This is your chance to receive guidance and support. Mentors are invested in helping you succeed. Applying to college and everything that goes with it can be an intimidating process. Your mentor is there to help! Be willing to openly communicate with your mentor as you prepare to start your first semester of college and do not hesitate to ask them questions.

As a TN Promise Scholar, it is your responsibility to engage with your mentor during the tnAchieves program. This is a chance to learn how to develop meaningful relationships with mentors who can provide support and opportunities for you to grow in your education and career.

Connect with your mentor when:
- You have a question.
- You complete a step in the process. They want to celebrate with you!
- They ask a question of you via tnAchieves CONNECT, text message or email.
- You are excited/nervous/worried about starting college.

You will meet your mentor for the first time this spring either in-person or virtually via tnAchieves CONNECT. This is an opportunity to get to know each other. Be willing to open up, answer their questions and ask any questions of your own.

Meet with your mentor this spring!
This spring, your tnAchieves mentor will schedule a face-to-face meeting with you! The purpose of this meeting is to help you get to know your mentor and set college goals. The meeting will occur either in-person or virtually, depending on your mentor’s preference. Below is what you can expect depending on your mentor’s preferred meeting format:

- **In-Person:** If your mentor chooses to meet in-person, they will offer a date, time and location for the meeting. This may occur at a local college, high school or business. In-person meetings are hosted in public spaces and you will meet your mentor there! Please confirm your attendance with your mentor by responding to their meeting request. It is imperative that you mark your calendar, show up on time and communicate with your mentor!
- **Virtual:** If your mentor chooses to meet virtually, the meeting will occur on tnAchieves CONNECT via the video chat feature. Your mentor will offer a date and time to meet, and it will be your responsibility to mark your calendar and attend virtually. If you need help with utilizing CONNECT’s video chat feature, let our team know. We are happy to help prepare you to meet with your mentor!

MENTORS

One challenge all tnAchieves mentors often face is unresponsive students. All of our students differ in terms of motivation and engagement, so patience and persistence are incredibly important. We recommend contacting your students prior to your face-to-face meeting. During the in-person or virtual face-to-face meeting, establish communication guidelines. Ask them how they prefer to be contacted – email, texting, etc.– and discuss the importance of their responsiveness to your communication, even if it is just a “thank you.” Having this discussion together will better equip students to respond and engage with you.

TIP: Prompt your students to respond to your correspondence by ending a text or email with, “Please respond with a YES that you received this email/text.” We have found this to be helpful.
Once you have introduced yourself to your students, we ask that you begin to communicate with them every two weeks. The following suggested communication items reflect upcoming student deadlines and can help guide conversations. Feel free to take these and make them your own!

Prior to your face-to-face meeting:
1. I am looking forward to meeting with you! I am hoping that you are available to meet in person/virtually on (Date and Time). Respond to this message to let me know if you are available!

2. “Have you populated your tnAchieves CONNECT account? Visit your profile and fill in any empty sections to help me get to know you!”

3. “Have you asked your counselor to send your official transcript to your college? You must do this! If you have yet to apply to college, you need to do so as soon as possible.”

4. “Does your college provide email accounts? If you do not know, it is important to check as that is usually how the college sends you important information!”

5. “You have two months to complete and submit your first 8 hours of community service. Do you need help finding somewhere to complete these hours?”

6. “Check in with the admissions and financial aid offices to determine what documents they need from you. Do not forget to check your college account each week!”

7. “Happy graduation! Now that you are on summer break, take advantage of your free time and complete your 8 hours of community service. Remember, your first deadline to complete and submit your community service hours is July 1st.”

8. “Have you logged into your college account to see if you were selected for verification? If you are selected, please check your college account or call financial aid today.”

9. “Today is the deadline to submit your 8 hours of community service! Remember, you will submit your hours at www.tnachieves.org. Also, remember to submit any required verification documents to your college’s financial aid office, if needed. If you do not know if you were selected for verification, please check your college account or call financial aid today.”

10. “Today is the deadline to complete the 2023-2024 FAFSA!”

PROGRAM MILESTONES

Milestone Completion Goal:

April 5
Conduct a face-to-face meeting with each student.

Face-to-face meetings can occur in-person or virtually depending on your preference. The face-to-face meeting will help you to get to know your students and learn more about their college goals. The meeting will also allow your students to get to know you and your reasons for mentoring!

May 1
Confirm that each student has completed a college application.

Have conversations with your students about the different types of colleges and which may be the best fit. Many students are not aware of the variety of colleges/programs that are TN Promise eligible.

June 1
Ensure that students are registered for at least 12 credit hours/full-time program for the fall term.

Helping students navigate the enrollment process can ensure they have the confidence to begin college in the fall. Common roadblocks occur around choosing a major, understanding the value of a college education in the workforce and communicating with their advisor.

July 1
Ensure that students complete and submit 8 hours of community service.

Students often need help connecting with valuable community service. Due to COVID-19, tnAchieves developed virtual community service opportunities at tnachieves.org/virtual. Mentors can share these virtual options with their students.

Aug. 1
Encourage your students to submit their class schedule to CONNECT.

To help you organize students’ progress, encourage them to submit their class schedules to CONNECT. By evaluating each student’s class schedule, you can help them with time management and prioritizing.

Aug. 15
Ensure each student is prepared to begin the fall semester via virtual face-to-face meeting.

To ensure each student is on track to begin classes in the fall, schedule a virtual face-to-face meeting in CONNECT. This will present each student with the opportunity to ask any questions and present any concerns.

Sept. 1
Ensure each student begins their fall semester.

Follow up with each student once classes begin to ensure they are acclimating to college life. This will give them an opportunity to ask any questions and you can connect them with the appropriate resources.

Sept. 15
Ensure each student is finding success during their first semester via face-to-face meeting.

Schedule face-to-face meetings with each of your students. During this meeting, check-in on the students and ensure they are progressing in their first semester of college. These meetings can occur in-person or virtually!

Oct. 14
Ensure each student views the fall tnAchieves webinar.

This webinar focuses on upcoming TN Promise requirements and college success. You can check each student’s CONNECT account to determine if students have completed this step.

Oct. 31
Ensure each student is registered for spring classes.

Check with each student to ensure that they register for the upcoming semester. Students may need help understanding who to contact to register for classes, so this presents an opportunity for you to act as a resource.

Nov. 1
Ensure that students complete and submit 8 hours of community service.

Students often need help connecting with valuable community service. Due to COVID-19, tnAchieves developed virtual community service opportunities at tnachieves.org/virtual. Mentors can share these virtual options with their students.

Dec. 1
Wish your students the best of luck on their college journey.

As your mentoring experience with this group of students comes to a close, wish them luck in the upcoming semester. We will share an end-of-year survey in December to collect your thoughts on the year’s program!
In Spring 2022, tnAchieves mentors will have three meeting options. Meeting face-to-face gives you the opportunity to understand your students’ college goals and aspirations. During this meeting, you are encouraged to become acquainted with your students and begin setting goals for the year. Shortly after receiving your list of assigned students you are encouraged to begin making plans to meet with your students.

Below is a list of goals for your face-to-face meetings with your students:

- Confirm where each student plans to attend college in the fall.
- Knowing where a student plans to enroll can inform your communication as they complete college applications, register for orientation/classes and, if selected, complete financial aid verification.
- Determine why each student plans to attend college.
- Understanding why each student plans to go to college can give you insight on their motivations. Some students are motivated to go to college because they want to be the first person in their family to enroll. Others are motivated by specific career interests/opportunities. Regardless of why they plan to go to college, each student has an intrinsic motivation to attend.
- Determine each student’s future career goals.
- It can be helpful to know if a student has a specific career goal. If they are unsure about their future, mentors can help students explore different career fields and the college programs that can serve as a pathway to the workforce.
- Determine each student’s plans for the upcoming community service deadline.
- Many students can benefit from their mentor connecting them with meaningful community service opportunities. If students are unsure about their community service plans, encourage them to find an opportunity that connects with their future career goals!

A summary of the three different meeting options can be found below:

1. tnAchieves Open House

   tnAchieves will schedule time at a local college campus or high school for students and mentors to gather and become acquainted. Each county’s meeting date(s) will be unique, so be on the lookout for the tnAchieves Open House schedule. The tnAchieves team will send Open House details to mentors and ask you to RSVP. By registering for the event, we can prepare adequate space for you and your students and send targeted reminders to your students about the Open House.

   Open Houses will be flexible events where mentors/students arrive at a time (within the event window) that works for them. After meeting, students and mentors are not expected to stay at the Open House until the end of the event. Mentors and students will be seated at an assigned table/area that will ensure a mentor’s assigned students are easily identified. tnAchieves will provide a handout that will include a checklist of items and conversation starters. In addition to the handout, tnAchieves staff will be present to answer your questions and provide guidance throughout the event. These events provide mentors and students an opportunity to engage in conversation, learn more about post-secondary options and set goals for the future!

   Please note: tnAchieves will provide you and your students with event details, however mentors should connect with their students to confirm their attendance. tnAchieves is not collecting student registration for this event, so mentors are strongly encouraged to confirm their students’ attendance before the Open House.

2. Independent Meetings

   Some mentors may prefer to schedule their own in-person meetings locally. With this option, mentors can pick the date/time that works best for them and their students. We encourage you to reach out to each student to confirm their attendance when scheduling an independent meeting. It is also helpful to send a reminder to your students via text message the day before your meeting. We simply ask that you meet in a public space!

3. Virtual Meetings

   tnAchieves CONNECT allows mentors and students to meet face-to-face in a virtual capacity through the video chat feature. This meeting option allows mentors to participate 100% virtually and provides the most flexibility. By utilizing tnAchieves CONNECT, you can propose meeting times, send reminders and host the meeting entirely on the platform. For a tutorial on scheduling a meeting with your students, visit the Pathways section of tnAchieves CONNECT!

Before You Begin

The fastest way to sign your application and have it processed is to create an FSA ID. The FSA ID allows a student and parent to identify themselves electronically to access FSA websites. An FSA ID is also the only way to access or correct your information online.

If you have an FSA ID but forget your username or password, attempt to log in on the FAFSA home page and click on forgot username or forgot password.

Dependency

If you are a dependent student, you will report your and your parent’s information. If you are an independent student, you will report your information (and, if you are married, your spouse’s). For clarification on your status, please visit: www.studentaid.ed.gov/sa/fafsa/filling-out/dependency.

Reporting Parent Information

There are numerous scenarios a student may encounter when reporting parent information on the FAFSA. The answers to questions regarding parent information may differ based on your parent’s marital status and living situation. If you have a question regarding your unique situation, you can visit www.studentaid.ed.gov/sa/fafsa/filling-out/parent-info for a breakdown of multiple scenarios. You can also contact the financial aid office of the college you plan to attend to ask specific questions.

Making Corrections to FAFSA

Log into FAFSA on the Web using your FSA ID and password, and click Make FAFSA Corrections.

When correcting your FAFSA, you can:
- Add or remove colleges from your application;
- Change your email or mailing address; and/or
- Correct any field in your FAFSA other than your Social Security number.

Any corrections you make to your application using FAFSA on the Web will be processed in three to five days. Changes must be submitted, not just saved, to be processed. You will receive a revised Student Aid Report (SAR) reflecting the corrections that you made to your application. All of the schools you listed on your FAFSA will have access to the revised information one day after it is processed.

IRS Data Retrieval Tool

The IRS Data Retrieval Tool allows students and parents to access the IRS tax return information needed to complete the FAFSA and easily transfer the data directly and accurately into the FAFSA from the IRS website.

In the finances section of your FAFSA, click Proceed to IRS and log in with the IRS to retrieve your tax information. On the IRS website, you must enter the requested information exactly as it appears on your tax return. Click the Transfer My Tax Information into the FAFSA box and then review to ensure your information has been transferred into the appropriate data fields. Questions populated with tax information will be marked with Transferred from the IRS. Some data may not be visible in order to protect your information.

Note: There are several scenarios in which you might not be given the option to use the IRS Data Retrieval Tool. Filing your taxes electronically or by mail will determine how quickly you can use the IRS Data Retrieval Tool. Usually the tool is available three weeks after tax returns are filed electronically or seven to eleven weeks after tax returns are filed by mail. If the IRS Data Retrieval Tool is not available to you, you can manually fill out the fields from your 2020 tax returns.
How to Apply

Community Colleges: All community college applications can be completed online. If you do not have internet access, most colleges will allow you to complete an application on their campuses.

Tennessee Colleges of Applied Technology (TCAT): Most TCAT applications can be completed online. You may also complete a paper application and submit it to the admissions office at the TCAT you plan to attend. Depending on location and program, a student may need to place their name on a waiting list once they have applied.

Make sure to complete an application by early spring. We recommend an April 1 application priority date!

Benefits of Community and Technical Colleges

Better Job Opportunities and More Money

In the future, 80 percent of the fastest growing jobs in the United States will require at least some post-secondary education. By the year 2025, 55 percent of all jobs in Tennessee will require employees to have earned a post-secondary credential (certificate, associate’s or bachelor’s degree).

By completing a two-year degree in two years, transfer to a four-year state school utilizing the Tennessee Transfer Pathway and save approximately 50 percent in tuition as you complete your bachelor’s degree, compared to directly enrolling at a four-year institution.

Earning a post-secondary degree could represent a quarter of a million dollar increase of earnings over a lifetime!

*United States Census Bureau; data.census.gov

Smooth Transition

Community and technical colleges offer less of a drastic change from high school than some four-year colleges. Class sizes are small, and campuses are typically easier to access.

Specialized Degrees and Licensing Programs

Community and technical colleges have specialized programs in areas such as welding, automotive technology, nursing, culinary arts and many others that put you on the fast track to a rewarding career.

Best Value for Your Dollar

Community colleges are a great place to take general education courses (e.g., English, math, etc.). You can complete your associates degree in two years, transfer to a four-year state school utilizing the Tennessee Transfer Pathway and save approximately 50 percent in tuition as you complete your bachelor’s degree, compared to directly enrolling at a four-year institution.

Below is a possible breakdown of a student who does not receive Pell or TSAA but is both HOPE/Wilder-Naifeh and TN Promise eligible. Please note that these are estimations.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>TCAT Two-Year Public</th>
<th>Four-Year Public*</th>
<th>Four-Year Private*</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tuition (No books/fees/supplies)</td>
<td>$3,000</td>
<td>$4,000</td>
<td>$8,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HOPE/Wilder-Naifeh</td>
<td>-$2,000</td>
<td>-$3,000</td>
<td>-$3,500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TN Promise</td>
<td>-$1,000</td>
<td>-$1,000</td>
<td>-$500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Your Cost</td>
<td>$0</td>
<td>$0</td>
<td>$4,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Check with your institution of choice to determine both college cost and the amount covered by TN Promise or other institutional aid as all four-year institutions process TN Promise differently.

The following list includes all Tennessee colleges and universities* students may attend as a TN Promise scholar. Visit the institutions’ websites to learn about programs offered and admissions requirements. The digital version of this handbook contains links to each institution’s TN Promise or financial aid page.

**Tennessee Community Colleges**
- Chattanooga State Community College
- Cleveland State Community College
- Columbia State Community College
- Dyersburg State Community College
- Jackson State Community College
- Motlow State Community College
- Nashville State Community College
- Northeast State Community College
- Pellissippi State Community College
- Roane State Community College
- Southwest Tennessee Community College
- Volunteer State Community College
- Walters State Community College

**Tennessee Colleges of Applied Technology**
- TCAT Athens
- TCAT Chattanooga
- TCAT Covington
- TCAT Crossville
- TCAT Crump
- TCAT Dickson
- TCAT Elizabethton
- TCAT Harriman
- TCAT Hartsville
- TCAT Hohenwald
- TCAT Jackson
- TCAT Jackson
- TCAT Knoxville
- TCAT Livington
- TCAT McKenzie
- TCAT McNairy
- TCAT Memphis
- TCAT Morristown
- TCAT Murfreesboro
- TCAT Nashville
- TCAT Newbern
- TCAT Oneida
- TCAT Paris
- TCAT Pulaski
- TCAT Ripley
- TCAT Shelbyville
- TCAT Whiteville

**Public Universities with Eligible Two-Year Programs**
- Austin Peay State University
- Tennessee State University**
- UT Southern (formerly Martin Methodist)

**Private Colleges with Eligible Two-Year Programs**
- Baptist Health Sciences University
- Bethel University
- Bryan College
- Carson-Newman University
- Christian Brothers University
- Cumberland University
- Fisk University
- Freed-Hardeman University
- John A. Gupton College
- Johnson University
- King University
- Lane College
- LeMoyne-Owen College
- Lincoln Memorial University
- South College
- Southern Adventist University
- Trevecca Nazarene University
- Tusculum College
- Welch College
- William R. Moore College of Technology

*In order to use the TN Promise scholarship at a four-year college or university, students must enroll in and be accepted into an associates degree program that school – not a bachelor’s degree program. Students enrolling in a health sciences program will not be eligible to receive TN Promise funding until admitted into the actual program of study. If you are a UT Promise student, please see page 27.

**Dental hygiene is Tennessee State University’s only TN Promise eligible program. Students enrolling at Tennessee State University in a program other than dental hygiene will be ineligible for the TN Promise scholarship.

At a four-year institution, the TN Promise scholarship may not be last-dollar, meaning it may not fully cover all tuition and mandatory fees. The amount of funding you will receive will be based on the average amount of tuition and mandatory fees at a community college, which is estimated to be $4,000. As a last-dollar scholarship, TN Promise will provide the remaining amount after Pell, HOPE and TSAA funds are applied. For example, if the average tuition and mandatory fees at a community college were $4,000 per year and you were receiving $3,500 in HOPE funds each year but no other federal or state aid, TN Promise would provide $500 to be applied toward tuition and mandatory fees at one of the eligible four-year institutions listed above.

15
NOw THAT YOU HAVE APPLIED

The college application is only the beginning of the admissions process. Below is a list of next steps you need to complete to ensure you will be able to start classes on time. tnAchieves has a priority date of May 1 to have all admissions documents submitted to your college.

Community or Four-Year College Students
- Submit ACT scores, final high school transcript and shot records
- Attend new student orientation
- Take any required placement tests
- Create and check (at least weekly) college account
- Meet with an advisor
- Submit full-time (12 credit hours)
  We recommend 15 credit hours each term for on-time completion.

TCAT Students
- Submit final high school transcript and shot records
- Take any required placement tests
- Enroll in a full-time program
- Attend new student orientation

Submit Your Final High School Transcript
This must be an official transcript sent directly from your high school to your post-secondary institution of choice. Talk with your school counselor to determine the procedure for having your transcript sent to your college. Do not wait until the summer to request your transcript—it may be too late!

Attend New Student Orientation
New student orientation is different at every institution. Some have online orientations, some require you to attend an orientation on campus and others host orientation on the first day of classes. Check with the admissions office to determine when your orientation will be held. tnAchieves encourages students to attend orientation on campus.

Complete Placement Testing
All TBR community colleges are allowing students with high school GPAs of 3.6 or higher to place out of learning support, and three colleges (Chattanooga, Nashville, and Southwest) are also allowing students with high school GPAs of 2.8 to 3.59 to provisionally place out of learning support. Check with your advisor to see if additional testing is required.

Create Your College Account
If your college has student accounts, create yours NOW and begin to check it weekly. This is where you will be notified if you are selected for financial aid verification (see page 21). This is also how your professors will communicate with you once you are enrolled.

Register for Classes
In college, your classes are not automatically assigned to you. You must select and register for classes based on your academic plan. Meet with an advisor or success coach before you complete registration to ensure you will be taking the correct classes. Please remember, at a community or four-year college, you must register for at least 12 credit hours to remain eligible for TN Promise. If you want to graduate in four semesters, you must take at least 15 credit hours each semester for most concentrations. At a TCAT, you must be enrolled in a full-time program.

The Summer Bridge Program is a FREE three-week program designed to help incoming students start on a more college-ready level, both academically and socially. Each day, students receive reading, English and math instruction and attend a college success Lunch & Learn. On the last day of the program, students have a chance to test out of learning support courses at the college they plan to attend.

Is the Summer Bridge Program for me?
If you answer yes to one or more of the following questions, the Summer Bridge Program may be for you!
- Did you score below a 19 on the math section of the ACT?
- Did you score below a 19 on the reading section of the ACT?
- Did you score below an 18 on the English section of the ACT?
- Was your high school GPA below 3.6?

Is the Summer Bridge Program mandatory?
No. You are not required to attend the Summer Bridge Program in order to receive the TN Promise scholarship.

Does the Summer Bridge Program use my TN Promise funding?
No! You will still receive the same amount of funding as long as you continue to meet the TN Promise requirements. The Summer Bridge Program is FREE!

What do you mean by learning support courses?
If your high school GPA was below 3.6, or your ACT math or reading score is below a 19 and/or your ACT English score is below an 18, you may be required to enroll in a learning support class during your first semester of college. At the Summer Bridge Program, you will take a college placement test on the first and last day. The goal is to better prepare you for your college experience. If you score high enough on the placement test, you will place out of the learning support class in that subject! Why does that matter? Students do not receive college credit towards their intended major for learning support courses, which can delay graduation.

Where will the Summer Bridge Program be held?
All 13 Tennessee community colleges host an annual Summer Bridge Program on one of their campuses. They are listed below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Community College</th>
<th>Community College</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Chattanooga State</td>
<td>Cleveland State</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community College</td>
<td>Community College</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Columbia State</td>
<td>Dyersburg State</td>
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<tr>
<td>Community College</td>
<td>Community College</td>
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<tr>
<td>Jackson State</td>
<td>Motlow State</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community College</td>
<td>Community College</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nashville State</td>
<td>State Community</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community College</td>
<td>College</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

When is the Summer Bridge Program?
Dates will differ by campus throughout June and July. Check www.tnachieves.org for details.

How do I sign up for the Summer Bridge Program?
The application will be available at www.tnachieves.org in spring 2022.

If I apply, am I automatically accepted?
Not necessarily. Students must maintain TN Promise eligibility to participate. Students planning to attend TN Promise eligible institutions will be given preference if a program reaches capacity. Acceptance is also first-come, first-served, so we recommend applying sooner rather than later!

Mentors

Your students are taking the final steps toward their first semester of college. There are several aspects of the college admissions process that you can discuss with them during the summer months.

Creating a College Account
The majority of post-secondary institutions use their assigned institution email to communicate with students. Remind your students of the importance of checking their college student accounts and emails on a weekly basis. Students often miss critical deadlines because they fail to check emails.

Attend New Student Orientation
Orientation provides a great opportunity for students to ask questions and seek out campus resources prior to the start of classes. You do not need to attend orientation with them, but this may be a good time to talk with your students about what they are most excited about as they prepare for college and to uncover any hesitations or questions.

Enrolling Full-Time
Students often do not understand how important it is to register for classes early. It is helpful to encourage them to meet with an advisor to discuss a general schedule so they have an idea of what they should take, when they should work and when they can make time to study.

Always encourage your students to call their post-secondary institution when they are confused, especially during this time. The schools have all the materials students need and their staff members are the best people to answer advising questions!
When you file your FAFSA, you need to make sure you select the TN Promise eligible institution you plan to attend in the fall as your first choice. If you change your mind, you will need to update the first college listed in two places. First, you will update your FAFSA. Second, you will update your TSAC Portal (next page).

Any change of institution with FAFSA and TSAC should be made by July 1. The longer you wait to update your institution, the longer it will take for your financial aid file to be completed. Failure to change your institution could result in a delay of your TN Promise award and result in you having to pay out of pocket.

**Updating Your First Choice Institution on the FAFSA**
1. Go to studentaid.gov, and log in using your FSA ID prior to July 1.
2. Ensure that the 2022-23 tab is selected, and click Update Schools found under You may take the following additional actions:
   - Select the school in the Selected Colleges and Housing Info menu. When you are done adding colleges, click Continue.
3. Click Continue.
4. Create a save key.
   - The save key is for temporary use for you or your parent to return and complete this specific FAFSA form. The save key must be between 4 and 8 characters long. You can use any combination of numbers and/or uppercase and lowercase letters. For example, the save key “Student2” is different than the save key “sTuDeNT2.”
5. If the school you plan to attend is not included in the schools listed in the summary, click Add More Schools.
   - Search for the school you need to add by state, city or school name, or type in the Federal School Code, which can be found in the financial aid section of the college’s website. Click Search.
   - Select the school in the Search Results box, then click Continue. The school should appear in the Selected Colleges and Housing Info menu. When you are done adding colleges, click Continue.
6. In the Make changes to another section of your FAFSA form? pop-up box, select No Thanks, Continue.
7. Check the box indicating that you agree to the terms outlined above.
8. Click Sign This FAFSA Form.
9. Click Submit My FAFSA Form Now.
10. You will be directed to a page confirming that your 2022-2023 correction was successfully submitted to Federal Student Aid.
11. You will receive a confirmation email to the email address you provided when you applied for TN Promise. The temporary password will expire in one hour. It is suggested that you copy and paste the temporary password from the email into the password field.
12. Changes made to your FAFSA can take up to three days to process. Stay in close communication with the financial aid office at the college you plan to attend to make sure they are able to access your FAFSA.

**MENTOR TIP**

“Send students messages specifically addressed to them at times throughout the process. Include information about them and their interests so it is not always a mass email and they know you care about them individually. Beginning with the very first communication, ask students to acknowledge they are receiving your communication efforts by responding to emails, text messages, voicemails, etc.”

Dave, Roane County Mentor

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**Updating Your Institution on the TSAC Student Portal**

2. Enter the username and password you created when you applied for TN Promise.
   - If you forgot your username and/or password, click Forgot username or password?
   - If you forgot your password, click the Forgot your password? Click here link. Enter your email address, the last four digits of your Social Security number and your date of birth. Click Submit. A temporary password will be sent to the email address you provided when you applied for TN Promise. The temporary password will expire in one hour. It is suggested that you copy and paste the temporary password from the email into the password field.
3. You may be prompted to answer one of the security questions you chose when you applied for TN Promise. Check the box next to Register this computer to skip this step next time you login from this computer. Click Continue.
4. The next page will show the image you chose. If it is the correct image, enter your password and click Log In.
5. Under the Grants and Scholarship Program Information section, you will see Academic Year 2022-2023 and a list of program names and the institutions (program names include TSAA Tennessee Grants, HOPE Scholarship, HOPE Access Grant, Wilder-Nalief Technical Skills Grant, Tennessee Promise).
6. You will see a Transfer School button for each program. You may click on any button and update the institution which will update all programs.
7. Select the correct institution from the drop down box. Click Process Transfer Request.
8. Click on View Financial Summary on the top right hand corner to return to your student portal. You should see that the institution was changed under the Grants and Scholarship Program Information section.
9. When you are finished, click Log Out. Please keep your username and password for the TSAC Student Portal in a safe place.

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**TSAC STUDENT PORTAL USERNAME:**

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**MENTOR TIP**

“Tell them you are proud of them for furthering their education, be friendly when meeting with them, ask questions and be attentive and sincere with your answers. They are nervous about this giant step in life and need a friend. This decision is one of the biggest, most important ones they will make along life’s highway. Help them - don’t hold their hand, just guide them.”

Sabra, Grainger County Mentor
What is verification?
Verification is a process initiated by the Department of Education at the time you submit the FAFSA. Students selected for verification are required to submit certain documents to the college’s financial aid office to verify the information provided on the FAFSA. Not all students are selected for verification, but if you are selected, no federal or state financial aid awards, including TN Promise, can be posted to your account until your financial aid file is verified.

What is the deadline to remain TN Promise eligible?
TNAchieves strongly encourages you to submit all requested documents by July 1 to avoid any delays with your financial aid package. The longer you wait to submit documentation, the longer it will take for your file to be completed. This means you may be required to pay to keep your classes.

How do I know if I have been selected?
You will be notified by your post-secondary institution if you have been selected for verification. Check your account! Your college account may show alerts when you first log in. In order to be notified if you have been selected for verification, the college must have your application and FAFSA on file. If you do not apply to the college, they cannot notify you of any outstanding requirements.

Click the links in the alerts to determine what information is being requested. You can also check the financial aid section of your college account for details. If you have trouble accessing or do not have a college account, contact the post-secondary institution’s financial aid office directly.

Many colleges begin posting verification requirements to student accounts in April or earlier. If you are selected for verification, make sure you begin working with the financial aid office at the college you plan to attend as soon as possible.

It is important to make sure your college is listed as the first choice school on your FAFSA and your TSAC Student Portal shows the correct institution. Refer to pages 19-20 if you need to change your FAFSA and/or TSAC Student Portal school choice.

What do I do if I am selected for verification?
If you are selected for verification, contact your school’s financial aid office. Sometimes linking your FAFSA back to the TS site will be sufficient. Other times, you will need to collect copies of the documents requested by the financial aid office (e.g., parent and/or student W-2, IRS tax return transcripts, etc.). Once all paperwork is submitted, the financial aid office will make corrections and process your financial aid. Remember, it can take up to four weeks for the financial aid office to process this paperwork, and processing documents may trigger the need for other documents to be submitted, so begin addressing this immediately.

All requested documentation should be submitted to the financial aid office at the college you plan to attend by July 1 to ensure your file is reviewed and awards are posted to your account prior to the beginning of the term.

Simply turning in documents does not mean you have completed review. The process at the college is considered part of verification.

8 hours of community service must be completed and submitted by July 1, 2022*
You may begin working on your community service hours November 2, 2021. If you plan to enroll at a Tennessee College of Applied Technology over the summer, your first 8 community service hours must be submitted by April 1, 2022.

Why?
Community service is a way to give back to your community, become involved and learn more about potential careers. It is also a great way to meet new people and learn about your community.

What?
Community service is time contributed to a nonprofit or public service organization. The community should be benefitting from the work you do! Students can also volunteer in their field of interest to gain experience. This means that job shadowing and unpaid internships may count toward your community service requirement.

Make sure you are volunteering with an individual or organization (not an individual), you are not being paid and you are being supervised by someone who is not a family member. Students can volunteer with more than one organization to meet their 8 hour requirement. Students can use unpaid internships and job shadowing opportunities as well! Unpaid internships and job shadowing must be completed at an organization or business directly related to your field of study. Job shadowing submissions are subject to review by tnAchieves staff and may be denied if they do not fit within the guidelines.

tnAchieves is offering virtual community service opportunities due to the limited in-person volunteer opportunities caused by COVID-19. The virtual community service webinar provides insight into various career fields and offers tips and advice. To access the virtual community service webinars, visit tnachieves.org/virtual!

If you need help finding community service opportunities, tnAchieves posts multiple opportunities for each county at www.tnachieves.org/community-service.

Make sure you submit your community service hours by the deadline. Do not rely on the organization or another person to complete this important step for you.

Examples of what is and is not considered community service:
YES! That counts!
NO! That does NOT count!

Tutoring students at school or community center
Babysitting your nieces or nephews

Doiing laundry for residents of a nursing home
Doing laundry for your elderly neighbor

Building homes for people in need through an organization
Building a deck with your friend

Participating in an environmental clean-up event
Picking up trash during a hike with friends

Volunteering with a JROTC/ROTC group
Service in the military for which you are being paid

Helping with landscaping at a church
Proselytizing (sharing or teaching faith)

Job shadowing in your future career field
Cleaning the parking lot at your place of employment

Attending a tnAchieves job shadow event
Following around the manager of a fast-food restaurant

Shadowing a vet because you are studying Animal Sciences
Working for free at a store because you are studying Business

Watching tnAchieves virtual community service/job shadowing webinars
Simply watching a YouTube or other online video not hosted by tnAchieves

Comm. Serv. Hours: 0
Comm. Serv. Hours: 8

*Eligibility Requirement

COMMUNITY SERVICE
COMMUNITY SERVICE

Eligibility Requirement

How?
1. Find an organization! Looking for places to volunteer? Check out www.tnachieves.org, contact your local United Way or ask your mentor! Already have a place in mind? You are welcome to complete your hours anywhere that meets the requirements on page 22.

2. Complete at least 8 hours! Don’t forget: someone who works for the organization must be able to confirm you were there the entire time. Before you leave, ask your supervisor for their name, email address and phone number. You will need this information to submit your form!

3. Submit your form! Go to www.tnachieves.org/community-service/submit-cs-hours and complete the form entirely. Below are a few tips for completing the form:
   - Did you volunteer at the same organization multiple days? When completing the form, make sure you list all of the days you worked and the total number of hours that you completed.
   - Having problems submitting the form? Follow the prompts on the error page to submit a help request. A tnAchieves staff member will respond via email to help troubleshoot your community service submission.
   - After you have submitted your form, you should see a completion page that states, “Thank you for submitting a tnAchieves community service form.” You will also receive a confirmation email at the email address you provided on your form. Save this confirmation email for your records.
   - If you receive an error message when completing your form, this means your form did not submit and your hours have not been received! Please follow the directions provided on the error message, or contact us: tnachieves@tnachieves.org.
   - Visit www.tnachieves.org/community-service/check-my-community-service-hours/ to check how many hours of community service you have submitted.

When?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Semester/Trimester</th>
<th>Deadline***</th>
<th>Timeframe for Completion</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Summer 2022*</td>
<td>April 1, 2022 by 11:59 PM CT</td>
<td>November 2, 2021-April 1, 2022</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fall 2022</td>
<td>July 1, 2022 by 11:59 PM CT</td>
<td>July 2-December 1, 2022</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spring 2023</td>
<td>December 1, 2022 by 11:59 PM CT</td>
<td>December 2, 2022-July 2, 2023</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Summer 2023**</td>
<td>April 3, 2023 by 11:59 PM CT</td>
<td>December 2, 2022-April 3, 2023</td>
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<tr>
<td>Fall 2023</td>
<td>July 3, 2023 by 11:59 PM CT</td>
<td>December 2, 2022-July 3, 2023</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spring 2024</td>
<td>December 1, 2023 by 11:59 PM CT</td>
<td>July 4-December 1, 2023</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Summer 2024**</td>
<td>April 1, 2024 by 11:59 PM CT</td>
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<td>Fall 2024</td>
<td>July 1, 2024 by 11:59 PM CT</td>
<td>December 2, 2023-July 1, 2024</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Only students attending a TCAT may enroll the summer directly following high school graduation and must meet the April 1, 2022 deadline. They must also submit an additional 8 hours by July 1, 2022 for the fall term.

**Summer semester/trimester deadlines only apply to students attending a TCAT or students choosing to enroll full time in a summer semester at a community college or eligible four-year institution.

***Students attending South College are required to submit 8 hours prior to each quarter. Contact us for specific deadlines.

To remain TN Promise eligible, a student must:

High School:
1. Attend and graduate from an eligible high school.
   a. A student must apply their senior year of high school with the Class of 2022 and meet the TN Promise established application deadline.
   b. A student must be a Tennessee resident.
   c. A student’s residency will be determined by the post-secondary institution.
   d. A student who resides with a parent outside of Tennessee pursuant to military orders will be considered eligible to participate in the scholarship program.
   e. A student who completes a GED or HiSET diploma must enroll full-time in an eligible post-secondary program in the fall after they receive their diploma, provided that the diploma was earned before the student reached 19 years of age. This assumes the GED or HiSET student met all TN Promise requirements.

2. Complete the mandatory meeting requirement as outlined in the student handbook and website.
   a. The mandatory meeting requirement will be completed virtually on tnAchieves CONNECT.
   b. Students must complete the mandatory meeting requirement by March 1, 2022.
   c. A student who graduates high school during the fall term is also required to complete the mandatory meeting requirement.
   d. A parent/guardian cannot complete the mandatory meeting requirement on the student’s behalf. The student is required to complete the mandatory meeting requirement.
   e. A student requiring accommodations for the mandatory meeting requirement should contact tnAchieves.

3. Complete the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) by March 1, 2022.
   a. Failure to qualify for federal aid in the form of a Pell Grant and/or state aid in the form of TELS (e.g., HOPE) or TSAA funding will not affect a student’s TN Promise eligibility.
   b. A student must be eligible for in-state tuition.
   c. A student must complete the correct year’s FAFSA each year prior to the deadline established by TSAC.

4. Submit all financial aid verification documents each year for community and four-year colleges.
   a. A student attending a TCAT must complete the verification process by October 1 each year.
   b. tnAchieves encourages students to submit all documents by July 1 to ensure the post-secondary institutions have adequate time to process.
   c. Students must select the eligible institution they plan to attend as their first choice on the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) as well as direct their TSAC Student Portal to the eligible institution.
   d. It is the student’s responsibility to confirm with the post-secondary institution that their admissions and financial aid files are verified, processed and ready for award.

5. Complete and submit at least 8 hours of community service prior to the start of each semester/trimester/quarter by the established deadline. Community service must be completed under the supervision of a established organization (e.g., nonprofit, public service organization).
   a. Community service is not:
      i. Work resulting in payment.
      ii. Work done under the supervision of an extended or immediate family member.
      iii. Work done for an individual rather than an organization (e.g., babysitting, mowing a neighbor’s lawn, picking up trash in your neighborhood).
      iv. Proselytizing (sharing or teaching faith).
   b. Students must submit all information regarding community service by the established deadline at www.tnachieves.org. Failure to comply by the established dates will result in loss of eligibility.
**College:**

1. **Maintain full-time status each semester.**
   a. If the student falls below full-time, they will no longer be eligible.
   b. TCAT students must maintain full-time attendance or continuous enrollment at an eligible post-secondary institution as long as all other acceptable eligibility criteria are met. A student must request a leave of absence with their chosen post-secondary institution for approval.

2. **Attend an eligible post-secondary institution in the fall term directly following high school graduation.**
   a. A student may begin at their post-secondary institution prior to the fall term directly following high school graduation; however, the student will be responsible for incurred tuition and fees until fall.
   b. A TCAT student may begin in the summer directly following high school graduation if they have met all TN Promise requirements.
   c. A student may be granted a medical or personal leave of absence from timely enrollment in the initial semester, full-time attendance or continuous enrollment at an eligible post-secondary institution as long as all other acceptable eligibility criteria are met. A student must request a leave of absence with their chosen post-secondary institution for approval.
   l. An approved leave of absence of six months or less shall not count against the five-semester or eight-trimester limit at an eligible post-secondary institution.

3. **Attend an eligible post-secondary institution for continuous semesters.**
   a. A student cannot leave the post-secondary institution for a period of time and remain eligible.
   b. If a student withdraws from all classes or stops attending during the semester, they will no longer be eligible.

4. **Maintain a 2.0 cumulative GPA at the end of each academic year.**
   a. TCAT students must maintain satisfactory academic progress each trimester.

5. **Complete the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) by the established deadline each year throughout their post-secondary experience.**
   a. Failure to qualify for federal aid in the form of a Pell Grant and/or state aid in the form of TELS (e.g., HOPE) or TSAA funding will not affect a student's TN Promise eligibility.
   b. A student must be eligible for in-state tuition.

6. **Submit all financial aid verification documents by July 1 each year for community and four-year colleges.**
   a. A student attending a TCAT must complete the verification process by October 1 each year.
   b. TN Promise only funds last-dollar tuition and mandatory fees. It does not pay for books or other post-secondary expenses (e.g., application fee, program and class specific fees). TN Promise only covers fees required of all students.

7. **Complete and submit at least 8 hours of community service prior to the start of each semester/trimester/quarter by the established deadline.** Community service must be completed under the supervision of an established organization (e.g., nonprofit, public service organization).
   a. Community service is not:
      i. Work resulting in payment.
      ii. Work done under the supervision of an extended or immediate family member.
      iii. Work done for an individual rather than an organization (e.g., babysitting, mowing a neighbor’s lawn, picking up trash in your neighborhood).
      iv. Proselytizing (sharing or teaching faith).
   b. Students must submit all information regarding community service by the established deadline at www.tnachieves.org. Failure to comply by the established dates will result in loss of eligibility.

**Other components:**

1. **Only a member of tnAchieves staff may determine a student's TN Promise eligibility.**
   a. Mentors are an extension of tnAchieves but are not tnAchieves staff members.
   b. tnAchieves mentors are volunteers and may lack adequate time to answer all questions; therefore, it is the student’s responsibility to confirm eligibility with tnAchieves staff.

2. **TN Promise only funds last-dollar tuition and mandatory fees. It does not pay for books or other post-secondary expenses (e.g., application fee, program and class specific fees). TN Promise only covers fees required of all students.**

3. **A student cannot be mentored by a family member.**

4. **Mentors cannot choose students to mentor.**
   a. tnAchieves staff will randomly assign students to mentors.

5. **TN Promise follows the admissions requirements of the post-secondary institution.**
   a. TN Promise will fund learning support classes if the student fails to meet the ACT requirements for college-level coursework.

6. **A student is responsible for notifying tnAchieves staff when their contact information changes. Incorrect information does not preclude a student from ineligibility.**

Should a student fail to adhere to any/all policies, tnAchieves invokes the right to remove a student’s eligibility.

tnAchieves values honesty and integrity. A student who submits misinformation will immediately lose TN Promise eligibility. Be respectful in all correspondence and communication, including social media.

Policies may be subject to change without notice. It is a student’s responsibility to refer to the policies as posted at www.tnachieves.org for updates and changes to the TN Promise legislation.

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**MENTOR TIP**

“It is most important for mentors to play the encourager role while students are trying to adjust to college life in the first few weeks of school.”

Chelsey, Shelby County Mentor
UT Promise is a last-dollar, undergraduate scholarship that will guarantee free tuition and mandatory fees to qualifying Tennessee residents enrolling at UT campuses in Knoxville, Chattanooga, Martin, Memphis and Pulaski.*

As a last-dollar scholarship, UT Promise will be applied after other financial aid is received. UT Promise is an expansion of scholarship offerings and does not replace existing scholarships. It is important to note that UT Promise functions separately from TN Promise and can only be used at universities falling under the University of Tennessee system. Eligible applicants must meet the following requirements:

**The accurate, verifiable total combined amount of parent and student adjusted gross income and untaxed income of less than $60,000, AND a total eligible non-citizenship status has been confirmed by the federal government. Note: This option is only available for:**

1. U.S. Citizens;
2. U.S. permanent residents (with an I-151, I-551, or I-551C permanent resident card); or
3. Individuals who have an Arrival/Departure Record (I-94) showing one of the following designations: Refugee, Asylum Granted, Cuban-Haitian Entrant (Status Pending), Conditional Entrant (Valid only if issued before April 1, 1960), Victims of Human Trafficking (T-2, T-3, or T-4 visa), or Parolee (who meets certain conditions).

**Does TN Promise cover remedial education?**

Yes. TN Promise will cover remedial classes if a student should need to take them.

**How will the funds be administered?**

After students meet all TN Promise requirements, the Tennessee Student Assistance Corporation (TSAC) will send the funds to the eligible institution after all Pell, TELS (e.g., HOPE and Wilder-Naifeh) and TSAA funds are applied. For example, if the average tuition and mandatory fees at a community college were $4,000 per year and you were receiving $3,500 in HOPE funds each year but no other federal or state aid, TN Promise would provide $500 to be applied toward tuition and mandatory fees at one of the eligible four-year institutions found on page 16.

**Will a student receive a check for the scholarship?**

Students never directly receive funding from TN Promise. TSAC will send funds directly to the college.
How long after high school graduation will students remain eligible for TN Promise?
If a student continues to meet all requirements, TN Promise funding is available for five consecutive semesters at a community college or eligible four-year institution, eight consecutive trimesters at a TCAT or until a terminating event (graduation or transfer to a non-TN Promise institution) has occurred.

What happens if a student misses a TN Promise deadline?
Failure to meet any TN Promise deadline will result in a student being permanently ineligible for TN Promise.

May a student attend a four-year institution with TN Promise funding?
TN Promise eligible post-secondary institutions (see page 16) offer associates degree programs. In order for a student to receive TN Promise funding at one of these eligible institutions, they must meet all deadlines, as well as be accepted in the associates degree program. At these institutions, funding for TN Promise may not be last dollar. The scholarship will be determined by the amount a student would receive should they attend a community college. This amount would be portable to the eligible four-year institution. In other words, if a student’s last-dollar amount at a community college is $0 due to a full Pell Grant being awarded, they would not receive any funding at the eligible four-year institution. If a student receives the HOPE scholarship only, they would receive approximately $500 each semester from TN Promise at the four-year institution. Check with the institutions’ offices of financial aid to determine student financial responsibility as it varies from college to college.

What should a student do if they are having trouble submitting the community service form?
Students that have trouble with the community service form should follow the prompts on the error page to submit a help request. A tnAchieves staff member will respond via email to help troubleshoot your community service submission.

Can a student take a semester off?
A student may request a medical or personal leave of absence from timely enrollment in the initial semester, full-time attendance or continuous enrollment at an eligible post-secondary institution as long as all other applicable eligibility criteria are met. Medical or personal appeals will be considered in the following situations: illness of the student, illness or death of an immediate family member, extreme financial hardship of the student or student’s immediate family, fulfillment of a religious commitment expected of members of that faith, fulfillment of required military service, enrollment for a specific TCAT program being unavailable until a later trimester or other extraordinary circumstances beyond the student’s control where attendance by the student creates a substantial hardship. In order to complete an appeal prior to initial enrollment, a student must visit www.tnachieves.org/resources/appeal-process/ for instructions on submitting an appeal. In order to request a leave of absence after initial enrollment, a student must complete the appeal process as specified by their college. In the event an institution denies a student’s request for a medical or personal leave of absence, the student may appeal the decision in accordance with the rules found at www.tnachieves.org/resources/appeal-process/.

How can students transfer to a four-year program or institution once they have completed their degree or certificate through TN Promise?
Tennessee Transfer Pathways ensure that students follow a prescribed curriculum that is transferrable, marked by clarity and abundance for students to review on the first day of enrollment. There are approved transfer pathways that span multiple disciplines and are accepted at all public institutions in Tennessee. More information about participating institutions can be found at: www.tntntransferpathway.org/transfer-campus. Although a student who completes an associates degree is no longer eligible for TN Promise, the student should contact the four-year institution they are interested in to discuss other sources of aid.

Why is it important to update tnAchieves when emails and phone numbers change?
A student’s contact information initially provided on the TN Promise application serves as the foundation for student communication. If this does not work, please let tnAchieves know and we will attempt to help facilitate a conversation.

What if I do not hear from my students after I contact them?
We have found that students prefer to communicate via text message. If you have not tried sending them a text message, do so!

What if I begin with seven students but only have two remaining after high school graduation?
We recommend at least once a week! Monitoring the platform frequently will ensure that you are up-to-date regarding your students’ progress.

How will I know which students I will be working with this year?
Mentors will receive their list of students and the students’ contact information in late-February/early-March via email.

When should I contact my students?
We ask that you contact your students at least every two weeks. We have provided suggested communication on page 13 for your reference. Feel free to contact your students more often! The more you reach out, the stronger the connection.

How many students will I mentor?
Mentors will be paired with 5-10 students, depending on how many students they indicated on their application.

How will I know if my students meet the TN Promise requirements?
Mentors are encouraged to use CONNECT whenever possible. Not only will this platform make connecting with students more efficient, it allows tnAchieves to better support your efforts as a mentor. We will continue to provide you with student contact information should you choose to reach out via phone or email, but recommend using CONNECT as a primary source of communication.

Are parents accessible on CONNECT?
Parents will not be accessible on tnAchieves CONNECT. You are encouraged to send emails and texts to parents regularly to stay in contact and continue offering support!

Will the virtual video meetings be group meetings or one-on-one?
You will set up individual virtual meetings with each of your assigned students, with each virtual meeting lasting about 10-15 minutes. We believe that these virtual meetings will allow for more connected, personal relationships and serve as an excellent jumping-off point to your time as a mentor. tnAchieves will provide topics, instructions and tutorials in advance of these virtual meetings.

What if I do not know an answer to a question?
Many of our students are the first in their families to attend college and sometimes parents are not aware of the steps involved in the college admissions process. This is the reason the students need you! You serve as an individual who can walk with students through this important process.

Who do I contact if I do not know an answer to a question?
You can contact any member of the tnAchieves staff with questions or concerns. Our contact information can be found on page 13 for your reference. Feel free to contact your students more often! The more you reach out, the stronger the connection.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

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Am I required to use tnAchieves CONNECT?
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How often should I check CONNECT?
We recommend at least once a week! Monitoring the platform frequently will ensure you do not miss student messages. tnAchieves will also provide the site with student data related to their requirements and college enrollment, so checking regularly will ensure that you are up-to-date regarding your students’ progress.

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