

EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION CREDENTIAL ASSISTANCE PROGRAM (CAP)

MINI-GRANT OPPORTUNITY

Grant Funding Available: \$30,000
Timeframe: End Date of December 31, 2023

Introduction

United Way of the Wabash Valley has announced a long-term bold goal for the community of moving 10,000 households out of financial struggles and into stability. In the United Way service area (Clay, Parke, Sullivan, Vermillion and Vigo Counties in Indiana and Clark County in Illinois) more than 33,000 households live below a bare bones financial income referred to as ALICE (see www.uwv.org/ALICE). The UWWV Success By 6 Impact Council (UWWV SB6) will impact the ALICE population by investing in efforts intended to promote healthy early childhood development to ensure children enter school ready to succeed. The UWWV SB6 believes that the availability of high-quality child care will positively impact the measurements for “kindergarten readiness.”

Early education program administrators have expressed a need for higher qualified staff. Unfortunately, for many students working towards attaining their credentials/degree, cost is a significant barrier. Also, for many Early Childhood Education programs, it can be costly to support student employees in attaining their education.

The Indiana Association for the Education of Young Children (INAEYC) offers the Teacher Education and Compensation Helps (T.E.A.C.H.) Early Childhood® Scholarship Program to address the issues of under-education, poor compensation and high turnover within the early childhood workforce. T.E.A.C.H. links education, compensation, and commitment to improve the quality of early care and educational experiences for young children and their families.

The comparable Illinois Gateways Scholarship Program pays a portion of tuition for eligible professionals working in early care and education or school-age programs who want to earn college credit, credentials, or degrees. Courses must be in early childhood education (ECE) or child development (CD), while enrolled in an associate, bachelor's, or master's degree program or taking classes toward a certificate, endorsement, or credential.

Program Offering

UWWV will provide an additional incentive scholarship payment for qualified applicants enrolled in the INAEYC T.E.A.C.H. Early Childhood® Scholarship Program or Illinois' Gateways Scholarship Program in order to support students attaining their Childhood Development Associate (CDA) Credential, Associates or Bachelor's degree in ECE, plus an additional incentive payment assisting ECE programs supporting their employees to attain their education.

Program Funding Available

The UWWV SB6 Impact Council has made available \$30,000 in funding to be provided to eligible qualifying applicants and their employers according to the following credential attainment:

Student Incentive Scholarship:

- CDA - \$500
- Associate's Degree - \$1,000
- Bachelor's Degree - \$1,500

Early Childhood Education Program Incentive:

- CDA - \$300
- Associate's degree - \$600
- Bachelor's degree - \$900

UWWV reserves the right to evaluate the grant funding available for this program based upon overall program effectiveness. This program offering will end on December 31, 2023 or when the available funding is exhausted.

Program Eligibility and Application Criteria

Eligibility for Student:

- Must be a T.E.A.C.H. Scholarship Program or Illinois' Gateways Scholarship Program recipient (see notes below)
- Must submit *UWWV ECE CAP* Application for consideration prior to the start date of the final semester of coursework. No incentive scholarships will be paid for applications received after this date.
- Must work within the United Way service area of Clay, Parke, Sullivan, Vermillion or Vigo Counties in Indiana or Clark County in Illinois.

Payment Criteria for Student:

- Must provide proof of completed credential/degree,
- Must provide signed statement proving work history from the ECE Program administrator

Eligibility for Early Childhood Education Program:

- Must commit to payment of 10% of tuition or matching stipend to applicable student
- Must be located within the United Way service counties of Clay, Parke, Sullivan, Vermillion, or Vigo Counties in Indiana or Clark County in Illinois.

Payment Criteria for Early Childhood Education Program:

- Must provide proof that the student has worked for them while attaining a minimum of 50% of the required coursework
- Must provide proof that they paid the 10% or a stipend to the student

The scholarship incentive and ECE Program funds will be distributed at the completion of the required coursework leading to the attainment of a CDA Credential, Associate's Degree or Bachelor's degree in the field of Early Childhood Education or a related field.

Expected Program Outcomes

By providing the ECE Credential Assistance Program (CAP), UWWV and SB6 expect to advance the following outcomes:

- With financial assistance, ECE programs will be more inclined to support staff in the attainment of higher education.
- ECE staff support for advanced certifications will build a stronger workforce within the field
- Higher qualified staff caring for young children attending ECE programs will increase the level of care and grow "kindergarten readiness"
- Potential wage increases for students after attaining credential/degree

How to Apply

To download instructions for application, go to <https://uwwv.org/funding> and click on the Early Childhood Education Credential Assistance Program for a download link. Follow the guidelines provided and submit the application and all required documentation via the email provided.

Notes of Interest:

Indiana's Teacher Education and Compensation Helps (T.E.A.C.H.) Early Childhood® Scholarship Program (<https://inaeyc.org/programs/teach/>) eligibility requirements:

Any assistant teacher, teacher, Early Head Start home visitor, center director or family childcare home owner meeting the following criteria may apply:

- Lives and works in Indiana.
- Is employed at least 30 hours per week in a licensed, registered or certified early childhood center, family childcare home or registered ministry within Indiana (for Full Time Scholarship)
- Is employed at least 20 hours but no more than 29 hours per week in a licensed, registered or certified early childhood center, family childcare home or registered ministry within Indiana (for Part Time Scholarship)
- Earns \$20 or less per hour (specific to role)
- Is a high school graduate or has obtained a GED
- Committed to the field of early childhood education

T.E.A.C.H. does not have a time limit for completing credentials or degrees; pays up to 80% of tuition and books; and reimburses for mileage.

Illinois' Gateways Scholarship Program's eligibility requirements are:

(<https://www.ilgateways.com/financialopportunities/scholarship>)

- Care for children in an Illinois Department of Children and Family Services (IDCFS) licensed program or Illinois State Board of Education funded Preschool for All program
- Employed by your current program for at least a one year (90 days if employed at an ExceleRate Bronze, Silver or Gold Circle of Quality program)
- Work an average of 15 hours per week.
- Meet wage requirements
- Be a citizen of the United States or a legal resident
- Commit to future work in early care and education or school-age care