

1 SENATE BILL 233

2 **56TH LEGISLATURE - STATE OF NEW MEXICO - SECOND SESSION, 2024**

3 INTRODUCED BY

4 Harold Pope

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10 AN ACT

11 RELATING TO HIGHER EDUCATION; AMENDING THE GRADUATE SCHOLARSHIP
12 ACT; CHANGING ELIGIBILITY; INCREASING AWARDS; MAKING AN
13 APPROPRIATION.

14
15 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF NEW MEXICO:

16 SECTION 1. Section 21-21G-3 NMSA 1978 (being Laws 1988,
17 Chapter 111, Section 3, as amended) is amended to read:

18 "21-21G-3. DEFINITIONS.--As used in the Graduate
19 Scholarship Act:

20 A. "academic year" means [~~any~~] the consecutive
21 period of two semesters [~~three quarters~~] or other comparable
22 units commencing with the fall term each year;

23 B. "award recipient" means a New Mexico resident
24 student awarded a graduate scholarship;

25 C. "department" means the higher education

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1 department;

2 D. "eligible institution" means ~~[any]~~ a graduate-
3 degree-granting state university in New Mexico accredited by
4 the ~~[north central association of colleges and secondary~~
5 ~~schools]~~ higher learning commission;

6 E. "graduate ~~[and professional]~~ field" means ~~[any]~~
7 a program of study intended to result in a master's or doctoral
8 degree, excluding ~~[the degree in medicine]~~ a doctor of
9 medicine; and

10 F. "groups underrepresented in graduate education"
11 means women, minorities, persons with a visual impairment or
12 other physical disability and other groups ~~[who]~~ that have
13 traditionally been underrepresented in the specific area of
14 graduate study or profession for which the scholarship is
15 awarded."

16 SECTION 2. Section 21-21G-5 NMSA 1978 (being Laws 1988,
17 Chapter 111, Section 5, as amended) is amended to read:

18 "21-21G-5. CONDITIONS FOR FIRST-YEAR ELIGIBILITY.--
19 Priority ~~[will]~~ shall be given to ~~[New Mexico students from~~
20 ~~those groups with the most severe underrepresentation and]~~
21 students who are New Mexico residents with the greatest
22 financial need and students from groups underrepresented in
23 graduate education. A scholarship may be awarded to ~~[an~~
24 ~~individual]~~ a New Mexico resident who:

25 A. ~~[is a citizen of the United States or who has a~~

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1 ~~permanent resident visa]~~ has earned a bachelor's degree and
2 maintained a grade point average of 3.0 or higher on a 4.0
3 scale or who holds a paid position supporting faculty teaching
4 or research activities;

5 B. has met the admission requirements, ~~[and]~~ is
6 accepted for enrollment ~~[as a full-time student in an~~
7 ~~underrepresented]~~ and enrolls in at least six credit hours in a
8 graduate [or professional] field of study [as determined by the
9 institution]; and

10 C. has complied with all the rules ~~[and~~
11 ~~regulations]~~ adopted by the ~~[commission]~~ department for award
12 of the scholarship and the provisions regarding the
13 administration of ~~[state]~~ the graduate ~~[scholarships adopted~~
14 ~~pursuant to the Graduate Scholarship Act; and~~

15 ~~D. agrees to serve in an unpaid internship or~~
16 ~~assistantship at the eligible institution, a government agency~~
17 ~~or private industry approved by his major department for ten~~
18 ~~hours per week during the academic year]~~ scholarship program."

19 SECTION 3. Section 21-21G-6 NMSA 1978 (being Laws 1988,
20 Chapter 111, Section 6, as amended) is amended to read:

21 "21-21G-6. CONDITIONS FOR CONTINUING ELIGIBILITY.--

22 A. Except as provided in Subsection B of this
23 section, a scholarship may be reawarded to a student who:

24 ~~[A.]~~ (1) has been an award recipient of a New
25 Mexico graduate scholarship the previous year;

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1 ~~[B.]~~ (2) maintains a grade point average of
2 3.0 or higher on a 4.0 scale and remains in good academic
3 standing as determined by the institution; and

4 ~~[C.]~~ (3) is enrolled ~~[as a full-time graduate~~
5 ~~student as determined by the institution;~~

6 ~~D. is pursuing the second year of a master's degree~~
7 ~~or the second or third year of a doctoral degree; and~~

8 ~~E. agrees to serve in an unpaid internship or~~
9 ~~assistantship at the eligible institution, a government agency~~
10 ~~or private industry approved by his major department for ten~~
11 ~~hours per week during the academic year]~~ in at least six credit
12 hours in a graduate field of study.

13 B. A graduate scholarship may be granted until the
14 award recipient either receives a terminal degree or has
15 qualified and received eight semesters of scholarship,
16 whichever occurs first."

17 SECTION 4. Section 21-21G-7 NMSA 1978 (being Laws 1988,
18 Chapter 111, Section 7, as amended) is amended to read:

19 "21-21G-7. AMOUNT OF SCHOLARSHIPS.--Scholarship ~~[awards~~
20 ~~shall be for seven thousand two hundred dollars (\$7,200) per~~
21 ~~year to be disbursed in equal installments over the period of~~
22 ~~an academic year]~~ award amounts shall not exceed one hundred
23 percent of tuition and fees for the graduate program at the
24 eligible institution for the academic year; provided that the
25 department shall fund only one semester at a time and shall not

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1 fund the second semester of the academic year if the student
2 does not enroll for that semester or does not maintain
3 eligibility."

4 SECTION 5. Section 21-21G-10 NMSA 1978 (being Laws 1988,
5 Chapter 111, Section 10, as amended) is amended to read:

6 "21-21G-10. TERMINATION OF SCHOLARSHIPS.--A scholarship
7 is terminated upon the occurrence of:

8 A. withdrawal from the eligible institution by the
9 award recipient or failure to reenroll for consecutive academic
10 years or [~~failure to be a full-time graduate student; or~~] the
11 second semester of an academic year;

12 B. failure to maintain the required grade point
13 average and other qualifications for the scholarship; or

14 [~~B.~~] C. substantial noncompliance by the award
15 recipient with the Graduate Scholarship Act or the rules
16 [~~regulations~~] or procedures promulgated by the [~~commission~~]
17 department."

18 SECTION 6. APPROPRIATION.--Five million dollars
19 (\$5,000,000) is appropriated from the general fund to the
20 higher education department for expenditure in fiscal year 2025
21 to fund the Graduate Scholarship Act. Any unexpended or
22 unencumbered balance remaining at the end of fiscal year 2025
23 shall revert to the general fund.

24 SECTION 7. EFFECTIVE DATE.--The effective date of the
25 provisions of this act is July 1, 2024.

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