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SENATE BILL 180

**55TH LEGISLATURE - STATE OF NEW MEXICO - SECOND SESSION, 2022**

INTRODUCED BY  
Harold Pope

AN ACT

RELATING TO HIGHER EDUCATION; AMENDING THE GRADUATE SCHOLARSHIP  
ACT; MAKING AN APPROPRIATION.

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

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

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

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

B. "award recipient" means a student awarded a  
graduate scholarship;

C. "department" means the higher education  
department;

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

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

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

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

16 "21-21G-5. CONDITIONS FOR FIRST-YEAR ELIGIBILITY.--  
17 Priority will be given to New Mexico students [~~from those~~  
18 ~~groups with the most severe underrepresentation and students~~]  
19 with the greatest financial need and students from those groups  
20 underrepresented in graduate education. A scholarship may be  
21 awarded to an individual who:

22 A. [~~is a citizen of the United States or who has a~~  
23 ~~permanent resident visa~~] has earned a bachelor's degree from an  
24 eligible institution and maintained a grade point average of  
25 3.0 or higher on a 4.0 scale;

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

6           C. has complied with all the rules [~~and~~  
7           ~~regulations~~] adopted by the [~~commission~~] department for award  
8           of the scholarship and the provisions regarding the  
9           administration of state graduate scholarships adopted pursuant  
10          to the Graduate Scholarship Act [~~and~~

11          ~~D. agrees to serve in an unpaid internship or~~  
12          ~~assistantship at the eligible institution, a government agency~~  
13          ~~or private industry approved by his major department for ten~~  
14          ~~hours per week during the academic year]."~~

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

17          "21-21G-6. CONDITIONS FOR CONTINUING ELIGIBILITY.--

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

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

22                         [B.] (2) remains in good academic standing as  
23                         determined by the institution and maintains a grade point  
24                         average of 2.5 or higher on a 4.0 scale; and

25                         [C.] (3) is enrolled as a [~~full-time~~] graduate

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1 student as determined by the institution.

2 ~~[D. is pursuing the second year of a master's~~  
3 ~~degree or the second or third year of a doctoral degree; and~~

4 ~~E. agrees to serve in an unpaid internship or~~  
5 ~~assistantship at the eligible institution, a government agency~~  
6 ~~or private industry approved by his major department for ten~~  
7 ~~hours per week during the academic year.]~~

8 B. A graduate scholarship shall not be granted on  
9 behalf of an award recipient who has received a professional or  
10 graduate degree or has received the graduate scholarship four  
11 times."

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

14 "21-21G-7. AMOUNT OF SCHOLARSHIPS.--

15 A. For award recipients who were awarded  
16 scholarships prior to July 1, 2022, scholarship awards shall be  
17 for no less than seven thousand two hundred dollars (\$7,200)  
18 per year to be disbursed in equal installments over the period  
19 of an academic year.

20 B. Scholarship award amounts shall not exceed one  
21 hundred percent of tuition and fees for the graduate or  
22 professional program at the eligible institution."

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

25 "21-21G-10. TERMINATION OF SCHOLARSHIPS.--A scholarship

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1 is terminated upon the occurrence of:

2 A. withdrawal from the institution by the award  
3 recipient or failure to reenroll for consecutive academic years  
4 [~~or failure to be a full-time graduate student~~]; or

5 B. substantial noncompliance by the award recipient  
6 with the Graduate Scholarship Act or the rules [~~regulations~~] or  
7 procedures promulgated by the [~~commission~~] department."

8 SECTION 6. APPROPRIATION.--Five million dollars  
9 (\$5,000,000) is appropriated from the general fund to the  
10 higher education department for expenditure in fiscal year 2023  
11 to fund the Graduate Scholarship Act. Any unexpended or  
12 unencumbered balance remaining at the end of fiscal year 2023  
13 shall revert to the general fund.

14 SECTION 7. EFFECTIVE DATE.--The effective date of the  
15 provisions of this act is July 1, 2022.

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