

## LOUISIANA'S TUITION OPPORTUNITY PROGRAM FOR STUDENTS, "TOPS" TECH EARLY START AWARD

For more information, call the Louisiana Office of Student Financial Assistance  
or visit our Web site at [www.osfa.la.gov](http://www.osfa.la.gov).

STANDARD ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS	TOPS Tech Early Start Award
High School Standing and Grade Level	Be in "Good Standing" <sup>1</sup> as a 11th or 12th grade student in a Louisiana <b>PUBLIC</b> high school
High School Grade Point Average (GPA)	Achieve a cumulative GPA of 2.00 on 4.00 scale (on all courses attempted)
Graduate Exit Exam (GEE)	Achieve at least minimum passing scores in English and mathematics
ACT PLAN Assessment	Score at least a 15 on the English and mathematics subsections of the Assessment
5-Year Education and Career Plan	Must have an approved a career plan <sup>2</sup>
Eligible Institutions and Courses of Instruction	Must pursue vocational or occupational training in a TOP Demand Occupation <sup>3</sup> at a public college or university that offers such training
Award Limits	Enrollment may not exceed 6 credit hours per semester, 12 credit hours each college academic year, <sup>4</sup> for 2 academic years
Maximum Award Amount	\$600 per academic year/\$300 per semester (Rate of \$50 per credit hour, paid to the college)
RENEWAL REQUIREMENTS	TOPS Tech Early Start Award
High School Standing	Remain in "Good Standing" <sup>1</sup> as a 11th or 12th grade student as verified by the high school
High School GPA	Maintain 2.00 on a 4.00 scale (on all courses attempted)
College Standing	Remain in "Good Standing" <sup>5</sup> as determined and verified by the public college attended
College Enrollment	Pursue not more than six credit hours per semester at a public college in a vocational course of study leading to an industry-based certification in a Top Demand Occupation. <sup>3,4</sup>
College Cumulative GPA	Achieve a 2.50 on a 4.00 scale by the end of spring term; maintain steady academic progress at the end of all other terms or semesters (2.00 cumulative GPA)

Footnotes:

- 1 - "Good Standing" is defined by the student's high school.
- 2 - Must have completed a career plan as required by LSA-R.S. 17:183:2.
- 3 - A list of the Top Demand Occupations that qualify for a program award is available from the high school guidance counselor or may be reviewed or downloaded at [www.osfa.la.gov](http://www.osfa.la.gov).
- 4 - Award is not payable for summer semesters or sessions.
- 5 - "Good Standing" is defined by the college attended.

## WHO MAY APPLY FOR A TOPS TECH EARLY START AWARD?

Any 11th or 12th grade student who is attending a Louisiana public high school during academic year 2007-2008, or years thereafter, and who meets the eligibility requirements listed in this brochure, may apply for the award.

## WHERE DO I GET AN APPLICATION?

You may obtain an application form from your high school guidance counselor or by downloading the form from the administering agency's Web site at [www.osfa.la.gov](http://www.osfa.la.gov). Check with LOSFA for the application deadline each semester.

## HOW DO I APPLY?

Follow the instructions printed on the reverse of the application form. After filling out the student section of the three-part form, obtain your parent's or guardian's signature authorizing you to be concurrently enrolled in high school and college, then take the form to your high school counselor. As soon as your high school has verified that you have met the eligibility requirements for the award, the application will be returned to you. Submit the completed application to the public college that offers the qualifying Top Demand Occupation\* you plan to pursue.

## WHO MAY I CONTACT FOR INFORMATION AND ASSISTANCE?

The Louisiana Office of Student Financial Assistance (LOSFA) administers the program on behalf of its governing body, the Louisiana Student Financial Assistance Commission. LOSFA maintains a staff of professional counselors that can provide information about the program, application forms and assistance in applying for an award. You may contact LOSFA using any of the means listed on the reverse panel.

## WHEN SHOULD I APPLY?

To obtain the maximum benefit from the program, you should submit the application upon completion of the 10th grade to qualify for an award in the 11th grade.

## WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS OF AN AWARD?

The award will cover your cost of attendance at most of the public colleges that offer training in qualifying Top Demand Occupations. It will enable you to take up to six credit hours per semester. As long as you have met the requirements for renewal of your award that are listed in this brochure, you could continue in the program for up to four semesters, not including summer semesters or sessions.

## WHAT MUST I DO TO CONTINUE IN THE PROGRAM?

You must complete the application for each semester you wish to participate in the program. After being awarded the first time, just follow the instructions on the reverse of the form and complete the "RENEWAL APPLICATION" for each semester thereafter. Check with LOSFA for the renewal application deadline each semester.

## WHAT IS THE TOPS TECH EARLY START AWARD?

The Louisiana Legislature enacted the TOPS Tech Early Start Award Program for the purpose of promoting a skilled workforce for the state. The award is an incentive for Louisiana's qualified public high school students to start early in preparing for a career in a qualifying Top Demand Occupation\*. Students in the 11th and 12th grades of public high schools, who meet the requirements explained in this brochure, may qualify for a grant that will cover the cost of attending most public colleges that offer vocational/technical training in a qualifying Top Demand Occupation. Recipients of the award will pursue occupational training at a public college while still enrolled in high school, giving them an "early start" toward acquiring an occupation that is in high demand within the state.

The award enables a student recipient to enroll in six credit hours per semester or twelve credit hours per academic year, for up to two academic years. The award does not cover enrollment for summer semesters or sessions. For each credit hour the student takes in a program leading to a credential in a qualifying Top Demand Occupation, the administering agency will pay \$50 to the college, up to \$600 for an academic year (or twelve credit hours).

## WHICH COLLEGES OFFER TRAINING IN A TOP DEMAND OCCUPATION?

A list of the qualifying Top Demand Occupations and the schools that offer courses leading to an industry-based certification in these occupations is available from your high school counselor or it may be reviewed or downloaded from the administering agency's Web site at [www.osfa.la.gov](http://www.osfa.la.gov). First, identify the college campuses near your home that offer training in a qualifying Top Demand Occupation that interests you. A few examples of these programs include: Drafting and Design Technology, Machine Tool Technology, Welding, Medical Office Assistant, Nurse Assistant, Office Systems Technology, Electrician, Automotive Technology and Process Technology. You will be required to complete the college's admission forms, so obtain those forms in advance so that you may present them to the college's admission office at the same time you submit your application for the TOPS Tech Early Start Award. The college's admission counselor will advise you in registering for classes. The college can confirm your Early Start Award when it transmits your application to the administering agency. If your enrollment at the college will be dependent upon receipt of your award, you should so advise the college's admission counselor.

*\* For the purpose of this program, a Top Demand Occupation is defined as a course of study leading to an industry-based certification in an occupation that is in top demand within the state. The list of qualifying Top Demand Occupations is published by LOSFA and can be obtained from high school counselors, public colleges offering eligible courses of study and from LOSFA's Web site or customer service specialists. The list of qualifying Top Demand Occupations is subject to change; however, once an award recipient enrolls in a listed program, the student may continue in the program even if the program is subsequently removed from the list.*

## CONTACT LOSFA



E-mail LOSFA at  
[custserv@osfa.la.gov](mailto:custserv@osfa.la.gov)



Access LOSFA on the Internet at  
[www.osfa.la.gov](http://www.osfa.la.gov)



Write LOSFA at  
P.O. Box 91202  
Baton Rouge, LA 70821-9202



To speak to a representative,  
call LOSFA at (800) 259-5626  
Ext. 1012



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**Disclaimer:** This brochure is current as of the edition date and is provided for informational purposes only. The eligibility requirements and rules governing this TOPS program are subject to legislative and regulatory amendments subsequent to the edition date of this brochure. Applicants are responsible for determining the program requirements at the time of application and should not rely on this brochure as a full disclosure of all qualifications required for a TOPS Tech Early Start Award.



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This brochure incorporates changes in effect as of the edition date and applies to high school juniors and seniors during academic year 2007-2008 and years thereafter.