

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Georgia grant offering free tuition expanded to include additional high-demand industries

HOPE Career Grants available in Jan. 2018 to qualified students in high demand fields: aviation, automotive, construction, electrical line work and logistics

Atlanta, Ga. – Gov. Nathan Deal announced this week that beginning in January 2018, the state will expand the **HOPE Career Grant** to offer students greater career opportunities in five of Georgia’s fast-growing industries, increasing the total number of programs that qualify for this grant to 17. The Governor made the announcement in conjunction with heralding Georgia’s 5th consecutive title as the best state for business by trade publication Site Selection.

“These additional fields are the result of polling of industries, talking to local businesses, and speaking with economic development organizations to better understand the jobs skills needs that are unfulfilled,” said Gov. Deal. “All five new programs, as well as the preceding ones that are currently in our offerings, meet that criteria. By adding these five additional fields, we are incorporating moving trends of the workforce to ensure Georgians are qualified to meet the obligations of the jobs available today and in the future.”

Students who receive the HOPE Grant and who wish to study aviation maintenance, automotive technology, distribution-materials management, electrical line working or several construction-related programs will also qualify for free tuition provided by the HOPE Career Grant.

This grant already offers free tuition to students pursuing certificates or diplomas in 12 other high-demand fields: certified engineer assistant, commercial truck driving, computer programming, computer technology, diesel equipment technology, early childhood care and education, health science, industrial maintenance, movie production/set design, practical nursing, precision manufacturing, and welding and joining technology.

Majors in the construction field that will be covered by the grant, starting with the 2018 spring semester in January, include air conditioning technology, carpentry, construction management, electrical construction and maintenance, masonry and plumbing.

“We couldn’t be more thrilled about this additional opportunity to connect Georgia students with the state’s growing industries,” said Gretchen Corbin, Commissioner of the Technical College System of Georgia. “We so appreciate Governor Deal’s support of technical education’s role in workforce development and his consistent

encouragement to explore ways in which we can expand our services to Georgia students and businesses.”

“The Georgia Student Finance Commission is proud to partner with the Governor’s Office and our eligible colleges around the state to offer these new categories for the HOPE Career Grant as one more way we can strive to offer a postsecondary education to every Georgian,” said Caylee Noggle, Interim President of the Georgia Student Finance Commission.

Industries covered by the HOPE Career Grant were identified by Governor Deal’s High-Demand Career Initiative as strategically important to the state’s economic growth. The grant is among the many forms of financial assistance available through the Georgia Student Finance Commission.

“This is a great example of the unified approach Georgia is taking to ensure we have a strong workforce, which is the greatest need for locating and expanding companies. The strong partnerships among GDEcD, Trade Five, the Governor’s Office, TCSG, GSFC and other public and private entities in the state testify to Georgia’s strengths in economic development,” said Ben Hames, Assistant Commissioner for Workforce at the Georgia Department of Economic Development.

To receive the HOPE Career Grant, students must first qualify for the **HOPE Grant**, which applies to diplomas and certificates only rather than the HOPE Scholarship, which applies to Associate and Bachelor degrees. The HOPE Grant is available for students of any age. A student can attend college part-time and does not have to have a specific high school GPA, but must maintain a cumulative 2.0 GPA after enrolling in college.

The HOPE Career Grant is also available to recipients of the **Zell Miller Grant**, which, in addition to HOPE Grant requirements, stipulates that students must maintain at least a cumulative 3.5 GPA at the end of each college term.

While the HOPE Career Grant opportunities are open for any qualified student pursuing a certificate or diploma at a public college in Georgia, students within the Technical College System of Georgia have been the main beneficiaries. The number of certificates or diplomas in these 12 areas awarded to technical college students in the 2017 academic year was 17,777 up from 16,514 in 2016.

About the Technical College System of Georgia

The 22 colleges of the Technical College System of Georgia (TCSG) are Georgia’s top resource for skilled workers. TCSG offers world-class training in 600 associate degree, diploma and certificate programs to students who are trained on state-of-the-art equipment by instructors who are experts in their fields. The system also houses Georgia’s Office of Adult Education, which promotes and provides adult literacy and education programs, including the GED® testing program, throughout the state. In addition, TCSG partners with companies through Quick Start, the nation’s top customized workforce training program, and through its individual colleges, who work with local industry to provide workforce and training solutions. For more information, visit www.TCSG.edu.

About the Georgia Student Finance Commission

GSFC is the state agency that administers nearly 20 state- and lottery-funded scholarships, grants and service-cancelable loans, including the nationally renowned HOPE programs. Founded in 1965, GSFC strives to ensure Georgians have an opportunity to access education beyond high school. GSFC also provides free financial aid and college planning counseling to K-12 students, parents, counselors, postsecondary institutions and community organizations across the state. To learn more about our programs and services or to find an Outreach Representative in your area, visit gsfc.georgia.gov, gaftures.org, or 1-800-505-GSFC (4732).

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