

Colorado Opportunity Scholarship Initiative

December 15, 2022



Program Overview

What is COSI

Colorado Opportunity Scholarship Initiative (COSI) was created in 2014 with the goal of increasing the attainment of postsecondary credentials and degrees for underserved students in Colorado.

Affordability alone wasn't enough.
We needed to address **accessibility**, too.

Why COSI

Primarily supporting students of color

59 percent of students receiving scholarship support

64 percent of students participating in student support program

COSI scholars persist at a rate 17-27 percentage points higher than their peers.

16,706 postsecondary degrees had been completed by students supported by the programs.

COSI scholars have up to \$4,277 less debt per year than their peers.

Students who received a combination of wraparound support and scholarships persisted at much higher rates of 92% than students who received CPP or MSS support alone.

Our Programs



Back to Work focus on providing scholarship and support services to individuals impacted by the pandemic.



Finish What You Started provides scholarship and support services to individuals impacted by the pandemic and adults with some college, no degree.



Fund My Future provides funds to local education providers to implement strategies to increase the number of students who complete the FAFSA/CASFA before high school graduation.

Matching Student Scholarship Grants increase postsecondary attainment by growing the number of available scholarship dollars for Colorado students. Partnering with higher education foundations and non-profits to match new scholarship dollars 1:1.



Pre-collegiate Student Support Services Model for High Schools provides college-going support to increase postsecondary enrollment



Postsecondary Student Support Services for Public Institutions of Higher Education provides student support services to recipients of COSI matching student scholarships



Second Chance Scholarship provides scholarship and support services to previously incarcerated youth who have been released from the Division of Youth Services (DYS) commitment facility within the last 5 years.



Using Federal Stimulus Funds in Higher Education

Back To Work

Finish What You Started

BACK TO WORK

#BackToWorkCO



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Background

Colorado allocated \$15,000,000.00 of Federal American Rescue Plan dollars to expand the Back to Work Program ([SB21-232](#))

This grant supports Coloradans displaced/impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic, including those laid off or furloughed, experienced decreased earnings, had job offers rescinded, or could not enter the workforce because of adverse economic conditions.

These workers have an incentive to reskill, upskill, or complete industry-recognized credentials to improve economic prospects for themselves and their communities.



Grant Basics

Grant Term

- Three years

Typical Grant Award Package of \$850,000

- \$25k-outreach and recruitment
- \$225k-student support service staff
- \$600k-student financial support

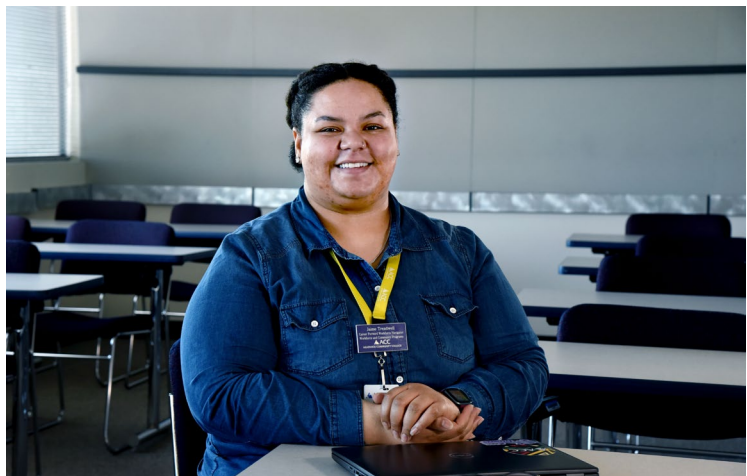
Program Outcomes

- 225 completions for each grantee over the grant term



Program Participant Eligibility

- Displaced/economically impacted due to the COVID-19 pandemic
- Complete credential/degree within the grant term
- New, re-engaged, or continuing students
- 0-250% of Pell-eligibility
- Colorado resident
- Enroll at a public Colorado institution
- Pursue credential/degree align with Colorado Top Jobs



[Back to Work Overview](#)

[Arapahoe Community College](#)

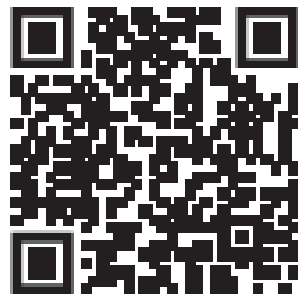
[Colorado Mesa University](#)

[Adams State University](#)



FINISH WHAT YOU STARTED

WHAT
YOU



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#FinishWhatYouStartedCO

Background

Colorado allocated \$49 million of Federal American Rescue Plan dollars to create the Finish What You Started program ([HB21-1330](#))

These funds will support in addressing the significant decline in enrollment in the public institutions of higher education, high rate of job loss, continuing unemployment, and the overall disruption to the workforce caused by the COVID-19 pandemic.

These disruptions have resulted in significant economic harm to individuals and businesses by quickly

These funds will effectively provide support for students to return to the public institutions of higher education to **complete their postsecondary credentials and help to rebuild and revitalize the workforce of Colorado.**

Grant Basics

Grant Term

- Two-five year

Grant Award

- Allocations determined by a formula in statute
- Each CO public institution received an allocation

Target Population

- Some college, no degree
- First-time students admitted in 2019-2020 and 2020-2021 but did not attend

Program Participant Eligibility

- Displaced/economically impacted due to the COVID-19 pandemic
- Complete credential/degree within the grant term
- Pursue first undergraduate degree/certificate (no previously earned degree or certificate of more than 30 credit hours)
- New or re-engaged students
- Colorado resident
- Enroll at a public Colorado institution

How Does COSI Support

Compliance and Monitoring

Technical Assistance

Finish What You Started Statewide Learning Community

Marketing and Communications

Reporting

What have we learned

Federal funds in higher education work!

Student support + financial support = Student Success

State and federal rules need to align

Clear guidance on the use of funds

Staffing challenges impact programs

Need to provide a “runway” to develop and implement programs

Other Initiatives

Fund My Future

Second Chance Scholarship

Student Aid Applications

Fund My Future



Background

- This grant provides funds to local education providers to implement strategies to increase the number of students who complete the FAFSA/CASFA before high school graduation. The local education provider must require students to complete a student aid application (FAFSA/CASFA) before graduation unless the student is eligible to waive the requirement.

Program Goals

- Increase the number of students complementing a student aid application
- Increase the number of students enrolling in postsecondary education after high school

Program Features

- Awards of \$75k per year
- Four-year grant terms
- \$1.5 million in federal funds

Previously Incarcerated
Youth Initiative

Second Chance Scholarship



Background

Individuals that wish to pursue a college degree and have been released from the Division of Youth Services (DYS) commitment facility within the last 5 years may be eligible for up to \$5,000 each year toward the cost of education. Eligible youth may choose among many college and career path options, including a traditional college degree to online & certificate programs.

Program Goals

- Invest in the educational success of youth involved with DYS/DHS by awarding \$100K in scholarships over 4 years for approved Colorado institutions.
- Ensure all participants are involved in CPP Postsecondary Support Programs with a focus on postsecondary credentials leading to gainful employment for youth previously committed to the DYS/CDHS.
- Overall program goal of reduction in recidivism for participating youth.

Program Features

- Participants receive up to \$5,000 per year (current goal of roughly 5 participants total)
- Participants receive CPP Postsecondary wraparound support services at participating institutions

Thank You!

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