

## DISTINGUISHED SCHOLAR PROGRAM

### Conditions of Award Renewal Academic Year 2011-2012

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#### Eligibility Requirements:

- o You and your parents must be Maryland residents for the duration of the award.
- o You must attend an accredited institution in Maryland. This award cannot be used at the U.S. Naval Academy or at any institution located outside of the State of Maryland.
- o You must enroll each semester as a full-time (12+ credits per semester) undergraduate student.
- o Audited courses cannot be used to reach the minimum credit hours required for full-time status.
- o The total dollar amount of all State scholarship awards may not exceed your cost of attendance, as determined by your school's financial aid office, or \$19,000, whichever is less.

As a condition of receiving a Maryland State scholarship or grant, you pledge to remain drug free for the full term of the award. Unlawful use of drugs and alcohol may endanger your enrollment in a Maryland college, as well as your Maryland financial aid award. **NOTE: If you fail to meet any of these eligibility requirements, your award will be cancelled.**

#### To Renew Your Award:

- o You and your parents must maintain residency in Maryland for the duration of the award.
- o You must remain enrolled full-time at an eligible institution in Maryland.
- o The award is renewable for three (3) years. Total award time is eight (8) semesters or four (4) years or when the first undergraduate degree is awarded.
- o You must maintain a minimum annual 3.0 grade point average (GPA) for each academic year. The GPA is not a cumulative average, but is for the academic year (fall and spring semesters). Your GPA cannot be rounded upward (e.g.: a 2.96 is not rounded to a 3.00). Your college financial aid office will report your GPA directly to the Office of Student Financial Assistance (OSFA) annually, in July.
- o The minimum 3.0 GPA requirement is for the academic year (two semesters) and applies to all students, including first year students at The Johns Hopkins University. Letter grades for the fall and spring semesters are included in the annual GPA calculation.

**NOTE: Awards are subject to the availability of funds.**

**Overawards:** Please be aware that if the institution you are attending notifies OSFA that you are receiving other financial assistance that causes you to exceed your financial need for the award or exceed the cost of attendance at the institution (e.g.: private scholarships; Veteran's Benefits; athletic scholarships), your State financial aid may be reduced or cancelled.

#### If You Do Not Maintain At Least An Annual 3.0 GPA:

- o You will be sent a notice in late July or August cancelling your Distinguished Scholar Award for the upcoming academic year. (If, for some reason, you do not receive the cancellation letter, the 3.0 GPA renewal condition is still employed.)
- o You may request, in writing, that your summer term grades (fall, spring, summer if needed), from either your home institution or another institution, be considered in the annual GPA. If the adjusted GPA is at least 3.0, your award may be reinstated.

(Over, please)

- o You may appeal to the Secretary of Higher Education if you feel that you can document extraordinary circumstances beyond your control (e.g. lengthy illness, accident or death in the family) that contributed significantly to your failure to meet the GPA requirement. Appeal forms will be provided at the time your award is cancelled.
- o If your appeal is granted your name will go on a waiting list for funds. It is possible that funds may not be available to reinstate your award.

### **Payment to Your Institution:**

At the beginning of each semester, your institution will be asked to certify that you meet the requirements of the award. When the institution completes the certification and requests funds from the Office of Student Financial Assistance (OSFA), your award will be processed for payment. **Payment to the institution will be made four to six weeks after the institution completes the certification.** Contact your institution's financial aid office if you have questions about the payment status of your award.

### **For More Information:**

If you have questions, please contact:

Dawn Costigan      (410) 260-4574 or (800) 974-1024 x4574      [dcostiga@mhec.state.md.us](mailto:dcostiga@mhec.state.md.us)