

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**April 14, 2025**

Connecticut Student Loan Reimbursement Program Surpasses \$1 Million in Awards, 350+ Residents Approved

Hartford, CT — The Connecticut Office of Higher Education (OHE) today announced a major milestone for the [Student Loan Reimbursement Program \(SLRP\)](#) with over \$1 million and more than 350 Connecticut residents having already been approved since the program's launch on January 1, 2025.

“We’re especially proud of the staff at OHE who moved mountains to stand this program up in record time,” said **Timothy Larson, Commissioner of the Office of Higher Education**. “We’ve already helped hundreds of residents pay down their student debt and strengthened our communities through a volunteer requirement that is deeply rooted in service.”

Funded by the Connecticut General Assembly with a \$6 million investment, SLRP provides financial relief to residents who have made qualifying student loan payments and contributed at least 50 hours of volunteer service to a nonprofit, municipal government, or through military service. Eligible applicants can receive up to \$5,000 per year, with a maximum of \$20,000 over four years, reimbursing them for actual payments made during 2024.

According to OHE staff member **Michael Criscuolo**, who oversees the program, applicants must be Connecticut residents for at least five years, have made payments on federal, state, or CHESLA student loans during 2024, and hold a qualifying associate or bachelor’s degree from a Connecticut institution, or a valid occupational/professional license or certificate. A Connecticut adjusted gross income of less than \$125,000 (single) or \$175,000 (married) is also required.

“The momentum we’ve seen speaks volumes,” said **Criscuolo**, Financial Aid Director at OHE. “More than \$1 million has been awarded already — a testament to both the need and the trust Connecticut residents have placed in this program. I want to

commend our team at OHE, who have worked tirelessly to make this process seamless, secure, and efficient for every applicant.”

Criscuolo added that the application portal, hosted on the CT Scholars platform, guides applicants through creating an account, submitting required documentation, and uploading notarized volunteer verification forms. Awards are granted on a first-come, first-served basis.

Unlike loan forgiveness programs, **SLRP is a reimbursement initiative** — applicants must have made payments in 2024 to receive the benefit. Even a single qualifying payment is sufficient to apply, and awards reflect the total dollar amount paid, up to \$5,000.

“Behind every application is a story — of perseverance, of service, and of financial responsibility,” stated **State Representative Corey Paris (D-Stamford)**, who along with fellow lawmakers State Representatives Eleni Kavros-DeGraw and Tammy Nuccio, is a strong supporter of the program. “We are not just reimbursing payments — we’re recognizing the effort Connecticut residents have already made to better themselves and their communities.”

“This program not only addresses the financial burden carried by many graduates but also reinforces the value of service to community,” said **Rep. Kavros-DeGraw (D-Avon)**. “I am proud to be one of the creators of a forward-thinking initiative that supports our workforce, strengthens our communities, and encourages educated professionals to stay and thrive in Connecticut.”

“Keeping our next generation of talent here in Connecticut is of the utmost importance. SLRP was the result of bipartisan work to meet that need,” **said Rep. Nuccio (R-Tolland)**. “The program strikes the right balance between financial relief and giving back to the community. We need students to stay in Connecticut, launch their careers here and even start a business, and I’m proud to support a program that helps them do just that.”

All reimbursements are taxable, and recipients will receive a 1099-MISC form for the applicable tax year.

SLRP is currently scheduled to continue through June 30, 2025, or until funds are exhausted. Residents interested in applying can visit the [CT Scholars Portal](#) or email OHE.SLRP@ct.gov for more information.

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