Texas Armed Services Scholarship Program

What is the Texas Armed Services Scholarship Program?

The 81st Texas Legislature created the Texas Armed Services Scholarship Program to encourage students to become members of the Texas Army National Guard, members of the Texas Air Force National Guard, and commissioned officers in any branch of the armed services of the United States. Up to 185 students who are enrolled in a Reserve Officers’ Training Corps (ROTC) program and enrolled in a Texas public or private institution of higher education may be selected by a Texas legislator to participate each year.

Who is eligible to receive the scholarship?

Beginning in fall 2010, the governor and the lieutenant governor may each appoint two students, and each state senator and each state representative may appoint one student to receive an initial conditional Texas Armed Services Scholarship annually. Each legislator must select a student that meets two of the following four academic criteria at the time of application:

- Is on track to graduate high school with the Distinguished Achievement Program (DAP) or the International Baccalaureate Program (IB);
- Has a current high school GPA of 3.0 or higher on a 4.0 scale;
- Achieved a college readiness score on the SAT (1590) or ACT (23);
- Is currently ranked in the top one-third of the prospective high school graduating class.

To receive an initial conditional scholarship award through the Texas Armed Services Scholarship Program, a selected student must:

- Be enrolled as a freshman;
- Enroll in and be a member in good standing of a Reserve Officers’ Training Corps (ROTC) program while enrolled in the institution;
- Meet the physical examination requirements and all other prescreening requirements of the Texas Army or Air Force National Guard or the branch of the armed services with which the student enters into a contract;
- Enter into a written agreement with the Board agreeing to:
  - Complete four years of ROTC training;
  - Graduate no later than five years after the date the student first enrolls in a Texas public or private institution of higher education after having received a high school diploma or a General Educational Diploma or its equivalent;
  - Graduate later than six months after graduation, enter into and provide the Board with verification of:
i A four-year commitment to be a member of the Texas Army or Air Force National Guard; or
ii A contract to serve as a commissioned officer in any branch of the armed services of the United States;
  o Repay the scholarship according to the terms of the promissory note if the student fails to meet the requirements for obtaining the scholarship.

How much will each selected student receive through the Armed Services Scholarship?

Dependent on funding available, students may receive up to $15,000 per year. Any amount paid to a student by the branch of the armed services of the United States during an academic year for which the student receives an Armed Services Scholarship will be deducted from the total scholarship award distributed. A student could receive less money each year, depending upon the number of recipients. If every elected official nominates an eligible student (or students) no student would receive the max award of up to $15,000 per year. The max amount would approximately total $10,800. The Legislature appropriated $2 million for the 2010-2011 biennium. A student may receive a scholarship for four of the five years allowed for graduation.

What is required of each recipient to receive a scholarship?

Recipients must sign agreements promising to remain enrolled in ROTC for four years and to graduate within five years. Recipients also must agree to enter into a four-year commitment to be a member of the Texas Army or Air Force National Guard or enter into a contract to become a commissioned officer in any branch of the Armed Services of the United States. In addition, recipients must sign a promissory note agreeing to repay any scholarship funds received if the satisfactory academic requirements or any other program requirement is not met. Thus, the scholarship is essentially a loan which has forgiveness provisions. If the loan is not forgiven, the Board must service and collect the loan.

What is the deadline for legislators to submit to the Coordinating Board their student selection?

Legislators must notify the Coordinating Board of their selected recipient(s) of the Armed Services Scholarship to the Coordinating Board by February 8, 2010, for the 2010 academic year.

For more information contact:
Loan Program Operations – Loan Originations
Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board
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Texas higher education Reserve Officer Training Corps (ROTC) programs