

Kate Marshall
State Treasurer



Steve George
Chief of Staff

Mark Mathers
Chief Deputy Treasurer

STATE OF NEVADA
OFFICE OF THE STATE TREASURER

RE: Nevada College Kick Start Program

Dear Community Partner:

In the fall of 2013, the ***Nevada College Kick Start Program*** will begin its journey to support the dream of a college education for Nevada children and their parents by establishing 529 college savings accounts for all new fall 2013 kindergarten students attending public schools in 13 of Nevada's rural communities. These schools districts include Churchill, Elko, Esmeralda, Eureka, Humboldt, Lander, Lincoln, Lyon, Mineral, Nye, Pershing, Storey, and White Pine counties. Selected Title I schools in Washoe County will also be part of the pilot program, thanks to a grant through Charles Schwab Bank. In all, the Nevada College Kick Start Savings Pilot Program will include some 3,000 kindergarten students. I would note that this is a pilot program. Our sincere goal is to expand the program statewide, as additional funding is secured.

The ***Nevada College Kick Start Program*** (CollegeKickStart.nv.gov) will use a portion of the fees we receive from our private sector College Savings Plans of Nevada program manager, Upromise Investments Inc.—not taxpayer dollars—to open an SSgA Upromise 529 Plan account with an initial deposit of \$50 for each kindergarten student located within the pilot program area. These college savings accounts will be held under a master account managed by Upromise Investments Inc. in the State of Nevada's name. Withdrawals can only be made for Internal Revenue Code qualified higher education related expenses when the child is entering college, in most cases, 13 years later.

Participants with an annual household income of less than \$75,000 may also be eligible for the ***Silver State Matching Grant Program*** (<https://uii.s.upromise.com/content/match.html>), which helps Nevada families accelerate their college savings by providing a 1:1 match on contributions of up to \$300 in additional matching grant funds each year to qualified participants, up to a lifetime maximum of \$1,500.

Research conducted by the Center for Social Development at Washington University in St. Louis outlined in, "The Role of Savings and Wealth in Reducing 'Wilt' Between Expectations and College Attendance," found *that children with a college savings account are up to seven times more likely to attend college than those without an account.* Similarly, a study conducted by the University of Kansas' School of Social Welfare found that college savings send a strong message to children: "*You are a college saver. You are college-bound.*" The study also concluded that "*Even small accounts, in many cases inadequate to even buy books for a semester, increase perseverance and improve academic preparation.*" It is important to note that such conclusions applied regardless of family income, ethnicity, or the educational attainment of the child's parents.

CARSON CITY OFFICE
State Treasurer
101 N. Carson Street, Suite 4
Carson City, Nevada 89701-4786
(775) 684-5600 Telephone
(775) 684-5623 Fax

STATE TREASURER PROGRAMS
Millennium Scholarship Program
Nevada Prepaid Tuition Program
Unclaimed Property
SSgA Upromise 529 Plan

LAS VEGAS OFFICE
555 E. Washington Avenue, Suite 4600
Las Vegas, Nevada 89101-1074
(702) 486-2025 Telephone
(702) 486-3246 Fax

With this information serving as a catalyst to action, as administrator of the College Savings Plans of Nevada Program and as Chairman of the Board of Trustees of the College Savings Plans of Nevada, we are moving forward with this pilot program knowing it can make a difference in the lives of many Nevada students by helping them realize that college does not have to be a dream, it can be a reality with proper planning and commitment.

Following the establishment of these *Nevada College Kick Start* college savings accounts, parents and other family members will be encouraged through a strong education and outreach component to open separate SSgA Upromise 529 Plan college savings accounts. Parents will learn how even small monthly deposits may grow over time, thus helping them meet the increasing cost of higher education.

In other similar programs which began in the City of San Francisco and the state of Oklahoma, a matching grant program was established through private donations from philanthropic and corporate foundations, community organizations, local businesses, and individuals.

This is where you come in. I'd like to enlist your expertise to serve as an ambassador for this program and/or to provide your financial support to the *Nevada College Kick Start Program*. Private donations will be used to fund a Community Support Grant Program in your selected area. Community Support Grant funding can be applied two ways: (1) to increase the \$50 individual accounts established through the *Nevada College Kick Start Program* for kindergarten classes in your selected area, or (2) you may choose to sponsor an individual school(s) by providing sufficient funding to create *Nevada College Kick Start Program* for all enrolled 2013-14 kindergarten students at that school(s). In either case, your donation will be kept within the Master Account managed by my office through Upromise Investment Inc., thus ensuring those funds will not be used for any other purpose other than to meet qualified high education expenses.

Your Community Support Grant dollars will greatly assist our efforts to improve the rate of Nevada high school graduates attending and graduating with a degree from an institution of higher learning. Again, research shows that the mere presence of a college savings account increases the likelihood of a child attending college sevenfold. That is most assuredly an admirable goal for us to attain!

I thank you in advance for your support. Should you have any questions, please feel free to contact me directly at (775) 684-7109, or contact my Chief of Staff, Steve George, at sggeorge@nevadatreasurer.gov or at (775) 684-5666.

With Warm Regards,



Kate Marshall
State Treasurer