



Ministerial Statement To The Senate

Senator the Hon. Owen Darrell, JP

2024 Scholarships and Awards Update

Thursday, March 21st, 2024

Madam President,

I stand before you to share an inspiring journey—a narrative of empowerment and growth fueled by the Ministry of Education’s dedication to fostering a brighter future for Bermuda through the Scholarships and Awards program. Today I am announcing the Government’s commitment, which has not only been met with overwhelming enthusiasm from our community but has also led to a remarkable increase in funding. Since 2017, the budget for the Ministry of Education’s scholarships and awards has been increased to a total exceeding \$2 million. This milestone is not just a number; it's a testament to our collective vision of nurturing a diverse and inclusive Bermuda, where every dream has the support it needs to flourish.

Madam President,

Expanding the Scholarships and Awards offerings is more than a policy—it’s a beacon of hope and opportunity for Bermudians across all walks of life. Whether young or seasoned, regardless of background or career aspirations, the Ministry is here to say that your ambitions are valid, and your potential is limitless. By investing over \$2 million into our citizens' futures, they are not just funding education; they are investing in the social and economic pillars of Bermuda. They are fostering an environment where promise, growth, and achievement are recognized and celebrated in all forms; building a Bermuda where every individual has the opportunity to reach their highest potential.

Madam President,

As the Ministry of Education continues to evolve and refine their commitment to education, this year, they are proud to introduce new and improved awards that underscore their dedication to accessible, inclusive education.

- First, they celebrate their enduring partnership with the **University of West Indies (UWI)** by earmarking funds specifically for Bermudian students. They are offering three annual awards, each valued at **\$7,500**, for those committed to pursuing their academic journeys at UWI. This initiative reinforces our long-standing relationship with UWI and opens doors for students eager to explore educational opportunities beyond our shores.

- **Males in Education** - Recognizing the pivotal role of male educators in shaping the future in education, they are introducing four new awards to encourage men to enter the education sector. This initiative provides financial support for males aspiring to switch careers and earn a teaching license through a qualified practicum, addressing a crucial gap in the educational workforce.
- **The College Promise Program**, launched in 2021, has been a beacon of opportunity for graduating seniors from CedarBridge Academy and The Berkeley Institute, allowing them to attend Bermuda College tuition-free. This year, they are taking it a step further by including a stipend to cover class incidentals like books, ensuring that financial barriers do not hinder students' educational pursuits.
- Lastly, the Ministry of Education is allocating **\$50,000** to support **Educational Trips** for public schools, enabling them to apply for up to **\$5,000** annually. This funding aims to provide a solid foundation for schools planning enriching educational experiences for their students, alleviating the financial burden often shouldered by parents and the community.

Madam President,

Together, these enhancements to the Scholarship and Awards program are more than just financial investments; they declare the Government's belief in Bermudians' boundless potential. By broadening access and removing barriers, we are paving the way for a future where everyone can excel and contribute to our vibrant society's tapestry.

Madam President,

These new or updated awards complement the already extensive awards list, which include:

- Two (2) Bermuda Government Scholarships worth up to \$35,000 per year for four years.
- Two (2) Non-Traditional Student Awards; up to \$20,000 per year for four years
- Up to Three (3) Teacher Education Scholarships; up to \$20,000 per year for four years
- Fifty (50) Further Education Awards worth up to \$10,000 each
- Two (2) Minister's Achievement Scholarships: up to \$25,000 per year for four years.
- Five (5) Applied Science Scholarships: \$5,000 for one year.
- Two (2) Exceptional Student Awards: up to \$25,000 per year for four years overseas and \$5,000 per year for two years for Bermuda College
- Two (2) Technical & Vocational Awards; up to \$25,000 per year for four years overseas and \$5,000 per year for two years for Bermuda College and,
- Ten (10) Bermuda College Book Awards worth \$500 each
- Continued supply of a **\$300,000** grant to Bermuda College for Financial Aid

Madam President,

The deadline for submitting applications for scholarships and awards is April 8th, 2024. I encourage eligible applicants to take this time to consider and apply for our scholarships and awards. I hope those pursuing post-secondary education know that more and more scholarship opportunities exist for a greater range of people. Therefore, parents, students, and other interested persons are encouraged to review the scholarship opportunities and the many different scholarships and awards available at www.bermudascholarships.com. More information can be found on the www.moed.bm website. Information on how to apply for Financial Aid from Bermuda College can be found on their website at www.college.bm.

Madam President,

As we celebrate another expansion of our Scholarship and Awards offerings to help support more Bermudians, the Ministry of Education is acutely aware that the need exceeds the supply. However, the Ministry stands committed to continuing to review their approach to scholarships and awards with an eye to improving what they do and developing more opportunities to bring post-secondary education within reach of all Bermudians. Their aim is clear: to broaden the horizon of possibilities, making post-secondary education increasingly accessible to all Bermudians. The Ministry is dedicated to meeting the current demand and anticipating and fostering future generations' growth. They are crafting a legacy of education and empowerment, ensuring that the promise of tomorrow is accessible to every Bermudian today.

Thank you, **Madam President.**