



UNIVERSITY OF NEBRASKA

OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT

November 22, 2024

The Honorable Jim Pillen
Governor of Nebraska
Lincoln, NE 68509-4848

Mr. Brandon Metzler
Clerk of the Legislature
Lincoln, NE 68509-4604

Dear Governor Pillen and members of the Nebraska Legislature:

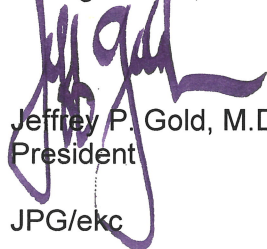
On behalf of the University of Nebraska System, thank you for your continued support of the Nebraska Career Scholarship program. This vital investment strengthens our ability to prepare students for careers in high-skill, high-wage, and high-demand fields, addressing Nebraska's most urgent workforce needs. We are grateful for your partnership in this impactful initiative.

The enclosed report highlights the exceptional progress of our scholarship recipients, many of whom are now in their second or third year of study. Their retention rate is an impressive 95%, nearly 10 percentage points higher than our already strong general student retention rate. Healthcare and engineering continue to lead as the top fields for scholarship recipients, demonstrating our collective dedication to tackling critical workforce shortages across the state.

Enclosed, you will find our responses to the annual reporting requirements outlined in Neb. Rev. Stat. §85-3004. Should you have any questions or wish to discuss these outcomes further, please do not hesitate to reach out.

Once again, thank you for your vision and support of this vital scholarship program. Your partnership is essential to our efforts to attract and retain high-achieving students who will lead Nebraska's workforce into the future.

With gratitude,



Jeffrey P. Gold, M.D.
President
JPG/ekc

Enclosure



Nebraska Career Scholarship Annual Report

Overview of LB 1329 Reporting Requirements

LB1329, passed by the Nebraska Legislature, requires the University of Nebraska to collect and report data on the Nebraska Career Scholarship program annually. The specific requirements outlined in the bill include:

- Total number of students enrolled in each eligible program of study in the prior academic year and total number of scholarship recipients in each eligible program in the current academic year, based on official fall census data.
- Total number of scholarship recipients in each eligible program of study for the current academic year, based on official fall census data.
- Total number of newly awarded scholarship recipients in each eligible program of study for the current academic year.
- Retention rates of newly awarded scholarship recipients, compared to the university's overall retention rates.
- Number of scholarship recipients who graduated in the prior academic year, with a comparison to the university's overall graduation rate.
- The number and percent of scholarship recipients who graduated in the prior calendar year and obtained employment in a major-related field in Nebraska.

Note: The reporting requirements have been significantly revised since last year; therefore, the figures reported in this year's report are not comparable to the figures from last year's report.

(a) Enrollment in Eligible Programs of Study

Enrollment in eligible programs at the University of Nebraska grew by **2.5%** from Fall 2023 to Fall 2024, outpacing the university-wide undergraduate growth rate of **0.8%**. This growth highlights the increasing demand and relevance of these programs.

Academic Program	Fall 2023	Fall 2024
Computer Information Systems	1,932	1,951
Engineering	3,371	3,617
Health Care	9,053	9,186
Math	503	542
Special Education	445	392
Total	15,304	15,688

(b) Scholarship Recipients by Eligible Program

Newly awarded recipients include **first-time, full-time freshmen and transfer students** identified as scholarship holders for the current fall semester. The total count reflects all recipients awarded scholarships by this date.

In Fall 2024, **1,054 students** received the Nebraska Career Scholarship. Among these, **124 were new recipients**, representing a targeted investment in students pursuing high-demand fields. These numbers exclude individuals added after the census date, ensuring consistent year-over-year comparisons.

Academic Program	New Recipients	Total Recipients
Computer Information Systems	11	199
Engineering	32	319
Health Care	73	481
Math	5	52
Special Education	3	3
Total	124	1,054

(c) Retention of Scholarship Recipients

Of the **702 students** who received the scholarship for the first time in the Fall 2023 semester, **665** either returned to NU in the Fall 2024 semester or graduated from an NU campus, resulting in a **95% retention rate**.

Among these students, **310** were full-time, first-time freshmen, with a **fall-to-fall retention rate of 95%**, compared to **83%** for all full-time, first-time freshmen at NU in the same period.

(d) Scholarship Recipient Graduation Rates

During the prior academic year, **40 students** who received the Nebraska Career Scholarship graduated from an NU campus. Since the program's inception, a total of **64 Career Scholarship recipients** have graduated.

Since the initial cohort began in Fall 2021, no cohort of first-time Career recipients has been enrolled at the university for at least four years. A comparison of the four-year graduation rates of Career Scholars to the university-wide rate will be available in next year's report.

(e) Graduate Employment Tracking

In the prior calendar year, **19 students** who received the Nebraska Career Scholarship graduated from an NU campus. Of these, **12 students** worked in Nebraska during at least one quarter after graduation. **10 of these students** were employed in Nebraska during Quarter 1 of 2024—the most recent period for which data is available. **One additional graduate** is continuing their education in a graduate or professional program at NU.

Overall, **68%** of scholarship recipients who graduated in the prior year were employed in Nebraska or enrolled in graduate/professional programs at NU.

NOTE: Because of the small number of graduating students, this percentage may not be reflective of the typical percentage of Career Scholars that work in Nebraska after graduation. Next year's report will include a higher number of graduates, which will provide a better indication of post-employment outcomes.

Conclusion

The Nebraska Career Scholarship program continues to demonstrate its value in increasing enrollment, retention, and employment outcomes for students pursuing high-demand fields. The University of Nebraska remains committed to providing transparent and accurate reporting to stakeholders while leveraging this program to meet the evolving needs of Nebraska's workforce.

As the program progresses, additional reporting will include:

- **Four-year graduation rates:** Comprehensive analysis for the Fall 2020 cohort.
- **Post-graduation employment trends:** Expanded data on career outcomes for scholarship recipients, verified through Nebraska Department of Labor records.
- **Programmatic adjustments:** Evaluations of program impact on enrollment, retention, and graduation outcomes.