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**For immediate release**

## Arkansas Department of Higher Education Opens ArFuture

LITTLE ROCK, AR - The Arkansas Department of Higher Education has announced the launch of the Arkansas Future (ArFuture) scholarship program application.

ArFuture was created through legislation in the 2017 general session. This program was created to promote higher education, increase the skills and education of Arkansas' workforce, and attract students to high-demand, high-wage occupations. This scholarship will cover tuition and fees for eligible students in qualifying Associate's and Certificate programs at public higher education institutions.

"I am pleased to hear that the ArFuture grant application process is now officially open," said Governor Asa Hutchinson. "The ArFuture grant will increase our degree and certificate attainment rates by removing the financial hurdles that keep many from enrolling. Increasing access to education and creating a more skilled workforce is the best way to strengthen economic development and increase opportunities for all Arkansans."

The scholarship is open to every person who has graduated from an Arkansas high school, Arkansas homeschool, GED program, or anyone who has a high school diploma and has lived in Arkansas for the last three years. Students must enroll in a high-demand or STEM program and cannot have earned a bachelor's degree. Students must also complete the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) and apply through ADHE's online YOUiversal scholarship portal.

The mission of the Arkansas Department of Higher Education is to advocate for higher education; to promote a coordinated system of higher education in the state; and to assist each of the publicly and locally supported institutions of higher education in the state in improving the delivery of higher education services to the citizens of Arkansas.

“The great thing about ArFuture,” said Dr. Maria Markham, ADHE Director, “is that it is available to both part-time and full-time students. Also, students directly out of high school and Arkansans who have been out of school for years can qualify.”

The scholarship program has mentoring and community service requirements. Research shows a greater chance of success if students are engaged in their professional fields and communities.

ArFuture will be awarded on a first come, first serve basis and the application period has been extended until July 1. Deadlines for other programs, such as the Arkansas Challenge Scholarship, have been extended until June 15.

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