

# R.A.I.S.E Scholarships

Providing no-cost pathways for adults pursuing industry-valued credentials is a proven strategy for connecting more people to jobs in high-demand, high-growth fields that pay a [family-sustaining wage](#).

**R.A.I.S.E. Scholarships** (Reinforcement And Investment to Strengthen the Economy) target needed financial aid to these individuals, building upon the model put in place through North Carolina's highly effective, GEER-funded Workforce Resiliency Grant program, which has also been generously supported by the NC General Assembly. The next step is for North Carolina to invest in enhancing these efforts and providing them long-term support.

## POLICY PROPOSAL

### **R.A.I.S.E. Scholarships (Reinforcement And Investment to Strengthen the Economy):**

- Available to anyone pursuing an eligible, industry-valued postsecondary credential, with funds directed to accredited North Carolina institutions of higher education to administer on behalf of enrolled students.
  - » Industry-valued credentials are those leading to a short-term, non-degree credential identified by the [NC Workforce Credentials Council](#) as either an “essential” or “career” credential.
  - » These are credentials which tend to lead to employment in high-demand, high-growth fields that pay a family-sustaining wage.
- Provide up to \$750 or the cost of the program, whichever is *more*.
  - » As evidenced by institutions' experience with existing programs, this amount is commensurate with actual costs.
  - » Funds to be designated as “last dollar,” meaning they are available after all other sources of financial aid have been applied.
  - » Data to be collected on students served, student demographics, and scholarship amounts paid. Where available, the number and type of credentials earned will also be recorded. Data to be analyzed for trends in enrollment, job growth, and scholarship effectiveness.
- Supported through recurring funding equivalent to estimated enrollment in eligible programs over each of the past two years, plus anticipated enrollment increases. Additionally, funds to be set aside for scholarship administration, staffing for the NC Workforce Credentials Council, and marketing to attract students to industry-valued credential programs and to elevate awareness of the opportunities throughout the state.