

Robert C. Byrd Honors Scholarship Program (CFDA No. 84.185A)

I. Legislation

Higher Education Act (HEA) of 1965, Title IV, Part A, Subpart 6, as amended (20 U.S.C. 1070d-31-1070d-41) (expires September 30, 1997).

II. Funding History

<u>Fiscal Year</u>	<u>Appropriation</u>
1987	\$8,000,000
1988	7,659,000
1989	8,200,000
1990	8,627,000
1991	9,271,000
1992	9,642,000
1993	9,470,000
1994	19,294,000
1995	29,117,000
1996	29,117,000

III. Analysis of Program Performance

A. Goals and Objectives

This program is designed to promote academic excellence and achievement among students and to encourage high school graduates to pursue postsecondary education and acquire a college degree by recognizing exceptionally able students who show promise of continued excellence.

B. Strategies to Achieve the Goals

Services Supported

Byrd scholarships were awarded for the first time in the spring of 1987 for study in the 1987-88 academic year. Scholarship recipients received \$1,500 for the first year of study at an institution of higher education. Byrd scholars selected for the 1993-94 academic year were the first cohort of scholars that were eligible to receive a \$1,500 scholarship annually for up to the first four years of study. In FY 1996, in order to accommodate additional cohorts, the amount of the Byrd scholarship was reduced to \$1,121.

<u>Fiscal Year</u>	<u>Number of Scholarships</u>
1987	4,749
1988	5,017
1989	4,905
1990	5,185
1991	5,561
1992	5,798
1993	6,283
1994	6,580
1995	6,548
1996	6,548

The Byrd Scholarship Program is administered by state education agencies, which establish specific scholar-selection criteria in consultation with school boards, teachers, counselors, and parents. All 50 states, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, the Virgin Islands, American Samoa, the Northern Mariana Islands, Guam, Micronesia, the Marshall Islands, and Palau are eligible to participate in the program. The scholarships are allocated to each state in proportion to its school-age population (5 to 17-year-olds), except that each state shall have at least 10 scholarships. The scholars must be selected in a manner that ensures an equitable geographic distribution of scholarships within the state.

To be eligible for a scholarship, the applicant must have a high school diploma or equivalent, and must have applied to or been accepted for enrollment at an institution of higher education. The scholarships are awarded on the basis of academic achievement and are renewable for up to four years of study at an institution of higher education of the scholar's choice.

Strategic Initiatives

The Department provides technical assistance and reviews all state reports for the accuracy of the performance data. Department staff edit the reports and return them to the states for revision, as necessary. Department staff review edits annually to refine them and to improve data quality. The Department provides case-by-case assistance to the states regarding various administrative aspects of the program, and distributes appropriate guidance to all participating entities.

The annual performance report form used in the past for the Byrd Scholarship Program did not ask the states for any information about the educational outcomes of students who receive the scholarships. The information currently available about students includes the number of recipients by type of institution, and the total amount paid to recipients at each type of institution. In the 1992-93 program year, the number of recipients was as follows:

<u>Type of Institution</u>	<u>Number of Recipients</u>
In-state, public	1,957
In-state, private nonprofit	969
Out-of-state, public	514
Out-of-state, private nonprofit	1,857

The program office has designed a new form that will ask the States for some student outcome data, including the number of scholarship recipients whose academic performance merits renewal of the scholarship each year, and the number of scholarship recipients who graduate from college each year.

C. Program Performance—Indicators of Impact and Effectiveness

Program indicators are under development. See also Office-Wide Performance Indicators for the Office of Postsecondary Education displayed in the Overview (OPS) to the postsecondary education programs.

IV. Planned Studies

None.

V. Sources of Information

1. Program files.

VI. Contacts for Further Information

Program Operations: Darlene B. Collins, (202) 260-3394

Program Studies: Andrew Lauand, (202) 401-3518