

**South Carolina**  
Commission on Higher Education  
*Access | Affordability | Excellence*

**CACRAO**

**SC College Access Programs, State  
Scholarships & Grant Programs  
2023**

# **SOUTH CAROLINA COLLEGE ACCESS PROGRAMS**



# College Access Programs

Step 1:

➔ College Application Month

Step 2:

➔ College Goal SC

Step 3:

➔ Decision Day

[www.sccango.org](http://www.sccango.org)

➔ Tool kits, handouts, resources, videos



SOUTH CAROLINA  
can go to college

# Step 1: College Application Month

- College Application Campaign for South Carolina
- Events run from September through November
- College Rep assistance and fee waivers
- End of Events Reports due 12/31/2023



[www.sccango.org](http://www.sccango.org)

- Tool kits, handouts, resources, videos

Register  
Today!

# Step 1: College Application Month SC

*Regardless of your district/school plan for instruction & attendance. We have developed a versatile CAM program with multiple options. If you will register, we will help you.*

To help with CAM in Fall 2023, CHE has made a request to higher education institutions for three items:

1. Updated videos of how to complete their application
2. Fee waiver codes from all institutions that charge an application fee
3. Paper applications for schools who need them

[www.sccango.org](http://www.sccango.org)

## Step 2: College Goal SC

- FAFSA Completion Campaign
- Events run from October to March
- Register through [SCCANGO.org](http://SCCANGO.org) for College Financial Aid Reps to support your event

[www.sccango.org](http://www.sccango.org)

➔ Tool kits, handouts, resources, videos



**SOUTH CAROLINA**  
**can go to college**

# 2024-25 FAFSA DELAYED UNTIL DECEMBER 2023

- FAFSA Simplification Act was passed in Dec. 2020
- Federal Department of Education has not released the FAFSA live date, only Dec. 2023
- Significant FAFSA changes for 2024-25
- Recommend students and parents set-up their FSA IDs now in preparation for FAFSA going live in Dec. 2023.



# Step 2: College Goal SC

*Regardless of your district/school plan for instruction & attendance. We have developed a versatile College Goal SC program with multiple options. If you will register, we will help you.*

To help with College Goal SC in Fall 2023/Spring 2024, CHE has made available the following items:

1. When available, a video of how to complete the Simplified FAFSA will be sent to registered schools
2. FSA ID events during the Fall 23 term in preparation for the FAFSA to be released in December 2023.
3. Colleges will register and meet the students on a virtual platform during the evening, if the event is a virtual event.

[www.sccango.org](http://www.sccango.org)



Register in  
February



## Step 3: College Decision Day SC

1. South Carolina's College Signing Day Program
2. Individual events run from March to June
3. We plan to do another rally at the statehouse this Spring. The tentative rally date is May 8, 2024.
4. Celebrate with your seniors and invite your local colleges to join you.

[www.sccango.org](http://www.sccango.org)

➔ Tool kits, handouts, resources, videos

# STATE SCHOLARSHIP & GRANT PROGRAMS



# STATE SCHOLARSHIP & GRANT PROGRAMS

- SC Need-based Grant
- Lottery Tuition Assistance
- SC HOPE Scholarship
- LIFE Scholarship
- Palmetto Fellows Scholarship



# GENERAL ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

SC HOPE, LIFE, Palmetto Fellows Scholarship, SC Need-based Grant & Lottery Tuition Assistance\*\*

- US Citizen/Legal Permanent Resident\*
- SC Resident\*
- No felony convictions\*\*
- No second or subsequent alcohol/drug misdemeanors
- Not in default on any state or federal loans
- Enroll in a degree-seeking program at an eligible SC institution

*\*This must be determined at the time of high school graduation & college enrollment.*

*\*\*Excluding Lottery Tuition Assistance.*

# State Scholarships & Residency: Basic Breakdown

- Students must have their immigration status verified through a federal process as either a US Citizen or legal permanent resident before they can be awarded any State scholarship.
- All students must be verified by the institution as a SC resident before they can be awarded any State scholarship.
- A student who is NOT verified as a US Citizen or legal permanent resident **AND** who is not verified as a SC resident **at the time of their high school graduation** cannot receive State scholarships at the time of initial enrollment or at any point in the future.

# SC Need-based Grant

- Must complete the FAFSA application each year and be determined to have 'need' based on Title IV
- Can be used at any 2-year or 4-year public SC institution
- Must be considered a degree-seeking student
- Award amount up to **\$3,500** for full-time or \$1,750 for part-time.



# SC Need-based Grant Additional Programs

## Foster Care Youth

Up to the maximum \$3,500 SC NBG award/year, plus an additional **\$2,000** award.

*\*Student needs to work with the Financial Aid Office, DSS and CHE to qualify.*

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## College Transition Program (CTP)

Programs at 6 eligible S.C. institutions for students with intellectual disabilities:

- College of Charleston
  - Clemson University
  - University of South Carolina- Columbia
  - Winthrop University
  - Coastal Carolina University
  - University of South Carolina – Aiken
- 
- Scholarship: Up to \$10,000
  - Grant: Up to \$10,000\*

*\*Student needs to be determined to have 'need' by Title IV guidelines*

# Lottery Tuition Assistance Program (LTAP)

Complete the  
FAFSA

Enroll as a degree-seeking student at one of the: 16 technical schools, 2-year USC satellite campuses or Spartanburg Methodist College

\$80\*/Credit hour up to  
12 hours maximum

*\*Award amount may vary each term depending on availability of funding.*



# SC HOPE Scholarship

**Eligibility:**

**3.0**

**Cumulative  
GPA**

(based on the SC UGP upon  
high school graduation)

No application process.

Institution reviews final high school transcript.

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Must attend an eligible SC 4-year institution

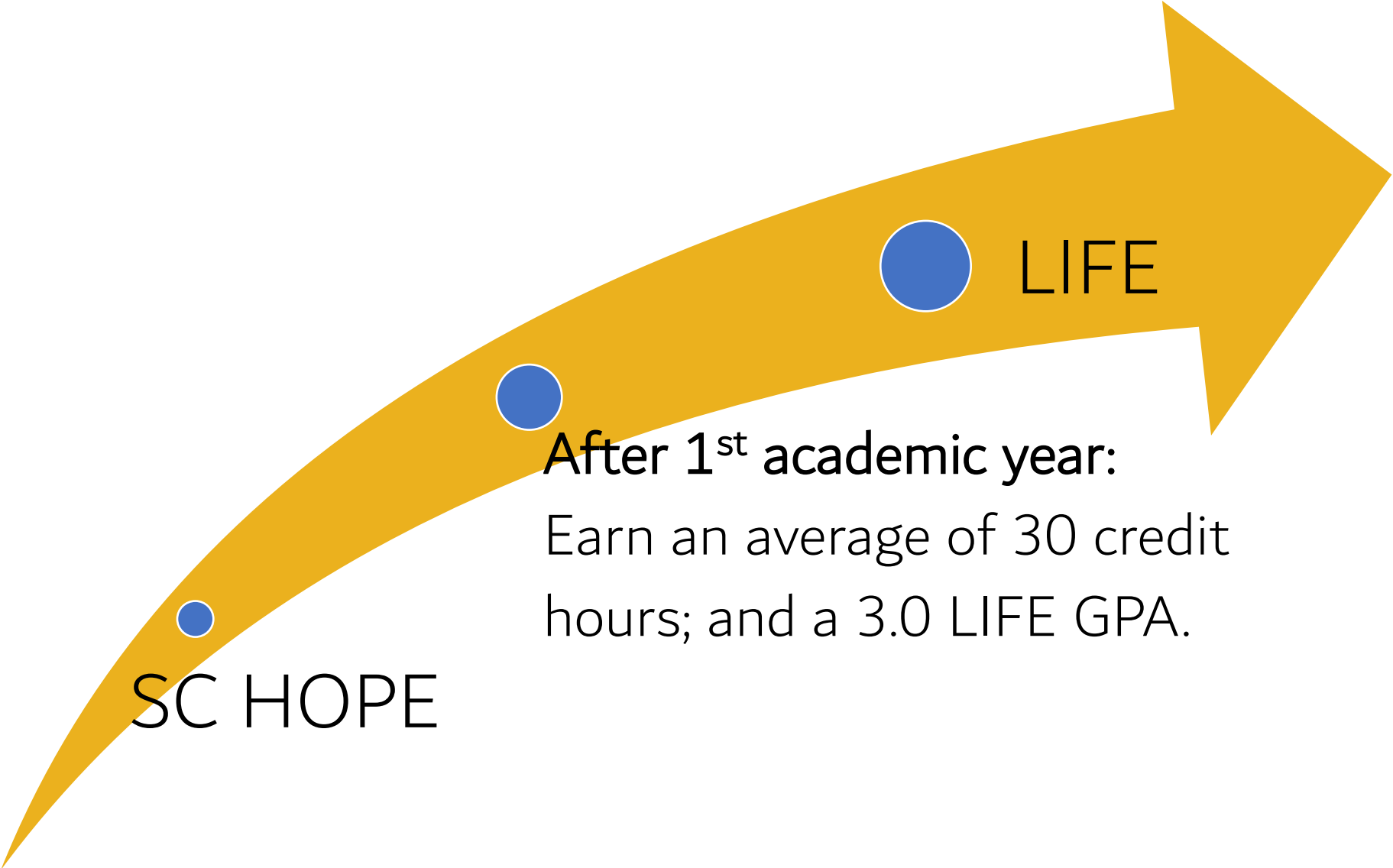
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Up to \$2,800

For the 1<sup>st</sup> academic year only (2 terms)

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# SC HOPE to LIFE Scholarship



# LIFE Scholarship Eligibility Requirements

## Eligibility at a 2-year institution

- *3.0 Cumulative GPA* (based on the SC UGP) upon high school graduation

## Eligibility at a 4-year institution

- Earn *2* of the following *3* requirements:
  - 3.0 Cumulative GPA (based on the SC UGP) upon high school graduation
  - 1100/SAT or 22/ACT
  - Rank in the top 30% of the graduating class (if applicable)

# LIFE Terms & Award Amount

## Terms of Eligibility

- Up to 4 consecutive semesters of eligibility at a 2-year institution (up to 6 semesters for students in Associate's Programs with minimum of 68 credit hours)
- Up to 8 consecutive semesters of eligibility at a 4-year institution

## Up to \$5,000 per academic year

- Not to exceed to the Cost of Attendance
- Must attend an eligible SC institution

# "FACTS OF LIFE" SCHOLARSHIP

No application process

Not required to begin college immediately after high school

Can *earn* LIFE Scholarship after 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup>, or 3<sup>rd</sup> academic year

Student has until the end of an academic year to earn the GPA/Credit hours

# LIFE GPA

IMPORTANT

Dual enrollment and college enrollment while in high school and/or prior to enrolling in college

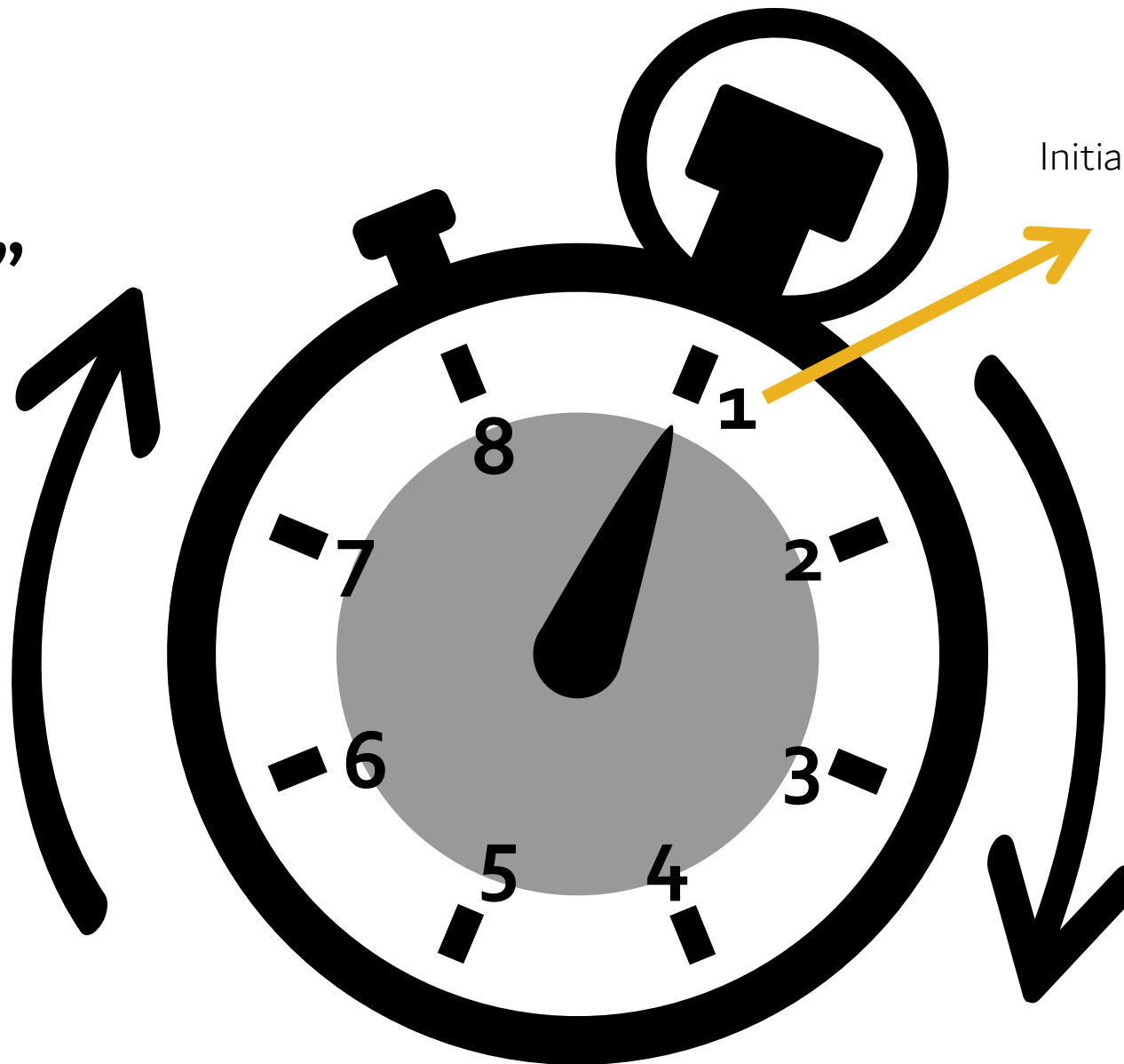
Grades and credit hours earned at colleges and universities (in-state, out-of-state, abroad)

**LIFE GPA**

Includes "F" and "D" grades

Grades and credit hours earned while enrolled in college (including summer school)

# Terms of Eligibility “LIFE Clock”



Initial College Enrollment  
TERM 1

Continuous  
LIFE 62-1200.5.UU.  
Palmetto Fellows 62-310.G.

# A 'WALK THROUGH LIFE'

End of 1<sup>st</sup>  
Academic  
Year

Earn a 3.0  
Cumulative  
LIFE GPA

Earn at  
least 30  
credit hours

End of 2<sup>nd</sup>  
Academic  
Year

Earn a 3.0  
Cumulative  
LIFE GPA

Earn at  
least 60  
credit hours

End of 3<sup>rd</sup>  
Academic  
Year

Earn a 3.0  
Cumulative  
LIFE GPA

Earn at  
least 90  
credit hours





# PALMETTO FELLOWS SCHOLARSHIP APPLICATION PERIODS

Any eligible student will need to be part of the Early or Late Award application process during their year of graduation

○ TWO opportunities to apply:

- Early Award: May 1<sup>st</sup> of Junior Year to April 15<sup>th</sup> of Senior Year
- Late Award: May 15<sup>th</sup> – June 30<sup>th</sup> of Senior year

*1) A student cannot use Early Award documentation for the Late Award*

*2) A student cannot apply or earn the PFS once they have graduated high school*

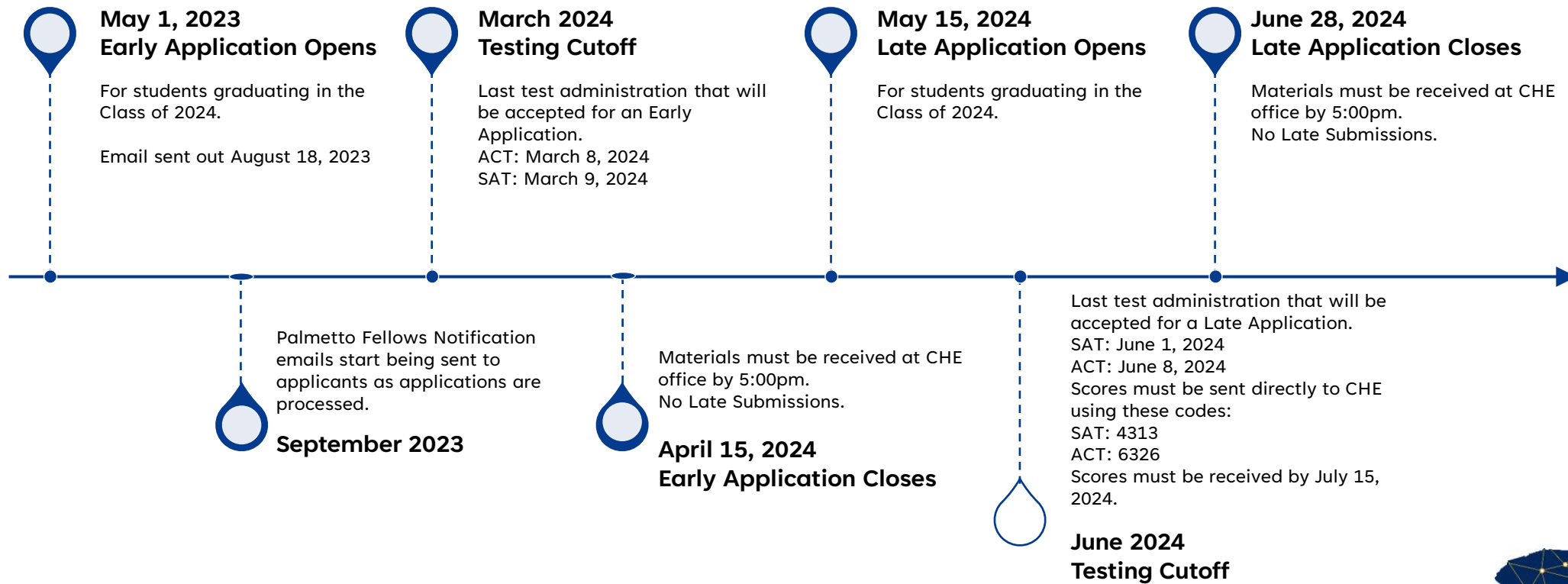
*3) Late award is awarded LATE - usually after tuition bill is due. Please let students and parents know.*

# PFS Year-Round Processing Timeline

- CHE will review applications continuously to determine eligibility for the PFS
- Decisions will then be uploaded into CHE data system and released to students via email
- Estimated processing time from date of paper application receipt to decision release: 1 month



# 2023-2024 Palmetto Fellows Application Timeline



SC Commission on Higher Education, Attn: Palmetto Fellows, 1122 Lady St, Suite 400, Columbia, SC 29201  
<https://che.sc.gov/>



# COUNSELOR DRIVEN APPLICATION PROCESS

The online application and application materials must be submitted via the high school/home school association and in the Commission office by the established deadlines.

- Submit ranking report
- Fill out online application (*posted on SC Guidance Listserv or contact CHE staff*)
  - *Please add student email address (personal - not school email).*
- Eligible applicant form
- Certification & Authorization Form (print; give to students to sign – must contain actual signature and initials).

# Counselor Driven Application Process cont.

## Student transcript

- Early Award: submit an 11<sup>th</sup> grade transcript for all applicants;
  - Only submit 10<sup>th</sup> grade transcripts if student is qualifying with 10<sup>th</sup> grade rank (if using rank)
  - DO NOT send final, end of year transcript in May/June.
- Late Award: submit 12<sup>th</sup> grade transcripts for all applicants;
  - Only submit 10<sup>th</sup> or 11<sup>th</sup> grade transcripts if student did NOT qualify with 12<sup>th</sup> grade rank (if using rank)

## Student test scores

- High school score reports (can be printed from K12 portal), score label (NO REPORTS PROVIDED BY STUDENTS)
  - Please sign or stamp score report
- Please have students taking the June test, send scores directly to CHE via SAT 4313 or ACT 6326.

# Palmetto Fellows Scholarship Eligibility Requirements

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For schools that have an official policy on rank that has been reviewed by Commission staff for compliance with the established regulations:

- Rank in the top 6% at the end of the 10<sup>th</sup>, or the 11<sup>th</sup>, or the 12<sup>th</sup> grade academic year; and
- Earn a 1200 SAT/25 ACT; and
- Earn a 3.5 cumulative SC UGP GPA

OR

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Alternative Criteria (without regard to rank)

- Earn a 1400 SAT/31 ACT; and
- Earn a 4.0 cumulative SC UGP GPA

# The “Decline” Difference

## Declination Form (Declining to Apply)

- Student will NOT be a part of a PFS application period
- Declination Form is signed by parent AND student

## Designation Form (Declining to Accept)

- Student has been a part of a PFS application period;
- Student has been determined by CHE to be a Palmetto Fellow
- Student has decided to attend an institution out-of-state
- Student **DECLINES** the PFS award to attend an out-of-state institution:
  - Declining allows for a student to maintain their eligibility should they return to an eligible SC institution
  - Student must meet renewal requirements

# Student Notification

- Students will be notified:
  - Approx. 1 month after CHE receives their paper application.
  - Late Award: Late August\*
- Email notifications are sent to student email
  - Please remind students to check Spam/Junk folders

*\*Tuition bill will be due prior to Palmetto Fellow notification.*



# Designation Form

- In order for the student to receive scholarship funds they **MUST** complete the DESIGNATION FORM
  - This is the SOLE responsibility of the student
  - This is an online form that is linked in the Student Notification email
- Final deadline to submit Designation Form: August 31<sup>st</sup>
  - Please remind students to check Spam/Junk folders

# Palmetto Fellows Award Amounts

1<sup>st</sup> Year

- Up to \$6,700

2<sup>nd</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup>, and 4<sup>th</sup> Years

- Up to \$7,500

# Important Palmetto Fellows Scholarship Points

- Gap Year: Students can utilize a Gap Year (or term) immediately following high school graduation. Student will submit their Designation Form indicating Gap Year. Student must enroll by the next Fall term and will need to submit a Reapplication form to CHE.
- Students must attend an eligible SC institution. As of Fall 2021 term, that includes 2-year SC institutions. List of eligible institutions on CHE website.
- **EARLY GRADUATES:** students graduating at the end of the Fall term (Dec/Jan) **MUST** have their PFS application submitted to CHE prior to completing their HS graduation requirements.

*\*Please add this to your checklist for Early Grads.*

# How do I keep the Palmetto Fellows Scholarship?

3.0 cumulative  
institutional GPA

(Cannot transfer grades  
from other colleges)

Earn 30 credit hours each  
academic year

Does NOT include AP, IB,  
Dual Enrollment, CLEP or  
exempted hours

# LIFE & PFS Enhancements

Must Earn 14 credit hours of math and/or science by the end of the 1<sup>st</sup> academic year  
(AP, IB, Dual Enrollment, CLEP and Exempted courses)

Must be enrolled in an eligible major at their home institution

Starts the student's 2<sup>nd</sup> academic year (6 semesters) at a 4-year institution only

Up to an additional \$2,500

# ENHANCEMENTS

## LIFE Scholarship

1st Year

- Up to \$5,000

2nd, 3rd &  
4th Years

- Up to \$7,500 with  
Enhancement

## Palmetto Fellows Scholarship

1st Year

- Up to \$6,700

2nd, 3rd &  
4th Years

- Up to \$7,500
- Up to \$10,000 with  
Enhancement

# Students with Documented Disabilities

**Register with the Office of Disability Services**



**May be eligible for accommodations**



**May be eligible for Reduced Course load**

# General State Scholarship & Grant Information

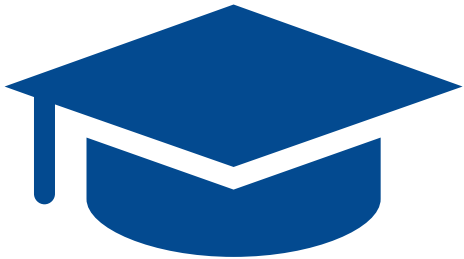


- No State Scholarships or Grants may be used at an out-of-state institution at any time.
- Academic Common Market
  - Allows for South Carolina residents who are enrolled in specific programs at out-of-state institutions to be charged only the applicable in-state tuition by the institution in which the student is enrolled



## Graduation Bulletin/Program

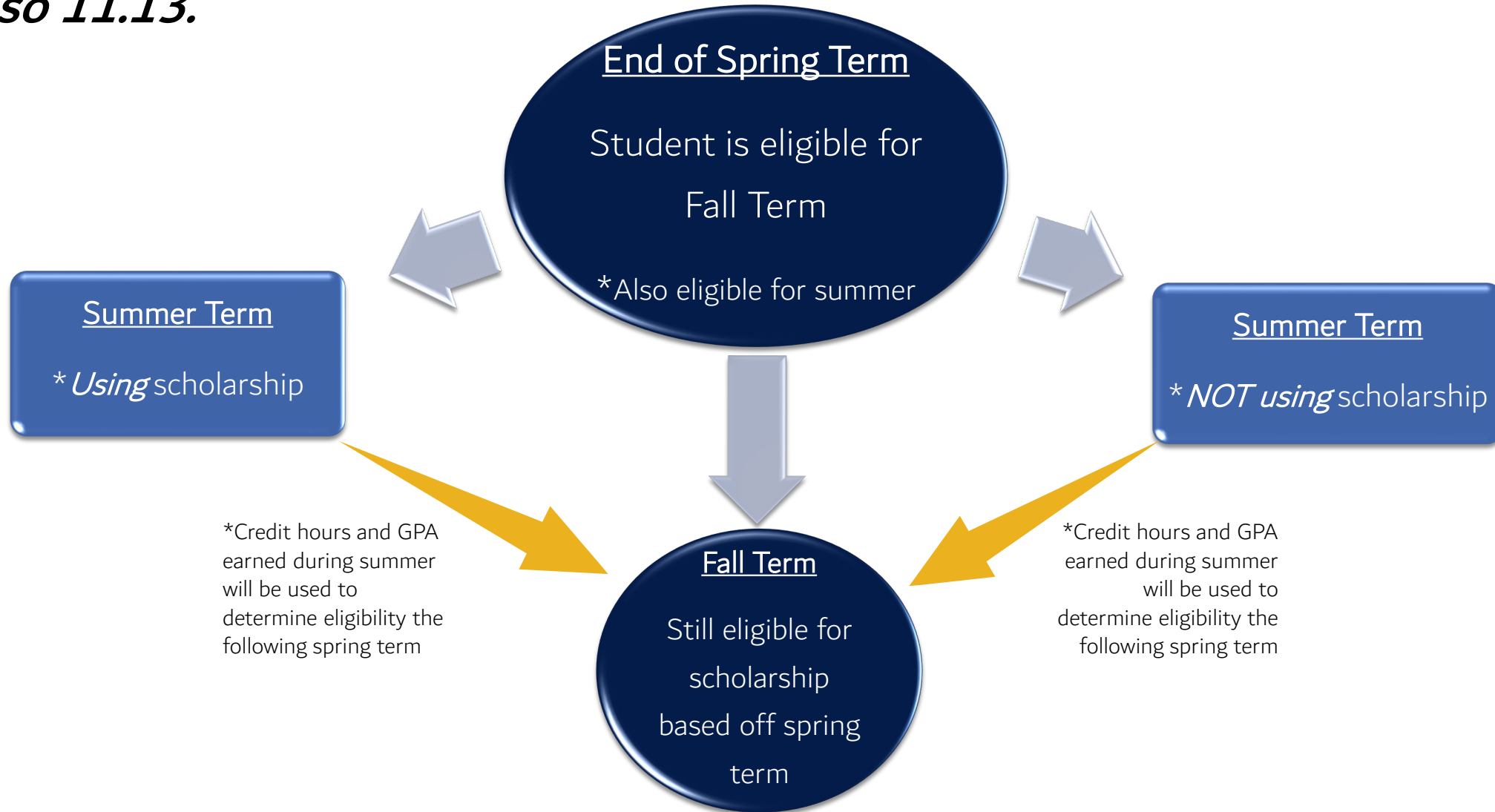
If the school chooses to designate scholarship recipients in such programs, we ask that you include the following disclaimer language:



*"The designation of scholarship recipients on this program or in any media is preliminary, based on information provided by the high schools and students at the time of this printing, and is subject to final confirmation and approval by the eligible higher education institution and/or the South Carolina Commission on Higher Education."*

# Year-Round Scholarships

*Proviso 11.13.*





# TRANSCRIPTS

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# Transcript Requirements:

## *Scholarship Eligibility Purposes*

All state scholarships and grants are based on the SC UGP, therefore all transcripts must specifically state “SC UGP.”

- Any transcript that states, “Weighted and Unweighted GPA” OR “Total GPA” will not be accepted for the purposes of awarding state scholarships as it must comply with the **SC UGP**.

All final official transcripts must be date calculated between 3 days prior to the date of the high school graduation and no later than June 15<sup>th</sup>

The final grades/ranking cannot include grades earned after the official graduation date of the school year. Summer school grades earned after high school graduation cannot be used in the calculation.

In order to determine eligibility for the State scholarship programs, the financial aid office/institution and/or CHE for the Palmetto Fellows Scholarship must have an official transcript on file (electronic or otherwise) that demonstrates the following items:

- A valid signature (electronic or otherwise) from the Principal.\* In the event that the Principal is not available, the Superintendent signature is acceptable.
  - *\*\*For Independent/Private and home school students: The administrator, registrar, or an official from the home school/accountability group. Should provide letter stating designated school rep.*
- SC UGP GPA must be demonstrated
- Date calculated date must be date calculated between 3 days prior to the date of the high school graduation and no later than June 15<sup>th</sup>
  - For the LIFE Scholarship and the Palmetto Fellows Scholarship Late Award the transcript MUST demonstrate that it is the final official transcript, as well as reflect a graduation date
- Rank
  - If an independent high school or home school association has an approved policy on rank, a rank must be demonstrated on the official transcript (even if the student is not using rank for scholarship eligibility).
  - A rank report must also be submitted with a date calculated matching the transcripts even if the student is not using rank. (LIFE 62-1200.10.C)

# Transcript Requirements:

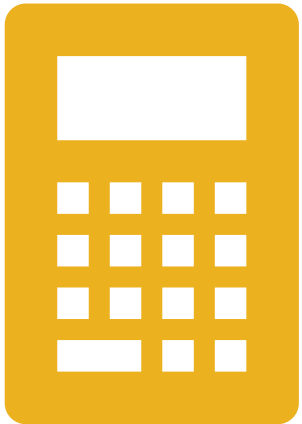
*Scholarship Eligibility Purposes*

# Out-of-State High Schools & Scholarship Eligibility

For Scholarship purposes, out-of-state schools must comply with SC UGP GPA and ranking (*if applicable*).

- If the institution is not converting the grades, the out-of-state high school must submit a converted transcript in addition to the official out-of-state high school transcript
  - No handwritten or strikethrough edits can be demonstrated on the submitted transcript for scholarship eligibility determination
- If a student is attempting to use rank as an eligibility criterion from an out-of-state high school:
  - The high school or home school association must have a policy on rank; *and*
  - If using rank, the entire academic class must be converted to the SC UGP and a ranking report that reflects all students in that academic class, the out-of-state GPA, the SC UGP GPA, and the rank based on the SC UGP GPA must be included in order to determine eligibility and award a State scholarship.
- If the high school or home school association does not rank as a policy, or the student does not meet the rank eligibility requirement once a conversion of the grades to meet the SC UGP GPA and rank requirement then student must use the Alternate Criteria for eligibility (SC UGP GPA and SAT/ACT score).

# Rank & State Scholarship Eligibility



- For the purposes of the LIFE and Palmetto Fellows Scholarship (PFS) programs two students cannot occupy the same rank.
  - **LIFE Scholarship:** Top 30% of the graduating class (NOT rounded up to the next whole number)
  - **PFS:** Top 6% (rounded up to the next whole number)
- In the event of a tie, the high school/home school association is responsible for determining the legitimate rank for each eligible applicant.
  - For the purposes of the Palmetto Fellows Scholarship the student's GPA may need to be truncated past two decimal points in order to determine the true rank for each student.
  - *Inquire about your School District or Board's approved policy*
- Commission staff will NOT be able to participate in a process to determine a student's true rank.

# Rank Policies

- In order for a student to use rank from any in-state, out-of-state, public, private, virtual, or charter high school or home school association the process in which rank is determined must be the same for each student.
- A rank policy\* is considered the following:
  - Based on the SC UGP;
  - Ranks ALL academic classes at the END of each academic year (9<sup>th</sup>, 10<sup>th</sup>, 11<sup>th</sup>, 12<sup>th</sup>);
  - Includes the entire class. If the entire class is not included when calculating class rank, then rank CANNOT to be considered;
  - Rank and SC UGP must be demonstrated on the official transcript submitted to CHE or eligible SC institution

*\*Please Note: In accordance with 62-1200.10 C (3): Student Eligibility: LIFE Scholarship and LIFE Scholarship Enhancement and 62-320 C (4): Palmetto Fellows Scholarship Application, "High schools or home school associations shall not use ranking for the sole purpose of obtaining eligibility for the state scholarships."*



# Rank Policies

- The rank policy and rank policy information needs to be consistent in all places rank information is provided
  - School profile
  - Student/parent handbook
  - School website
- Made available to:
  - Students/parents
  - SC Commission on Higher Education staff
  - SC colleges and universities that award State scholarships

*Please Note: A Rank Report is required to be submitted to Commission staff and/or eligible SC institution by any independent/private high school or homeschool association should a student be using rank as an eligibility criteria for any of the State scholarship programs. (In compliance with Regulation 62-1200.10)*

# Rank Reports

If the school/home school association officially ranks as a policy, a rank report must also be submitted to verify class rank on transcript.

Rank reports must include:

- All diploma-seeking students in the class;
- List their GPAs;
- List their class rank;
- Show “Date Calculated”
  - No later than June 15<sup>th</sup>
- **Information on rank report MUST match information on Transcript.**



NEW

# Rank Reports

Per the memo sent to institutions and high schools on June 15, 2023, beginning with the Class of 2024, all ranking schools MUST submit their final 12<sup>th</sup> grade ranking report to CHE no later than June 30 of each academic year.

Rank reports can be sent to  
[Scholarships@che.sc.gov](mailto:Scholarships@che.sc.gov)

*Ranking high schools no longer need to send ranking reports to SC Colleges and Universities.*



# Early Graduate vs. Graduating Early

## Early Graduate

(Senior graduating mid-year > not during the Spring Cohort)

### LIFE Scholarship

- For scholarship eligibility the student **CANNOT** use rank as an eligibility criterion.

### Palmetto Fellows Scholarship

- Student can qualify with class rank from the end of the 10<sup>th</sup> or 11<sup>th</sup> grade year.
- **Palmetto Fellows: can only apply during the Early Award Period PRIOR to completing their high school graduation requirements.**

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## Graduating Early

(Student graduates academic year(s) early > graduates with Spring Cohort)

### SC HOPE / LIFE Scholarship

- Eligibility is based on the end of the academic year with the student's "new" graduating class

### Palmetto Fellows Scholarship

- Early Award Application Period can use the end of 10<sup>th</sup> or 11<sup>th</sup> grade rank, must use end of 11<sup>th</sup> grade GPA
- Late Award Application Period can use the end of 10<sup>th</sup> or 12<sup>th</sup> grade rank, must use end of 12<sup>th</sup> grade GPA

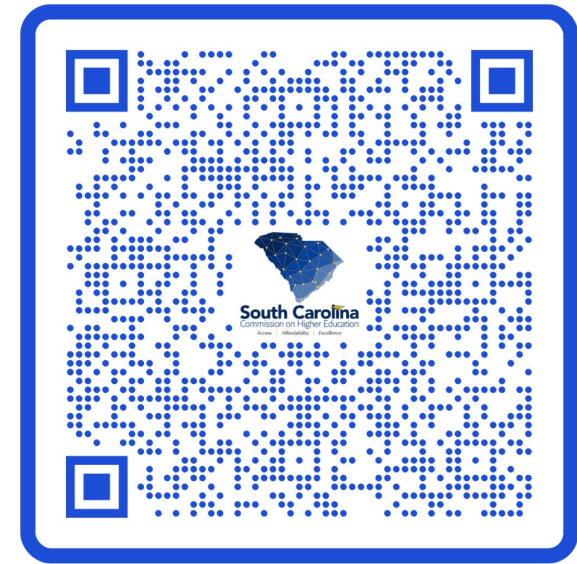
# QUESTIONS?

**Register for an Upcoming Virtual Workshop**

Palmetto Fellows Early Award In-Depth Workshops



Wednesday 10/18: 11:00am



Tuesday 10/24: 1:00pm

# CHE Contact Information

## Dr. Karen Woodfaulk

Director of Student Affairs  
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## Dr. Gerrick Hampton

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