



## SPREADING THE NEWS

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# Top nonprofit watchdog gives highest mark to Tampa-based scholarship program

The Step Up For Students scholarship program for low-income students has again received the top rating from Charity Navigator, the nation's largest independent evaluator of charities.

This is the fifth consecutive four-star rating that Step Up For Students has received from Charity Navigator. Only 6 percent of the charities rated by Charity Navigator have received the top rating five consecutive times.

When Charity Navigator rates a nonprofit organization, it examines its efficiency and its performance. More than 97 percent of the corporate contributions Step Up For Students receives go directly to scholarships for students who would qualify for a free or reduced-price lunch in public schools.

Ken Berger, Charity Navigator's president and chief executive officer, said Step Up For Students "consistently executes its mission in a fiscally responsible way, and outperforms most other charities in America.

"This 'exceptional' designation from Charity Navigator differentiates [Step Up For Students] from its peers and demonstrates to the public it is worthy of their trust," Berger continued.

The Step Up For Students scholarship program served more than 34,500 students at 1,100 schools this past school year. It is financed by companies whose contributions receive a dollar-for-dollar state tax credit. The maximum annual scholarship this fall will be \$4,011. For more information, visit [www.stepupforstudents.org](http://www.stepupforstudents.org).

Charity Navigator has become the nation's largest and most-utilized evaluator of charities since it was founded in 2001. It provides an unbiased, objective, numbers-based rating system to assess the financial health of more than 5,000 of America's best-known charities. Charity Navigator's rating system examines two broad areas of a charity's financial health: how responsibly it functions day to day as well as how well positioned it is to sustain its programs over time. Each charity is then awarded an overall rating, ranging from zero to four stars. For more information, visit [www.charitynavigator.org](http://www.charitynavigator.org).

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