



## Program Summary

Through the Florida Tax Credit (FTC) Scholarship Program ([Florida Statutes, Section 1002.395](#)) and the Florida Sales Tax Credit (FSTC) Scholarship Program ([Florida Statutes, Section 212.099](#)), dollar-for-dollar tax credits are provided to companies that redirect certain Florida tax liabilities to Step Up For Students, a state-approved Scholarship Funding Organization (SFO). The redirected tax dollars fund education scholarships for lower-income Florida children in Kindergarten through 12th grade. Contributions are reported as a payment of state tax – not a charitable contribution – and therefore do not affect a company's regular philanthropic efforts.

Since 2001, the corporate community has pledged more than \$5 billion to this initiative, providing more than 800,000 scholarships for economically disadvantaged children. When companies invest in our program, they make a lasting impact on the lives of scholarship students and inspire a brighter future through personalized education.

### MISSION

Step Up For Students empowers parents to pursue and engage in the most appropriate learning options for their children, with an emphasis on families who lack the financial resources to access these options.

Parents use these scholarships to send their child to a K-12 public or private school that provides the learning environment that best meets their child's unique needs.

Scholarships are awarded to students, not schools, making them portable. If a school fails to meet the needs of a student or the expectations of a parent, they are free to choose another school approved by the Florida Department of Education.

### FAST FACTS

**57%** of all scholarship children are from single-parent households

**68%** of benefiting scholarship students are Black or Hispanic

**\$25,755** is the average household income of benefiting families – a mere 9% above poverty

### ACADEMIC GAINS

Students in grades 3-10 are evaluated annually with state-approved, national norm-referenced tests. Eleven consecutive years of studies show the **average scholarship students are among the lowest performers in their prior school and, once on scholarship, students see similar learning gains to all students nationally, regardless of income.**

### FTC STUDENTS MORE LIKELY TO ATTEND COLLEGE

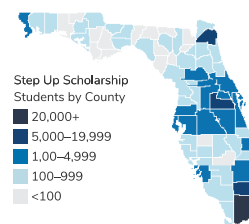
In February 2019, the Urban Institute released an updated study to its 2017 analysis of the effectiveness of the Florida Tax Credit Scholarship Program - the nation's largest private K-12 scholarship program. The updated study **found that students on scholarship for four or more years were up to 99% more likely to attend a four-year college than their peers in public school and up to 45% more likely to earn bachelor's degrees.**

### TAX LIABILITIES ELIGIBLE FOR THE 1:1 CREDIT

- Alcoholic Beverage Excise Tax – up to 90%
- Business Rent / Commercial Lease Tax – up to 100%
- Corporate Income Tax – up to 100%
- Direct Pay Sales and Use Tax – up to 100%
- Insurance Premium Tax – up to 100%
- Oil and/or Gas Production Tax – up to 50%

### STATEWIDE IMPACT

**Step Up For Students served over 100,000 children in more than 1,800 schools for the 2019-20 school year.** Step Up is the only organization that has served the entire state of Florida since the program's inception in 2001. Scholarships for 2019-20 averaged \$6,751 per student for K-5th grade, \$7,058 for 6th-8th grade and \$7,368 for 9th-12th grade



More than 200 corporations partner with Step Up, including: Circle K Stores, GEICO Companies, HCA Healthcare Inc., Lowe's Companies, Raymond James, Southern Glazer's Wine & Spirits, UnitedHealthcare, U.S. Bank National Association, Waste Management and Walgreen Co.

### STATE COST SAVINGS

Five independent studies on the financial impact of the program have each concluded **the program saves the state money.** The savings derive primarily from the scholarship amount calculation, which is less than state's per-pupil public school cost.

### NATIONAL RECOGNITION

Step Up has a **4-star rating from Charity Navigator and has earned the GuideStar Nonprofit Profile Platinum Seal of Transparency.** Step Up is 20<sup>th</sup> on Forbes' list of America's Top Charities and 18<sup>th</sup> on The Chronicle of Philanthropy's list of America's Favorite Charities.

