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1 A bill to be entitled

2 An act relating to student financial assistance; creating
3 s. 1009.892, F.S.; creating the Innovation Florida
4 Scholarships for Developing High-Tech Jobs Program;
5 authorizing need-based scholarships for students enrolled
6 in certified degree programs in targeted employment areas
7 at Florida postsecondary educational institutions;
8 providing for administration and funding of the program;
9 providing student eligibility requirements for initial and
10 renewal awards; providing an appropriation; providing an
11 effective date.

12
13 Be It Enacted by the Legislature of the State of Florida:

14
15 Section 1. Section 1009.892, Florida Statutes, is created
16 to read:

17 1009.892 Innovation Florida Scholarships for Developing
18 High-Tech Jobs Program.--

19 (1) This section shall be known by the popular name
20 "Innovation Florida Scholarships for Developing High-Tech Jobs
21 Act."

22 (2) The Innovation Florida Scholarships for Developing
23 High-Tech Jobs Program is created to provide need-based financial
24 assistance to any Florida high school graduate who merits
25 recognition of high academic achievement and who enrolls in a
26 certified degree program at an eligible Florida postsecondary
27 educational institution within 3 years after graduation from high
28 school.

29 (3) As used in this section:

30 (a) "Certified degree program" means a degree program that:



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- 31 1. Is certified by the Department of Education.
- 32 2. Addresses the need for support of degree programs in
- 33 targeted employment areas.
- 34 3. Includes an internship component as described in this
- 35 section.
- 36 (b) "Targeted employment" means employment in any of the
- 37 following business areas:
- 38 1. Advanced manufacturing, including the following:
 - 39 a. Automotive and electronics.
 - 40 b. Aerospace technology.
 - 41 c. Robotics.
 - 42 d. Engineering design technology.
- 43 2. Life sciences, including the following:
 - 44 a. Orthopedics or medical devices.
 - 45 b. Biomedical research or development.
 - 46 c. Pharmaceutical manufacturing.
 - 47 d. Agribusiness.
 - 48 e. Nanotechnology or molecular manufacturing.
- 49 3. Information technology, including the following:
 - 50 a. Informatics.
 - 51 b. Certified network administration.
 - 52 c. Software development.
 - 53 d. Fiber optics.
- 54 4. High-technology logistics, including the following:
 - 55 a. High-technology distribution.
 - 56 b. Efficient and effective flow and storage of goods,
 - 57 services, or information.
 - 58 c. Intermodal ports.
- 59 (4) The Department of Education shall administer the
- 60 Innovation Florida Scholarships for Developing High-Tech Jobs



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61 Program according to rules and procedures established by the
62 State Board of Education. The department must advertise the
63 availability of the scholarship program and must notify students,
64 teachers, parents, guidance counselors, and principals or other
65 relevant school administrators of the criteria and application
66 procedures. The department must begin this process of
67 notification no later than January 1 of each year.

68 (5) Funds for the Innovation Florida Scholarships for
69 Developing High-Tech Jobs Program shall be appropriated annually
70 in the General Appropriations Act.

71 (a) If funds appropriated are not adequate to provide the
72 maximum allowable award to each eligible applicant, awards must
73 be prorated to each eligible applicant using the same percentage
74 reduction.

75 (b) Notwithstanding s. 216.301, if all funds allocated to
76 the Innovative Florida Scholarships for Developing High-Tech Jobs
77 Program are not used in any fiscal year, up to 20 percent of the
78 total allocation may be carried forward and used for awards in
79 the following year.

80 (6) The department shall issue awards from the scholarship
81 program annually. Annual awards may be for up to 45 semester
82 credit hours or the equivalent for the amount of demonstrated
83 unmet need not to exceed an amount equal to the average prior
84 academic year cost of tuition, fees, and assigned books and
85 supplies at state universities or such other amount as specified
86 in the General Appropriations Act. A demonstrated unmet need of
87 less than \$100 shall render the applicant ineligible for a
88 scholarship. Before the registration period each semester, the
89 department shall transmit payment for each award to the president
90 or director of the postsecondary educational institution, or his



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91 or her representative, except that the department may withhold
92 payment if the receiving institution fails to report or to make
93 refunds to the department as required in this section.

94 (a) Within 30 days after the end of regular registration
95 each semester, the educational institution shall certify to the
96 department the eligibility status of each student who receives an
97 award. After the end of the drop and add period, an institution
98 is not required to reevaluate or revise a student's eligibility
99 status, but must make a refund to the department if a student who
100 receives an award disbursement terminates enrollment for any
101 reason during an academic term and a refund is permitted by the
102 institution's refund policy.

103 (b) An institution that receives funds from the program
104 shall certify to the department the amount of funds disbursed to
105 each student and shall remit to the department any undisbursed
106 advances within 60 days after the end of regular registration.

107 (c) Each institution that receives moneys through this
108 program shall prepare an annual report that includes an annual
109 financial audit conducted by an independent certified public
110 accountant or the Auditor General. The report shall include an
111 audit of the institution's administration of the program and a
112 complete accounting of the moneys for the program. This report
113 must be submitted to the department annually by March 1. The
114 department may conduct its own annual audit of an institution's
115 administration of the program. The department may request a
116 refund of any moneys overpaid to the institution for the program.
117 The department may suspend or revoke an institution's eligibility
118 to receive future moneys for the program if the department finds
119 that an institution has not complied with this section. The



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120 institution must remit within 60 days any refund requested in
121 accordance with this subsection.

122 (7)(a) A student enrolled in 6 to 8 semester credit hours
123 may receive up to one-half of the maximum award; a student
124 enrolled in 9 to 11 credit hours may receive up to three-fourths
125 of the maximum award; and a student enrolled in 12 or more credit
126 hours may receive up to the full award.

127 (b) If a recipient transfers from one eligible institution
128 to another and continues to meet eligibility requirements, the
129 award must be transferred with the student.

130 (c) A student may use an award for summer term enrollment
131 if funds are available.

132 (d) Funds from a scholarship may not be used to pay for
133 remedial or college-preparatory coursework.

134 (8) To be eligible for an initial award, a student must:

135 (a) Be a Florida resident as defined in s. 1009.40 and
136 rules of the State Board of Education.

137 (b) Earn a standard Florida high school diploma or its
138 equivalent as described in s. 1003.43 or s. 1003.45 unless:

139 1. The student is enrolled full-time in the early admission
140 program of an eligible postsecondary educational institution or
141 completes a home education program according to s. 1002.41; or

142 2. The student earns a high school diploma from a non-
143 Florida school while living with a parent who is on military or
144 public service assignment away from Florida.

145 (c) Have achieved a cumulative grade point average of 3.0
146 on a 4.0 scale or its equivalent in high school courses
147 designated by the Department of Education.



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148 (d) Be accepted by and enroll in a Florida public or
149 independent postsecondary educational institution identified by
150 the Department of Education.

151 (e) Be enrolled for at least 6 semester credit hours or the
152 equivalent in quarter hours or clock hours.

153 (f) Not have been found guilty of, or plead nolo contendere
154 to, a felony charge, unless the student has been granted clemency
155 by the Governor and Cabinet sitting as the Executive Office of
156 Clemency.

157 (g) Apply for a scholarship from the program by high school
158 graduation.

159 (9) A student is eligible to accept an initial award for 3
160 years following high school graduation and to accept a renewal
161 award for 7 years following high school graduation. A student who
162 applies for an award by high school graduation and who meets all
163 other eligibility requirements, but who does not accept his or
164 her award, may reapply during subsequent application periods up
165 to 3 years after high school graduation.

166 (10) Eligibility for renewal awards shall be based on
167 continued academic achievement of a cumulative grade point
168 average of 2.75 on a 4.0 scale or its equivalent by the student
169 at the eligible institution, continued eligibility for financial
170 assistance pursuant to this section, and participation of the
171 student for at least one summer during the course of the
172 student's postsecondary education in an internship program that
173 is relevant to at least one of the targeted employment areas as
174 defined in this section. A student must work a minimum of 160
175 hours during the summer internship.

176 (11) Employers must pay students in an internship program a
177 wage at least 20 percent above the federal minimum wage.



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178 Employers with whom interns are placed may receive \$500 per
179 student per summer.

180 Section 2. There is hereby appropriated from the General
181 Revenue Fund to the Department of Education for fiscal year 2003-
182 2004 the sum of \$30 million to implement the provisions of this
183 act.

184 Section 3. This act shall take effect July 1, 2003.