



NJSTARS

at BERGEN COMMUNITY COLLEGE

Free Tuition is
in the Stars



What is NJ STARS?

The New Jersey Student Tuition Assistance Reward Scholarship (NJ STARS) program is an initiative created by the state of New Jersey that provides New Jersey's highest achieving students with free tuition at their home county community college.

NJ STARS Benefits

The NJ STARS state scholarship program covers the cost of tuition, less any state and/or federal grants and scholarships for 12 to 18 college-level credits per semester, for up to five semesters. (The NJ STARS program does not cover fees, books or summer courses.)

Who is Eligible?

- New Jersey residents who rank in the top 15 percent of their high school class at the end of their junior or senior year may be eligible.
- Students must be U.S. citizens or eligible non-citizens and legal New Jersey residents for a minimum of twelve consecutive months prior to high school graduation.
- Students must enroll full time in a degree program no later than the fifth semester following high school graduation at their home county community college.
- Students can attend another community college if their home county community college does not offer their desired program of study or the program is oversubscribed for at least one year. Visit the Admissions Department to begin the out of county chargeback process.
- Complete and submit all required information within established deadlines.
- Students who do not demonstrate college readiness by placing into all college level courses will be given up to one year to gain the skills they need to be college ready, but the NJ STARS program will not cover costs for remedial coursework.
- Students who are not college ready by September 1, one year after high school graduation, are no longer eligible for the NJ STARS program.

Tips to Get Started

Students must first apply to Bergen Community College through the general enrollment process. Visit www.bergen.edu/getstarted and follow **steps 1-6 only** of the enrollment process. After registering for classes, NJ STARS students will be responsible for payment of all fees associated with tuition. Courses will be protected to allow prospective NJ STARS students time to submit all documents requested by the Office of Financial Aid and HESAA, and to complete the certification process. Upon completion within established deadlines, the state of New Jersey will pay for tuition costs by the end of each semester.

To receive the NJ STARS scholarship, students must apply for all need-based, federal- and merit-based state financial aid grants by completing the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) annually, and maintaining continuous, full-time enrollment (www.bergen.edu/fa - www.fafsa.ed.gov). The NJ STARS program will cover the remaining balance of tuition.

Students interested in pursuing their bachelor's degree should enroll in an Associate of Arts (A.A.) or Associate of Science (A.S.) degree program. Associate in Applied Science (A.A.S.) degrees are career programs and are not guaranteed to transfer to four-year schools (including the NJ STARS II schools). Students should do all necessary research with their intended four-year school before finalizing their major.

Students who were in the top 15 percent of their class at the end of their junior year should receive a letter from Bergen Community College midway through their senior year together with information regarding NJ STARS eligibility requirements, a checklist to ensure completion of the College's application and NJ STARS certification processes, and the NJ STARS Application/Contract.

Students should self-certify to njstars@bergen.edu, fill out the NJ STARS Application/Contract completely, and then stop in A-118 or call (201) 447-7211 to schedule an appointment with one of the NJ STARS Academic Counselors. Students should mention that they will be bringing in a completed NJ STARS Application/Contract. If the NJ STARS Application/Contract is not complete when meeting with an NJ STARS Counselor, the appointment will be rescheduled.

Students who were not in the top 15 percent of their class at the end of their junior year, but were in the top 15 percent of their class at the end of their senior year should email njstars@bergen.edu after high school graduation to self-certify and request NJ STARS processing information.

Maintaining NJ STARS Status

- Students who previously received an NJ TAG award must file their FAFSA by April 15.
- New and returning NJ STARS students who did not receive NJ TAG: the FAFSA application must be renewed annually as follows: September 15 for fall and spring terms; February 15 for spring term only
- Students must maintain continuous, full-time enrollment with a minimum of 12 college-level credits each semester.
- Attain a cumulative 3.0 GPA by the start of the third semester to be eligible for renewal in the second year.
- Successfully graduate from Bergen Community College with an associate degree within five semesters with a 3.25 GPA or better to be eligible for NJ STARS II.



"Attending Bergen Community College through the NJ STARS program has shaped me into an independent and tenacious individual. The professors challenged my academic abilities and I have grown so much because of them. Bergen was one of the best decisions I ever made."

Dina Muric

"NJ STARS is such a great program supported by our state government, because it saves me thousands of dollars by covering my tuition. The program served as a powerful motivator and I am very thankful that my hard work is recognized!"

Thomas Van Winkle



"I am one of many people who did not realize that the quality of education at a community college is the same as a four-year college - especially at Bergen Community College. After working closely with the great faculty here, I realized I made the right decision to come to Bergen."

Jazmine Gutierrez

"If you are eligible to get into the NJ STARS program, don't miss out. Not only does it provide free tuition, it also challenges students to work hard and earn good grades. Joining NJ STARS was arguably the best decision of my life."

Adam Grassani



Where to Go From Here?

- New Jersey community college NJ STARS students who earn their associate degrees with a 3.25 GPA or better are eligible for a NJ STARS II scholarship, valued up to \$2,500 per year, at any New Jersey public or independent NJ TAG-participating, four-year college or university.
- Students whose family income exceeds \$250,000 dollars will not be eligible for NJ STARS II.
- NJ STARS II students must enroll full time in a baccalaureate degree program at one of the participating colleges or universities (listed below), renew their FAFSA annually, maintain continuous, full-time enrollment, and graduate within four semesters.
- Students must inform the admissions office at the four-year college or university of their NJ STARS status and provide an official New Jersey county college transcript as proof of graduation. The four-year public college or university will provide notification of NJ STARS II eligibility.
- For more information, go to www.njstars.net.

NJ STARS II Participating Colleges and Universities

Public:

The College of New Jersey
 Kean University
 Montclair State University
 New Jersey City University
 New Jersey Institute of Technology
 Ramapo College of New Jersey
 The Richard Stockton College of New Jersey
 Rowan University
 Rutgers University
 Thomas Edison State College
 William Paterson University

Independent:

Berkeley College
 Bloomfield College
 Caldwell College
 Centenary College
 College of Saint Elizabeth
 DeVry University
 Drew University
 Fairleigh Dickinson University
 Felician College
 Georgian Court University
 Monmouth University
 Rider University
 Saint Peter's University
 Seton Hall University
 Stevens Institute of Technology

About Bergen Community College

Bergen Community College allows students to choose from more than 140 programs of study. The College offers Associate in Arts, Associate in Science and Associate in Applied Science degree programs. With a diverse and vibrant population of 16,000 students, Bergen provides opportunities to make new friends and to join student activities, sports, clubs and organizations. Bergen also offers small classes, dedicated faculty, outstanding services, flexible scheduling, state-of-the-art technology and a student centered campus. No wonder so many NJ STARS students choose Bergen!

For more information about Bergen Community College, call the Office of Admissions and Recruitment at (201) 447-7200 or visit www.bergen.edu.

Want to Know More?

- Come to an Open House: www.bergen.edu/openhouses.
- Come to an Information Session just for NJ STARS students: www.bergen.edu/njstars (click on Events).
- Watch a video to see what current NJ STARS students and graduates have to say about Bergen Community College and the NJ STARS program. Visit www.bergen.edu/njstars (click on News & Social Media).
- Find us on Facebook: www.facebook.com/bccnjstars.



www.bergen.edu/njstars