West Virginia’s PROMISE Scholarship:  
Perceptions of the First Graduating Class  

In 1993, Georgia changed the landscape of financial aid by establishing the HOPE scholarship, a revolutionary non-need-based aid package designed to keep more of the state’s most academically gifted students in Georgia to attend college. Since that time, an additional 13 states\(^1\) have implemented similar programs (Krueger, 2005), motivated in part by increases in the cost of postsecondary education, reductions in state appropriations to postsecondary institutions, changes in the nature and sources of financial aid (e.g., reductions in federal appropriations, the gradual replacement of grants with an increasing number of loans,\(^2\) etc.), and concerns about postsecondary participation, retention and graduation.

As these programs are still young, with the oldest starting in 1993 (Georgia) and the most recent in 2005 (Massachusetts), there are insufficient longitudinal data to conclusively assess these programs’ effectiveness and effects, both intended and unintended. The National Association of State Student Aid and Grant Programs, however, reports that spending on merit-based aid increased 348% between 1994-95 and 2004-05. Given that trend, as well as those mentioned in the previous paragraph, it is important that the impacts of these programs be evaluated on a continuing basis. This study is one such effort.

\(^1\) See Appendix A for a complete listing. The 14-state figure is provided by Heller (2004) and is generally recognized as the standard. Some programs that have been instituted since that time or that were not included in Heller’s original listing are included in the table, noted by date of inception.

\(^2\) Thirty years ago, $3.00 of every $10.00 of financial aid was from loans; by the end of the 1990s, loans accounted for $6.00 of every $10.00 (Creech, 1998). In the past decade, average public four-year college tuition fees rose 51 percent, after adjusting for inflation. In 2000, the average debt load of a four-year public college graduate was approximately $19,300 — more than double the level in 1991.
The report begins with an explanation of data collection procedures and return rates, then develops a “profile” recipient created from analysis of survey data combined with demographic data provided by the Higher Education Policy Commission. It then examines participants’ responses to the survey instrument and details the categories into which the survey and demographic data provided by the WVHEPC were grouped for ease of analysis and explanation. Each category will subsequently be examined individually, including the relevant participant data and an explanation of the specific statistical analyses conducted on the data for each of those categories. The report will conclude with an explication of these data as they relate to previously stated goals of the PROMISE Scholarship.

While the research base for merit aid is thin in relationship to studies concerning more established financial aid practices, continuing growth in the number of merit scholarship programs is a phenomenon that warrants examination. PROMISE constitutes a major policy intervention, hence the commissioning of this evaluation represents a commendable interest in the extent to which the scholarship is meeting its stated goals. It is hoped that the data and analyses contained herein will make a valuable contribution to that effort.
Procedures for Data Collection

There were two primary sources for the information contained herein: an online survey sent to all students who were offered PROMISE scholarships in the inaugural year of 2002 (both those who accepted the awards and those who didn’t) and a set of demographic data provided by the Research and Technology Office of the Higher Education Policy Commission. The 2002 recipients were chosen on the premise that if they persisted in obtaining the baccalaureate degree, they would have been scheduled to graduate in the spring of 2006 and would likely constitute the largest number of PROMISE scholars to have finished college.\(^3\) Four-thousand-seventy-three students qualified for the merit award in 2002, and all 4,073 were mailed an invitation to participate in the online survey. Two-hundred-eighty-one of those letters were returned unopened, leaving a population of 3,792. Of those 3,792, there were 1,183 who completed the survey, a return rate of only 31%. A return rate of that size signifies that any inferences that may be drawn from this study will be suggestive rather than conclusive.

There are two mitigating factors which indicate that the return rate may have been slightly higher. One involves calculating the number of returns in light of the number of students who actually used the award in 2002. While 4,073 awards were offered to eligible recipients, only 3,497 accepted. If the 1,183 returned surveys are measured against the number of students who accepted the award, the return rate increases to 33%. Moreover, if returns are calculated against the number of students who retained the

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\(^3\) This premise was verified by the survey returns. Only four respondents identified their graduation year as 2004, while 49 reported having been graduated in 2005. The largest number, 812, were either graduated in the spring semester of 2006, or are scheduled to be graduated in either August or December, 2006. These frequencies are provided in Appendix B.
awards for the full eight semesters (1,752), the return rate could rise as high as 67.5%.
Neither of these methods, however, is standard in survey research; thus, an overall return rate of only one-third cautions against conclusiveness.

The process for notifying students that their participation in the study was requested involved the mailing of a letter from the PROMISE office to the permanent addresses of recipients in April, 2006. It was reasoned that students would be approaching final examinations and preparing to leave campus, so the decision was made to contact them at their home addresses. Following the initial mailing, financial aid officers were asked to forward an e-mail message reiterating the invitation to participate to the PROMISE recipients on their respective campuses. A follow-up postcard was subsequently sent from the PROMISE office, also to students’ permanent addresses, reminding them to log on and complete the survey.

The survey was housed on the Higher Education Policy Commission’s server, providing a 128-bit secure socket layer (SSL) protection environment. Responses were thus confidential, although students were given an option to provide their student identification numbers in order to allow WVHEPC Research and Technology personnel to provide additional demographic information for purposes of data analysis. Nine-hundred-eighty-four numbers were matched.

**PROMISE Recipient Profile**

From a thorough analysis of the survey responses and demographic data supplied by the WVHEPC Research and Technology Office, a 2002 profile recipient can be constructed. Our profile recipient is a female whose overall high school GPA was 3.8.
Her GPA in the core courses was 3.7, and she posted an ACT score of 24 or an SAT score of 1148.

She attended a public high school with a student population of over 1,000 and was not the first in her family to attend college. Her family’s income at the time of application was $76,938 and their Expected Family Contribution (EFC) was $14,136. She identified her major field of study as “other,” posted a cumulative college GPA of 3.4, and kept her award for eight semesters.

In terms of the scholarship itself, our profile recipient reports she would still have pursued a postsecondary education and would have stayed in West Virginia for college even without the PROMISE award. She does not believe the renewal requirements had any effect on her academic performance in college, and thinks the requirements should remain as they are.

She would have accepted the scholarship had the amount of the award been smaller, but is undecided about whether she would have accepted had the award been extended in the form of a forgivable loan. She likely would not have accepted the scholarship if she were required to pay it back.

Our profile recipient does plan to pursue an advanced degree and hopes to do so in West Virginia. She shows some ambivalence, however, about whether she plans to seek employment in the state, indicating that if she ultimately decides to leave, the reasons are likely to be higher salaries in other states, difficulty locating a job in her field in the state, or simply the desire to experience life elsewhere. The PROMISE award, she reports, will not affect her decision to stay in West Virginia or leave.
**Survey Responses**

The online survey featured 22 questions, three of which gave respondents the option to provide additional comments, for a total of 25. Questions were grouped into the following categories: demographic information, pre-college information, postsecondary choices, renewal requirements, potential award changes, and post-graduation plans. Analysis of the survey responses will be examined in each of those categories.

The software used for the online survey, provided by the Higher Education Policy Commission, provided both the raw numbers and calculated means for each of the forced-choice items. Responses to the open-ended questions (i.e., the two questions which provided participants an opportunity for follow-up and the final “additional comments” option) were analyzed from a qualitative perspective using the phenomenological method to extract primary themes or patterns/directions.

Phenomenology is a three-step analytical process requiring description, reduction and interpretation. The objective of the descriptive step of the process is to thorough read through all of the comments provided with the intent to allow for the broadest number of themes to emerge. The second step, reduction, identifies those themes or patterns that can be seen as central to the issue under investigation (i.e., those which are most common) and grouping the comments under those themes. The interpretive step then requires the extraction of comments which most clearly summarize or represent the feelings of the participants in the study as they relate to those themes.

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4 The writer has no way of knowing whether specific responses were attributed to females or males. Students’ identities were kept confidential by the WVHEPC’s Research and Technology Office. The terms “she,” “he,” “her” and “his,” thus, are used arbitrarily in the interest of avoiding the clumsy constructions “she/he” and “her/his.”
Responses to both the forced-choice items and the open-ended comments will be discussed in the order in which they were presented in the survey according to the categories identified above. The survey instrument itself, with the raw numbers and percentages calculated by the survey software, can be found in Appendix C. Respondents’ open-ended comments are also presented in their entirety in Appendices D, E, F and G.

**Demographic Information**

Demographic information collected through the online survey included the sex of the respondents, their graduation dates, and their academic majors. These data were supplemented by additional demographic information provided by the Research and Technology Office of the Higher Education Policy Commission, discussed in a later section of this report.

The majority of students responding to the survey were female (65%) rather than male (35%). The majority reported their projected graduation date as the spring semester of 2006 (57%), with other dates spread among the remaining four choices.
When compared with national data on time-to-degree, these students appear to have fared better. Both the National Center for Education Statistics and the ACT use six years as the standard time-to-degree expectation for the baccalaureate degree and three years for the associate degree (ACT, 2006; NCES, 2003). Based on the demographic dataset provided by the WVHEPC’s Research and Technology Office, some of those who reported an “other” graduation date were students who attended and were graduated from two-year community and technical colleges, and others who reported the projected dates for their graduation from professional school (e.g., medical, dental, law). The survey did not ask respondents to indicate whether they attended two- or four-year institutions.

Academic majors were established by using a drop-down menu with CIP codes supplied by the WVHEPC’s Research and Technology Office. Only those majors identified by more than 50 respondents are featured in the chart below. Those with fewer than 50 responses may be found in the complete survey results in Appendix C.

Reported in percentages, the figures are these: 21% other; 14% education; 13% business; 7% biological sciences; 6% nursing; and 5% psychology.
**Pre-College Information**

Information gathered in the pre-college category included data regarding high school type and size, high school location, and whether respondents were the first in their families to attend college. An overwhelming majority of the respondents attended a public high school (94%), as opposed to private (5%) or being home-schooled (< 1%). The numbers on school size, however, were more uniform. Schools with student populations of fewer than 500 were attended by 292 of the survey respondents (25%), while 240 attended schools with populations of 500 to 750 (21%). Two-hundred-eighty-four of the respondents were graduated from schools with 750 to 1,000 students (25%) and 311 were from schools with student populations of over 1,000 (29%).

![High School Size Chart]

The locations of the schools attended by the survey respondents were also fairly evenly divided, with 540 attending urban/suburban schools (47%) and 587 attending rural
schools (51%). Two percent of the respondents reported having been home-schooled.

**High School Location**

Respondents were also asked whether they were the first in their families to attend college. A clear majority, 899, indicated they were not first-generation college attendees (78%), while 242 (22%) reported that they were the first in their families to pursue a postsecondary education.

**First-Generation Attendees**

*Postsecondary Choices*

This section of the survey focused on whether respondents would still have pursued a postsecondary education without the PROMISE award, whether they would still have attended college in West Virginia without the award, and the extent to which the award influenced their decision to stay in the state for college. An overwhelming
majority (1,108, or 97%) reported that they would have attended college regardless of whether they’d received the scholarship.

**Effect of PROMISE on College Attendance**

A substantial number also reported that they would have remained in West Virginia to attend college, even without the PROMISE award (804, or 71%).

**Effect of PROMISE on College Attendance in West Virginia**

Students were subsequently asked to provide a measure of the effect the scholarship had on their decision to remain in West Virginia, with options to report that PROMISE “had no effect on [their] decision” to attend an in-state institution, that it “had a minor effect,” that it “had a fair effect,” or that it “was the primary factor” in their choice. Only one-third (33%) reported that the award was the “primary factor” in their
decisions. Fourteen percent (163) indicated that the award had “no effect,” 16% (182) that it played a minor role, and 37% (422) that it exerted a “fair effect.”

Renewal Requirements

Students were asked their opinions regarding the requirements for retaining the scholarship in this section of the survey. There were two primary questions, one of which provided respondents with the option to provide additional comments. The first question probed the effect of renewal requirements on recipients’ academic performance in college. The majority, 843 respondents (73%), reported that “renewal requirements had no effect” on their performance, indicating that their “credit hours/GPA would have been the same with or without PROMISE.” Seven percent (77 respondents) believed their performance “would have been better without the renewal requirements,” while 20% (223 respondents) indicated their performance “would have been worse.”
Effect of PROMISE Renewal Requirements on Academic Performance

- No effect
- Better w/o renewal requirements
- Worse w/o renewal requirements

Students were subsequently asked whether they thought the renewal requirements should be changed. Consistent with the majority who reported the requirements had no effect on their academic performance, respondents answering this question indicated that there is no need to change the requirements (947, or 83%).

Should PROMISE Renewal Requirements Be Changed?

Seventeen percent, however, believed the requirements should undergo some changes, and their primary recommendation was to reduce the number of required credit hours per year (41%, or 76). Thirty-two percent (60) suggested that a lower cumulative GPA would be helpful in
retaining scholarships, and 27% (51) added that the requirements should allow for a lower GPA than 2.75 in the first year.

**Recommended Changes to Renewal Requirements**

As can be seen in the chart, however, the majority of students (85) responded to this question by choosing “other,” and each of the 85 suggested additional revisions. Recommendations were grouped into five separate categories: increasing requirements, decreasing requirements, weighting of academic majors, calculating academic credits/hours in a different fashion, and incorporating financial need into the eligibility equation. The latter was also mentioned several times in the open-ended comment section at the end of the survey, and will be discussed in a subsequent section of the report.

By far the most popular suggestion was that the renewal requirements be made more difficult to maintain. This is perhaps understandable in a population most of whom were able to retain their awards, but the number who emphasized this point was a large one. Representative of their suggestions were comments such as “demand a 3.5 [GPA] to
continue,” and some suggested that both the first-year and cumulative GPAs be increased. There was some disagreement on this point, however, with another student noting that “it’s easy to goof off and make a 2.75 the first year.” One respondent recommended “a combination of increased GPA [with] reduced credit hour” expectations, while others offered more general suggestions such as “[m]ake it more difficult to get,” “require better academic performance,” and “make it more strict, please.” Another had this to say:

Too many people are getting this scholarship because it is so easy to get. I could sleepwalk my way to a 3.0 GPA. I think it would make more sense to raise the requirements and use the rest of the leftover money to reduce in-state tuition for everyone else.

Several respondents addressed the motivational impact of the renewal requirements. One said, “If not for the requirements of PROMISE, I would have taken fewer credit hours per semester to cut back on academic stress. However, at the same time, meeting the requirements of PROMISE almost guarantees graduating in eight semesters and for that I’m grateful.” Others agreed, noting that the requirements “made [them] work harder,” “provided a great incentive,” and kept them from “slack[ing] off.”

While a smaller number suggested that renewal requirements be less rigid, they were clear on what they thought most problematic: GPA and credit hour issues. There were those who thought the freshman requirement too difficult, arguing that “the first year is the hardest [in] getting acclimated to college life,” and another pleading, “Give us a break in our first semester.” Some wanted a “grace period” during which they could “make up for” poor performance, and one suggested that “a semester or two of less than
2.75” would be reasonable. Others thought the cumulative GPA should be lowered, anywhere from 2.75 to 2.90 (although the latter admitted to having a 2.96 when he lost his scholarship). Several objected to having lost their awards by fractions. “It’s ridiculous,” one wrote, “for you to take away a student’s only form of financial aid if he/she drops even .1 point in his/her GPA. The ‘PROMISE’ is full of unfulfilled promises.” Another student appears to have had the same problem: “The scholarship is a good program, but I think it’s unfair to take it away from a student when [she misses] the GPA by a tenth of a point.”

The subject of credit hours was also a popular one, with many arguing that the 15-hours-per-semester requirement is just too difficult, particularly in terms of maintaining an adequate GPA. One respondent observed that her GPA was “still quite good (overall 3.4)” and that she didn’t think she “deserved to have the scholarship taken away due to hours.” Others expressed their frustration that lab and clinical hours are “not reflected in the credit hours.”

A few of the survey participants took issue with the egalitarian treatment of academic majors. Most thought the GPA for “more difficult majors” should be reduced, while increasing expectations for “easier majors.” One student was more blunt: “Artsie fartsies get a free ride through, but people pursuing real majors don’t get to keep [the scholarship].” Another respondent helpfully suggested a couple of majors that should be exempted from the GPA requirement (computer science and engineering), while a fellow student pointed out a discipline she thought should incur higher GPA expectations (communication studies).
Other students thought exceptions should be permitted for students who incur scheduling problems making it difficult to graduate in four years. In terms of calculating credit hours, one respondent recommended that “all credits, even those accrued during high school” be counted toward requirements. Another advised that factoring summer school hours into the equation, and one simply called for “us[ing] all college credits to count toward hours for renewal.”

Finally, there were students offering suggestions in this category regarding the consideration of financial need. One recommended that “only students whose families are in the lowest tax bracket” be able to apply for the award, and another advised that the scholarship “should be only given to those who need it.” Because the subject of financial need was not related directly to the issue of renewal requirements, a fuller examination of this particular issue (which was a concern voiced by numerous respondents) will occur later in this report as the end-of-survey “Additional Comments” are discussed. The complete list of recommendations concerning renewal requirements can be found in Appendix D.

**Potential Award Changes**

Potential changes to the scholarship were explored in this section of the survey. Students’ reactions were sought concerning whether a smaller award would have influenced their accepting it, and whether requirements that it either be repaid or that it assume the dimensions of a forgivable loan would have affected their acceptance as well. A clear majority (88%, or 1,004 respondents) reported they would still have accepted a smaller award. Only 43 (4%) would have rejected it, while 88 (5%) indicated they weren’t sure.
Responses concerning paying back the award, however, or working off a forgivable loan showed clearly different reactions. Only 24% of those responding (273) reported they would have accepted the award if they were required to pay it back upon graduation if they left the state. Forty percent (459) responded negatively, while 35% indicated they weren’t sure.

Numerous students took the opportunity at the end of the survey in the “Additional Comments” section to precisely articulate their feelings about future students possibly paying back their awards. One wrote, “The idea of having to pay the money back if you leave West Virginia after graduation is a little over the edge.” Another was more blunt: “I think that the question of whether or not we would have accepted the award if we had to work it off while staying in West Virginia to be somewhat appalling.” A peer agreed, saying “I do not think that you should change the amount or repayment of the scholarship because that was what it was created under [sic]. You do not create a scholarship that rewards hard work that is supposed to pay tuition and then make people pay it back.”

“Placing stipulations on PROMISE recipients that require them to stay in West Virginia after graduation or pay off their reward by working in the state will be detrimental,” wrote one respondent. “There are simply not enough economically beneficial job opportunities in this state for all the recipients; it would force graduates to
take jobs they are overqualified for, and they would be underpaid.” Another student agreed that it would be “inappropriate” to require students to remain in the state or pay back their loans: “That would only limit their opportunities after graduation .... If the program wants to keep more students in West Virginia, they perhaps they should offer special rewards to those who do, instead of punishing those who do not.”

Some of the comments were more strongly worded. One student dismissed the entire idea of paying back the scholarship as “ridiculous,” pointing out that “we live in a free country and should be able to move wherever we please.” Others took state leaders to task, arguing that the state isn’t working as hard to attract businesses as the students are working to maintain their scholarships, and that “[there’s no] evidence that the state is being properly managed, and those in power – with the exception of Joe Manchin – haven’t proven themselves.”

Respondents were fairly evenly divided on whether they would have accepted the award if it were in the form of a forgivable loan. Those reporting “yes” and “no” were exactly the same at 35% (403 and 402 respectively), while a lesser number indicated they weren’t sure. Some of the latter were concerned about the dimensions of a potential loan program, with one saying, “I don’t think requiring people to stay in West Virginia for a few years after completion of college is a bad idea, but don’t penalize them by making them pay the money back with interest.” Another agreed, observing that “if you

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5 The issue of what structure a potential forgivable loan may assume (i.e., with interest or without interest) was not addressed in the survey question. The question asked students only whether they would have accepted the award if it were a forgivable loan.
wish to offer a scholarship or loan that requires work in West Virginia in order to receive it, then that should be a different program.”

Others, however, were more receptive to the idea. One reported that “there need to be stipulations on the PROMISE program to keep students in West Virginia” Pointing out that “currently, students can receive a full education paid for by West Virginia and leave the state immediately after graduation,” the respondent continued to say, “West Virginia is not reaping any reward from their investment.” Another shared that perspective, offering “a suggestion for further thought: if [students] accept the PROMISE scholarship, they should be required to work in West Virginia for as many years as they accepted it .... I believe that if the state gives you a free ride (pretty much) through school, you should have to give something back to the state.”

**Post-Graduation Plans**

This section of the survey instrument focused on students’ plans after graduation and included questions concerning employment or the pursuit of an advanced degree. The first question in the category asked whether students had either acquired employment in West Virginia or whether they planned to seek employment in the state once they were graduated. Responses in this section too were evenly divided with 50% reporting they had either already secured in-state employment and 21% indicating that they either had not yet acquired a job or weren’t sure if they intended to pursue one (29%).

**Planning to Work in West Virginia?**

![Pie chart showing distribution of responses to the question: Planning to Work in West Virginia?](image)

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<thead>
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<th>Option</th>
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<tr>
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<td>No</td>
<td>21%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Not sure</td>
<td>29%</td>
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Students who responded negatively to this question were provided a follow-up query allowing them to indicate their reasons for potentially leaving the state.
after college.

Three possible choices were offered, as well as an option to choose “other” and insert their own explanations. Among the three choice options, the majority (45%) identified a desire to “live in and/or experience another place,” while another 39% reported their belief that “salaries are higher in other states.” Both are consistent with recent research indicating that the bachelor’s degree-holding population is the most mobile (Bound, Groen and Turner, 2001; Bound and Holzer, 2000; Hammond, 2003 and 2004; Heller, 2006; Heller and Rogers, 2004; Long, 1988; Longanecker, 2002).

![Why Leave WV?](chart.png)

As can be seen in the chart above, a sizable number of students (32%) responded to the question of why they weren’t seeking employment in West Virginia by choosing “other,” offering alternative rationales. The majority of them reported that the positions they were seeking did not exist in the state or that salaries are higher elsewhere. Some offered general expressions, such as “there are better opportunities out of state,” while others were more specific. One noted her “specialty is GIS/geography” and that she’s found no job here, while others cited theater arts, visual arts, civil engineering, international law, and forensic biology.
Some respondents felt that while they could find employment in the state, they could expect better salaries elsewhere. One explained his frustration:

I witnessed firsthand the hardships in trying to find a job in West Virginia. I graduated in December with a 3.9 GPA in accounting/finance and the best job that I could find was starting out at less than $10 an hour. I love this state and I hope that I never have to relocate outside of the state, but the bottom line is there are not many good-paying, professional type jobs in the state.

Another December 2005 graduate whose field is public relations had the same concern, saying he’d been rejected [for] jobs because he’s “overqualified.” One student who identified her fields as intelligence research and analysis/political science, was particularly discouraged: “I have applied for 20-some jobs [in West Virginia], ranging from some that are above my standards and some that are below, and have not received a single call ... I applied for possibly five jobs out of state and received two interviews within a few months.”

Among others who were concerned about salaries, one felt that “a good job with advancement potential and no ‘glass ceiling’ of pay and benefits can’t be found in West Virginia.” Another explained that he’s leaving West Virginia because “there’s no future here ... [and] the reason for this is, no matter what occupation we students choose to pursue, West Virginia pays virtually nothing compared to most other states.

Interestingly, a full 15% of those responding to this question reported their reasons for leaving the state were family-related. Several indicated that their spouses or those to whom they were engaged to be married were going to be working out of state,
and others reported that their parents lived elsewhere and that they would be joining them. Among these also were those who plan to either join the armed forces themselves or to join a spouse who is already on duty. There were students who were taking their future families into consideration as well, noting that they’ll seek a state with outstanding K-12 schools.

Several of the comments related to perceptions of medical care and medical malpractice insurance. Some are clearly future physicians concerned about the cost of practicing in the state (“medical malpractice insurance in this state is outrageous” and “WV malpractice insurance is exorbitant), while others want “larger” or “better” hospitals or hospitals “with better reputations.” Those planning careers in nursing noted that “salaries are higher in other states” and that “WV hospitals are not making efforts for nurse satisfaction/retention.”

Some of the respondents reported they hadn’t yet sought employment because they’d be continuing to graduate school in programs that aren’t available in West Virginia. Most simply indicated “no WV schools offer a graduate degree in my field,” but others mentioned specific academic majors – clinical neuropsychology and health psychology among them.

A few respondents took the opportunity to express their general dissatisfaction with circumstances in West Virginia. One indicated that “the quality of life is better elsewhere” and another that “I just don’t want to live here anymore.” Some had more strongly stated opinions: “West Virginia is dead. Period.” Some, however, had a lighter perspective, with one noting he “need[s] a bigger music scene” and another that his reason for leaving is that West Virginia is “lacking in snowfall.”
On the subject of pursuing an advanced degree, the responses were encouraging. Seventy-two percent of the students reported they do plan to acquire further education, with only 8% responding “no” and 20% indicating they weren’t sure. Moreover, of the 72% reporting they plan to pursue an advanced degree, 64% plan to do so in West Virginia. Nineteen percent reported their intent to study elsewhere, while 17% responded that they weren’t sure.

Students who reported they were either disinclined to stay in the state for advanced study or who indicated they weren’t sure were given a follow-up question allowing them to specify their reasons for possibly leaving for graduate or professional school. Two possible choices were provided, as well as an option to choose “other” and offer their own answers. Thirty percent selected “[a] graduate degree in my field is not available in West Virginia,” while 32% simply “prefer to attend an out-of-state school.” The majority (48%), however, had other reasons.

Comments of the 114 students who chose “other” fell into three broad categories: the perception that the quality of graduate programs is better at out-of-state schools, uncertainty about where they’ll be living and/or working, and a desire to experience a different...
Among those who were concerned about the quality issue, one summed it up well: “I need a university that excels in my chosen [field of] study.” Others suggested that graduate programs in West Virginia “are not rigid enough,” or that they’re seeking a “more prestigious program” or “more selective” school.

Several were uncertain about their locations after graduation, noting either that they “don’t know where [they’ll] go yet” or that where they attend graduate school “depends on where [they’re] living” when they decide to enroll. A couple also noted that the decision would be affected by their employers. One wrote, “My employer offers a large annual allowance for continuing education; this is a company not located in WV. Not many WV companies make this offer.” Another confirmed that prospect, noting that her/his “employer will pay for [the] advanced degree, [so I] must go where the employer finds acceptable.”

Among those reporting that they simply want to experience another community or campus, most expressed a preference for a larger institution or city. One also noted that “having two different schools from two different states would look better [on the resume’].” There were also a few who preferred a fully-online degree.

The final question in this section on post-graduation plans is a critical one for policymakers. Students were asked whether having received the PROMISE award had any effect on their decisions to stay in West Virginia after completing college. The vast majority, 82%, said “no.”

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<th>Did PROMISE Affect Decision to Stay in WV or Leave?</th>
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[Image: PROMISE effects on stay or leave]
As was noted above in the explanation of responses volunteered by students who indicated they would be leaving the state to find employment, this finding is consistent with research in both the higher education and economic fields focusing on the migration patterns of traditional aged college graduates. Bound et al. (2001) found “only a modest relationship” between the numbers of college degrees produced within a state and the number of college-educated workers in a state’s population in the long run:

Our results point to the finding that state policymakers have only a modest capacity to influence the human capital levels of their populations by investing in higher education. Within this relatively limited sphere of influence, the structure of specific labor markets – particularly the elasticity of demand for labor and the relative mobility of capital and labor – will substantially affect the expected link between degree production in the education market and the concentration of college-educated workers in the work force. (p. 38)

Additional Comments

Survey respondents were invited to provide any additional comments they wished, and no fewer than 624 of them took the opportunity to do so. Students’ remarks were coded into six broad categories, some of which reprise previous open-ended questions (i.e., recommended changes to the renewal requirements, leaving the state for graduate school, and leaving to find employment). As those comments were discussed in the sections above, they will not be repeated here.
The remaining three categories are appreciation, the nature of the award (i.e., merit-based vs. need-based), and additional programmatic recommendations. The complete text of respondents’ observations can be found in Appendix G.

**Appreciation.** By far, this category netted the largest number of comments, with numerous “thank you” sentiments and other similar expressions of gratitude. Many characterized PROMISE as “a great incentive to make kids perform well in school,” “a wonderful program that motivates and helps young people,” and “a great asset [that will] increase the number of educated professionals in the state.” Several were also grateful that the award helped to defray their private school tuition.

Several respondents acknowledged specifically the latitude that the award gave them with expenses other than tuition. One noted that “combined with summer internships and a few extra scholarships, I have been able to almost fully fund all of my expenses outside of tuition on my own.” Others reported using additional scholarships for books and fees while relying on PROMISE for tuition, being able to save money for graduate or professional degrees while in undergraduate school, and attending the college of choice rather than commuting to a closer institution. A few were especially pleased to be able to reside on campus rather than commute, but another had this to say: “Yes, I would have gone to college regardless of receiving the award or not, but I would have been forced to live on campus.”

The subject of debt/loan avoidance dominated much of the appreciative comments discussion. Many students mentioned the fact that they would be facing significant debt had PROMISE not paid their tuition, with one observing, “If it hadn’t been for the PROMISE scholarship, I would be neck-deep in student loans at this point.” Others
agreed, noting that they were graduating “debt-free,” that they’d feel “more secure” after graduation “without major loans to pay back,” or that with the money they’d saved as undergraduates, they’d be better able to fund their own graduate education. Several also observed that by bundling PROMISE with their other scholarships, they would be graduating “without owing a penny.” Some also mentioned that having their tuition paid meant they did not have to work while in school, resulting in better academic performance.

**Merit-Based vs. Need-Based.** The issue of whether PROMISE should incorporate a need-based component or remain strictly merit-based was clearly on survey respondents’ minds, generating a substantial number of comments and/or recommendations. For that reason, it was decided that the subject deserved a section of its own.

Among those who urged that policymakers consider factoring financial need into the award calculus, there were two primary themes: observations that many of their peers came from families that could have well afforded to pay tuition, and that among these students, there were many who took the award retention requirements less than seriously. Students addressing this subject were inclined to write fairly lengthy comments, many of which demonstrated that their knowledge of the issue is broader than their own campus experiences. One student, for example, offered this explanation for her advocacy of a need-based component:

Please limit the PROMISE to a lower standard and to only those who need it. Too many really smart people are getting it who already have plenty of aid and those who really need it who don’t quite make the same grades are
being left behind. The academic performance of students of West Virginia can be linked to their household monetary worth. Wealthy students tend to do better since they have more opportunities, and these students don’t need the financial assistance that underprivileged students who try hard, but the stresses of college costs distract them. I received the PROMISE along with enough other scholarships that I was handed a check at the beginning of each semester. There were those who needed the money more than me, but because I did so well academically, I received the money that someone else really needed .... I made as good use of the money provided to me as possible, but I feel that I didn’t need the scholarship as bad[ly] as some others out there.

Others shared this student’s perspective, writing “[s]ome students received this money without needing it and that took away from those who did,” or “[h]onestly, I felt a little guilty accepting the scholarship because I would have been able to go to college without it and have never had plans to stay in West Virginia.”

Some were also concerned that what they perceived as the original intent of PROMISE had been subverted. One wrote, “The PROMISE scholarship certainly worked out in my favor, but I believe that it did not serve the purpose for which it was originally intended. By making the qualifications to receive the award GPA and SAT/ACT score-based, many students that would have been better served by the scholarships were denied.” Another agreed, saying, “[H]earing that [PROMISE] is running out of money and knowing the requirements have been raised so much makes me feel it is no longer
helping those it originally planned to help.” One respondent clarified what he understood as the original intent of the award:

West Virginia does not have the highest ACT average score; however, the standards were raised so that only high-achieving test takers could receive the scholarship. Those high-achieving test takers receive college scholarships anyway. This was not what Governor Wise wanted. It has been tinkered with to the point that it is unattainable to most West Virginia public school students.

A peer shared that viewpoint, asking, “Don’t the 4.0, rich, honors students receive enough scholarships? Does a person really need five scholarships if one student does not receive any money for school?”

There were a number of respondents, however, who advocated that the award remain strictly merit-based, and their remarks were no less lengthy. One had this to say:

There are so many need-based forms of assistance available that it is possible for a student of lesser academic integrity to receive more aid and ultimately pay back less [sic] loans that a student with an impeccable record merely due to the fact that the former student’s family has a lower income than the latter’s. Tell me, does that make any sense? What kind of message is that sending to all the good students out there? With the PROMISE, the fact that my family makes a comfortable income was not going to be held against me ...

There was substantial agreement on this position, with others noting that “the PROMISE program should NEVER become a need-based program” (emphasis in original) and “I do
not feel that the scholarship should be anything other than a merit-based award, not a need-based one.” One student summed it up:

I didn’t work hard in school just so people who NEED the scholarships could get them. My efforts should be rewarded, not undermined by providing it only for those students who families have a lower EFC. I also do not believe a cap should be put into place. The idea behind the scholarship was to keep students in the state. How is it right to limit the amount [sic] of students who get it, or to limit the amount that it covers?

(Emphasis in original.)

Numerous students offered specific suggestions for constructing the financial guidelines that will be discussed in the next section on recommendations.

**PROMISE Recommendations.** The other issue to dominate the “Additional Comments” section was recommendations from students regarding changes to PROMISE they would consider beneficial. Their suggestions spanned several subjects, including more leniency for students in the freshman year; a grace period for students who fail to meet renewal requirements for a semester; changes in the eligibility criteria (making them either easier or tougher); extensions on the award period; private school tuition; specific income/financial recommendations; and others which were mentioned and discussed previously (e.g., weighting majors, reducing credit hour expectations, etc.).

The suggestions related to the **freshman year** were uniform, with those concerned pleading for more leniency. “Requirements are a little hard for first-year students,” wrote one respondent, while another pointed out that “freshmen need [time] to successfully adapt to college life ... Think of a lower, say 2.0, GPA for the first semester or year.”
Many agreed with the student who observed that “a 2.75 GPA [isn’t] that much to ask,” but “for the first year, it is a little on the demanding side.”

There were some who extended the discussion of GPA requirements beyond the freshman year, suggesting a grace period of sorts for upperclassmen as well. “Maybe you should give students one grace semester if their GPA doesn’t meet minimum requirements so they may try to make up [for the loss],” wrote one respondent. Another student “would have liked [PROMISE] better had it been forgiving about a semester, and if you screwed up, you could fix it the next semester and reapply.”

The issue of initial eligibility criteria generated numerous comments, perhaps not surprising given the 83% who responded negatively to the earlier question of whether renewal requirements should be changed. Some respondents focused specifically on test scores. One recounted her own experience, writing, “I am a hardworking student and it took me three tries just to get a 21 on the ACT ... Not all students are excellent test takers.” Another agreed, asking that there be no “significant increase in the importance of standardized test scores to receive the award. Many students, including myself, do not perform extremely well on such tests.”

A suggestion that there be a mitigating factor inserted into the test-score criterion came from one student. “There should be some type of appeals and exceptions committee,” she wrote, “or some way teachers can recommend students who deserve the scholarship and have the work ethic ... that will help them be successful in college despite what the ACT or SAT scores say.”

As was the case with the merit-based-vs.-need-based debate, however, there were others who felt eligibility requirements should be stiffer. “Requirements to obtain the
scholarship are too soft,” wrote one student, who was joined by several others agreeing that “initial requirements are too low” or that “this scholarship was the easiest to get and keep of any that I was eligible for.” Some offered specific recommendations for “more stringent entry requirements,” such as “an increase to [the] high school GPA of 3.25 to 3.5 and an increased ACT score.” Another who agreed believed that if the eligibility criteria were raised, “only serious students would get the scholarship.”

The issue of adequate funding for the scholarship was mentioned by respondents in this area as well. “If you want to save some money,” wrote one student, “make it harder to receive and maintain.” Another suggested that “if there is any problem with funding, I would recommend that the requirements for qualifying be increased.” One respondent offered this summary:

[I]f something needs to be done to lower the financial burden the state is facing due to the program, the minimum GPA requirements needed for eligibility must be raised. I felt no pressure through school to be able to keep the 3.0 GPA, and the entry requirements were not very strict as well. I feel that something as prestigious as the PROMISE scholarship should be made available for only the higher echelon of achieving students, and the requirements set forth at this time only require the average student to maintain mediocre GPA requirements.

The subject of extending the award maximum beyond eight semesters encompassed several issues, among them limitations on how the award may be used or how long it should continue, scheduling problems, and lack of funding for summer school. One student who completed his baccalaureate program in three-and-a-half years
felt he’d been unfairly denied his last semester of funding: “I started my graduate
education immediately following my undergrad and PROMISE did not pay for my first
semester. I received only 3.5 years of funding from PROMISE.”

Many of the comments related to extending the scholarship’s duration came from
students unhappy that their graduate education would not be subsidized. Several felt
PROMISE “should continue past the four years if the student has [met the retention
requirements],” particularly if they were immediately entering a graduate program:

The four-year payment was nice, but now I have to come up with a whole
year on my own because my bachelor’s degree will not get me a job in the
field I’ve been pursuing. Based on a student’s GPA after graduation from
college, then the student should receive funding for furthering his/her
graduate education.

Another student shared that perspective, writing, “My GPA is a 3.6 and after this
year, I lose my tuition and have to figure out how to pay for two more years of school. I
think if you honored your four-year commitment to keeping PROMISE, you should be
allowed to keep it until you graduate.” One thought it “unreasonable to take away a
student’s main source of college financial aid after four years.”

There were some who felt that the program’s original intent was to fully fund
five-year programs. “It was promised to our class that if we were in a five-year program,”
wrote one student, “the PROMISE scholarship could be extended and that was not true.”
That perception was shared by other respondents:

Originally, if we were attending a five-year program, the PROMISE was
going to cover our fifth year’s tuition .... Now I have to get loans to cover
my graduate tuition. The PROMISE scholarship discourages people from choosing careers in pharmacy, dentistry, medicine, etc. It’s not fair that students choosing health professions are limited in their scholarships because their education is more expensive.

That position was shared by students in the occupational therapy field and students in WVU’s five-year education program as well.

Some students in two-year programs were displeased as well. One such respondent wrote that “due to scheduling conflicts,” an extra semester was required to complete her degree. “I had to foot the bill for tuition, books and room out of my own pocket,” she reported, observing that “it wasn’t my fault they didn’t offer certain classes at certain times, so I think that really wasn’t fair!”

Lack of funding for summer classes troubled several respondents, one of whom observed, “the renewal requirements pertaining to required hours should be adjusted or money should be given to cover costs of summer courses.” Several supported that position, with most reporting that “it is not always possible to enroll in 15 credit hours per semester at school.” There were also some who were unhappy with what they perceived as the narrow conception of eligible programs – specifically the omission of hospital-based programs, which some characterized as “unfair.”

Students who chose private colleges/universities also chafed under what they considered unequal treatment, with one characterizing the situation as “punishment for being accepted into a private college.” Another “did not appreciate the fact that [she] did not receive the ‘full promise’ simply because [she] attended a private school.” One respondent took a more measured approach, however, with a suggestion:
PROMISE did not pay anywhere near my full tuition because I went to a private college. I would not ask that our whole tuition be paid [at private schools], but maybe slightly more than what is given because some of don’t have other options at cheaper schools. The scholarship should be pro-rated based on tuition costs at various schools. I feel I have received a better education by attending a private school, but my award did not cover my full tuition.

There were several respondents who offered suggestions for *ameliorating the financial difficulties* facing the PROMISE program. Among the recommendations were these:

- Perhaps there should be different levels to PROMISE, where a certain GPA and [test] score get you a 50% scholarship, a level that pays 75%, and a higher level, say 3.8 and a 28 ACT score that pays 100%.
- The higher the performance, the greater the award could be a possibility.
- Less fortunate students should be given greater priority with the scholarship and more fortunate students should get only a percentage of their tuition paid.
- There could be a cap put on the income recipients’ families can make in order to be eligible.

Other remarks in the “Additional Comments” section did not fall neatly into any of the categories above. They did, however, offer some interesting suggestions. One student, for example, reported that he “did not renew [his] scholarship in my last year of eligibility because [he] only needed 10 credit hours.
He continued to say that he “even thought of staying full-time so [he] would not have to pay anything ... How many stay full-time just to keep the PROMISE benefits? Would it be cheaper for you to offer part-time aid to students like me?”

Another asked for more clarity in “what PROMISE covers and what it doesn’t,” reporting that she had “registered for an online class and [her] dad had to pay for it.” One respondent recommended that “PROMISE [be] accompanied by an education program about scholarship programs and advanced degree options for first-generation students,” and another that “mentorships [be made available] for first-generation students.”

Interestingly, or perhaps inevitably in a population of this size, there were those who demonstrated a level of skepticism regarding the management of the program. One respondent “believe[d] you have raised the requirements yearly so as to not bankrupt the program, which I believe has lessened the effectiveness of the program.” Another felt intentional dismissal was a possibility: “Students who have proven through their grades and scores that they are worthy of college should be given this scholarship .... without the board trying to eliminate them.” This student was especially unhappy:

I firmly believe that since I didn’t know what I was doing when I signed up for classes, the counselor [who] knew I had the PROMISE put me with a load full of difficult classes to test me and see that I would have a hard time. I believe the presumed outcome was that most students would not meet the criteria anyway .... [I]f there are any doubts in your mind that I support the PROMISE scholarship, let me reassure you, I DON’T!!! Next time, don’t promise something [and] then try to make sure people fail out” (emphasis in original).
Another seconded that opinion, writing, “I detest the ‘bait and switch’ game on the PROMISE program. West Virginia should stick with the original guidelines, not change them in midstream because they underestimated the amount [sic] of students that would participate.”

Finally, there were a few comments about the survey itself. One student took exception to the distribution process, pointing out that “the letter [inviting survey participation] was one sheet of paper ... flat in a large manilla envelope that cost significantly more [to mail]” than a standard letter-sized envelope. “The program could have spent the money better by using it for sending more West Virginians to college,” he observed. Another, however, was pleased with the opportunity to share her thoughts: “I’m glad those of us who originally received the scholarship have this opportunity to participate anonymously in a survey about the program.”

Further Statistical Analyses

This section of the report will present the findings resulting from various statistical analyses conducted by incorporating demographic data provided by the WVHEPC’s Office of Research and Technology into the survey data. Students who responded to the survey questions were given an option to provide their student identification numbers in order to allow WVHEPC Research and Technology personnel to provide additional demographic information for purposes of data analysis. Nine-hundred-eighty-four numbers were matched, an 85% sample of the population.

There was no identifying information in the dataset forwarded by the Research and Technology Office. As was stipulated in the data usage agreement, all findings are reported in the aggregate and students’ identities are known only to WVHEPC personnel.
Statistical tests performed with these additional data included descriptive analyses (means, modes, frequencies, etc.), correlations to look for relationships between and among variables, and linear regressions to test the strength of identified correlations. All statistical analyses were conducted using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) software. Results of these tests will be reported in essentially the same categories that were established for reporting the survey data: demographics, pre-college/admissions criteria, postsecondary attendance and performance, potential award changes, and post-graduation plans.

As the findings in this section of the report are examined, it is important to bear in mind that the characteristics of both the sample and the population from which it was extracted were highly homogeneous. The results, thus, do not show the kind of variance one might expect to see if the entire class of students who were graduated from high school in 2002 were included in the population.

This is an exclusive sample, all of whom met the eligibility requirements for PROMISE; hence, the findings reflect that homogeneity. Unacceptable levels of skewedness and kurtosis (measures of normal/abnormal distribution of data) affected many of the statistical analyses. Additionally, skewed demographic variables had an impact on the analyses (e.g., nearly two-thirds of the respondents were female (65%), which led to some misleading results based on sex; 94% of the respondents attended public schools; 930 took the ACT as opposed to the SAT, etc.), as did certain overwhelming responses (e.g., 98% reported they would have attended college with or without PROMISE). These kinds of figures occasionally tended to suggest relationships where none existed.
All of the variables in each category were tested against each other and against all other variables in all other categories. Following standard research reporting, only significant results will be identified and discussed and there will be no duplication (e.g., the relationship between income and ACT/SAT scores will be discussed in the demographics section, where “income” resided as a variable, and will not be repeated in the section on pre-college/ admissions criteria). Those instances in which skewedness and/or kurtosis in the data led to misleading results are not addressed in the narrative. All correlational matrices, linear regressions, probability plots and other statistical outputs, however, can be found in Appendix J.

**Demographics**

The demographic variables used for analyses incorporated four items from the survey instrument: the student’s sex, school type (i.e., public, private or home), school location (i.e., urban/suburban, rural or home), and school size. These were supplemented by two items provided by the WVHEPC’s Research and Technology Office: family income and the family’s expected financial contribution to the student’s postsecondary education (EFC).

**Descriptive Statistics.** The production of descriptive statistics involves the calculation of figures establishing means, medians, modes, standard deviations, frequencies, etc. Because four of the variables in this category – sex, school type, school size and school location – were reported with the survey results, there was no benefit to be derived from further descriptive analyses of them. The remaining two variables of family income and EFC, however, did provide an opportunity for examination.
Family incomes for the 984 students in the database were extraordinarily unique; so much so that a frequency test revealed that only two of the 984 figures were exactly the same. Means, ranges, percentiles and standard deviations were calculated, however, and are discussed below.

### Descriptive Statistics: Mean Family Income

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Minimum</th>
<th>Maximum</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std. Deviation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Income</td>
<td>984</td>
<td>$550.00</td>
<td>$702,398.00</td>
<td>$76,938.09</td>
<td>$55,812.54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Valid N</td>
<td>984</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Clearly, the range of incomes represented in the sample is a large one, ranging from a low of $550 to a high of $702,398, with an average of $76,938. There are, however, some “gaps” in the figures, possibly allowing those figures at the extremes of the family income continuum to inaccurately reflect the mean. The $550 figure, for example, is $3,066 less than the figure immediately above it; similarly, the $702,398 figure is $15,033 higher than the figure immediately below it and $252,398 higher than the next figure. For that reason, another mean calculation was done, omitting the extreme figures at both ends of the income column.

### Descriptive Statistics: Mean Family Income Minus Extremes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Minimum</th>
<th>Maximum</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std. Deviation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Income</td>
<td>971</td>
<td>$10,528.00</td>
<td>$450,000.00</td>
<td>$76,473.75</td>
<td>$55,48,076.14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Valid N</td>
<td>971</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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6 The U.S. Census Bureau draws a distinction between “family” and “household” incomes. Because the financial aid calculus uses family income in calculating EFC, the report cites the national means and median family income figures for comparison. The household income figures, however, both state and national, are lower than family incomes across the board.
As the table indicates, removing the extremes did little to change the outcome, reducing the average family income by only $465. Both averages exceed the mean family income for West Virginia, which was $48,111 in 2002 (US Census Bureau, 2003). The median family income for West Virginians in 2002 (i.e., the figure that is precisely in the middle of the family income range, with half earning more and half earning less) was $38,568, while the median family income for the PROMISE sample was $66,628. A complete chart of 2002 family median incomes by state, provided by the U.S. Census Bureau (2003) can be found in Appendix I.

Because family income and the expected family contribution to the student’s postsecondary education are so closely related, the descriptive figures for EFC are quite similar to those for family income.

**Descriptive Statistics: Mean EFC**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Minimum</th>
<th>Maximum</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std. Deviation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>EFC</td>
<td>984</td>
<td>$0</td>
<td>$99,999.00</td>
<td>$14,135.86</td>
<td>$18,410.86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Valid N</td>
<td>984</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Applying the same process of omitting the extremes as was done with the family income data, the result is nearly the same. While the minimum is increased by $1,049 and the maximum decreased by $2,965, the average is nearly identical.

**Descriptive Statistics: Mean EFC Minus Extremes**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Minimum</th>
<th>Maximum</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std. Deviation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>EFC</td>
<td>874</td>
<td>$1,049.00</td>
<td>$97,034.00</td>
<td>$14,134.04</td>
<td>$15,056.27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Valid N</td>
<td>874</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


A comparison of the average EFCs for PROMISE recipients with the average EFCs for full-time undergraduates nationally yields the table below. The finding that the EFCs for PROMISE recipients are higher across the board than the national figures can be explained, as noted in the introduction to this section of the report, by the homogeneity of the sample. Were we to examine the EFCs of all students applying for financial aid in the state, the averages would likely be lower. Likewise, were we to compare the EFCs of PROMISE recipients with the EFCs of other merit-based scholarship recipients, the averages would show more parity.

### Descriptive Statistics: Mean United States Undergraduate EFC and PROMISE EFC

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Lowest Quartile</th>
<th>Lower-Middle Quartile</th>
<th>Upper-Middle Quartile</th>
<th>Highest Quartile</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>$1,288</td>
<td>$1,740</td>
<td>$5,076</td>
<td>$10,881</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>$5,765</td>
<td>$11,959</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>$24,956</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>$37,416</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Additional Analyses for “Demographics.”

1) Correlational tests and linear regressions (and other tests when appropriate) were conducted on each of the variables in the “Demographics” category against each other variable within that same category. While it appeared there were several significant correlations between and among the variables within the “Demographics” category, subsequent regression analyses indicated that most were misleading (e.g., the apparent correlation between public/private/home school and urban/suburban/ rural school occurred because the vast majority of schools

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7 The most recent figures for U.S. undergraduates are from 1999-2000, provided by the National Center for Education Statistics (2000). The figures for the PROMISE sample are from 2002.
represented in the sample were public). There was, however, an expected correlation between family income and EFC, illustrated in Table 1. A subsequent linear regression of these two variables confirmed the relationship.

Table 1

*Bivariate Correlation Between Family Income and EFC*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subscale</th>
<th>Income</th>
<th>EFC</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Income</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>.786**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. EFC</td>
<td>.786**</td>
<td>--</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

While correlations between and among the variables within the “Demographics” category itself weren’t plentiful, those between and among two of the demographic variables – family income and EFC – with variables in other categories were broadly distributed. Both variables correlated with at least one other variable in nearly every category.

2) The following table reflects the second analysis, which looked for correlations between family income and/or EFC from the “Demographics” category and the four variables in the “Admissions Criteria” category (i.e., ACT and SAT scores, high school GPA and high school GPA in the core subjects).
Table 2

*Bivariate Correlations Among Family Income and Admissions Criteria*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subscale</th>
<th>Income</th>
<th>ACT</th>
<th>SAT</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Income</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>-.079*</td>
<td>.151**</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).
** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

The correlations are not unexpected in light of the research linking income and student achievement (Advisory Committee on Student Financial Aid Assistance, 2006; Hauptman, 2005; Heller, 2003; Heller, 2006; Heller and Marin, 2002; Heller and Rogers, 2004; Kodrzycki, 2001; Mathews, 2005; Redd, 2004; Schmidt, 2004; Selingo, 2001), and common relationships between and among test scores. Linear regressions were conducted nonetheless in order to confirm the relationships.

Among the stronger relationships was family income with SAT (higher family income suggests higher test scores). The association between income and ACT was weaker at .05, and is likely attributable to the large number of students in the sample who took the ACT rather than the SAT. The mean ACT and SAT scores are below.

**Descriptive Statistics: Mean ACT and SAT**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Minimum</th>
<th>Maximum</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std. Deviation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ACT</td>
<td>930</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>24.62</td>
<td>2.915</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SAT</td>
<td>200</td>
<td>110</td>
<td>1530</td>
<td>1148.29</td>
<td>148.986</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
As noted previously, the relationship between family income and SAT score featured the strongest correlation between variables in the categories of demographics and admissions criteria. The association is illustrated in the table below.

**Table 3**

*Bivariate Correlation Between Family Income and SAT*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subscale</th>
<th>Income</th>
<th>SAT</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Income</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>.151**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. SAT</td>
<td>.151**</td>
<td>--</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

The correlation between EFC and SAT score parallels that found between income and SAT at almost the same magnitude (.141 vs. .151), in the same direction (positive), and at the same significance (at the 0.01 level). There were no significant correlations between EFC and ACT score, overall GPA or GPA in the core.

**Table 4**

*Bivariate Correlation Between EFC and SAT*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subscale</th>
<th>EFC</th>
<th>SAT</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. EFC</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>.141**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. SAT</td>
<td>.141**</td>
<td>--</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).
Overall, the relationships between the demographic variables of income and EFC with admissions criteria were strong where extant research suggested they would be strong. There is nothing in this set of analyses to contradict current knowledge.

3) The third statistical analysis searched for correlations between the variables in “Demographics” and “College Attendance/Performance.” Variables in the latter category combined elements from the survey (i.e., identification as a first-generation college student, whether respondents would still have attended college without PROMISE, the effect of PROMISE on their decision to attend a college in West Virginia, whether they would have attended college in West Virginia without PROMISE, and whether they felt the academic requirements for renewal of the scholarship affected their academic performance in college) and from the dataset provided by the WVHEPC Research and Technology Office (i.e., cumulative college GPA and number of awards).

As was the case with the demographic variables and admissions criteria, the two demographics to return significant correlations were family income and EFC. Strong correlations were found between income and first-generation attendance (the higher the income, the higher the likelihood they said “no”); whether academic renewal requirements had any effect on their academic performance (the higher the income, the higher the likelihood they said “no”); and the number of awards received (the higher the income, the higher the number of awards renewed). Linear regressions confirmed the strength of the correlations, and the table below illustrates these relationships.
Table 5

**Bivariate Correlations Among Income and College Attendance and Performance**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subscale</th>
<th>Income</th>
<th>1st Gen.</th>
<th>Effect of Renewal Reqs.</th>
<th># of Awards</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Income</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>.210**</td>
<td>-.064**</td>
<td>.099**</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).**

Interestingly, while the EFC variable also correlated with first-generation attendance (the higher the EFC, the higher the likelihood they said “no” to being first-generation), and the number of awards received (the higher the EFC, the higher the number of awards renewed), there was no correlation between EFC and whether academic renewal requirements had any effect on their academic performance (as was the case with income).

Table 6

**Bivariate Correlations Among EFC and College Attendance and Performance**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subscale</th>
<th>EFC</th>
<th>1st Gen.</th>
<th># of Awards</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. EFC</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>.176**</td>
<td>.102**</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).**
Overall, the relationships between the demographic variables of income and EFC with the variables in the “College Attendance and Performance” category follow the pattern established in the previous categories – strong where the current body of research indicates we should expect them to be strong.

4) Correlations between the categories of “Demographics” and “Potential Award Changes” were conducted in the fourth analysis. The four variables in the “potential changes” category examined whether students thought changes should be made to the renewal requirements, whether they would have accepted the award if they were required to pay it back, whether they would have accepted it if it came in the form of a forgivable loan, and whether they would have accepted the award if it were smaller (i.e., if it did not fully cover the cost of tuition). Only one relationship emerged from correlating the demographic variables with these questions: a significant relationship between income and whether renewal requirements should be changed. The higher the income figure, the more likely students were to say “no” to changing requirements.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subscale</th>
<th>Income</th>
<th>Change Renewal Requirements</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Income</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>-.087**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Change Renewal Reqs.</td>
<td>-.087**</td>
<td>--</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).
A subsequent linear regression reflected the same outcome, although the number of respondents who chose “no” to the question of whether renewal requirements should be changed (83%) affected the linear model. Other correlations emerged within the “Potential Award Changes” category and between the variables in that category and others that will be discussed later in the report.

5) The fifth analysis to be run correlated the variables in the “Demographics” category with the variables in “Post-Graduation Plans.” Variables in the latter category included whether respondents had acquired or would attempt to acquire employment in West Virginia, whether they would pursue an advanced degree, whether those planning an advanced degree would enroll in a graduate or professional school in West Virginia, and whether PROMISE had any effect on their decision to remain in the state after graduation or leave. There were no meaningful correlations between/among the variables in theses two categories, although there were some relationships to emerge within post-graduation plans. Those relationships and relationships between the variables in the “Post-Graduation Plans” and variables in other categories will be discussed in a subsequent section.

Admissions Criteria

The “Admissions Criteria” category included only four variables: ACT score, SAT score, high school GPA, and high school GPA in the core subjects. The variables in this category that correlated with those in the “Demographics” category were discussed in the previous section. This section of the report will examine the relationships between
and among the variables within the “Admissions Criteria” category, and between the variables in the admissions category and the remaining categories.

There were several correlations within the category, owing to the homogeneity of the sample (i.e., all are students who qualified for the award, hence their GPAs and test scores were all high; the within-category analysis, thus, featured high levels of skewedness and kurtosis – both of which affect the distribution curve – as well as a high degree of multicollinearity – the extent to which the variables are interacting with each other). Correlations emerged between ACT with overall GPA (higher ACT score indicates a higher GPA); ACT with core GPA (higher test score relates to a higher GPA in the core); and core GPA with overall GPA (students with high GPAs in the core demonstrated higher overall GPA). None was unexpected, and all were confirmed by linear regression.

**Descriptive Statistics.** Means, ranges, percentiles and standard deviations were calculated for each of the four variables in the “Admissions Criteria” category and are reported below.

**Descriptive Statistics: Admissions Criteria**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Minimum</th>
<th>Maximum</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std. Deviation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ACT</td>
<td>930</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>24.62</td>
<td>2.915</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SAT</td>
<td>200</td>
<td>110</td>
<td>1530</td>
<td>1148.29</td>
<td>148.986</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GPA</td>
<td>994</td>
<td>3.00</td>
<td>4.87</td>
<td>3.7974</td>
<td>.31254</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Core</td>
<td>994</td>
<td>3.00</td>
<td>4.96</td>
<td>3.7473</td>
<td>.41239</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The chart indicates the reason for many of the following correlations: the high number of students who took the ACT exam rather than the SAT. As was also mentioned above, the homogeneity of the sample led to expected relationships in this category.
**Additional Analyses for “Admissions Criteria.”** Correlational tests and linear regressions (and other tests when appropriate) were conducted on each of the variables in the “Admissions Criteria” category against each other variable *within* that same category. These yielded the results in Table 8.

---

**Table 8**

**Bivariate Correlations Among “Admissions Criteria”**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subscale</th>
<th>ACT</th>
<th>SAT</th>
<th>Overall GPA</th>
<th>GPA in Core</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ACT</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>-.391**</td>
<td>.250**</td>
<td>.256**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SAT</td>
<td>-.391**</td>
<td>--</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overall GPA</td>
<td>.250**</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>.946**</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GPA in Core</td>
<td>.256**</td>
<td>.946**</td>
<td>--</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).**

Additional analyses were also conducted on the variables in the “Admissions Criteria” category and the variables in the remaining three categories: “College Attendance and Performance,” “Potential Award Changes,” and “Post-Graduation Plans.” (Analyses examining relationships between the variables in the “Admissions Criteria” and “Demographics” categories were examined in the previous section.)
1) Relationships in the categories of “Admissions Criteria” and “College Attendance and Performance” were notable for the extent to which they conform to current research regarding the effects of high school GPA and college academic performance. Much of the recent research on admissions policies has focused on predictors for academic success in college, with most studies finding a strong correlation between college GPA and courses taken in high school (regardless of grade received), or both, and college academic performance (Adelman, 1994, 1999, 2004, 2006; Adelman, Daniel and Berkovits, 2003; Akerhielm, Berger, Hooker and Wise, 1998; Altonji, 1996; Barth and Haycock, 2004); Conley, 2005; Horm and Kojaku, 2001; Hu, 2002; Ishitani and Snider, 2004; Pike and Saupe, 2002; Zhang and Richards, 1998; Zwick and Sklar, 2005).

In this study, correlations were found between HS GPA and college cumulative GPA (the higher the HS GPA, the higher the college cumulative); HS GPA and number of awards (the higher the HS GPA, the higher the number of awards); HS GPA in core subjects and college cumulative GPA; and HS GPA in core subjects and number of awards. These relationships were confirmed by linear regression and are illustrated in Table 9.
Table 9

Bivariate Correlations Among “Admissions Criteria” and “College Attendance/Performance”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subscale</th>
<th>Overall GPA</th>
<th>GPA in Core</th>
<th>College Cumulative GPA</th>
<th>Number of Awards</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Overall HS GPA</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>.285**</td>
<td>.239**</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. GPA in Core</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>.277**</td>
<td>.238**</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. College Cum. GPA</td>
<td>.285**</td>
<td>.277**</td>
<td>--</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Number of Awards</td>
<td>.239**</td>
<td>.238**</td>
<td>--</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).
** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

The correlations between overall high school GPA and GPA in the core subjects with college cumulative GPA are not surprising and have been well established in the research literature, particularly in studies examining the predictive validity of the ACT and SAT on postsecondary student academic performance (Adelman, 1999, 2004, 2006; Baron and Norman, 1992; Beecher and Fisher, 1999; Crouse and Trusheim, 1989; Eno, McLaughlin, Sheldon and Borovsky, 1999; Hu, 2002; Keller, 1994; Rothstein, 2004; Zwick, 1999; Zwick and Sklar, 2005). These findings, hence, are not unanticipated.
2) Variables in the “Admissions Criteria” and “Potential Award Changes”
categories were the focus of the second analysis in this section. Variables in the latter
category focused on students’ responses to questions concerning whether award renewal
requirements should be changed; whether they would have accepted the award if they’d
had to pay it back if they left the state after graduation; whether they’d have accepted the
award if it assumed the form of a forgivable loan, allowing them to repay it by working in
West Virginia for a predetermined period of time; and whether they would have accepted
the award if it had not paid their full tuition.

Only two of the significant correlations that emerged between and among the
variables in these two categories could be confirmed. Relationships were found between
high school GPA and whether award renewal requirements should be changed (the higher
the GPA, the more likely respondents were to say “no” to changing renewal
requirements) and between high school GPA in the core subjects and whether award
renewal requirements should be changed (also indicating that the higher the GPA in the
core, the more likely students were to say that renewal requirements should not be
changed). These findings are illustrated in Table 10.
Table 10

Bivariate Correlations Among Admissions Criteria and Potential Award Changes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subscale</th>
<th>HS GPA</th>
<th>HS GPA in Core</th>
<th>Change Renewal Requirements</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. HS GPA</td>
<td>--</td>
<td></td>
<td>-.104**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. HS GPA in Core Subjects.</td>
<td>--</td>
<td></td>
<td>-.101**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Change Renewal Requirements</td>
<td>-.104**</td>
<td>-.101**</td>
<td>--</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

3) The third analysis in this section paired variables from the “Admissions Criteria” and “Post-Graduation Plans” categories. It appeared there were four significant correlations (i.e., SAT score with acquiring/seeking employment in West Virginia; high school GPA with seeking an advanced degree and staying in the state after graduation; and high school GPA in the core subjects with seeking an advanced degree), but none could be confirmed through subsequent statistical analyses.

It is likely that the small number of students who took the SAT (only 21.5% of the sample) contributed to the presumptive relationship of test score to seeking/acquiring employment in West Virginia. Similarly, the identified correlations of high school GPA and/or GPA in the core subjects with seeking an advanced degree or staying in the state after graduation were likely attributable to the homogeneity of the participants (i.e., the fact that students in the study had GPAs that were sufficient to explain their inclusion in the sample).
College Attendance and Performance

Issues involving students’ postsecondary choices and their academic performance while in college were the focus in this broad category, which had seven variables: whether students reported they were first-generation college attendees; whether they would still have attended college without PROMISE; the extent to which PROMISE influenced their decisions to remain in West Virginia for college; the effects of renewal requirements on collegiate academic performance; cumulative college GPA; and number of awards. While numerous correlations were identified between and among variables in this category, none was supported by subsequent analyses.

The likely reason for this occurrence is, as has been mentioned several times, the high degree of homogeneity in the sample. As was indicated in the section on survey responses, only 22% of the respondents identified themselves as first-generation college students (leaving 78% who were not); 97% reported they would have attended college anyway, even without the PROMISE award; 70% indicated that PROMISE was a fair-to-major reason they chose to remain in the state for their postsecondary education; and 74% felt the renewal requirements for keeping the award had no impact on their academic performance while in college.

In addition to the homogeneity of the sample, there was a high degree of multicollinearity in this category (i.e., the extent to which the variables interact with other), which can generate misleading results. The descriptive statistics on college cumulative GPA and number of awards received, however, are informative.
### Descriptive Statistics: College Cumulative GPA

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Minimum</th>
<th>Maximum</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Median</th>
<th>Std. Deviation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cumulative</td>
<td>880</td>
<td>.00</td>
<td>4.00</td>
<td>3.4302</td>
<td>3.5100</td>
<td>.50405</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

![Cumulative GPA Distribution](image)

### Descriptive Statistics: Mean Number of Awards

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Minimum</th>
<th>Maximum</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std. Deviation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Awards Valid N (listwise)</td>
<td>994</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>7.25</td>
<td>1.712</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

![Number of Awards Distribution](image)
These data demonstrate well the difficulties that are encountered in analyses in which there are high levels of homogeneity in the sample. The mean number of awards was 7.25 out of a possible eight, and of the 994 students in the sample, 788 (or 79.3%) retained their awards for the full eight semesters. Those kinds of figures tend to skew
statistical outcomes. On the other hand, the fact that 79.3% of the students in whom West Virginia invested were able to demonstrate model academic performance is a positive finding.

1) The first between-categories analysis looked for associations between and among variables in the “College Attendance/Performance” and the “Post-Graduation Plans” categories. As has been the case with previous statistical analyses, these too featured high levels of multicollinearity and generated some misleading correlations. In particular, the high college cumulative GPAs contributed to some confusion.

Correlations between college cumulative GPA\(^8\) and some other variables (such as the pursuit of an advanced degree) are logical, but could not be confirmed statistically. There was one correlation involving cumulative GPA and staying in West Virginia after graduation that was confirmed, and two others involving number of awards – one with pursuit of an advanced degree and another with staying in West Virginia after graduation. These are illustrated in Table 11.

\(^8\) A frequency calculation was also done for students who kept their awards for five semesters or less. For these students, the mean cumulative GPA was 2.8034.
Table 11

Bivariate Correlations Among College Attendance/Performance and Post-Graduation Plans

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. College Cumulative GPA</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>-.122**</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Number of Awards</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>.123**</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-.122**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Seeking Advanced Degree</td>
<td>.123**</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Staying in WV After Grad.</td>
<td>-.122**</td>
<td>-.122**</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

What these relationships likely reflect, again and despite the 0.01 level of significance, are high levels of homogeneity in the sample. Eighty-two percent of the survey respondents reported that PROMISE had no effect on their decision to stay in West Virginia or leave the state after graduation, and more than 50% of them had cumulative GPAs that were higher than the mean. It is the 82% figure that should concern us rather than the correlation with students’ cumulative GPAs.

The same can be said for correlations between number of awards received and both the pursuit of an advanced degree and disinclination to remain in West Virginia following graduation. A high number of students (72%) reported they would be pursuing an advanced degree, which likely explains the correlation between that variable and the number of awards received. The correlation between number of awards received and the
number of students reporting that PROMISE had no effect on their decision to stay in
West Virginia or leave the state, however, is of concern. Most of the students in the
sample were able to retain their scholarships for the full eight semesters for which they
were eligible (788, or 79.3% of the sample). Having 82% of these students report that
receiving the PROMISE scholarship had no effect on their decision to leave the state or
remain is troublesome.

2) The second analysis to be conducted using variables in the “College
Attendance/Performance” looked for relationships with the variables in the “Potential
Award Changes” category. Three correlations emerged that could be confirmed: the
effect of PROMISE on staying in West Virginia to attend college with willingness to
accept a smaller award (those who responded that PROMISE was a “fair” or “primary”
factor in their decisions to stay in the state to attend college were also likely to accept a
smaller award); college cumulative GPA with changing renewal requirements (students
with higher cumulative GPAs were likely to say “no” to changing renewal requirements
for the scholarship); and number of awards received with changing renewal requirements
(the higher the number of awards received, the more likely respondents were to say “no”
to changing the scholarship renewal requirements). These correlations are illustrated in
Table 12.
Table 12

*Bivariate Correlations Among “College Attendance/Performance” and “Potential Award Changes”*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subscale</th>
<th>Effect of PROMISE on Attending College in WV</th>
<th>College Cum. GPA</th>
<th># of Awards Received</th>
<th>Change Renewal Requirements</th>
<th>Accept Smaller Award</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Effect of PROMISE on Attending Coll. in WV</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>.158**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. College Cum. GPA</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>-.208**</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. # of Awards Received</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>-.408**</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Change Renewal Requirements</td>
<td>-.208**</td>
<td>-.408**</td>
<td>--</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Accept Smaller Award</td>
<td>.158**</td>
<td>--</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

**Potential Award Changes**

The fourth category for analysis involved four variables related to possible changes in the dimensions of the PROMISE award: changes in academic requirements for renewal; students’ paying back the award if they were to leave the state after graduation; offering the award in the form of a forgivable loan that would allow students to “work off” their debt by accepting employment in West Virginia for a specified
number of years; and accepting a smaller award that may not fully cover the cost of
tuition. The within-category analysis produced only one correlation that could be
confirmed: the possibility of paying back the award with the possibility of having the
award assume the form of a forgivable loan. Students who were disinclined to accept one
were also negative about the other.

Table 13

_Bivariate Correlation Between Potential Payback of Award and Possible Forgivable
Loan_

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subscale</th>
<th>Payback</th>
<th>Forgivable Loan</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Payback</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>.338**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Forgivable</td>
<td>.338**</td>
<td>--</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

As the variables in the “Potential Award Changes” category have been analyzed
against all of the variables in the three previous categories (i.e., “Demographics,”
“Admissions Criteria,” and “College Attendance/Performance”), the only between-
categories analysis remaining is with the variables in the “Post-Graduation Plans”
category. The latter involves four variables: employment in West Virginia, pursuit of an
advanced degree, pursuit of an advanced degree in West Virginia, and remaining in West
Virginia following graduation.

While there appeared to be a number of correlations between and among the
variables in these two categories, only one could be confirmed: pursuit of an advanced
degree in West Virginia and changing the academic requirements for renewal of the
award. It appears that students who report they will be pursuing an advanced degree in the state were also likely to say that the renewal requirements should not be changed. This relationship is illustrated in Table 14 below.

Table 14

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subscale</th>
<th>Seeking Advanced Degree in WV</th>
<th>Change Requirements</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Seeking Advanced Degree in WV</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>.101**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Change Renewal Requirements</td>
<td>.101**</td>
<td>--</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

**Post-Graduation Plans**

The final category for statistical analysis includes four variables related to students’ plans after graduation: whether they have acquired or are seeking to acquire employment in West Virginia; whether they plan to seek an advanced degree; whether they plan to pursue the advanced degree in West Virginia; and whether they intend to remain in the state after they’ve been graduated. As the variables in this category have been analyzed with the four previous categories already, all that remains is to look for relationships within the category of “Post-Graduation Plans.”

While four correlations emerged, only one was weakly confirmed through linear regression – seeking an advanced degree (72% said “yes”) and staying in West Virginia
after graduation (82% said “no”). It is possible that the demonstrated association between these two variables has to do with perceptions students provided in the open-ended comments section of the survey, in which some offered their opinions that graduate programs in West Virginia universities are insufficiently rigorous or reputable. Others indicated that the specific graduate programs in which they’re interested simply aren’t available in West Virginia. This inference is speculative, however, not conclusive. The correlation is illustrated in Table 15 below.

**Table 15**

*Bivariate Correlation Between Seeking an Advanced Degree and Staying in WV After Graduation*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subscale</th>
<th>Seeking Advanced Degree</th>
<th>Staying in WV After Graduation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Seeking Advanced Degree</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>.081**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Staying in WV After Graduation</td>
<td>.081**</td>
<td>--</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).**

**Summary: Statistical Analyses**

As is often the case with studies involving highly homogeneous populations or samples, the descriptive data are often more informative than the data derived from correlations, regressions, or other forms of statistical analysis. That is the case that emerges from the various statistical analyses conducted with these data. There were no unanticipated findings, and those which were significant largely confirmed what is
already known from the literature on merit-based scholarships and postsecondary education in general.

Family incomes and expected family contributions of recipients essentially correlated across the board with high school academic performance, admissions criteria, and postsecondary academic performance as well. Of more concern to policymakers, perhaps, are the survey findings related to the effect, or lack thereof, of PROMISE on students’ staying in West Virginia to attend college and remaining in the state after graduation. These have been examined in their corresponding sections of this document, but will be briefly reviewed in the conclusion which follows.

**Conclusions**

When introducing the PROMISE Scholarship Program, Governor Bob Wise articulated a dual rationale: increasing the postsecondary attendance rate in West Virginia and improving the state’s economy. “By putting forth a reward for achievement, we’re saying to students that working hard, playing by the rules and meeting tough expectations will earn them the opportunity to attend college,” he said in 2002 – a declaration which remains on the program’s website. The governor continued, saying, “I firmly believe getting more students to attend college will turn around the economies of our communities, attract energetic people to the state and keep our best students at home in West Virginia.”

The first executive director of the program expanded on those points in a 2002 interview (personal communication, September, 2002):
We’re saying to these students, ‘We’re going to make an investment in you if you can meet these bars’ .... West Virginia has designated this program, we’re going to set these challenges, and if you meet these challenges, there’s going to be a reward. That’s what PROMISE says – ‘You meet these challenges, there will be a reward’.... Now if we happen to send a student from a family with a $100,000 income to college and that student stays in West Virginia to work after graduation, that’s going to be a good investment. We will have spent $12,000 on that student for four years. If this student ends up earning $100,000 a year like his or her family did (that’s the normal predictor), the state will collect six percent in taxes each year. That’s a good investment. Seventy percent of our graduates from West Virginia public and private colleges stay in state after graduation. If we can get all achieving students, whether they come from upper-, middle- or lower-income families to stay in state, then that’s a good investment.

Current information on the PROMISE website reiterates those observations in a “Facts and Figures” section, providing these answers, among others, to the question “Why is the PROMISE Scholarship so critical?”

- While West Virginia has 74% of its students graduate from high school, only 59% of the graduating seniors go to college.

- According to the United States Census Bureau, only 14.8% of West Virginia residents over the age of 25 have a bachelor’s degree – compared to 24.4% in the United States as a whole.
• Getting more students into college is the best thing we can do to turn around the economies of our communities, to attract energetic people to the state, and to keep our best students in West Virginia (PROMISE Scholarship Program, 2006).

Given these statements of purpose, it would seem logical to view the findings from this study in light of the program’s stated intent at the time of its introduction. The current description of the program, however, as expressed on the homepage of the PROMISE website says this: “West Virginia PROMISE (Providing Real Opportunities for Maximizing In-state Student Excellence) is a merit-based scholarship program designed to keep qualified students in West Virginia by making college affordable” (PROMISE Scholarship Program, 2006).

While not specifically contradictory to the statements of the former governor and executive director, there is nonetheless a level of reductionism in the current language in which the explicit expectations of previous iterations of purpose are amalgamated into a single goal of keeping qualified students in the state for their postsecondary education – the third of Governor Wise’s original rationales. The objectives of increasing postsecondary attendance and improving the state’s economic prospects are now implicit, if they remain in operation.

Program evaluations at any stage, however, require criteria against which to gauge performance. In the interest of thoroughness, the three statements of original intent as articulated by Governor Wise will be utilized for this purpose. As the current description of the program on the website is consistent with one of the former governor’s rationales (i.e., keeping qualified students in West Virginia), it will not be treated as a separate criterion. These are the questions to be addressed.
• Is the PROMISE Scholarship “getting more students to attend college”?

• Is the PROMISE Scholarship “keep[ing] our best students at home in West Virginia”?

• Is the PROMISE Scholarship “turn[ing] around the economies of our communities”?

Each of these questions will be examined individually, taking into account both responses from the survey and the subsequent statistical analyses. Relevant findings from external research studies will be included where appropriate.

It is important to bear in mind that a thorough evaluation will require much more longitudinal data than are currently available. That being the case, the results from this examination are, as noted in the introduction to this document, suggestive rather than conclusive. The current document is more properly a preliminary exploration of the program’s impact.

It is also important to recognize that the survey responses are the perceptions of young people and may not fully reflect the judgment of their parents or guardians (e.g., the decision to attend an in-state rather than an out-of-state school may not have been the student’s to make alone; in instances in which the students were independent, this may have been the case, but that information is not available to us). One must be mindful of the low rate of return on the survey as well. Of the 3,792 students who accepted the PROMISE award in 2002, only 1,183 completed the survey – a return rate of only 31%. With these caveats in mind, we can address the following questions.
1) Is the PROMISE Scholarship encouraging more West Virginia students to attend college?

There are a number of variables that make this question particularly difficult to address, chief among them the general increase in the college-going rate that was emerging even before the PROMISE program was initiated. The state recorded minor increases in academic years prior to 2002: 53.4 percent in the autumn of 1998, 54.92% in 2000, and 56.37% in 2001. The trend continued over the next four years, with 56.53% 2002, a decrease to 53.39% 2003, a substantial increase to 60.6% in 2004, and then a minor decrease to 59.3 in 2005 (WV Higher Education Policy Commission).

Any number of factors may have contributed to those increases, however, including a decreasing number of traditional-aged college students in the state. There were also changes in data collection methods with the advent of SB 448, which may have complicated efforts to gauge the potential impact of PROMISE on attendance trends.

Survey responses are not especially helpful on this point, as 70% reported that PROMISE was either a “fair” or “the primary” factor in their decision to stay in West Virginia for college, but 71% also responded “yes” when asked whether they would have remained in the state for college even if they had not received the scholarship.

What is clear from the surveys, however, is that PROMISE does not appear to be reaching students who may not otherwise have attended college. Only 22% of the survey respondents identified themselves as first-generation college attendees, leaving 78% from families in which at least one parent, and likely both given that roughly 20% of the students in the sample came from families whose incomes averaged $152,865, attended college. Moreover, a full 97% of the survey respondents reported that they would still
have attended college without the scholarship, which suggests that the impact of
PROMISE on increasing postsecondary attendance may not be as strong as was hoped. If
by “getting more students to attend college” we mean encouraging students who may not
otherwise have pursued a postsecondary education, there is no evidence herein to suggest
that this happening.

A look at the demographic composition of the 2002 class of PROMISE Scholars
is consistent with both survey responses and the accompanying statistical data. The
average family income of recipients was $76,938, well exceeding the average family
income for West Virginia, which was $48,111 in 2002. The same is true for the median
income of recipients’ families, which was $66,628, as compared to the $38,568 median
for all West Virginia families in 2002.

While West Virginia’s family and household incomes typically lag behind those
of other states (i.e., the U.S. Census Bureau ranked West Virginia 49th in median income
in 2005 – see Appendix I), the correlations between income and academic performance
that hold true nationally are also demonstrated in the sample drawn from the larger
population of survey respondents.

Those findings are to be expected with such a homogeneous population and
sample, as has been pointed out frequently in this document. They are reiterated only to
denote their consistency with decades of research confirming the relationship between
family income and student academic performance/college attendance, and to allow
readers to factor them into their consideration of whether the PROMISE program is
encouraging more students to go to college.
There appears to be substantial anecdotal evidence (e.g., from principals and teachers) that the possibility of attaining a PROMISE Scholarship is encouraging high school students to work harder at meeting the eligibility requirements for the program. This evaluation, however, is confined to those data which were collected through the survey and the accompanying dataset provided by the WVHEPC’s Office of Research and Technology, and cannot confirm findings other than those reported herein.

2) Is the PROMISE Scholarship keeping qualified students in West Virginia for college?

As indicated in response to the previous question, 70% of the survey respondents reported that PROMISE was either a “fair” or “the primary” factor in their decision in remain in the state for college. To the extent that all of the students in the population of 1,183 survey respondents were “qualified students” by virtue of being PROMISE recipients, and that all of them did, in fact, remain in West Virginia to attend college, as is required by the scholarship, one could judge the program a success on this criterion.

The fact that 71% of the survey respondents said “yes” to the question of whether they would have remained in West Virginia for college whether they’d received the PROMISE Scholarship or not, however, recommends caution in assuming that the award is solely responsible for their choosing in-state schools. As noted previously, the college-going rate in West Virginia has been steadily increasing for the past several years, a phenomenon that can be attributable to any number of factors that are difficult to isolate. These factors, combined with the strong number of these “qualified students” who reported they would have pursued their postsecondary studies in the state regardless of
assistance from PROMISE, suggest there is little evidence to conclude that it is the
PROMISE program that is keeping students in West Virginia for college.

It is encouraging, however, that of 1,131 students\textsuperscript{9} who responded to the question
of whether they plan to pursue advanced degrees, 72\% (819) said “yes.” Of those 819
students, 64\% indicated they would be pursuing their advanced degrees in the state as
well, with 19\% saying “no” and 17\% indicating they weren’t sure.

According to the “Retention and Earnings of Graduates” reports published by the
WV Higher Education Policy Commission, graduates of West Virginia institutions with
master’s degrees, post-MA certificates, initial professional degrees and doctoral degrees
(Ph.D., Ed.D.) show encouraging retention records.\textsuperscript{10} Mean figures from these reports
are illustrated in Table 16.

\textsuperscript{9} Of the 1,183 students who took the survey, 52 declined to provide an answer to this question.
\textsuperscript{10} The WVHEPC defines “retention” as “obtaining employment or remaining enrolled in public higher
education in West Virginia after receiving a degree.”
Table 16

Mean Retention Figures for Resident Graduates With Advanced Degrees from West Virginia Institutions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Years</th>
<th>Doctoral Mean</th>
<th>First Professional Mean</th>
<th>Post-MA Certificate Mean</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1999-2000</td>
<td>57%</td>
<td>58%</td>
<td>88%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2000-2001</td>
<td>52%</td>
<td>61%</td>
<td>81%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2002-2003</td>
<td>70%</td>
<td>64%</td>
<td>64%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2003-2004</td>
<td>62%</td>
<td>60%</td>
<td>88%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mean</td>
<td>60.25%</td>
<td>60.75%</td>
<td>80.25%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

If, in fact, we are able to keep our “qualified students” in the state for their advanced degree work, it appears a substantial number of them will remain here at least for the short term. Whether our BA-holding graduates will do the same is the subject of the final question.

3) Is the PROMISE Scholarship improving the state’s economic prospects?

This question is particularly difficult to answer, primarily because the first class of PROMISE Scholars was graduated just this past spring. Others from the 2002 class remain in school, their time-to-degree compromised by scheduling conflicts, increased credit hour requirements, and other intervening factors.

11 Data for the 2001-2002 year could not be accessed.
The U.S. Department of Education reports that first-time recipients of bachelor's degrees in 1999–2000 (the most recent year for which their data are available) who had not stopped out of college for six months or more averaged about 55 months from first enrollment to degree completion (2003). That 657 (55.5%) of the PROMISE Scholars represented in this report who were first enrolled in the fall of 2002 reported their graduation date as May, 2006 suggests that these students are completing their degree work more quickly than most of their peers – in 40 months as opposed to 55. One-hundred-seventeen reported their graduation date as December, 2006 (45 months), and another 177 as May, 2007 (50 months).

Because most of these students had not yet acquired employment at the time of the survey, there are no quantifiable data available to gauge their impact on the state’s workforce. We do, however, have their responses to questions concerning their future employment and the impact of PROMISE on their remaining in West Virginia for employment or graduate/professional school. We also have data from the WVHEPC’s Office of Research and Technology on previous trends of the BA-holding population in the “Retention and Earnings of Graduates” reports.

Bartik (1991), Blanchard and Katz (1992), who focused on mobility in the labor force in general, and Bound and Holzer (2000) and Long (1988), whose focus was the college-educated labor force in particular, agreed that the link between the number of college students graduating in a given state and the number of college graduates living in the state may be small indeed: “In fact, it seems unlikely that the production of large numbers of college graduates will have any significant impact on the fraction of a state’s workforce that is college educated, unless the presence of a relatively large number of
colleges and universities in an area significantly affects the industrial composition in the area and the associated demand for college-educated workers” (Bound et al., 2001, p.1).

Higher education researcher David Longanecker (2002) examined the same issue, using Colorado as an example:

Colorado, for example, ranks second among all states in the education level of its adult population. Yet it ranks only about average in higher education participation. This occurs because high-paying Colorado firms in communities with exceptional qualities of life attract highly educated people from elsewhere. Indeed, the culture of American higher education accentuates this dilemma by fostering greater mobility for the best and the brightest. These are precisely the students whom we encourage to attend graduate and professional school, often in a different location. So we actually encourage the exodus of many of the students that we heavily subsidized initially in the hopes of keeping them in-state after graduation. All of this suggests that states will be unlikely to retain their best and brightest after graduation unless they offer them great jobs and wonderful communities. Furthermore, states that have these great jobs and wonderful communities may not need to educate the best and brightest themselves because they can attract them from elsewhere. (p. 4)

Kodrzycki (2001), using the National Longitudinal Survey of Youth (NLSY),¹² found the same pattern: “[E]ducation beyond high school was associated with

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¹² To track migration patterns, the NLSY, a project of the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, examined a nationally representative sample of about 6,000 individuals who were 14-to-22 years old in 1979. These youths and young adults were interviewed once a year until 1994 and once every other year thereafter. The final year of available data is 1996, when the subjects were 31-to-39 years old.
substantially greater mobility ... [T]he percentage changing their state of residence between 1979 and 1996 was 19.2% for those completing only high school, but 36.6% for those completing four years of college and 45% for those with even higher levels of education” (p. 15).

As is the case with national-level data, the question of whether the presence of a well-educated labor pool is sufficient to catalyze economic development is a crucial one for state policymakers. “Selected Data for West Virginia for West Virginia Higher Education,” a presentation created by the Higher Education Policy Commission for the National Collaborative on Postsecondary Education in 2004, suggested that for the transition to a “knowledge economy” to be successful, policymakers would need to look not only at educational preparation, but at job creation as well. The presentation, for example, indicated that from 1990-2000, the state produced 84,106 graduates with bachelor’s degrees, but retained only 33,577 of them (WVHEPC, 2004b, February; see Appendix H).

“Selected Data” also reported figures from the 2000 United States Census which provided information on West Virginia’s net migration by occupation for all 22- to 29-year-olds. The Census data indicated that among that population, 600 migrated into the state: 200 as cooks or food preparation workers; 100 in forestry, conservation and logging; 80 food and beverage service workers; 60 each in postsecondary teaching and protective social service; and 40 each in physical science, law enforcement, personal appearance and sales representative workers. At the same time, West Virginia lost 6,200 workers in the 22-29 age group, the vast majority of them primary, secondary and special education teachers (960). There was also a loss of 700 information and record clerks, 640
computer specialists, 620 engineers, and 540 health diagnosing and treating practitioners (WVHEPC, 2004; see Appendix I).

The *West Virginia Economic Outlook 2004* reflected those figures (Hammond, 2003). Noting that the state continues to struggle to generate job growth despite the ending of the national recession in November 2001, the report predicted that “the service-providing sectors will generate the driving force behind West Virginia’s job growth during the next five years” (p. 9). That observation is consistent with the Bureau of Labor Statistics’ projections for national job growth (2004). Moreover, the *Forecast Update 2004* (Hammond, 2004) called for overall job growth to average only 0.6% between 2004 and 2014, which is “half the expected rate of job growth for the nation and is significantly below the 1.1% per year rate that the state posted during the 1992-2003 period” (p. 1).

These projections taken into account, do the data we have shed any light on the ability of PROMISE to keep the state’s “best and brightest” at home after graduation? Bearing in mind the caveats established for interpreting the information gathered (i.e., difficulty in establishing a return rate on the surveys, the preliminary nature of the investigation, the absence of longitudinal data, etc.), the students did provide some illuminating responses.

Perhaps the most important finding is that a full 82% of the survey respondents reported that the PROMISE Scholarship had no effect on their decision to remain in West Virginia after graduation. Additionally, only 50% of those responding to the survey indicated that they had either acquired employment in the state or would be seeking employment in the state after graduation.
The reasons students offered for their disinclination to stay in the state to either work or search for work were fully explicated in section on survey responses earlier in the report (see pp. 20-23). Briefly, their rationales were these: that “better opportunities” exist elsewhere, that jobs in their fields aren’t available in West Virginia, that salaries are more lucrative in other states, that they are leaving to join families or spouses, and/or that they simply prefer to experience life in a different location. Given the research findings reported previously in this section by Bartik (1991), Blanchard and Katz (1992), Bound and Holzer (2000), Kodrzycki (2001), Long (1988), and Longanecker (2002), it would appear that these perceptions are not unusual among the recently graduated BA-holding population.

Taken together, students’ reporting that receiving the PROMISE scholarship had no effect on their decisions to stay in or leave West Virginia and the less than optimal economic forecasts and migration data may be disappointing. Previous trends in the state’s BA-holding population, however, may offer some hope that West Virginia students will defy the norm.

According to the WVHEPC’s “Retention and Earnings of Graduates” reports, 67% of the state’s students who acquired bachelor’s degrees in the 1999-2000 academic year remained in the state for at least one year following graduation. The 2000-2001 figure was 71%, the 2002-2003 figure 73%, and the 2003-2004 figure 71%.

Caution is advised, however, in using these figures as bellwethers. The Policy Commission’s reports take into account all of the BA-holding population, while our concern lies in an exclusive subset of that population. The first class of PROMISE Scholars has just been graduated, and data on their in-state retention are not yet available.
The 1,183 students who responded to the survey request constitute an even smaller unit of that exclusive subset.

Returning to Kodrzycki’s (2001) study using the data from the National Longitudinal Survey of Youth (NLSY), we find that recent graduates demonstrate a “high degree of willingness” to make long-distance moves (p. 30). According to the NLSY, five years after college graduation, 30% of the graduates no longer live in the states where they attended college, and 35% no longer live in the states where they attended high school.

These kinds of data are of concern to many who study merit-based aid. Longanecker (2002) wrote that “the best and brightest students are more likely to stay instate and attend [college] – although ... they do so at substantial cost to the state, because they receive merit-based aid and they generally attend the state's most expensive and highly subsidized public institutions. But do they stay after graduation? That's not clear (p. 5).

It is, however, an issue that must be made clear. Consider, for example, the economic implications of the following table, from Dufforc’s 2006 study (p. 242).
Table 17

*Measures of Merit Program Size*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Program Costs</th>
<th>Students Served</th>
<th>Cost Per Student</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Alaska</td>
<td>$500-$700K</td>
<td>1,540</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Florida</td>
<td>$202M</td>
<td>110,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Georgia</td>
<td>$377.7M</td>
<td>52,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indiana</td>
<td>$18.4M</td>
<td>10,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kentucky</td>
<td>$55.5M</td>
<td>118,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Louisiana</td>
<td>$113.8M</td>
<td>24,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Michigan</td>
<td>$91M</td>
<td>48,500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mississippi</td>
<td>$3.9M</td>
<td>1,678</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nevada</td>
<td>$13.6M</td>
<td>9,400</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New Mexico</td>
<td>$24M</td>
<td>14,563</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South Carolina</td>
<td>$114M</td>
<td>64,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South Dakota</td>
<td>$826K$^{14}</td>
<td>826</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Washington</td>
<td>$8.4M</td>
<td>7,500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>West Virginia</td>
<td>$30M</td>
<td>3,497</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

What is striking about the table is that three of the top four states in the cost-per-student column – Louisiana, West Virginia and Mississippi – are at the bottom of the median household income rankings provided by the U.S. Census Bureau (2006), at 47th, 49th and 50th respectively (see Appendix I). If improving the economic prospects of the West Virginia remains one of the goals of PROMISE, it is critical that the Board of Control continue to evaluate the program in order to determine whether the state’s investment in these students is paying off over the long term.

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13 Per capita costs
14 Figures for first year of existence. Pays $1,000 for first three years, $2,000 for the fourth.
15 Figures adjusted. Dufforc had estimated figures for the inaugural year of the scholarship using information from the PROMISE website. Adjusted figures provided by the PROMISE office have replaced Dufforc’s original table numbers.
Smith and Rademacker (1999) addressed the presumed nexus between educated populations and economic development, pointing out that “the empirical record ... has produced very mixed results ... [but] factoring in a positive causal relationship between education and economic performance at the state level persists in spite of the empirical record generated by the research effort rather than because of it” (p. 710). Olson (1997) agreed, writing that “education reform at the state level is frequently abetted by the assumption that a sub-par education system has negative local economic consequences,” a position shared by Brace (1993), Jones (1990), and Powell and Steelman (1996). Smith and Rademacker (1999) summed up the findings:

The fact is that while economic development is a central component of state politics and policymaking, and education is widely assumed to play an important role in this mix, the extant research has largely failed to show a convincing relationship between education and state-level economic development. (p. 710).

The authors go on to speculate that the possible reason for the absence of any credible research linking education levels of a state’s population with economic development is a methodological one (i.e., that there is “no uniform approach to modeling state-level economies in the existing literature,” p. 716). A more recent meta-analysis supports that observation. Long (2007, in press) had this to say about efforts to apply econometrics to studying the transition of students to college:

A main goal of economics literature has been to establish a causal relationship rather than one based on the correlation of trends or patterns. In pursuit of causality, economists rely on complex estimation techniques usually involving large samples of quantitative data and often utilize ‘natural experiments’ to
establish the impact of a factor of policy. Unfortunately, the data requirements for such work, along with the concerns about biases, often limit the kinds of questions that can be confidently answered.

Whether the problem is that researchers haven’t found the appropriate research design for examining the virtually universal assumption of a relationship between education and the economy or whether there simply is no connection, it remains important for policymakers to continue to monitor the outcome of their investment in students they assume will remain in the state after graduation.

Both advocacy of and opposition to merit-based aid programs have begun to appear in the research on student financial aid over the past few years. Both perspectives raise important policy issues, most of which can be neither confirmed nor denied because these scholarships are still fairly recent innovations. Such is the case with PROMISE. The program simply hasn’t been in place long enough for a reasoned judgment on its success to be rendered. Many of our “best and brightest” are remaining in the state for their postsecondary education, but we haven’t the data in this report to answer the questions of whether PROMISE is increasing the college-going rate or whether PROMISE graduates will remain in the state for employment.

Documenting the effects of merit-based programs such as PROMISE will be especially important in the context of the challenges facing higher education nationwide. Carnevale and Fry (2002) report that higher education is likely to face an increase in enrollment of 1.6 million undergraduates over the next decade. This demographic trend is surfacing at precisely the same time that state capacity for funding colleges and universities is diminishing. Seven years ago, Hovey (1999) examined the growing tension
between increasingly constrained revenues facing states and their obligation to increase funding for areas other than higher education (e.g., health insurance, public pension plans, etc., to which we could add increasing K-12 fiscal needs catalyzed by No Child Left Behind). These demands and others will make it even more difficult for states to meet the financial needs of college students in the coming years, and even more important to evaluate their efforts to do so.
References


Hovey, H. (1999). *State spending for higher education in the next decade: The battle to sustain current support*. San Jose, CA: National Center for Public Policy and Higher Education.


## Appendix A
### Comparison of State Merit-Based Aid Programs

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>State</th>
<th>Name of Program</th>
<th>Award Criteria</th>
<th>Maintaining Eligibility</th>
<th>Award Amount</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Alaska</td>
<td>Alaska Scholars Award (financed from Land Grant Endowment Funds-administered by University of Alaska)</td>
<td>Top 10% of students in each high school are eligible. Recipients are chosen by their high school at end of junior year of high school. Each high school sets own criteria, but generally awarded based on GPA. A student’s financial need may NOT be considered.</td>
<td>To stay eligible, must be a full time student making satisfactory progress toward graduation, maintain a 2.5 GPA, and be in good financial standing with the university, and meet the college’s code of conduct. Award will be forfeited if it is not used for three consecutive semesters. Can take up to two consecutive semesters off. Is good for 8 semesters.</td>
<td>Currently amount is 10,800 per student. Talk of increasing to 11,000.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Delaware*</td>
<td>SEED (Student Excellence Equals Degree Scholarship Program (Funds appropriated by state legislature)</td>
<td>GPA of 2.5. Satisfy admission requirements of college. Must enroll in college in fall that immediately follows high school graduation.</td>
<td>Stay enrolled on a full time basis with steady progress toward degree…..must earn not less than 24 credit hours for full time standing each academic year. Loses scholarship if convicted of felony.</td>
<td>Eligible to participate for three consecutive academic years. Pays 100% of community college tuition.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>B. Bradford Memorial Scholarship</td>
<td>Upper quarter of class, 1800 on SAT</td>
<td>3.00 GPA</td>
<td>Full tuition and fees at University of Delaware.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Charles L. Hebner Memorial Scholarship (Merit Based)</td>
<td>Upper half of class, 1350 on SAT, must major in humanities</td>
<td>3.00 GPA</td>
<td>Full tuition at University of Delaware or Delaware State University.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Herman M. Holloway, Sr. Memorial Scholarship</td>
<td>Upper half of class, 1350 on SAT</td>
<td>3.00 GPA</td>
<td>Full tuition and fees at Delaware State University.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>State</td>
<td>Name of Program</td>
<td>Award Criteria</td>
<td>Maintaining Eligibility</td>
<td>Award Amount</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----------</td>
<td>----------------------------------------</td>
<td>-------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>----------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Florida</td>
<td>Florida Bright Future Scholarships</td>
<td>(Lottery funded).</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Community Technical College funding has increased from 75% to 100% since inception.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Florida</td>
<td>Florida Bright Future Scholarships</td>
<td>3.5 GPA, 1270 SAT, or 28 ACT and 75 hours of community service.</td>
<td>3.00 GPA. Up to 132 semester hours.</td>
<td>Pays full tuition and fees.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Florida</td>
<td>Academic Scholars Award</td>
<td>GPA of 3.00 and ACT of 20 (SAT of 970); student must have taken 15 required core classes.</td>
<td>Cumulative GPA of 2.75; minimum of 6 hours per term. Up to 132 semester hours.</td>
<td>75% of tuition and fees at public institutions (comparable amount at private institutions).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Georgia</td>
<td>HOPE Scholarship</td>
<td>Core GPA of 3.00, (SAT of 970); student must have taken 15 required core classes.</td>
<td>GPA of 3.00 for all hours attempted; reapplication form. Covers 127 attempted semester hours.</td>
<td>100% of tuition and fees at public institutions and $3000 at private institutions. Includes book fees.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kentucky</td>
<td>Kentucky Educational Excellence Scholarship (KEES)</td>
<td>Sliding scale, with minimum GPA of 2.50 and ACT of 15 (SAT of 710).</td>
<td>GPA of 2.50 during first year; cumulative GPA of 3.00 thereafter. Covers 8 semesters.</td>
<td>$125 to $500 based on GPA, with bonus of $360 to $500 based on ACT or SAT score.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>State</td>
<td>Name of Program</td>
<td>Award Criteria</td>
<td>Maintaining Eligibility</td>
<td>Award Amount</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----------</td>
<td>------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>-----------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>------------------------------------------</td>
<td>--------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Louisiana</td>
<td>TOPS Scholarships (Tobacco Settlement Trust Fund/General Revenues)</td>
<td>Opportunity Award: 2.5 GPA, 20 on ACT</td>
<td>2.5 GPA (2.3 the first year)</td>
<td>100% of tuition and fees.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Performance Award: 3.5 GPA, 23 on ACT</td>
<td>3.0 GPA</td>
<td>100% tuition and fees plus $400.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Honors Award: 3.5 GPA, 27 on ACT</td>
<td>3.0 GPA</td>
<td>100% tuition and fees plus $800.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Tech Award: 2.5 GPA, 17 ACT</td>
<td>2.5 GPA</td>
<td>Covers cost of vocational program.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maryland*</td>
<td>Maryland Distinguished Scholar Award (merit based)</td>
<td>GPA of 3.75 plus high enough SAT scores (award is competitive; not everyone gets it).</td>
<td>GPA of 3.00</td>
<td>$3,000 annually.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Massachusetts*</td>
<td>John and Abigail Adams Scholarship (Funded by Massachusetts State Legislature/General Revenues)</td>
<td>Must score in advanced category in either MAT or Eng Lang Arts of the grade 10 MCAS test and score in advanced category on the second subject (MAT or Eng Lang Arts). Also have combined MCAS score that ranks in top 25% in school district.</td>
<td>3.0 GPA. Must enroll in first eligible academic semester. Covers eight semesters.</td>
<td>100% of tuition.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Michigan</td>
<td>Michigan Merit Award (Tobacco Settlement Trust Fund)</td>
<td>Level I or II on all four high school tests (MEAP).</td>
<td>Must attend MSU. Award is paid over two consecutive years.</td>
<td>$3000 is maximum award. First year will not exceed half of the total award. The second year, student will receive remaining balance. Failure to use funds the second year will result in forfeiture of the balance that is due the second year.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>State</td>
<td>Name of Program</td>
<td>Award Criteria</td>
<td>Maintaining Eligibility</td>
<td>Award Amount</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------</td>
<td>----------------------------------------------</td>
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<td>-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>---------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mississippi</td>
<td>Eminent Scholars Grant</td>
<td>GPA of 3.50 and ACT of 29 (SAT of 1280).</td>
<td>GPA of 3.50; full-time enrollment. Eligible for 8 semesters.</td>
<td>$2500 per year, but cannot exceed amount of tuition and fees.</td>
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<td>Missouri</td>
<td>Bright Flight Scholarship</td>
<td>Composite score on ACT in top 3 percent of high school seniors in Missouri.</td>
<td>May be renewed for up to 10 semesters or until completes bachelor’s degree. Must continually attend school full time and maintain 2.5 GPA.</td>
<td>$2000 each academic year. Distributed %1000 per semester.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Cannot be pursuing a degree or certificate in theology or divinity.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Home Schooled students eligible for consideration.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Presidential Scholarship</td>
<td>Top 10 percent of class and minimum ACT of 30 or equivalent SAT. Interview for final selection. Limit of 40 scholarships awarded each year.</td>
<td>Complete 30 Missouri State credit hours each academic year. 3.50 GPA.</td>
<td>$11,742 per year for Missouri resident.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Board of Governor’s Scholarship</td>
<td>Top 10 percent of class or GPA of 3.90, ACT of 28 or SAT of 1240. Unlimited number of scholarships available.</td>
<td>Complete 30 hours each year with a 3.50 cumulative GPA. Participate in at least two public affairs activities each year.</td>
<td>$5,500 each year.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Academic Scholarship</td>
<td>Top 20 percent of class or 3.70 GPA, ACT of 26 or SAT of 1170 or rank first or second in</td>
<td>Complete 30 hours each year with a 3.40 cumulative GPA.</td>
<td>$2,250 per year for Missouri residents.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>State</td>
<td>Name of Program</td>
<td>Award Criteria</td>
<td>Maintaining Eligibility</td>
<td>Award Amount</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------------</td>
<td>-------------------------------------</td>
<td>-------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>--------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>---------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Recognition Scholarship</td>
<td>Top 10 percent of class or 3.90 GPA, ACT of 24 or SAT of 1090.</td>
<td>Completes 30 hours each year with a 3.30 cumulative GPA.</td>
<td>$1,125 annually for Missouri residents.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Out of State Fee Waiver/Mid-West Student Exchange Program</td>
<td>Non-resident entering freshmen with ACT 24 or SAT of 1110 or 3.70 GPA or top 20% of class. Number available is unlimited.</td>
<td>Complete 30 hours each year with a 3.25 GPA.</td>
<td>Full waiver of non-resident fees (Approximately 5,000 annually).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nevada</td>
<td>Millennium Scholarship (Tobacco Settlement Trust Fund)</td>
<td>GPA of 3.25 plus must pass all areas of high school proficiency examination.</td>
<td>GPA of 2.60 freshmen year. 2.75 for sophomore, junior, and senior years.</td>
<td>Value determined on cost of credit hours taken.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New Mexico</td>
<td>Lottery Success Scholarship (Lottery funded)</td>
<td>All students who graduate from a NM high school or receive a GED are eligible. Must enroll in college immediately following high school graduation or award of GED. GPA of 2.50; 12 credit hours first semester of college is required in order to acquire the scholarship which doesn’t begin until the second semester of college</td>
<td>GPA of 2.50; 12 credit hours each semester of college to maintain. Scholarship will cover 8 semesters starting with second semester of college.</td>
<td>Full tuition at public institution beginning in second semester.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North Dakota*</td>
<td>Scholars Program</td>
<td>ACT score in top 5% of state test-takers.</td>
<td>Cumulative GPA of 3.50. Renewable for 3 years. Cannot continue to receive once bachelor degree awarded.</td>
<td>Full tuition at public institution or equivalent amount at private institution.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South Carolina</td>
<td>Palmetto Fellows Scholarship (Lottery Funded)</td>
<td>Cumulative GPA of 3.50 and ACT of 27 (SAT of 1200); top 6%</td>
<td>GPA of 3.00; 30 credit hours per year.</td>
<td>$996 per semester.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>State</td>
<td>Name of Program</td>
<td>Award Criteria</td>
<td>Maintaining Eligibility</td>
<td>Award Amount</td>
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<tr>
<td>--------------</td>
<td>---------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>-------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>----------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>----------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LIFE Scholarship</td>
<td>GPA of 3.00 and ACT of 24 (SAT of 1100); top 30% of class.</td>
<td>GPA of 3.00; 30 credit hours per year.</td>
<td>Tuition or $4700, whichever is less, and $300 book allowance.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>HOPE Scholarship</td>
<td>GPA of 3.00.</td>
<td>Not renewable. For freshmen year only.</td>
<td>$2650.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South Dakota*</td>
<td>South Dakota Opportunity Scholarship (Tobacco Trust Money, State Legislature Appropriations)</td>
<td>GPA of 3.00</td>
<td>GPA of 3.00</td>
<td>$5000 paid over 4 years.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>West Virginia</td>
<td>PROMISE Scholarship (Lottery Funded)</td>
<td>Core and cumulative GPA of 3.00; ACT of 22 with sub-scores of 20 in all subject areas (SAT of 1020 with sub scores of 490 verbal and 480 math).</td>
<td>Cumulative GPA of 2.75 during first year and a cumulative GPA of 3.00 thereafter; 30 credit hours per year.</td>
<td>100% of tuition and required fees at public institution ($3758 per year at private institution).</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Document originally compiled by Dennis Taylor, WV Higher Education Policy Commission, in 2005. Updated 2006 by Rebecca Calwell and Joy Cline, doctoral students in Marshall University’s Graduate School of Education and Professional Development, assisted by Rachael Alley and Jeff Green. Information was gathered by researching scholarship websites and attempting to contact scholarship representatives. Researchers note that information is dynamic due to the continual evolution of rules and regulations concerning award criteria, award eligibility, and award amount.

* Indicates program implemented after 2002.
## Appendix B

### Frequencies: Graduation Dates

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>GRAD_DATE</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
<th>Valid Percent</th>
<th>Cumulative Percent</th>
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<td>1.0</td>
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<td>3.7</td>
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<td>20.5</td>
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<td>5-07</td>
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<td>5.5</td>
<td>96.3</td>
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<td>1.2</td>
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<td>1.2</td>
<td>1.2</td>
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## Appendix C
### Survey Responses

### Survey Results -- Overview

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<th>PROMISE Survey</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Status:</strong></td>
<td>Open</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Launched Date:</strong></td>
<td>08/16/2006</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Closed Date:</strong></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Display:</strong></td>
<td>Display all pages and questions</td>
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### 1. GRAD_DATE

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Graduation Period</th>
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<tr>
<td>Spring 2006</td>
<td>655</td>
<td>57%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Summer 2006</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>3%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Fall 2006</td>
<td>112</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spring 2007</td>
<td>175</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other, please specify</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Total Respondents</strong></td>
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### 2. SEX

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<th>Gender</th>
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<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>762</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>409</td>
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<td>MAJOR</td>
<td>Response Total</td>
<td>Response Percent</td>
</tr>
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<td>----------------</td>
<td>------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agricultural Business and Management</td>
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<td>Agricultural Sciences</td>
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<tr>
<td>Architecture</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Biological Sciences</td>
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<tr>
<td>Business</td>
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<tr>
<td>Communications</td>
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<td>Computer and Information Sciences</td>
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<tr>
<td>Conservation and Renewable Natural Resources</td>
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<tr>
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<td>- Pre-Pharmacy</td>
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<td>- Pre-Med</td>
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<td>- Pre-Dental</td>
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</tr>
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<tr>
<td>Multi / Interdisciplinary Studies</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parks, Recreation and Leisure Facilities Management</td>
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<td>0%</td>
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<tr>
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<tr>
<td>Visual and Performing Arts</td>
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<td>Vocational Home Economics</td>
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<tr>
<td>Other</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Total Respondents</strong></td>
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</table>

### 4. PUB_PRIV_HOME

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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Private</td>
<td>60</td>
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<tr>
<td>Home-schooled</td>
<td>4</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Respondents</strong></td>
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<td><strong>(skipped this question) 47</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### 5. SCH_SIZE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Field</th>
<th>Response Total</th>
<th>Response Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fewer than 500 students</td>
<td>293</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>500 to 750 students</td>
<td>243</td>
<td>21%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>750 to 1,000 students</td>
<td>285</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More than 1,000 students</td>
<td>332</td>
<td>29%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Respondents</strong></td>
<td><strong>1153</strong></td>
<td><strong>(skipped this question) 45</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### 6. URB_SUB

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Response Total</th>
<th>Response Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Urban/Suburban</td>
<td>542</td>
<td>47%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rural</td>
<td>591</td>
<td>51%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Home</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Respondents</strong></td>
<td><strong>1151</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
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</table>

*skipped this question 47*

### 7. FIRST_COL

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Response Total</th>
<th>Response Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>248</td>
<td>22%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>904</td>
<td>78%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Respondents</strong></td>
<td><strong>1152</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*skipped this question 46*

### 8. STILL_ATT

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Response Total</th>
<th>Response Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>1114</td>
<td>97%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Respondents</strong></td>
<td><strong>1152</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*skipped this question 46*
### 9. COLL_WV

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Response</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>PROMISE had no effect on my decision.</td>
<td>165</td>
<td>14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PROMISE had a minor effect on my decision.</td>
<td>183</td>
<td>16%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PROMISE had a fair effect on my decision.</td>
<td>422</td>
<td>37%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PROMISE was the primary factor in my decision.</td>
<td>383</td>
<td>33%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total Respondents: 1153
(skipped this question) 45

### 10. STAY_WV_YN

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Response</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>808</td>
<td>71%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>338</td>
<td>29%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total Respondents: 1146
(skipped this question) 52

### 11. REQ_PERF

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Response</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Renewal requirements had no effect on my performance. My credit hours/GPA would have been the same with or without PROMISE.</td>
<td>845</td>
<td>74%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My academic performance would have been better without the renewal requirements.</td>
<td>78</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My academic performance would have been worse without the renewal requirements.</td>
<td>226</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total Respondents: 1147
(skipped this question) 51
### 12. CHANGE_REQ

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Response</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>951</td>
<td>83%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>199</td>
<td>17%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total Respondents: 1148

*(skipped this question)* 50

### 13. REC_CHNG

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Requirement</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Require fewer credit hours per year.</td>
<td>77</td>
<td>41%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Allow for a lower GPA than 2.75 in the first year.</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>27%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Allow for a lower cumulative GPA.</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>32%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other, please specify</td>
<td>86</td>
<td>46%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total Respondents: 188

*(skipped this question)* 1010

### 14. PAY_BACK

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Response</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes, I still would have accepted the award.</td>
<td>274</td>
<td>24%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No, I would not have accepted the award.</td>
<td>462</td>
<td>40%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I'm not sure.</td>
<td>405</td>
<td>35%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total Respondents: 1141

*(skipped this question)* 57
### 15. FOR_LOAN

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Response</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>407</td>
<td>36%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>402</td>
<td>35%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I’m not sure</td>
<td>333</td>
<td>29%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total Respondents 1142

(skipped this question) 56

### 16. SML_AWD

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Response</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>1008</td>
<td>88%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I’m not sure</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total Respondents 1141

(skipped this question) 57

### 17. EMP_WV

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Response</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>570</td>
<td>50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>237</td>
<td>21%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I don’t know</td>
<td>338</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total Respondents 1142

(skipped this question) 56
### 18. WHY_NO_EMP

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reason</th>
<th>Response Total</th>
<th>Response Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I can't find/don't think I can find a job in my field in WV.</td>
<td>161</td>
<td>31%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Salaries are higher in other states.</td>
<td>206</td>
<td>39%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I would like to live in and experience another place.</td>
<td>240</td>
<td>46%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other, please specify</td>
<td>169</td>
<td>32%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Respondents</strong></td>
<td>525</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(skipped this question)</td>
<td>673</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### 19. ADV_DEG

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Response</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Response Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>822</td>
<td>72%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>98</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I'm not sure.</td>
<td>222</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Respondents</strong></td>
<td>1137</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(skipped this question)</td>
<td>61</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### 20. ADV_DEG_WV

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Response</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Response Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>524</td>
<td>64%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>158</td>
<td>19%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I'm not sure.</td>
<td>136</td>
<td>17%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Respondents</strong></td>
<td>814</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(skipped this question)</td>
<td>384</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### 21. NO_ADV_DEG_WV

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Response</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A graduate degree in my field of choice is not available in WV.</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I prefer to attend an out-of-state school.</td>
<td>77</td>
<td>32%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other, please specify</td>
<td>114</td>
<td>47%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total Respondents: 241

(skipped this question) 957

### 22. STAY_WV

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Response</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>189</td>
<td>19%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>832</td>
<td>82%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total Respondents: 1013

(skipped this question) 185

### 23. SSN

View responses to this question

| Average | 241,443,561.5 |

Total Respondents: 1014

(skipped this question) 184

### 24. ADD_COM

View responses to this question

| Total Respondents | 641 |

(skipped this question) 557
## 25. CONTACT_INFO

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>View responses to this question</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Respondents</strong></td>
<td>448</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(skipped this question)</td>
<td>750</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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SelectSurveyASP Advanced 8.1.1
Appendix D

Text Responses to “Recommended Changes to PROMISE”

13.  **REC_CHNG**

1.  higher standards
2.  demand at least a 3.5 to continue,
3.  Extensions for good students who can not graduate in four years because of class scheduling problems.
4.  not to be lied to by the promise scholarship office regarding the 2.75 GPA the first year
5.  Make the cumulative GPA a 2.90. I had a 2.96 when I lost my scholarship. I made nothing but A’s and B’s since that time and could’ve kept Promise.
6.  Reduce GPA requirements for more difficult majors, increase the GPA requirement for easier majors.
7.  Make it more strict, please!
8.  require a higher GPA in the first year
9.  Higher GPA
10.  3.5 GPA, like my other academic scholarships require.
11.  Allow exceptions to terminating PROMISE when a student withdraws from all classes.
12.  lower gpa, inform students of raise in gpa from the start instead of raising it over and over so they can set appropriate goals
13.  Higher GPA for first year and higher cumulative GPA (3.0 was relatively easy to achieve/maintain in my opinion)
14.  it is so hard to maintain a 3.0 every semester, I felt more pressure by the requiremnt
15.  Students should be allowed to reapply for the scholarship if they bring their gpa back up after one semester of dropping it.
16.  lower the ACT score requirements for the scholarship so more students who are perhaps borderline to recieve financial aid
17.  Lower GPA first year (2.75), Higher GPA after (3.2)
18.  Allow students that mess up a spring semester to be able to sit out a semster but be able to reapply for the scholarship the next Spring.
19.  i received a 2.99999 and lost my scholarship, i believe that there should be some sort of give-way for those who are that close in gpa standings.
20.  I think that the requirements to earn and maintain the scholarship need to be much higher.
21.  Only allow students whose families are in the lowest tax barcket be able to apply
22.  Should be weighted baised off of your Major. Artsie Fartsies get a free ride through, but people pursuing real Majors don't get to keep it.
23. A combination of increased GPA, and an allowance for reduced credit hours with more extracurricular activities.
24. Make PROMISE renewal harder to achieve by mandating a higher cumulative GPA.
25. give us a break in our first semester
26. The second year GPA of 3.00 should be lowered.
27. They should require a better academic performance.
28. Allow a grace period the following year to make up one's GPA
29. Make A Higher Requirement
30. I believe the promise should be harder to get but easier to keep, especially for people with more difficult majors, i.e. computer science, engineering
31. Require a higher cumulative GPA
32. A higher GPA should be maintained
33. The GPA requirement should be INCREASED, not DECREASED. This is a FREE education - make them earn it.
34. Require a 3.25 or higher GPA, but keep freshman year requirements somewhat lower (3.0?)
35. Make it more difficult to receive
36. require a higher cumulative gpa
37. allow for a semester or two of less than 2.75 GPA for really tough semesters
38. Increase GPA requirements
39. use credit hours per year, not per semester per year. make it less confusing.
40. the scholarship should be only given to those who need it. Not full ride students at WVU who are being paid to go to school.
41. The Promise Scholarship is also difficult to manage alongside activating an ROTC scholarship.
42. allow all credits, even those accrued during high school to count toward requirements
43. Raise the admission criteria and the criteria to stay in the program
44. Require students to maintain a higher cumulative GPA
45. Cumulative higher to around 3.2
46. you should raise the GPA requirement from 3.0 to somewhere between 3.25-3.5
47. Should decide if requirements were met on an individual basis.
48. If you come from a small school like I did and don't have the advantages to take a lot of classes, college can stun you right out of the gate.
49. Higher GPA needed to continue with Promise
50. Raise the cumulative GPA to 3.25
51. make for higher GPAs
make it harder to retain, it's easy to goof off and make a 2.75 first year

Raise GPA requirement

I think it should be more difficult to get (greater academic requirements).

same

i think they should be raised a little.

Major Weighted; as a Chemical Engineering major it was far harder to keep the GPA versus a Communications major.

I think the requirements could increase...a 3.0 is the same as what is require to attain it and should be the same to maintain it.

higher GPA, 3.25 or above

Make a higher GPA, a 3.0 is a pretty low standard when you consider it's full tuition

to be able to use it for hospital based programs

consideration in that student is not dropping out because course work is difficult

I agree with having a set GPA, but when you only miss it by a tenth of a point it is not really fair.

Make credit hours less per year if student has full semester intership or is studying abroad - usually these are only good for 12 hours a semester.

I think that the overall way it is done should be reevaluated

same GPA every year, not lower at first

Require a higher cumulative GPA (a 3.3 would be fair) to retain the PROMISE

Raise the requirements so that there is more money for the students who really need it and deserve to have it.

Increase the GPA requirements, especially in the first year. WV colleges and universities are far less difficult than schools in other states.

I believe that if you are "PROMISED" this scholarship it shouldn't be taken away. I think that the expected outcome was that most students would fail.

I didn't have a problem with the requirements, but others seemed to.

if one "d" or "f" brings a student below the GPA requirements...a probation period to get the GPA back up

require higher GPA

Higher GPA

Make the GPA higher

Make the 2.75 in your MAJOR ONLY; general studies are what bring most students down.

Higher first year GPA requirements, Higher cumulative GPA

or add college credit from high school

Exceptions to the GPA requirements if medical problems occur, for example when I missed 2 weeks of school for medical reasons and lost my scholarship
80. Increase the requirements
81. use of all college credits to count towards hours for renewal
82. There should be exceptions. My brother (best-friend) passed away the second week or my first semester, which dropped my grades. I lost the promise.
83. allow summer school hours count toward 30 hrs yearly
84. higher gpa requirement
85. Allow lower GPA just for the first year which is the hardest getting acclimated to college life, being away from home, and in my case participating in  
86. higher gpa
Appendix E
Text Responses to “Why Not Working in WV?”

18. WHY_NO_EMP

1. I will be going on to dental school so I don’t know at this point
2. Better opportunity elsewhere
3. My specialty is GIS/Geography. I’ve found no jobs here.
4. I will go to the best job offer
5. Attending Graduate school over the next two years
6. I am attending graduate school in New York
7. Graduate school - WVU
8. I’m not sure yet what my plans are
9. I wanna get married.
10. Attending graduate school at WVU.
11. Depends on where my family is, WV is dying economically, many schools lack what I require for my future children, etc.
12. [No Answer Entered]
13. Kings Daughters was the first to offer a position in the area in which I wanted to work. I will still live in West Virginia and commute to Ashland.
14. theatre arts employment is mostly out-of state
15. i already have a job in Va.
16. I’m going to law school at WVU Colleg of Law in the Fall.
17. Parents are moving out of West Virginia; I will be attending graduate school in another state
18. moving overseas, barring unforeseen circumstances, for better job opportunities
19. I found a job elsewhere.
20. I will live whereever I can get a job. I don’t know whether it will be in WV or not.
21. I simply prefer King’s Daughters Medical Center in Ashland, KY to those in WV
22. My field is limited in WV; however, I applied for 20 some positions in WV and have not received one call. I have received 2 offers out of state.
23. I live in WV, but will work in KY for 2 yrs. Then, work in WV again. WV hospitals are not making efforts for nurse satisfaction/retention.
24. Attending Medical School in West Virginia
25. I would like experience in theater in NY and return to WV.
26. I was hired by the Federal Government and had to move.
27. Engaged to someone from another state
28. I would like to attend a graduate PhD program in another state, and then practice in WV.
   The number of available jobs is much greater in other states, but salary is the biggest. A $10,000/yr salary difference for some jobs!
29. Husband is in the military; will be traveling with him.
30. I don't want to live here anymore
31. All Reasons
32. haven't started looking yet, but will probably need job in a larger hospital
33. getting ready to attend pharmacy school...in Colorado
34. I am in pharmacy and I have 2 more years.
35. i plan on attending graduate school in another state
36. My degree is in Accounting and it's more difficult to find a job in WV. I will be moving back in 3 years.
37. I plan to attend graduate school.
38. I am getting married in September and moving where my fiance lives.
39. WV does not have a grad. program in my field
40. need a bigger music scene
41. My husband is in the military, so I am going where he is
42. I am attending graduate school at the University of Cincinnati to obtain a masters degree in Marketing which is not offered at any school in WV
43. Currently I plan on going to Graduate School.
44. I don't know that I won't be working in West Virginia
45. I am attending graduate school to obtain my master's degree at West Virginia University.
46. Plans for graduate schooling
47. I am attending graduate school at WVU
48. High Profile Civil Engineering jobs are not present in WV, however some lower level jobs are
49. I want to work in international law, and WV doesn't have much in that field.
50. I'm working for my dad in Ohio right now.
51. I'm going to graduate school
52. fiance received a good job in Cincinnati, Ohio.
53. Joining the United States Air Force
54. I have already found a job in another state.
Opportunities for Professional Growth are greater outside the state
just depends on where the best job is located
going to grad school in another state
significant other can't get a good job in WV with degree
I will be attending graduate school at WVU
I accepted a position with the government in Virginia where I can make more but am living in West Virginia.
Medical Mal-Practice Insurance in this state is outrageous
in medicine, WV malpractice insurance is exorbitant
I am attending medical school after graduation, so where I work will be determined by the Residency Matching Program
Graduate studies elsewhere
Going to law school out of state
Graduate School
Received job offers from companies in other states
i am going to grad. school next year. after that, i want to work in a large firm in a big city and travel.
There is only one Big 4 accounting firm office in WV (E&Y in Charleston) and I didn't want to work for them.
continuing school
Im pursuing a Master's Degree not offered in our State
working on a PhD in political science
I don't know where I am going to seek employment yet.
I could be moving after I get married.
quality of life is better elsewhere
I will go where the money and living conditions suit me best. where ever i can find a good opportunity wv or some other state
Going to Law School at Washington & Lee University
There is no Theatre In West Virginia
I am going to graduate school for the next 3 years at WVU
I am going to medical school at WVSOM
Active Duty Military - Location of Duty Station is outside WV
My husband's job is taking us out of state.
Family and other opportunities
85. I am continuing my education in WV
86. I am currently in law school at WVU College of Law
87. I'm attending graduate school (at WVU) and will only be working part-time.
88. high costs of malpractice insurance, if I don't stay...
89. graduate school
90. I am working for a missionary company and it is based out of Florida,
91. I'm not sure where I'll work
92. Grad school at Pitt
93. I have no one here... my parents are in North and South Carolina and my fiance is in Nebraska
94. Attending the Graduate School of Chemistry at the University of Pittsburgh
95. I'm not sure where I want to end up
96. I would like to go abroad for a year and teach ELL
97. Not spending money on undergrad has afforded me the ability to go to grad school, I plan to work in WV after Grad school
98. Malpractice Insurance is too high
99. I have received a very high paying job offer in another state.
100. It depends on where I am able to find a job.
101. boyfriend lives in another state
102. I'm going to graduate school.
103. All the above reasons, except the first, there are jobs here for EE but not near the salary as other states.
104. spouses job elsewhere
105. My husband may need to move to find a job.
106. Because I will be a doctor and the malpractice here sucks.
107. Going to graduate school
108. Had a job offer with a major company and they relocated me
109. I am a Forensic Biology major and there are no job opportunities within that field in WV.
110. fiance may not find work here, few jobs available which makes it very competitive, teachers stay in their jobs for many years (no overturn)
111. I'm a going to graduate school and have not yet started to look for a job in state or other wise
112. all of the above options affect my decision
113. still have 4 years of college
114. attending law school
I'm attending a school in NC to obtain my masters in clinical neuropsychology and health psychology, which is not offered in WV.

Broadcast news is a very competitive field and I will take a job whereever I can get one, whether it be WV or some other state.

most of the companies in my field are not headquartered in WV

from searching around it does not seem like there are many professional type jobs in the state

hospital reputations are better in other states

I had much better job offers elsewhere. Will start working in June in Pittsburgh.

I am undecided because I have 3 years of graduate school left.

My family has recently relocated to another state and I plan to join them after graduation

I am joining the Peace Corps

moving overseas to work

I am a small business owner, therefore I create my own employment.

I would love to; however, after my first year of college I joined the U.S. Air Force.

my husband is already working out of state

I have gotten a position teaching English in Japan

Boards of Pharmacy require you to work for a year in your state of licensure.

I have not decided where to seek employment.

My fiance lives in another state; I'm going to grad school in another state

Military

In general, I feel like the opportunity to get a good job with advancement potential and no "glass ceiling" of pay and benefits can't be found in WV.

I would like to work at the Women and Children's Hospital as a Diagnostic Medical Sonography. Salaries are higher in other states.

I will be attending graduate school in Kentucky

attending graduate school

While in college I'm working in a Federal job in WV. This job is leading me to a better one in Washington, D.C. I did get my start (five years) in WV.

Military spouse

I am entering my second year of law school.

Undecided at this time - planning to go to grad school

I plan to do research on a higher level than is available in the state; ex, cancer research,

There is very low demand for careers in the Visual Arts in West Virginia

hospitals are better in the DC area
I plan to further my education, instate or out of state.
I am teaching English in France, starting in October, 2006
Mom filling out survey, daughter was killed in Nov. 2005
Medical reasons
not currently seeking employment, will be attending optometry school in the fall
I would like to live in and experience another place and where I seek employment has a great deal to do with where I attend law school.
I have been offered a fellowship to attend graduate school outside of WV.
Getting married and fiance took a job out of state
I have not seen evidence that the state is being properly managed, and those in power, with the exception of Joe Manchin, haven't proven themselves.
West Virginia is dead =P
I am attending graduate school.
My fiance lives in another state.
Going to Graduate School
i will attend graduate school in wv
family
I am currently living and working overseas
Not enough jobs/salary in this area. More opportunities in other states.
If my best job opportunity is in WV, then I'll stay, I will just have to go where ever I get the best offer. I would love to stay in WV, but I may hav
High cost of medical mal-practice insurance
Currently living and working in PA
Attending Grad school in West Virginia
no openings available, too hard to get into system
I am attending graduate school in Texas.
I am attending graduate school
have been accepted into a professional degree program in another state
lacking snowfall
Appendix F
Text Responses to “Why Not Pursuing Advanced Degree in WV?”

21. NO_ADV_DEG_WV

1. I need a university that excels in my chosen study.
2. did not like the program
3. I need an online degree and most WV colleges do not offer what I need online
4. Only one law school in the state, and unfortunately that is WVU.
5. Optometry
6. No Christian graduate schools in West Virginia -
7. specialized trade degree
8. Unsure where I will be going for my masters degree
9. [No Answer Entered]
10. i want to pursue my degree online
11. I have not decided if I will stay in state or go to a university in Ohio or Kentucky
12. There is a better graduate program in another state and Marshall does not offer the program of my choice (MAcc).
13. My employer offers a large annual allowance for continuing education; this is a company not located in WV, not many WV companies make this offer.
14. Better programs in out-of-state schools
15. depends on where i end up working
16. I will be teaching in Florida and attending University of FL for my Master's
17. I feel the psychology phd programs in WV are not as diverse as in other places
18. Depends on where I can get Grad. School paid for.
19. [No Answer Entered]
20. WVU has not accepted me into the program yet, but Colorado has.
21. I will be attending a graduate program in Marietta, OH because it is closer to my home.
22. the program i'm interested in has a better structure in another state
23. I want to broaden my life experience and go to school in a large city
24. Chemistry graduate schools in WV are not rigid enough to support quality degrees in the field.
25. The program I plan to attend has better programs outside of WV
26. [No Answer Entered]
27. I don’t know where I’ll go yet
28. No courses available in McDowell County for an MBA
29. I am not yet sure which institution offers the best price/performance compromise in an advanced Aerospace Engineering degree.
30. I may decide to go to Law School or a MBA Program. These programs aren't as competitive as I am looking for.
31. There is only 2 schools in WV that has the program I want to pursue and they are very competitive. If I can get into those schools I will attend them
32. Place of Employment
33. I have a good chance of being accepted to more selective schools
34. I want to earn my degree while teaching, and I don't know yet what colleges will be near where I settle.
35. just dont know where i will end up
36. i'm moving out of state when i graduate
37. I may move to find better jobs and go to school wherever I live in a few years.
38. Moving out of state after graduation because of fiance's job.
39. I am unsure of where I will be living when I go back to school.
40. Better programs are available at other institutions.
41. I was awarded full tuition scholarships from an out of state school for my masters degree
42. I am graduating this May (2006) with an MS in Biomedical Engr. WVU did not seem interested in me pursuing a graduate degree, so I went elsewhere
43. WVU's law school is not highly regarded, although I do intend to eventually practice in WV.
44. employer pays for advanced degrees, in other state
45. I feel like there are better programs offered out of state in my field that I am going to pursue an advanced degree in.
46. Looking to attend a top law school in the nation
47. It depends on were I am living at the time I pursue the advanced degree
48. Continuing education at my Military Duty Station.
49. I may not be accepted to a WV graduate degree program
50. I don't know where I want to go and I'll have to pay for it either way.
51. WV schools do not offer the same opportunity of working with individuals with cochlear implants.
52. Want experience at another school
pending acceptance

I am not sure at this point

Stipend is better out-of-state

I am moving to be with my fiance

It has a limited amount of places that offers SLP MA

Only WVU has advanced degree in Water Resource Engineering, and I have worked on my undergraduate degree there. So I am going to study at a new school

Better technological opportunity in Pittsburgh

I'm not sure where I'll pursue my advanced degree, it will depend on where I am at

WV doesn't have a reputable fine art school...

want to travel outside of the state

I just am not sure of where I want to pursue the degree yet

WV schools do not have REPUTABLE, challenging graduate programs in my field

[No Answer Entered]

It just depends on where life takes me. I would like to work full time for some amount of time before studying for my Graduate Degree.

I haven't pursued all of my options yet.

[No Answer Entered]

school system will pay for schools close by

Underdeveloped MBA program

Nationally ranked schools

tuition might be smaller in other states.

doctoral program better at another school

I plan to work on the Ohio border. The schools within my county lack graduate school, but ones across the river have plenty.

I don't know where I'll be living when I go to graduate school

I'm not sure that I will stay in WV for the rest of my life

I am going to teach in another state and work on my master's while I am teaching

I do not know where I will be living or the cost benefits at the time I pursue an advanced degree.

will probably be moving out of state before I go back to school

Out of state schools offer a better MBA program.

I feel that the best school for my field of choice is not in WV.
The Promise Scholarship and Fairmont State both let me down completely and I will not spend any additional money to attend any other school in WV.

don't have plans yet

want o do it online

I am not sure, I will go wherever I can recieve a reliable scholarship.

I will go where I can have a reassuring scholarship.

not sure

[No Answer Entered]

i am moving out of state

I am currently enrolled in the University of Kentucky College of Pharmacy.

WV does not have the non-traditional Creative Writing program I want

Not sure where i will be living

I plan to attend a "top 10" school in my field, and there are none located in WV.

Better marketing/pr programs out-of-state

Received a lucrative offer for full tuition and assistantship in VA

I will be moving in 2-3 years to another state.

Having two different schools from two different states would look better

My job may be out of state, thus I'd probably be going to a mba in another state.

Military spouse, i dont know where i will be living for sure

encouraged to attend grad school at another institution

It will depend on the school that accepts me as a grad student

may not be living in WV

The Law Schools in West Virginia are sub-par on a national level. I wish to be a competitive candidate for any law related job anywhere in the US.

I don't know my future plans but do not plan to reside in this state

I was accepted to a prestigious program outside of WV

I will not be living in West Virginia

I no longer live in WV.

I want to go to a larger area

I want a school with higher funding and more opportunities than the schools in WV
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>111.</td>
<td>If I can get a teaching job in WV, I will work towards my masters in WV.</td>
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<tr>
<td>112.</td>
<td>I will be living in another state</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>113.</td>
<td>There were not schools in WV that taught my interests.</td>
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<tr>
<td>114.</td>
<td>Employer will pay for advanced degree. Must go where Employer finds acceptable.</td>
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Appendix G
Additional Comments

24. ADD_COM

1. No.

2. I wish there was a 5th year extension on the scholarship

3. I am graduating Magna Cum Laude. I made good grades in high school but I exceeded that in college.

I am so thankful for the PROMISE program. Although my parents attended college, I am the first in my family to graduate from college. PROMISE requirements kept me motivated to keep up my grades to keep the money which helped so much! Although I attended a private university and PROMISE did not pay full tuition, the university had "PROMISE plus" scholarships that accompanied state money and allowed me to graduate WITHOUT loans! What a great way to start off my career! Thanks to Governor Wise and all the others that pushed this through in 2002. I was determined to keep my scholarship even though Nursing classes were so difficult. This money truly helped me to stay on track and remain in school and graduate. THANK YOU!

The PROMISE program was the only chance I had at going to school. It was the only aid I received and without it I would have not been able to afford to go to school. I did not renew my scholarship in my last year of eligibility because I only needed 10 credit hours in this (my Last) year. I did struggle to pay the costs and wish I would have been able to still get aid from PROMISE. I even thought of staying full time so that I would not have to pay anything. Maybe this is something to look into. How many stay full time just to keep the PROMISE benefits? Would it be cheaper for you to offer part-time aid to students like me? I would just like to say thanks again PROMISE made it possible for me.

6. I would just like to thank you for being given this opportunity.

7. I am very grateful to the Promise Scholarship, and believe that the scholarship should continue.

I was an over 4.0 student with average standardized test scores and still had trouble getting scholarships because most are need-based. The Promise Scholarship really helped me to achieve my goals. I'm now finishing my first year of pharmacy school. I have a younger brother who is now pre-med. This scholarship is making it a little easier to decide where to go and with the financial aspect. I am so grateful to have had this opportunity. Thank you so very much.

I have worked very hard to keep my promise scholarship but because of the 30hr requirement and the lack of summer school funding it was very hard for me to get all the classes I need to finish my Elementary Ed. Degree in four years. I now have to find some way to pay for my last class and student teaching. I think that some serious considerations need to be addressed for future generations about the hours required, summer funding, and extensions for students in situations like mine.

The Promise Scholarship did not pay my full tuition since I attended a private college. Although, I did find the scholarship helpful. I worked hard in high school and I feel it rewarded me for doing this. I realize that the requirements for the promise scholarship have been changed since I have received the scholarship. I do not think that they should have changed the requirements. I am a hard working student and it took me three tries just to get a 21 on the ACT test so that I would qualify for the Promise Scholarship. Not all students are excellent test takers. Since the ACT requirement have been raised it eliminates all of the "average"
students. Students who do well or can do well on a test usually receive all of the scholarships and do not need the Promise Scholarship. Therefore, I feel the requirements for the Promise Scholarship should be review to make sure that the average students are benefiting from it.

11. I think it is wonderful. Gives many who deserve recognition for merit, not just for need.

My second semester at Marshall I fell below the 2.75 GPA and was told by the Promise Scholarship office that if I took 1 class during the summer that I would be able to keep the scholarship. I attended a summer class at WV State to keep my scholarship which my mom paid for (she is a single parent who works for the State and doesn’t make much money anyway), and made an A in it, only to find out that I still missed my GPA by .10%. I was told by the Promise Scholarship office that if I made an A in that class I would be able to keep the scholarship, but was then told after I found out that I didn’t keep it that they must have miscalculated it. I have maintained my position on the Deans list at Marshall and do not understand how this happens. I was good enough for Deans list but not good enough for the Promise Scholarship. I was determined, as well as my mom, to finish school and to see that I graduated. I am proud to say I completed my nursing degree in 4 years. There needs to be better communication in your office to help students stay with you program.

The promise was a major blessing to me and my family. The weight off of my shoulders from paying tuition and fees enabled me to worry less on my loans and possibly working to pay for school and allowed me to focus on my studies much more. I feel as though the state actually cares for me as a West Virginian and for my education and only makes me think even more highly of my beloved state.

13. I think the PROMISE program is excellent. Not only has it taken a large financial burden off of my family, but when combined with summer internships and a few extra scholarships I have been able to almost fully fund all of my expenses outside of tuition on my own during college.

14. This is what I am most proud of this far in life. I am so appreciative. I have worked hard to be an ample example of a Promise Scholar.

15. I would like to say that I am very thankful for this program! I have to pay for college all on my own and without the promise I don’t know what I would have done! Although I did recieve the scholarship for all four years, I still have to pay back over $10,000 in loans because I went to a private school. But, it would have been over $20,000 had I not gotten this award! Let me tell everyone this one more time, I am VERY thankful for this scholarship! Please keep it in effect and in all honesty, I think it should be given to those students who have to pay for college alone and/or have parents who do not make enough money to send their child to college... Some students recieved this money without needing it and that took away from those who did. But, that's just my opinion. However, I am still very thankful and want to stay in WV because WV gave me an education.

If it had not been for the Promise, I would be graduating with a loan to be repaid. Also, my mother, a single parent and a teacher had to work a second job during the last four years (and the previous four years before my enrolling in college during which my sister attended and graduated)----so having the Promise helped my family immensely. Because my mother did not make enough money to send their child to college any more...

16. The PROMISE certainly had an effect on my decision to remain in state for college. Despite its help to me however, it seems that it would be much more beneficial to the state of West Virginia if the program used a forgivable loan program.

17. The promise scholarship certainly worked out in my favor, but I believe that it did not serve the purpose for which it was originally intended. By making the only qualifications to receive the award GPA and SAT/ACT score based many students that would have been better served by the scholarships were denied. It is my opinion that this scholarship should be on a “need basis.” Even as a student who may not have received the scholarship if the qualifications were related to family income, I still think the award would be most effective if it was offered to
students who could not otherwise afford to attend college IF they met the other academic qualifications.

20. Thank You

I am grateful for the opportunity it provided me, and it certainly made the college experience less stressful. Thank you.

I think the Promise is a wonderful program for WV students who may or may not be able to have attended college, especially in WV. However, I do not feel that the scholarship should be anything other than a Merit based award, not a need based one. I also do not feel as if any changes should be made currently other than to the academic requirements, if so. If changes are made to the program that change its original purpose, then the Promise is not being fulfilled.

Thank you for paying for the 2 years of college that I was able to keep the Promise. I think it's a great program, and it gives many high school students the opportunity to attend college. It also gives relief to them in knowing that they will not have to pay back a lot of student loans at the end of their college years. I may recommend changing the 3.0 requirement to a 2.90. The first 2 years of college for any student give them a tough time. They have to adjust to the harder curriculum and the atmosphere of college. Through my years, I have noticed through myself and through my peers that after that 2 years is up, school tends to be easier and good grades can come easier. This is especially the case for engineering students who have to take 4 courses of calculus throughout their beginning years. Some of these prospective engineers may have come from schools with poor teaching in math and other subjects. Many of them may be losing their Promise because of the poor teaching they received at their high schools. I, myself, came from a school with some poor math teachers. Luckily, I was able to have one of the better teachers at the school for 2 of my 4 high school math courses. I suggest that maybe you should give students one grace semester if their GPA does not meet minimum requirements so that they may try to make up that 3.0 GPA. I lost my promise because I was taking summer courses to try and improve my GPA. Summer courses, however, turn out to be harder than the regular semester courses because all the curriculum is crammed together in 5 or 10 week courses.

23. I think this is a really great program that gives kids a chance to make something of themselves.

24. I think that this scholarship is fine if you go to a University or College, but ridiculous if you go to a hospital-based program. It amazes me that Promise paid $4,000 for me to go to WVU for a year, and would have paid that for the next 3 years after that, but wouldn't pay $1,000 per year for 2 years for me to go to my hospital-based program of Radiologic Technology. The 2-year tuition there would be half of what it would cost to send me to WVU for an entire year, let alone the 4 years that I am allowed at WVU. This is outrageous to me and I am not happy about it at all. The "No Child Left Behind Act" is bunch of bologna, because I worked my behind off at WVU to keep my scholarship, and then lost it because I wanted to pursue my dreams at a different school. Ridiculous!!

25. The requirements to obtain the promise scholarship are too soft. If the PROMISE program wants to better the state, it should reward the state's best and brightest, persuading them to stay in the state.

At the end of my freshman year at WJU my GPA did not meet promise requirements. I took a summer course at Condord and received an A that would have increased the GPA to continue with the Promise.WJU has a rule about only accepting WJU credits towards a GPA for graduation and other schools credits as credits only. Therefore I was still not eligible for the Promise my Sophmore year.

26. I talked to numerous people at WJU and at Promise to try to get WJU to include GPA from WV schools in their Promise calculations for the purpose of the award. I also asked Don Caruth to talk with the Promise people about this. The final decision by Promise was whatever WJU
turned in that was what they accepted. WJU decision was only GPA earned at WJU would be
turned in so no more Promise for me. I believe that the Promise is for WV schools and that all
GPA credits earned in WV schools should be eligible for the Promise. Since it was the first year
of the Promise, I pointed out to WJU that they had an opportunity to assist students at that
point and make a rule for Promise GPA calculations but they chose to ignore my suggestion
and who know how many students missed out from WJU.

The promise was very helpful to me. I graduate in 7 semesters and had an extra semester left
for the promise. Therefore, I saved the state some money, but wish that would be applicable to
furthering my education, but I'm sure that's not an option.

It has been very helpful because I also received the John Marshall Scholarship so I was able to
pay for college with the Promise scholarship and use the John Marshall Scholarship for books
and other things I needed. Thank you so much!

The PROMISE Scholarship gives so many students an opportunity to go to college who would
otherwise have no other funding for their education. The PROMISE Scholarship helped me
financially - I was able to concentrate more on my studies rather than having to work too
much during the week to pay for extra expenses.

The PROMISE program is an excellent program for the state of WV. I have one suggestion
though. I attended a private college in WV for my degree, because no state college offered my
major, Physician Assistant. I would ask not that our whole tuition be paid for by the PROMISE,
but maybe slightly more than what is given because we don't have other options at cheaper
schools. I did attend WVU for my prerequisites for the program for two years, but I still was
limited when I choose my major. Maybe for the few that may fall into this category, we could
have an additional part of our tuition be forgivable if we worked in WV for an "X" amount of
years. I am very grateful though for what the PROMISE has given to me over the past four
years and making my higher education more affordable to me and my parents, who also have
another PROMISE recipient in college.

I am very grateful for the program. I think it would be stronger and more effective in its goal if
students were to gain a deeper appreciation for what West Virginia (education, employment,
activities, and recreation) offers to them. A lot of people don't really know what is right in their
"own back yard." (Activities such as skiing, fishing, bicycling, libraries, West Virginia history,
spelunking, research at major WV institutions, etc)

I think that the Promise program is a good program. One reason it didn't affect my decision to
stay in West Virginia is the fact that I had planned to attend Shepherd University (College at
the time I entered) before the Promise program was introduced. It also allowed me to save
more money for after graduation. With that extra money left over I was able to move to
another location in West Virginia to start a full time job.

I think it is great because a lot of students need financial assistance to attend college.

I am so lucky to have gotten this award. It has made the college experience much more
affordable and less stressful.

The promise scholarship was a wonderful idea. Without the promise I would have a lot of
student loans. My family is middle class and I have always made good grades, but this
scholarship really relieved financial burden from my parents. I have three younger siblings and
I hope that the promise stays around to help them pay for college.

I am thankful for the scholarship because it allowed me to go to the college of my choice in
WV, instead of having to save money by commuting to the closest college to my home. You
guys (and Bob Wise) are wonderful!

Please continue to have the scholarship cover the ENTIRE tuition cost if at all possible.

I am glad that the promise scholarship does not take into account the income of the student's
parents. It was rewarding to receive the scholarship based on my hard work and dedication through high school. One problem with the renewal requirement of a 3.0 GPA is that different majors and different schools may use a different grading scale which puts some students at a higher advantage of keeping their scholarship than others. I would like to see some sort of allowance made for this.

There should most definitely be an adjustment in requirements for different majors.

Requirements should be strict to yield the best students WV has to offer. 30 hours is a great credit hour requirement. I believe that the PROMISE has afforded me great opportunities, and I'm very grateful for our state going into massive debt!

I was so happy to receive this scholarship because it paid my tuition in full for four years of college. I have no loans and will start graduate school in WVU School of Dentistry in August 2006. I wrote a letter to Governor Manchin concerning the Promise scholarship. I wanted him to the please continue the Promise Scholarship because it opens doors to all walks of life. My letter also contained a special thanks to all the people who made the Promise Scholarship possible and encouraged Governor Manchin and lawmakers to keep the Promise in West Virginia. I have seen students work harder in high school and college to keep the Promise. I even know people who lost the scholarship because of grades and regret it now. Governor Manchin answered my letter and promised to pass it on. Again, I would like to thank the State of West Virginia for giving me the opportunity to receive the Promise Scholarship. Without the promise, I would have to incur student loans for both undergraduate and graduate school. It is a wonderful program and I hope it will continue for others in the future. When I attended Boys'State, Former Governor Wise introduced the scholarship and explained that the students who worked hard in their grades and ACT and SAT tests would benefit. I was so lucky to be the first class to receive the scholarship and hope other students will realize what a wonderful program it is. It was the best graduation gift I received in May 2002.

The Promise Scholarship provides an outstanding opportunity for students who are serious about furthering their education. For many students this award is essential. If we are to ever improve our standing as a state it has to be through education. Please don't discontinue or reduce the amount of the Promise scholarship.

You should allow the scholarship extend past the four years if a student has the grades.

I attended summer school in order to bring my GPA up to what it needed to be. I was told that I only needed to take one class and get an A, which I did, and then my GPA would meet the requirements. However, after I took the class and received an A my GPA was off by either .01 or .001. Either way I should not have lost my scholarship over something as minor as this!

My parents both have college degrees, but my Dad, a coal miner, went back to college at age 37 and he still has student loans at age 48. This is not taken into account when the financial aid people look at the numbers. The Promise allowed me to get my undergrad degree paid in full with no loans. I have been accepted into WVU Dental School and will have a huge amount of loans for my postgrad education. If I would have graduated with a lot of debt, I'm not sure I would have been able to go straight into dental school. The program is great and I never had any problems dealing with it. I think its a huge state asset and I hope our legislators will try to keep the Promise in its current form.

I think this was a great incentive to make kids perform well in school. I liked the fact that it was based on grades and not family income. Although my mother is expected to give me money for college she doesn't and I am thankful that I have had this scholarship to use. I think you should extend the scholarship until you graduate. Colleges these days make it very difficult for an individual to graduate in four years.

If it hadn't been for the Promise scholarship, I would be neck deep in student loans at this point. My parents had been saving for college since I was born, but since the cost of tuition has risen so much, they would not have been able to pay for it. The Promise, along with other scholarships I received, has allowed me to graduate college debt free. Although I will be
working in Ashland, I do not plan to work there long. My goal is to work in West Virginia as a school nurse within the next five years.

I really appreciated the monies provided, and it definitely was the primary reason that I stayed in West Virginia. However, I did not appreciate the fact that I did not receive the "full promise" simply because I attended a private college. As a student at Appalachian Bible College, I could have used that "extra" money as tuition there is much higher than that of State, Marshall, etc. Please take this into consideration for the future!

The strict requirements that the program requires to keep the scholarship has made it hard for me to find a job to support myself, in paying rent and for food and such. The amount of work required for 15 hrs of upper level classes can be a heavy load.

Just that I can't thank you enough. I absolutely could not have attended WVU without the benefit of the Promise Scholarship. Thank you.

I APPRECIATE RECEIVING THE PROMISE SCHOLARSHIP.

This program is great! I kept my award all eight semesters, and it was just a huge help. I have not had to get a single loan thanks to this scholarship and two other scholarships that I received. If it were not for all three of these scholarships, I fear that I would be starting "real life" in debt. I really do appreciate all that this scholarship program has done for me and my family. I say it has helped my family as well, because they didn't feel obligated to pay for my schooling. When I tell people from other states about what my great state of West Virginia has done for me, I feel proud to say that I am a West Virginian through and through. The program has just been a really big help to me, and I'm sure that all of the recipients who kept their PROMISE feel the same way!

This scholarship really helped my parents as they prepared financially for my college career.

I believe the promise program is very good for West Virginia and its young people attending college. I know it definitely helped me out very much and I am grateful for the opportunities it gave me.

Without the financial assistance offered by the PROMISE program, paying for college would have been extremely difficult for me. With the financial burden lifted, I was able to concentrate on my school-work and finish my BSBA degree with a cumulative GPA of over 3.5. Having less accumulated debt upon graduation has also made it possible for me to pursue even further education; In the fall of 2006 I will be attending the West Virginia University School of Law as member of the Class of 2009. Without the PROMISE scholarship program, I would not have been able to reach, what I feel is, the pinnacle of my life thus far.

Its a great program

It is certainly a nice gesture. I certainly would not have attended college in West Virginia if I had not received the PROMISE scholarship. However, I feel that I made the wrong decision by staying in-state for college. The biology program at my college was less than satisfactory, and I believe I would have received a better education elsewhere.

Other than that, I did receive an excellent education at a public institution in my opinion. My other top choices were private, out-of-state schools--which I believed I could receive a better education at. For the most part, I would recommend my college to other upcoming students.

I am unsure of where my residence will be after graduation. This is because I live extremely close to Virginia, and most jobs in my field are located in that area.

I think this is a great scholarship. It affected my decision to stay in state and is why I went to WVU. If I didn't have the Promise there was another scholarship offered to me at Marshall and I would have gone there. However, I would have done some extra scholarship hunting if that
was my only option. Also if the Promise scholarship had those other conditions such as working in state or paying it off in state I would have chose the Marshall scholarship. However, I think that is a good idea for our state's economy. Also I plan to try to find a job in state after graduation, but it needs to be competitive with other places.

I think the PROMISE program is an excellent program. I am very thankful that I was given this opportunity.

I think it is a great program and has helped many students obtain a great education. I'm glad I was fortunate enough to be included in the program.

the PROMISE Scholarship was my main reason of staying in West Virginia. The help it gave me was imperative.

I owe much of my college education to the Promise Scholarship. Most awards depend on how much money your parents make -- regardless of whether they will be helping you or not. They just assume that will happen. These students receive money -- regardless of their performance in high school or college. In my case -- I had to find my own way to attend school. My life would have been so much more difficult and my grades would have suffered if I'd of had to work even more hours to pay bills incl tuition. Requiring students to keep their grades up and work hard is a very good thing and should be continued. Sincerest thanks, Promise!

I think that the PROMISE scholarship is a wonderful program that motivates and helps young people make the life-changing decision to attend college and attempt to begin a better life for themselves.

I have enjoyed the opportunities that the PROMISE program has created for me. In one of the questions before about the extent to which the requirements have affected my performance, there was no choice that indicated that a student may have taken fewer credit hours per semester. If not for the requirements of PROMISE I would have taken fewer credit hours per semester to cut back on academic stress. However, at the same time meeting the requirements of PROMISE almost guarantees graduating in eight semesters and for that I'm grateful as well.

It was a very big help to me. Without it, I would have had to get loans to pay for school. I am very grateful to the Promise program.

It's been a wonderful opportunity-granting program which I would recommend the state continue in order to better its name in the minds of all those students who are leaving in the exodus. What better way could West Virginia show its dedication to those who feel there is no commitment to higher education? It's part of building a better "brand" recognition for the state. Budget cuts and higher future taxes are not a way to support continued growth. Abandon the antiquated tax code and adopt a more business-friendly structure that may attract businesses and jobs.

I think it's a great idea, but the initial requirements for acceptance (high school gpa and ACT scores) are too low. This scholarship was the easiest to get and keep of any that I was eligible for, and some people who have it take it for granted due to the low requirements.

I wish they paid more money for private colleges.

I think it should continue and I think the requirements should not be raised just to get the state out of paying for it.

The Promise scholarship was the best thing that could have happened for me for my college experience. I definitely would have so many school loans to pay back if the Promise scholarship was not available. This is definitely something that should continue in West Virginia to help high school students strive to want to go to college.

I think it helps out families a lot with the tuition rates. I know that I really appreciated the scholarship and the financial aid it gave to me and my family.
Thank you!

Sometimes it just isn't possible to get 30 hours in a year without taking summer courses, which aren't covered by PROMISE and are very expensive.

I think that the PROMISE program is an excellent program for encouraging students to attend college in the state of West Virginia. I don't think that the program should be changed so that students should pay back"work off" the scholarship money after graduation. If there is any problem with funding, I would recommend that the requirements for qualifying be increased. I know that one of the goals of the program is to encourage students to attend college, but I think that we also need to make sure that we keep some of the brightest students in the state as well. Even if the qualification requirements are increased to match the budget, the program will still be able to encourage some of the top students to attend school in WV and hopefully work in the state as well. I know that if my field (nanotechnology) was more predominant in our state, I would definitely stay here and partially because of the PROMISE program.

I feel that having to maintain a 3.0 after the first semester is so hard given the 15 hour requirement. I know so many people like me that lost it after two semesters because it is so demanding.

It was a great motivator to keep good grades and work hard. It would have been a huge financial burden for me and my family to deal with.

I think the idea of the PROMISE scholarship is great. I wish it worked better for the students in the state and for the people working at the capital.

I think the promise was a major help in allowing me to attend college and will allow me to feel more secure after graduation without major loans to pay back.

I am very thankful for this opportunity that Governor Wise created in 2002. I am also thankful for Governor Manchin keeping this scholarship in order for other WV students to pursue higher education. I owe my state a lot for everything that it has done for me and if possible I would love to attend graduate school in WV, if the money situation is okay with my family, and then ultimately find a job in WV to live and raise my own family. However, with my field (Double BA major in Intelligence Research and Analysis, and Political Science) I am having a hard time finding a job. I have applied for 20 some jobs ranging from jobs that are above my standards and below my standards and have not received one call; while I applied for possibly 5 jobs out of state and received two interviews within a few months. I want to stay in WV more than anything and serve my state through working here but things aren't working out for my favor. Now that we have our students going to school in WV we must look at how to keep them here with employment! Thank you for everything Promise!

Thank you for easing my financial burden through college. It means a lot and makes it stress free. I love your guidelines and standards because it pushes you to work harder.

I am glad that I received it and was able to keep it for the entire duration of my college experience.

I really appreciated the financial assistance. Without this award, I probably would have gone to college out of state and then pursued a job in another state. I think the Promise is good for the future of West Virginia.

very grateful for the award.

The PROMISE was an excellent opportunity for me to attend college. If I had not received the scholarship, I would have not been able to attend a university. It also freed me from worrying about paying for college since I am from a middle class family that could not afford to pay for it.

My family is not in the lower class, yet not exactly in the middle. This makes it hard for me to get grants for my schooling. The promise scholarship encouraged me to finish my degree
before applying to professional school, since my tuition would be paid. I think that it is a wonderful program that encourages students to begin working harder in their studies while in high school. I hope that it persists in the future.

I feel that I am somewhat unique in the program. I used the scholarship for 3 years of undergrad and was accepted into medical school are Marshall. I would have to say that the scholarship was the deciding factor to stay at home because I was accepted into my top choice of out of state schools, but couldn't turn down having my schooling paid for. Had I not received the Promise I would most likely not been here for medical school. I believe the scholarship is the reason im in my home state that i love and the reason I will get to practice medicine here.

Skyler Smith

I believe there need to be stipulations on the PROMISE program to keep students in WV. Currently, students can receive a full education paid for by WV and leave the state immediately after graduation. WV is not reaping any rewards from their investment.

The promise did not pay my full tuition, this is discouraging. I attend a rather small college with a lower tuition.

I would like to say that I have really benefited from the PROMISE program. The only problem is I attended WVU, since I could get my tuition paid for. WVU only has a 5 year education program, so I have one more year after this and I need to find money to pay for it.

I think that the qualifications should be raised in order to obtain the scholarship. I also think that certain 4.5 and 5 year programs should be taken into account have the reward extend for those extra semesters.

THANK YOU! The PROMISE scholarship made affording college a much less stressful issue. GREAT program!

I think the Promise scholarship is an important thing for students in WV. It provides people with opportunities that they may have not had otherwise. I would have still gone to college regardless of whether I recieved the award or not, but I did greatly appreciate the help that it gave me. I also know that some of my fellow students from high school would not have been able to go to college had it not been for the Promise program. It is important to the state and it's children.

good program, however too strict on requirements to keep scholarship

I believe the PROMISE program is a great program and very thankful that I was awared one. It was a great help to my parents in paying for college and it allowed me to save money up to go on to Law School, which I might not have if it where not for this program.

I was lucky enough to earn the PROMISE. I am upset to see that others who had the same
grades that I did will not be able to earn the award. If a student in WV who has been a good student through out their entire school career, why would they not be able to have money to go to college? Also, why is Theatre not considered a major on the drop down list?

The PROMISE program is great. It has aloud several people to receive a college education that otherwise may not have.

The Promise program is a great idea. I would have liked it better had it been forgiving about a semester and that if you screwed up that you could fix it the next semester and maybe reapply. The requirements were a little strict for incoming freshman trying to adjust to a whole new life.

No.

Thank you so much for approving and providing this scholarship to myself and many others. I greatly appreciate it and regret that people did not take full advantage and lost their scholarships.

I was the first class of Promise recipients. Every year thereafter, the stakes became higher for high school students to meet the criteria. WV does not have the highest ACT average score. However, the standards were raised so that only high achieving test takers could receive the scholarship. Those high achieving test takers receive college scholarships anyway. This was not what Gov. Wise wanted. It has been tinkered with to the point that it is unattainable to most WV public school students. I did not keep my scholarship, as I had a rough freshmen year as far as coursework. More leniency is needed for the freshmen year and for attaining the scholarship from high school. I am graduating with over a 3.0 average, yet did not keep the scholarship--I was lucky enough to get other aid.

The Promise Scholarship has proven to be a very positive program for West Virginia residents and students. While in high school my friends and I strived to maintain an average and ACT score to qualify. My parents have praised this scholarship for years!

This is a great program that rewards people for doing good. The idea of having to pay the money back if you leave WV after graduation is a little over the edge. In my case there was not a postion open in WV for the agency that I chose, so I had to move. I could not simply just turn down the job.

The PROMISE program should NEVER become a need-based program. If a student does the work and earns the grades, he/she should get the reward. If a student is from a low-income family and cannot afford college tuition, he/she has the right to apply for grants and other forms of need-based financial aid that are already established by the state, federal government, and other institutions.

Do not significantly increase the importance of standardized testing scores to receive the award. Many students, including myself, do not perform extremely well on such tests. However, we greatly perform in the classroom and in extracurricular activities. I have friends who had a higher ACT score than me, but I have outperformed them in my college studies (same major and school). I believe a student's high school GPA and extracurricular activities (over a four-year period) provide a more accurate representation of a student's abilities than one test that a student takes for four hours.

I am so grateful to be a recepient of the Promise program. Without this I am not sure how I would have been able to attend college. I am very proud that I was able to meet the requirments and recieve the scholarship for 4 years. Thank you very much!

I think that this program was wonderful and helped keep me and my parents from taking out loans. My parents and I still had to pay approximately $3,000 dollars a semester for lab fees, dormatory fees, and meal plans but it did greatly help.

I attended a private university in West Virginia, so, as you can imagine, the PROMISE
scholarship paid only a small portion of my tuition. Now, my family is not poor by any means, but with 3 children in college every bit of financial aid counts. I was a 4.0 student in high school and had good ACT and SAT test scores. I was excited that the state was developing a scholarship program that was based on MERIT and not NEED. There are so many need-based forms of assistance available that it is possible for a student of lesser academic integrity to receive more aid and ultimately pay back less loans than a student with an impeccable record, merely due to the fact that the former student’s family has a lower income than the latter’s. Tell me, does that make any sense? What kind of message is that sending to all the good students out there? With the PROMISE, the fact that my family makes a comfortable income was not going to be held against me, because I was finally going to be rewarded for my years of academic excellence. I am grateful to the state of West Virginia for providing me with the PROMISE scholarship; for saying ‘we appreciate your hard work.’ If you, the directors for the PROMISE program, want to develop that feeling in more of West Virginia's students, then I urge you to continue providing the PROMISE scholarship was a merit-based form of financial aid.

The PROMISE scholarship needs to remain fully-funded in its entirety. If not for the scholarship, my GPA would have suffered, I would have $20k worth of debt, and I would not have had the college experience I was able to have. It is my opinion that the "goal" of the scholarship is to continue to educate our youth, and keep them in the state for their higher education. Although proponents of the scholarship said that this would generate revenue for the state (because we would stay here), it seems to me that was not the mission of the award. The state needs to couple great jobs with this great education and we will stay.

I think the promise is a great program that allowed me to graduate a semester early, get good grades, and not have any debt to pay back!!!

I feel that receiving the PROMISE scholarship was one of the best things that has happened to me. If I would not have received this scholarship, I would not be receiving the education that I am today. I think that it is terrible that the requirements for the scholarship keep changing; less and less students are benefiting from this scholarship, due to the lack of funding. I believe that if the title of this scholarship is PROMISE, then the "promise" should be kept to those students who excell greatly in high school.

I think the Promise program provided me with the funds to go to college that I would otherwise not have had. It has decreased the amount of loans I will have to pay off in the future and I'm glad that the state awarded me for my hard work in high school.

I am a Pharmacy major. For students like me that are involved in 4+ year programs, the last couple of years are very hard without the PROMISE. It would be nice to have some help for those last couple of years especially for the students that are excelling in college. Maybe raising the bar to a 3.5 while in college as a tradeoff for helping financially in those final two years or for those pursuing an advanced degree would be helpful.

I am from Parkersburg and there is a scholarship called the Tippen's Scholarship that pays for all costs at college. I recieved the Tippen's scholarship because of the Promise scholarship. I wasn't one of the original Tippen's scholarship recipients, but since extra money was made available because of the Promise and other recipients staying in state, they called my friend and I and informed us that we had been selected for the Tippen's. I know that my friend and I are very happy that the Promise program was made available.

I am so grateful to the PROMISE scholarship for being such a huge factor in my life. I had never thought of making any kind of commitment to stay in my state for anything, but the PROMISE planted the seeds of thought, and now I am fully committed to West Virginia. If I had not stayed here for college, I might not have had the same spectacular opportunities and I would truly be a different person. I am adamnant in working here after I graduate and committed to trying to make things better. However, I do not think raising the requirements for high school students every year is helping the scholarship in any way. The program was started for middle-class, average kids, who, in the words of Bob Wise, if they worked hard and
played by the rules, would be rewarded. The scholarship is shutting these students out every year with every requirement risen. Don't the 4.0, rich, honors students receive enough scholarships? Does a person really need five scholarships if one student does not receive any money for school? Please remember the PROMISE is very powerful.

This program helped me so much throughout my undergraduate career. It allowed me to go to a bigger school in WV and helped me keep my grades up. I am very grateful.

Because I could not always get classes that I needed for my degree, but still had to keep a certain number of hours, the promise scholarship paid for a lot of classes that were pointless and of no help in my attaining my degree. As a result I have the hours to be considered a senior, but another three semester to graduation, that I have to pay for.

The PROMISE scholarship helped me to graduate without ANY student loans! I am so grateful for that!

I feel that the promise scholarship is an excellent idea. I do feel that if a student accepts the scholarship that they MUST reside in WV for a certain time period after graduation, if employment is available. However, it is evident that sometimes students might be offered an excellent job out of state that the state of WV could not offer. Maybe some type of service could be set-up to help recent WV graduates find a job within the state.

I come from a family of teachers and it would have been very hard for me to have attended college because of the financial burden. I still would have gone but I know my academic performance would have suffered because I would have had to work over 40 hours a week while a full time student. The Promise program changed all of that. It was very instrumental in my success in college. I worked hard to achieve the right GPA and I have carried a 3.76 which is higher than I had in high school. I owe my entire education to the Promise. I will graduate on time in a few weeks with a degree in Secondary Education with an emphasis on Social Studies. I plan on being a teacher in my home county and giving back to West Virginia what it gave to me.

I would like to say that I am truly greatful for the Promise Scholarship. Even though I attended Wheeling Jesuit University, a private institution, I would not have been able to persue the degree I wanted or the school I wanted to attend without it. I now have my Bachelore's Degree in Nuclear Medicine and am currently working at the WVU PET/CT Center for Advanced Imaging in Morgantown, WV. I was disappointed when I had to move out the state for my first job at Magee Women's Hospital in Pittsburgh. I have always wanted to promote healthcare for West Virginia and the Promise Scholarship played more of a role than what people are aware of in helping me reach my goals...my potential. Thank you and I truly hope to see this award be continued.

The PROMISE program really helped! Thanks a lot!

The promise scholarship is a good program, it keeps students in state and requires them to keep their grades high. I understand that the scholarship has changed substancially since 2002, my sister is 16 and she has no interest in the scholarship because the offers are not as attractive as they were in 2002. The origional Promise was much better than it is today and not only will high school graduates leave the state to attend college, but most likely never live or work in the state. I would suggest that the Promise return to its roots as it was in 2002, it would give the state a much better chance at keeping young people in state.

I believe you have raised the requirements yearly so as to not bankrupt the program which I believe has lessened the effectiveness of the program.

I have closely followed the changes made to the PROMISE program over the pass few years and it saddens me to see that these changes have been made. Through my college career I have been honored to be on the Dean's and President's lists. However, if I were to apply for the PROMISE scholarship now, I would not receive the award. Many students do not perform well on standardized tests and by increasing these requirements they will not receive this
award. The PROMISE program was designed to help the college bound graduates from this state. With the increase in requirements though, the scholarship is now further helping the students who have already been awarded ample scholarship money and hindering those who have not. My comments may be hollow, but it just upsets me to see some of West Virginia’s brightest not receiving the help they are entitled to.

127. n/a

It is a great program, and I feel like it helped keep a lot of people in West Virginia for university, but I SERIOUSLY doubt that PROMISE will keep people in West Virginia after graduation. In my opinion, West Virginia does not offer the opportunity that several of the surrounding states do. For example: we have Washington, D.C. to the East, Charlotte to the South, Pittsburgh to the North, Columbus to the West, etc. In West Virginia we have Charleston, and in my opinion Charleston is not much. I am studying international business, speak Spanish, have traveled to 22 countries, etc. I need to live in a large, international city to put my skills to use and be happy. And a large, international city is one thing that West Virginia does not have, and will never have to offer. I am not going to take the time to do things like learn Spanish and live somewhere where the only time I see a Hispanic is in a Mexican restaurant. I hope this helps some.

128. It is a great program, and I feel like it helped keep a lot of people in West Virginia for university, but I SERIOUSLY doubt that PROMISE will keep people in West Virginia after graduation. In my opinion, West Virginia does not offer the opportunity that several of the surrounding states do. For example: we have Washington, D.C. to the East, Charlotte to the South, Pittsburgh to the North, Columbus to the West, etc. In West Virginia we have Charleston, and in my opinion Charleston is not much. I am studying international business, speak Spanish, have traveled to 22 countries, etc. I need to live in a large, international city to put my skills to use and be happy. And a large, international city is one thing that West Virginia does not have, and will never have to offer. I am not going to take the time to do things like learn Spanish and live somewhere where the only time I see a Hispanic is in a Mexican restaurant. I hope this helps some.

129. I paid for my college on my own, but because of my parent's income I did not qualify for any grants. I only received loans and scholarships. Without this scholarship I would not have been able to acquire enough money for my four years of college. Even my loans could not have paid for everything. I NEEDED this scholarship.

130. I would have attended West Virginia University with or without the Promise Scholarship. However, because I was awarded the Promise Scholarship it has greatly helped me financially and kept me debt-free.

131. You ought to make it more clear to students what the scholarship covers and what it doesn't. I registered for an online course one semester because I needed it and all the campus classes clashed with my schedule. I found out a few months later that the PROMISE doesn't cover online classes, and my dad had to pay for it. I just would have liked to have known things like that. Who knows what other things I was unaware of about the scholarship.

132. I am very appreciative of the Promise program, and am glad Promise continues to remain a merit based program, although I had money to attend college saved, I have now put that money towards grad school. It was difficult for me to obtain scholarships because the income levels of my parents, but without Promise, I would have had to work through college, and my grades probably would have suffered, and I just would not have had the opportunities that such a scholarship has afforded me.

133. I think this a wonderful program, however, I believe that the requirements are a little hard for first year students. The first year is the hardest. I lost my scholarship because of my first year but I should still be graduating with honors. It just takes a little time to get used to the university setting.

134. Promise is a good program. It assisted me financially my first year. If not having it I don't know how I would've paid for college, however, after loosing it I am one of the many who will be in debt due to outrageous student loans.

135. I think the PROMISE scholarship program is a wonderful program for the state of West Virginia. I believe it will increase the number of educated professionals in the state, which will help the state’s economy and positively affect many other aspects of the state. My family and I have benefited greatly from the PROMISE program, and I am both thankful and proud to live in a state that is so willing to help its young citizens acquire a college education.

136. I have provided my contact information below and I would be more than willing to help with the program.

137. PROMISE is the only reason I went to Marshall and maintained an above 3.0 GPA and
graduated in four years. I am very thankful for the opportunity it gave me, I owe a big chunk of my last four years to it.

I think the PROMISE scholarship is an excellent program! Yes, I would have gone to college regardless of receiving the award or not, but I would have been forced to live on campus and would not have had the “extras” throughout college that I have had. It made the last four years much easier on myself and my family and I’m very thankful to the state for giving me this opportunity!

The PROMISE program truly aided my endeavors to pursue pharmacy as a career path. I encourage lawmakers in WV to continue this program. I realize the struggles they face to finance the program and therefore would encourage them to require students to work in WV after graduation, or pay back the amount they received if they choose to leave. For those students who choose (or must) leave WV, the PROMISE program would still be a valuable resource for desperately needed funds during their education. Furthermore, I don’t encourage them to continue raising the standards required to obtain the PROMISE scholarship. By doing so, they will be leaving behind many valuable, intelligent students who deserve the same opportunity as those who happen to be “better test-takers.”

Without this scholarship, it would have been hard for me to attend WVU. I still have 2 years to go.

The requirements of the promise scholarship added stress onto my schooling and I eventually lost it by having a gpa of 2.85 when I needed a 3.0 gpa. I currently have over a 3.0 gpa now that I don't have the Promise Scholarship anymore. I feel that the high requirements is basically saying that someone is not good enough if they don't have a 3.0 gpa or higher. I’m proud of my grades. I just wish that the Promise Scholarship can see how hard I’ve worked for them.

I would like to thank the PROMISE Program for the financial assistance that helped me try to reach my goal of becoming a Pharmacist. I will soon be completing my first year of Pharmacy School with at least three more years to go. Having my tuition paid these past 4 years has helped to ease my total financial burden in completing my education. Again, I appreciate all that the PROMISE program has done for me!

I think that this scholarship has helped many students attend college. I know that without this award many of my friends would not have been able to afford higher education.

I do not believe that raising the requirements to receive a promise scholarship however is fair. It has raised a lot since I received this award and I don't think that I still would have qualified if the requirements were that high four years ago. This award is a good thing and I hope that it is still offered for years to come. It greatly benefits students who have multiple siblings wanting to attend college.

I think that the requirements for a full-tuition scholarship need to be much higher and the requirements to maintain it need to be high. Maybe allowing for people to maintain a lesser part of the award for a 3.0 or what not would be alright. I just think that a lot of money is being invested and some people take it for granted. Moreover, possibly allowing for the 22 to be a 3/4 or 1/2 tuition and then moving to full tuition with higher gpa and test scores may be a better idea. I think a 24 or 25 ACT and a 3.5 GPA in high school should be standard for a full tuition scholarship.

Thank you

I am not sure if this is already a factor, but I would like for it to be available again to those students who received the promise scholarship and then lost it due to their GPA dropping, as long as they bring their grades back up.

It's wonderful!! Thank you!!!
The PROMISE program is probably the only reason I was able to afford college. However, now that I have to go an extra semester because I'm doing a double major, I wonder how I'm going to be able to pay for it.

The PROMISE scholarship was a wonderful way to help my family financially as I pursued my dreams. Initially I was looking at out of state colleges for my undergraduate until I received the promise and then I realized it was worth it to stay in state. I ended up attending WVU and loving my decision. I will be attending WVU Medical School in fall of 2006 and I give most of the credit to my education at WVU.

I think this is a good program. It provides opportunity to students that would not normally be able to afford going to college. It provided me with the opportunity to go to college without having to take out student loans.

I think the PROMISE program is a great asset to the students in WV. It gives more people a chance to go to school which will most likely help WV in the end as we will become a better educated state.

I think the Promise program was a wonderful program. It had a strong effect on my decision to attend college in West Virginia.

I think it should be renewable for persons who are pursuing an entry-level masters degree... the 4 year payment was nice, but now I have to come up with a whole year on my own because my bachelor's degree will not get me a job in the field I've been pursuing. Also, maybe if you struck a deal with the universities that recipients had to live in the dorms to get the promise, maybe you could cut down on the money spent. Also, I think if someone can't renew their award for academic reasons, they should have to pay the promise back.

The Promise Scholarship did not pay anywhere near my full tuition, as I went to a Private college. Although it helped me in my financial situation, it would have been more helpful had it not penalized me for choosing a private institution.

The Promise program screwed me too many times. It is too much of a hassle to re-apply after taking summer courses to make up for failed credits and it is ridiculous for you to take away a students only form of financial aid if he/she drops even .1 point in his/her GPA. The "Promise" is full of un-fulfilled promises.

The PROMISE scholarship is the greatest gift I have ever received. I am grateful to Mr. Wise, Mr. Manchin, and all the individuals responsible for creating and keeping the PROMISE scholarship available. Thank You WV!

Although the Promise Scholarship did not cover the full amount of my tuition, it was very rewarding. I graduated with an Associates Degree in Radiologic Technology in the Spring of 2005 with a high GPA and I have yet to find a job. This scholarship makes WV sound like it has wonderful job opportunities, but I know a lot of other students will probably run into the same job shortage problem I have found. I will continue to search for a job until I find one, because I refuse to let my college education go to waste. Luckily, I was able to move back home with my parents after college to find a job in the local area because this is where I will reside after getting married but what about the students who can't? I think the Promise Scholarship is great, but if we are required to work in WV after college to get financial help with our college education, then the scholarship really needs to help more with job placement.

I think it is an amazing program. It really influenced my decision about where to go and I would not have wanted to go anywhere but WVU.

I greatly appreciate the Promise Scholarship. I have one year of college left because my major and minor combined to make a 5 year program for me. Hopefully I will be able to finance my
expenses for the last year with the job I have this summer. I will be so thankful to graduate from college without having a huge debt facing me when I finish school. The Promise was an incentive for me to try my hardest in order to keep the financial aid.

I think that the scholarship should be based on scores/grades/income where less fortunate students should be given greater priority with the scholarship and more fortunate students should get only a percentage of their tuition paid. I also want to give my thanks because the scholarship made my college experience much richer.

If I had not received the PROMISE Scholarship, I would have stopped when I earned my Associate Degree of Science in Nursing. Because of the PROMISE Scholarship I was able to earn my Bachelor’s of Science in Nursing. If I had not received the PROMISE Scholarship it would have taken a long time for me to complete my Bachelor's Degree because I would have only been able to take a class or two at a time. With this scholarship I was able to go full time. Also because of the PROMISE Scholarship I do not have a debt to pay for my college education. Thank you for the PROMISE Scholarship.

I think the promise is a good program but having to take 15 hours a semester and maintaining a 3.0 GPA is a little hard and most students can't handle that many hours and getting good grades.

I have really been lucky to have received the Promise scholarship. Without the Promise scholarship I probably would have had to take out student loans to pay for my schooling but since I received the scholarship I didn't have to.

It was a great financial help, I only wish it lasted more than 4 years.

The promise scholarship allowed mw to expand upon my education without the burden of financial worries. For this, I was able to put my education first and feel that I greatly benefited from it.

I am so thankful that I had the opportunity to receive the Promise scholarship. It was such a blessing to me and my family. It took a lot of stress off of me and the requirements were easy to meet each semester. I would like to thank the state of West Virginia for putting this scholarship into place, it is a great thing!

A big thank you goes to all its contributors!

I definitely liked it that it was a merit-based award and not need-based. It was extremely helpful in paying for my expenses during college.

I was very pleased that with this scholarship, that I didn't have to worry about my tuition payments at all. All my payments were made in a timely and orderly fashion by the Promise Scholarship.

I really appreciate it!

I am grateful for the Promise. It helped me out a lot. I was able to fully focus on school needs. Thanks a lot!

I really felt honored to receive this award. It felt good to be rewarded for hard work in high school.

The letter mailed to me about this survey was one sheet of paper, but not folded three times and in a standard envelope. It was flat in a large manilla envelope that costed significantly more. I think the program could have spent the money better by using it for sending more West Virginian’s to college.

Aside from that, this scholarship has made attending college much easier for me in that I didn’t have to work during the school year to pay for tuition. Instead I was able to fully focus myself on studying, learning, and growing. All of my friends from out of state are jealous of how well West Virginia takes care of it’s college students. Thank you for this wonderful
I feel very fortunate to have received this award. It was very beneficial in assisting with my college tuition costs. I am glad to see that the requirements for awardance out of high school have increased. I know at my school there were many students who received the award but did not follow through with their ‘promise’.

I think this program is great. Many students wouldn’t have the chance to go to college without it. In my opinion, if a student gets a chance to get their foot in the door, regardless of keeping the scholarship for all 4 years, the student will be motivated to finish school. I believe the PROMISE scholarship has caused WVU to become a stronger school academically. The professors are amazing and I’m grateful I stayed in WV.

Thank you for the opportunity.

If it were not for the PROMISE, though most likely I still would have attended college, it would have been very difficult. Also, because I have had four years to save money, I am able to attend school for an extra year in order to earn two degrees. This program has enabled me to pursue my goals, and I am very close to achieving one of them.

I thought the PROMISE program was an amazing opportunity for me and I am extremely grateful!

The scholarship does well in keeping students in West Virginia. It may not have that great of an effect on keeping future employees in the state, however.

I think the PROMISE scholarship is a wonderful program and by making this available to students I am aware of many people who were able to come to college that otherwise would never had gotten the opportunity. I think that it should not change to become a forgivable loan or even having to pay it back, because it is a merit based scholarship. That is unfair to students who have worked hard all of their senior high years and then do not have the money to pay in back. If those would have been the case when I was offered I DEFINITELY would NOT HAVE taken it at all.

I really appreciated the financial assistance provided by the state of WV and although it would be ideal for the state if all recipients chose to live and work in WV after graduation, I feel that by giving the recipients a choice it increases the value of the program.

Maybe had a Promise type thing for graduate students. It’s nice for in state student to be able to attain a scholarship that pays for tuition for 4 years. It gives you a goal to do well in school.

I am grateful for the Promise. My parents make just enough money so that I was unable to get financial aid, but I already had a brother in college, so the financial strain on my family would have been huge. The Promise helped me and my family.

Should be weighted biased off of your Major. Artsie Fartsies get a free ride through, but people pursuing real Majors don't get to keep it. A student that are just doing an easy major that gives out easy grades gets their whole tuition paid. But if you are in something thats more difficult like Engineering and you get a couple difficult professors all in one year youve just lost it for the rest of your time here. There should be a forgivability for low GPA for a few semesters for someone persuing a difficult degree.

Please strongly consider extending the Promise scholarship to students who enter professional school earlier than their peers without first obtaining a bachelor’s degree. I am one of these students, and I know that I and many others in my situation felt that we were being punished for trying to excel and accelerate our education.

I consider myself fortunate for receiving the promise scholarship. Paying for shcool would have been very difficult.

The requirements to keep it are quite high considering how low the requirements are to get it.
higher entrance requirements.
GPA differences for different majors
Job placement help after college

thank you

I think that based on a Student's GPA after graduation from College then the student should
receive funding for furthering his/her education in Graduate school. It is a little harder to
receive financial aid for Graduate school. Maybe setting a higher GPA standard would
appropriate, but Graduate school should not be ruled out for the Promise Scholarship. It should
be given to those worthy.

I am thankful that I was able to have my education paid for. It would have been hard for me
to pay for my own education because I plan to go on to get my Ph.D. and at least I have had
four years of schooling paid.

You have opened the door for so many students that would not have ever considered going to
college. This was a great thing for the state of west virginia and WVU helping them move to
the next level of prestige.

I think it is a great program and a great opportunity for West Virginia students. Although I
would have attended college regardless of receiving the scholarship or not, it was very helpful
in financing my education. Also, I would remain in West Virginia to further my education if the
program was offered.

The PROMISE program was a great program for my undergraduate career. I appreciate the
large financial contribution. Without this scholarship, I would be in large debt when graduating
this May. But I am a proud recipient without debt. :)

I think it's horrible that now many kids are denied the opportunity to recieve the PROMISE due
to higher acceptance standards.

I would support more stringent initial entry requirements, an increase to a highschool GPA of
3.25 to 3.5 and an increased ACT score. These changes would not be unreasonable if the
state's financial situation requires a reduction in the number of Promise shollarships awarded.

The Promise Scholarship has helped me through college because my parents could not afford
to pay for my tuition. It takes the pressure off them and leads me to greater things.

PROMISE is a wonderful idea, and the scholarship should remain exactly how it is today. A
scholarship is not a forgivable loan, it is an educational gift for excellence.

The PROMISE scholarship saved my life! I was a very hardworking student in high school, but I
worked hard on my own merit. When the PROMISE scholarship was announced, it was like all
my hard work was going to pay off. If I had not received the award, I would have still attended
college, but it would have been VERY difficult for my family to fund it. Having the PROMISE
also made me work harder in my college classes, knowing that I couldn't fall below the status
quo or I'd lose the entire scholarship. The PROMISE is one of the best things that has
happened to me.

Although, the PROMISE has not influenced my decision to stay in West Virginia. In my field of
Marketing, it is very difficult to find a job, even with all my internships and job experience. If I
stayed in West Virginia, I would have to compromise to get a low-paying job and put my
talents on the backburner. West Virginia, specifically Morgantown, is a GREAT opportunity for
Medical majors, but it doesn't provide much in the way of my area of study.

PLEASE do not make PROMISE Scholarships need-based. Without this award, my middle-class
family would have struggled to pay tuition for my older sister and I without taking out loans.
With an award like the PROMISE that was based on academic achievement, my family was
much more able to handle the cost of college. Those of the middle class need awards to
depend on, too, and we will be robbed of that if only need-based students are able to receive
them.
Good program, something needs to be in place to tell students how hard of a transition it is from high school to college. This will help in them meeting requirements for keeping it.

I greatly appreciate the PROMISE scholarship. If it weren't for this program, I would have received minimal, if any, financial aid. This programs is a great idea, especially for those students wanting to further his/her education but unable to afford it. It is my personal opinion that the money given should be close to full tuition and if the program needs to change, a tougher criteria be applied. Thank you once again for allowing me to have this opportunity.

Just a comment on this survey; I marked that my course work wasn't affected by the promise, but this is because my own standards were higher than the minimums set by the scholarships. I think having these standards is a positive control.

I think the program is a wonderful idea for keeping bright students in the state following high school. The scholarship LARGELY influenced my decision to attend WVU and I'm not sure that I have remained in state otherwise. I am attending medical school in the fall and my lack of undergraduate debt has made the thought of graduate school much less intimidating. Thanks for the help!

The PROMISE program helped me so much. My family couldn't help me financially, the PROMISE program filled in where they lacked. I wouldn't have been able to get the grades I received if I would have been working while going to school.

Promise Scholarship is the best thing to happen to West Virginia since coal. I am so grateful for this opportunity; the state government should do everything in its power to keep the program alive. Promise was 95% of my decision to stay in WV for college. If the state runs out of money, they should increase the requirements before decreasing the award amount for everyone. Promise could even request donations from former Promise scholars on a completely voluntary basis. I do not think job placement in WV should be mandatory for Promise scholars. Even though graduates may seek immediate employment in other states, they likely will relocate in WV eventually and bring the state a fresh perspective from their travels.

Made my education possible! Without it I would no have been able to afford to attend such a accredited college and would not have been able to save money for graduate school.

It is very helpful and makes attending college a much more enjoyable event.

I lost the scholarship because of a tough first semester, and i ended up changing my major.

I am extremely grateful for the Promise Scholarship and all it has done for my family, as well as myself. I will state that I think it would be a grave mistake to make the Promise a "forgivable-loan", by working inside of WV for a specified number of years. Just because I am not working out of WV directly after graduation, does not mean that I intend to return after a few years of experience that is simply not available in WV. I hope to return to WV with the skills and knowledge to improve the industry inside the state. Which to me, is more beneficial to the states economy and standing than just working in the state after graduation to repay a scholarship/loan

This program has enabled me to attend college without worrying about my tuition for the last four years. I am in a five year program and I will receive my bachelors degree as well as my masters degree next year. This scholarship has helped me so much throughout college. I don't know what I would have done without it.

I believe that PROMISE monies would be better spent if it was a scholarship program that rounded out the costs of tuition after grants and scholarships had already been counted toward tuition and fees. This way, money would be freed up for more recipients, and the requirements wouldn't have to be as unreasonably high as they have been in the last few years. I also would like to see PROMISE accompanied with an education program about scholarship programs and advanced degree mentorships available to first-generation students. It is hard to believe how many people don't know that things like the McNair Scholars Program and other such
programs exist to help students. I don't think enough is done to let all WV students, regardless of test scores and high school performance, know about what higher educational opportunities are out there. I'd love to talk with people about this sort of stuff, and I listed my contact information below.

The PROMISE Scholarship is a great program to allow students to attend college for an inexpensive price in the state of West Virginia. However, there are not enough quality jobs in the state available to retain the best students. Also, if you want to attend a top graduate school, the state of West Virginia does not have the highest quality programs.

Without the Promise scholarship, my education would have been far more difficult to pay for, and would have required years and years to pay off. With the Promise, I was able to afford to earn my degree with only reasonable loans to have to pay off with a teacher's salary.

I think that the PROMISE scholarship program is great. I still qualified for financial aid, so the promise was not the only way for me to attend college, but it helped tremendously and I know there are other individuals who could not have attended without it. THANKS!!!!!!

I would have gone to college without the Promise but I chose to attend West Virginia University partially because of the scholarship.

The Promise Scholarship was very helpful in paying for my education and allowed me to relieve some of the stress associated with college finances. Without the scholarship, I would have struggled greatly with meeting financial obligations.

This award allowed me to go to school. The requirements are not too much to ask of students for what they get in return. This program was very influential in my decision to go to school at all and much less in West Virginia.

I think it is a great program and it really helped me and my family out financially. It also helped me to stay on top of my grades because I knew I couldn't afford to lose the scholarship.

I feel so blessed to have received this award. It is so nice to be able to begin medical school with $0 in education loans. Thank you!

I was able to maintain the PROMISE scholarship for my four years at WVU, and the scholarship has allowed me to graduate from college debt-free, which I am extremely thankful for. This scholarship eased the financial burden of college expenses and gave me extra motivation to keep up my grades up. I was mostly considering attending West Virginia colleges and universities after I graduated from high school, but the PROMISE gave me more reason to remain in West Virginia. I think it is a great program and definitely encourages students to stay in state for their college education and work after college.

I think that this is a very good program and it allowed me to receive a wonderful education at WVU. It has an amazing Nursing program and allowed me to see that West Virginia does provide very good educational programs.

I think it is a good program for many kids in WV. College is very important and since this has requirements it helps to keep students focused on their school work.

I think that the Promise should be a scholarship (not paid back) to those students who work in WV after graduation, and should be paid back from those students that do not work in WV after graduation.

Yes, when I started the five year education program at West Virginia University, the promise said that they would pay for the fifth year. This is a major reason I chose this University. However, now that the promise will not pay for the fifth year I am gonna have great difficulty in coming up with tuition. I have to stay in the program because they do not offer a four year degree in education. I feel a little cheated because the promise will no longer pay for this fifth year, and it is putting a burden on me.
I think it is a great program for the state, and that it should continue for many more years to come.

I think it has been a wonderful program for me. Perhaps the requirements should be a little higher since it is such a huge award.

The Promise Scholarship is an excellent program. By keep strict academic requirements on students, it drives to do well in school. The Promise Scholarship kept my amount of debt as a student to a minimum. Overall, it is a great program.

This is a great program that helped alot of people... I know it changed my life in a positive way.

I don’t think requiring people to stay in west virginia for a few years after completion of college is a bad idea, but don't penalize them by making them pay the money back WITH INTEREST. I think that if you do that, people will shy away from it. Just make it so that if you stay in state for a few years, you're fine. If you don't, you have to pay the money back, but only with interest occuring AFTER you’ve graduated and started working.

It made the financial burden of college less of a problem and made life easier for my family and myself. I am glad I got the promise. I think the GPA requirements could be a little lower if the state could afford the additional scholarship holders able to maintain the scholarship.

Without the PROMISE scholarship, I would not have stayed in WV for college. I think this is a very beneficial program. I know several highly intelligent, driven students who also would not have stayed in WV for college. This program had a major impact on many of my graduating class and their decision to stay in the state.

Its an excellent program & allowed me to go to college worry-free and debt-free.

The PROMISE program is very good for students wishing to attend college in WV and con not afford it, but have work hard in high school. Also, I really appreciate the help it has given me.

The PROMISE program played a significant factor in my decision to stay in WV. I attended the WVU Perley Isaac Reed School of Journalism and without the PROMISE I may have gone to Syracuse or Ohio University.

I know that the idea of making recipients stay in the state for a number of years postgraduation has been tossed around. This is a bad idea on many levels. By doing this you would in a sense make the student sign a contract, not reward them for hard work. This is an award, treat it like one. I am attending WVU College of Law in the fall of ’06 and will be doing so with the intent of graduating and staying in the state for my lifetime. However, we all know that the job outlook in WV is bleak at best. Thus, it would be impossibe to guarantee that a recipient could even find a job postgraduation within the state.

If you want to save some money, make it harder to receive and maintain the PROMISE. A 3.0 college GPA is reasonable, however, in high school the GPA should be higher to receive the scholarship.

I am very glad there was this program to help high school seniors with the growing cost of college.

Because of the PROMISE scholarship, I was able to attend college without acquiring student loans. I hope many more working class college-bound students get to recieve this award.

Its a great program

very helpful with education

The promise scholarship helped me through school. Without it I would have had to take out loans and graduate with a lot of debt. This award will help me to graduate with a limited
amount of debt and for that I am grateful. Because I have not had to worry about how I would pay for college I was able to get more out of my education. I had more time to study instead of work etc.

It is a great program to keep people in the state of West Virginia. It helps people like me who need money for college, yet they do not meet the requirements for financial aid.

I feel the PROMISE program should become need-based. I know of numerous students whose parents are lawyers and doctors and would have no problem paying for their child's education.

My parents make $14,000 a year because they are self-employed. If it wasn't for PROMISE paying for college would have been nearly impossible for me, and I would have to take out an extremely large amount of loans.

This is a wonderful program. I know that it did keep a lot of students in WV. Their attendance did generate income for the state while they were studying in WV. As a resident of the Eastern Panhandle, the cost of living is very expensive, so people from that area often have to seek employment in other states and just live in WV, since the salaries in that area of WV are not comparable to MD, VA, and DC, especially for teachers.

I am currently an Occupational Therapy major at WVU, and am in my 4th year, however I still have 2 years left of school because the WVU OT Program is a 3 years Masters Program, with a BS to be received at the end of the 2nd year. My GPA is at a 3.6 and after this year I lose my tuition and have to figure out how to pay for 2 more years of school. I think if you have honored your 4 year commitment to keeping the Promise, you should be allowed to keep your Promise scholarship until you graduate. Particularly because I will not receive my B.S. until the end of my 5th year so technically I will still be considered an undergraduate. More and more students are not graduating in 4 years or are going on to pursue advanced degrees because in todays society a BA or BS do not mean too much. I think it is unreasonable to take away a students main source of college financial aid after 4 years particularly when they have the grades to maintain the scholarship. The state of WV needs more competitive young professionals and if you want to foster that, Promise needs to be extended to those Promise students who wish to stay in WV to pursue their advanced degrees.

It's a wonderful program helping people afford college. I, for example, had no fiscal parental support. But now (in part thanks to the support I received via the Promise scholarship) I am in medical school and plan on contributing significantly to society using my intelligence, education, training, and enthusiasm. There are people, particularly in more rural WV that simply cannot afford to go to college and for whom this program is essential. From the position of the state, it seems sound to expect recipients to remain or work in WV for a certain period of time. However, the state also needs to entice people with available jobs that put to use someone's education and offer opportunities for advancement.

I'm proud of being a first-year Promise recipient and for being able to keep it throughout my college career. The requirements to remain eligible kept me motivated.

The PROMISE Scholarship program is a very worthwhile program and should continue to be funded by the state of WV. I know of several brilliant students who would have gone elsewhere had they not received the award. It's time to improve our state for the best, and I feel that the Promise scholarship is a major step in that direction because it does tend to keep brighter minds in the state.

I've heard that Promise no longer covers full tuition for students. If it is not fully funded, the requirements should be raised so that the scholarship can pay for 100% of the tuition.

It's a WONDERFUL award and really helped minimize my student loans. However, the idea to make the students stay in West Virginia after graduation is ridiculous. We live in a free country and should be able to move wherever we please. Why would someone accept an award that they have to pay back by living in West Virginia when they could just as easy accept a student loan and move anywhere they wanted after graduation?
Personally, being a public relations major, it would be difficult for me to find a job in West Virginia.

I think that the PROMISE program is one of the most wonderful things that the state of West Virginia could have done for its students. I do think that the state should require some kind of work or "pay back" after students graduate, though, so that the scholarship isn't just a complete drain on the state's economy. Even though I am glad that I do not have to do any sort of pay back or required work time in West Virginia, I think it is important to consider.

My program is a 5-year program -- there is no 4 year option. I realize funds are limited, but I believe the Promise should cover our 5th year, as it is required for our degree.

I was raised in a single parent household so receiving the promise scholarship helped my mother out greatly. I just want to say, Bob Wise is the man!

Graduated in December, 2004, earning 4 year degree in 2 1/2 years. Promise scholarship is an excellent half to revitalizing WV. Unfortunately, the opportunities in Mechanical Engineering and many other technical fields within the state are limited. I had no desire to leave the state except for the opportunities available. Promise *should* maintain high standards both for earning, and renewing the scholarship. Students should not be required to be pay back the scholarship if leaving the state, or receive it as a forgivable loan if the program is to retain the lofty ideals of it being both a "promise" and an award for "scholarship". At best this would be something akin to a "sign on" bonus, teaser, payment for services rendered, or a "gift" with conditions and strings attached. The purpose of the scholarship is to increase the numbers of students attending college, vitalizing the indigenous talent base in the state. This has certainly been accomplished with record numbers of West Virginians attending college in the state. However, little can be expected if the opportunities for utilizing this talent is not available. In tandem with the scholarships, WV should be working equally hard on the other half of the effort - to attract high tech businesses to the state so that graduates will have the opportunity to put into practice their new skills, and still be able to enjoy the existing benefits that make West Virginia such a wild and wonderful state.

Recently, I have heard rumors that it will be harder to obtain the Promise Scholarship, it will provide less money, etc. Personally, I think the Promise Scholarship is one of the best things to ever happen to this state. I know so many people that would not have been able to afford coming to college without it, and because of it, their lives will be severely better. Also, after being an RA for three years, I have observed that Promise Scholars are more likely to try harder not to fail out of school.

I definately appreciate the state giving me the funds to have virtually no tuition. I think that if you are considering making students stay in WV for several years after they graduate is a terrible idea unless you people actually bring in jobs that someone like me with a finance degree can get and prosper. I feel that the people in charge of this state especially people from Charleston have failed miserably at progressively changing the business climate in WV. I love this state and I think it's ridiculous that everyone i know from other states can go home and find great jobs but myself and other students from North Central WV have to drive to DC or NC just to make 40k a year. I thank you people for the PROMISE but i feel that whomever reads this needs to go to your superior,(namely plaintiff's attorney's from Charleston) and tell them they've failed for 30 years to make this state better and should hang there heads in shame. Thank you once again for the PROMISE---Matt Williams

I think it's a great program, but I also believe that it is given away to freely. Perhaps there should be different levels of the promise, where a certain GPA and ACT Score get you a 50% scholarship, a level that pays 75%, and a higher level, say 3.8 and a 28 ACT that pays 100%.

The PROMISE scholarship was a tremendous help to me! I am very thankful for it. I think it is wonderful that West Virginia is providing an opportunity for so many people to be able to go to college. Without the scholarship, it would have been hard to pay for my schooling. Also, it keeps students motivated to do well so that they can first get the scholarship and also keep it
through school. The PROMISE scholarship also keeps people in West Virginia. The college I wanted to attend was in Pennsylvania, but since I received the scholarship, I stayed in West Virginia. Thank you to all of those who helped create the PROMISE scholarship.

I would like to thank the Promise Program. It allowed me to successfully achieve my educational goals without going in debt. I wish there was a program like this one to acquire my Master's degree, but never the less this was a huge blessing. My only suggestion would be to allow a certain allowance for book cost.

I think the Promise program is a great program for West Virginia. I really appreciated the help with school. I hope I never see it go away.

Feel that the renewal criteria is fair and essential for students who obtain the PROMISE.

I also do not think that this should be financial need based, as I would surely not have qualified although my parents are not capable of financing my college tuition. By awarding this scholarship to me, you helped a WV native who is a good student stay in WV for school and then acquire employment in WV. Without the scholarship, I would not have done as well in school because I would have had to work more to pay for my education. I think that future generations need to have this program to ensure WV students make the most of their education.

It is a great idea and helps many students attend college who may not otherwise. I hope this program continues in the future!

I am a pharmacy student, and a degree is not granted until completion of 6 years of college. So fortunately enough, I was able to get 2 years paid for then, the next 2 years was the difference between the cost of pharmacy school and PROMISE. This scholarship definitely influenced me to stay in state.

Its a good program, if funds are low perhaps making it a bit more need based would be good, my family makes over $100,000/yr and I was still able to get the promise.

The PROMISE Program is truly a blessing. I have worked and saved all of my life so that I could go to college without the burden of taking out a loan. My parents combined incomes, years of savings, as well as my earnings did not amount to enough money required to attain a six year doctor of pharmacy degree. With the help of the PROMISE Program, I will soon graduate a debt free pharmacist. I hope to provide quality healthcare to many West Virginians for many years to come and attempt to give back in service what the state as provided me as a student. Thank you and God Bless.

the promise scholarship is a joke. not only has it caused those ugly depressing gambling joints to sprout up everywhere in morgantown but it's giving money to people who don't need it and is taking money away from other areas where it could be better used.

I think that the question of whether or not we would have accepted the award if we had to work it off while staying in West Virginia, to be somewhat appalling. I feel that the state should keep the PROMISE program as is, in that it stays as a scholarship; I was one of the years in school that got perennially excluded from events or opportunities that years before and after me were allowed to have, and the PROMISE was the one time that I was not excluded. Now granted, I think it was extremely too easy to achieve the first year that it was in effect, but I think that raising the criteria to acquire the scholarship the way it has been is good. It is good in that it is challenging the students to better themselves. I also think that keeping the scholarship the way it is will in turn be better for the state because it will draw more parents into the state, which means it will draw a larger workforce.

I was very grateful to receive the promise scholarship. I think it is an excellent award because it allows many people to assume a college career who might not be able to afford it on their own.

I would be in much greater debt without this grant, but I wish it would last up to 10 semesters
for those of us seeking dual degrees.

The PROMISE is the only reason I was able to attend West Virginia University. If I hadn't received it I would have gone to a smaller school.

I think it is an excellent program. I was able to work during school to pay my living expenses and because of the promise I was able to attain my degree debt free.

I would just like to thank the state of WV for helping make my education possible!

They should have more guidance counselors available on campus to call or go to see with questions.

I really appreciate the establishment of this program. It is a great idea and has allowed me to save a lot of money while in college.

At WVU, I am in a five-year teacher education program that allows me to get both a BA in my content area AND a Master's in Education. I am not just adding an extra year, and I think that the Promise should cover all 5 years of the program. If the Benedum Collaborative would have been approved by the PROMISE program, we could've gotten the extra year scholarship. I think you should look into approving some five-year programs. Almost 75% of the Education majors are from WV.

The scholarship should be prorated based on tuition costs at various schools. I feel I have received a better education by attending a private school but my award does not cover my full tuition. I plan to continue my education at West Virginia School of Osteopathic Medicine in Lewisburg WV, which will also cost me a great deal of money. I believe that the promise scholarship is an excellent program, however if the amounts of the scholarship are not more competitive to the scholarships private schools provide many students will leave the state of WV to attend private schools elsewhere. I feel that this issue should be addressed to provide more equal support as it is needed.

Thank you. It greatly helped me afford a better education and be the first in my family to go to college.

didn't cover ALL tuition, such as classes with extra labs. no leftover for books, which sucked.

The Promise Scholarship should be renewable as long as requirements are met, even if it takes more than four years to graduate, because many programs are being changed to five year programs.

I think that it's a great program and I would really be disappointed to see it eliminated or changed to a smaller award or a pay-back loan. This scholarship helped out so many middle class kids who really needed the money to go to school. Most of the kids who got this award had to work hard for it. I would hate to see younger kids not have the opportunity to receive this scholarship. I am very grateful for having received the scholarship and I have strong feelings about not eliminating the program.

The only comment is that it was promised to our class that if we were in a five year program the promise scholarship could be extended and that was not true. I have tried to get an extension because of my five year program and they have denied the request.

I think it is a wonderful program that brings out the best in WV students, and actually does help them stay in WV, not just for school but for work. I know many students who would not have gone to college without the promise and I also know many students who worked hard to keep their grades up just to keep the promise. It is really a great program.

I think if students who received the award flunk out of school, they should be required to pay the state back for what they spent.

First of All I don't appreciate the use of my SS#. But the promise scholarship program is the best thing to happen to WV. I know so many friends from High School that went to College as
a result of the promise, where as they probably wouldn't have otherwise. The promise scholarship rewards those students who work hard in High School and want to further educate themselves. I was definately one of those people. WV needs people with higher education and this is the best way to jumpstart the states future. The requirements as far as keeping the scholarship are fitting such that the students who receive the promise are forced to continue their good academic standing in college, which is a great incentive for those students to work hard. I would hate to see this program go away. If all the big wigs at the politician level can't see that this program could turn our state around, they need to open their eyes. If they don't agree in that this program is great for the state, they should be asked if they think children's education is indeed the best solution for tomorrows future?

I think it's a great scholarship and saved me a considerable amount of money. I think it should remain for other students in the future.

The promise scholarship helped me maintain my GPA throughout the years and I am very thankful to have had it.

I am not interested in furthur interviews because I lost the PROMISE scholarship after the first year. I have however remained in college, I am on the Dean's list and will be graduating from WVU in Spring of 2007.

It provided a great opportunity to students who may not have otherwise been able to afford college.

It should be made better known whether or not the scholarship can be continued beyond 4 years for those in professional programs that last longer than that time frame

Stricter requirements to obtain PROMISE would be a good idea.

Forgivable loans for working in the state would not be a good idea. Many individual fields already offer that option.

The PROMISE helped me so much financially. Without it, my student loans would be even bigger.

I think the PROMISE scholarship is an excellent scholarship because it allowed me to concentrate more time on academics (studying more and keeping my grades up) versus having to work a lot and not having ample time to study and socialize.

The PROMISE has allowed both my brother and I to attend college without leaving my parents in financial turmoil. Thank you.

Keep it.

The PROMISE program is a really wonderful program. I was unable to receive financial aid throughout my college career, and it helped me to be able to graduate from college debt free. I really appreciated the opportunity to be a Promise scholar.

It is hard for students to go into challenging fields and keep the promis if they do not receive excellent grades

Thank you sooooo much! The promise scholarship saved me so much money, and I really thank you. I really needed to save money because I start WVU dental school in the fall which is going to cost about $150,000 over the next 4 years.

I graduated last year with a double major in history and criminology and am currently a first year student at WVU College of Law.

thanks

Great program, I actually had the opportunity to introduce Governor Wise at the WVU BIOSCIENCES RESEARCH program. I was also found in the WVU alumni magazine eating with
Gov. Wise at a Promise Scholarship welcome lunch.

It was a great program that convinced me and several other friends that I know of to stay in WV for College, and now possibly stay and work in WV.

There is no Theatre or even Fine Arts Choice on the degree study question, which I find is inadequate. The program itself was fine. I do not believe the Promise should be a need based award, but a scholarship program as it is now. I also do not agree with changing it to a forgivable loan, or a requirement to work in WV in order to recieve the award. There is nowhere in WV in which I will be able to find adequate work, which I would assume is the experience of several promise recipients, which should not be a point of penalty against us. The program has helped me out tremendously with school, I feel I worked very hard in high school and deserved the awards I was given, but, if the Promise would have required me to work in WV after graduation in order to be awarded, the I would have had to turn it down, and would now be in deep student loan debt. If you wish to offer a scholarship or loan that requires work in WV in order to recieve it, then that should be a different program, do not take away what has helped so many WV students go to college and find better lives.

The PROMISE was a huge financial burden relief for me and my family. I also receive several grants and the PROMISE kept my school debt relatively low. I think that the standards to recieve PROMISE should be raised in order to encourage high school students to perform better to get college paid for, to help with the costs of providing the scholarship to students. I appreciate the changes made to PROMISE allowing for more flexibility with studying abroad.

The Promise is a great program. I think the requirements for getting the Promise should be raised especially the high school gpa requirement. I would like to see the promise be all or nothing in regards to paying tuition.

I think the Promise award really helped those students who would not have been able to attend college. It also gives people something to work for once they have entered college in order to keep it.

It is a big help on funding for school. I would have stayed in WV most likely even if I had not received the Promise Scholarship, but it relieved a big financial burden and allowed me to graduate college debt free.

I think that this is a great program and encourages students to consider staying in WV to complete college.

I would still be a PROMISE recipient, had I not been told the wrong number of hours needed to keep the credit hours requirement. After my sophomore year, I was told I was an hour short, and could take a summer course to meet the requirement, so I took a 3 hour course, but after the summer, I recieve a letter stating that I had been dropped from the scholarship because I was 5 hours short of the requirement. In all the letters I had recieved it said that I needed 30 credit hours every year. I exceeded that both my freshman and sophomore years. However, the requirements turned out to be not 30 hours per year, but 15 a semester, which somehow made me 5 hours short my sophomore year. I feel that the scholarship is a great idea and provides a wonderful opportunity to the students of West Virginia, but I feel it is poorly written and should be re-evaluated and rewritten. I am also glad those of us who originally received the scholarship have this opportunity to participate anonymously in a survey about the program. Thank you.

The promise program was a great blessing. Without my scholarship, attending WVU would have been a major financial burden on my family and myself. I am very fortunate for being awarded this scholarship. I am about to graduate and I have received a great job offer to work in PA. I do not believe the scholarship should change. Keep it as it is. Students should be able to choose whatever they want to do after graduation. In the long run, WV will benefit from educating its young population. Even if the student moves out of WV, this will still be its home
and will still spend money in the state.

I have heard of problems funding the PROMISE scholarship. I think that rather than decrease the amount of money given to PROMISE scholars, that High school requirements and test score requirements to receive the PROMISE scholarship should be more vigorous. It really is not that difficult to attain a 3.0 core GPA in High School.

I do not believe the PROMISE should be need based. Students such as myself, that come from a sufficient, but not rich, family, should be awarded the promise just like everyone else. I didn’t work hard in school just so people who NEED the scholarships could get them. My efforts should be rewarded, not undermined by providing it only for those students whose families have a lower EFC. I also do not believe a cap should be put into place. The idea behind the scholarship was to keep students in the state. How is it right to limit the amount of students who get it, or to limit the amount that it covers? Private institutions already limit the amount of this scholarship, as I attend one such institution, and I do not receive the entire PROMISE scholarship. By limiting the number of students who can receive PROMISE, it's basically sending out the message that legislators didn't know that so many students would start excelling at the rate they are, in order to meet the requirements to receive it. The very fact that more students are excelling should be a POSITIVE thing, not a negative one. Before this talk of limiting eligible recipients began, people should have considered allocating funds from other sources.

I think it would be a good idea to have recipients to sign a contract that binds them to work in WV for so long after receiving their degree. After all, WV paid for our degree why shouldn't the state get something in return.

Promise is great. Please limit the promise to a lower standard and to only those who need it. Too many really smart people are getting it who already have plenty of aid and those who really need it who don't quite make the same grades are being left behind. The academic performance of students of WV can be linked to their household monetary worth. Wealthy students tend to do better since they have more opportunities, and these students don't need the financial assistance that underprivileged students who try hard but the stresses of college costs distract them. I received the promise along with enough other scholarships that I was handed a check at the beginning of each semester. There were those who needed the money more than me but because I did so well academically, I received the money that someone else really needed. I know of several other cases where this money was squandered, either on parties and alcohol or just plain wastefulness. I made as good of use of the money provided to me as possible but I feel that I didn’t need to the scholarship as bad as some others out there.

It was a wonderful program. The only fault for me was that I graduated from Concord a year early and lost the scholarship money that I had earned for that final year. It would of helped me if I could of used it in obtaining my masters, because now I have alot of student loans!

It's a good program in theory, but the first semester/year GPA requirements are slightly too lofty. Freshmen need to successfully adapt to college life first before being able to delve deeper and more successfully in college level academics. Think of a lower, say 2.0 GPA for the first year/semester as a teaser and incentive to continue education, then bump it up to about 2.5. Maintain the high school GPA and other requirements so that the students who obviously have earned the monies benefit, but don't let those who earn it suffer because perfection is demanded. For example, the degree of study would have a definite impact on GPA - an athletic coaching major does not put forth nearly the same amount of work or effort an engineering student does.

I appreciate the financial assistance that the PROMISE scholarship provided; it was very beneficial to my family and me.

I think the PROMISE Program is a very beneficial program that has opened many doors for West Virginia residents whom otherwise would have had difficulties attaining funding and motivation for attending college.
I don't think the PROMISE Scholarship requirements for both initially receiving the award and for maintaining the award should be changed. I also do not believe students should have to pay back the award amount. I think that the PROMISE Scholarship could be awarded based on income. I know a lot of people who received the PROMISE award but could have paid for college with or without the scholarship. There could be a cap put on at what income recipient's families can make in order to be eligible for the award.

The requirements to attain the scholarship exclude those the program was originally planned to target. The people getting the scholarship now were already going to college and would most likely stay in state if the major they are looking for is offered in state. The high school students that want to go to college but don't quite have the grades or the monetary efficiency to attend are being excluded. Once again money is going into the pockets of the richest families who need no help funding their children's higher education ambitions. This is why I would just as soon see the Promise program terminated rather than to continue to give money to those who don't need it.

Thank you for giving me the opportunity to further my education, I could not have done it without your help!

It is a fantastic program and I appreciate the award very much.

I think the PROMISE program is great. I was able to graduate in only three years and with no debts.

The Promise scholarship is a great program. It helped me out financially in ways beyond words. I would have had to take out loans which would have become a burden to me next year. Because of the Promise, I have the ability to come out of college with a Bachelor's in Engineering, and due to my GPA and education received in WV I am able to attend WV School of Law in the fall. I would like to thank WV for all the contributions they have made towards my education. I hope the scholarship remains available for years to come.

The PROMISE program did enable me to attend Marshall University in Huntington, WV in which I have been quite successful. With limited resources, I needed to attend school where it was affordable.

The Promise Scholarship was my only reason to go to a WV school. If not for the Promise Scholarship I would have gone to a college that was only 10-15 minutes from my house instead of driving the 45 minutes everyday to the WV college. For those of us who live on bordering states I would say that offering the Promise Scholarship is a good way to encourage students to attend WV colleges.

I think that this program has retained several above average students in the state who would otherwise have left. I think it may be the best program that the legislature of WV has ever passed. WV and its legislature are constantly disappointing me; however, I can feel comfortable staying here because of the commitment symbolized through this scholarship.

The money was a great help to my family.

I couldn't graduate in 4 years, and I have to go to summer in order to graduate in 5 1/2. It would help a lot if it paid for the rest of my education, but now we have to pay out of pocket. Not many people graduate in 4 years anymore.

I am very appreciative of this scholarship. It has made my attending college much easier financially on both me and my parents. I have another year of school after my 4 years and would love to be able to benefit from it my final year. I would like to thank everyone that was responsible for allowing so many of us financial help in our college career.

PROMISE was great for me, and I think it's something that the state needs to work to continue funding. I would have been able to attend college either way, but I know some people who would not have. Also, because of the PROMISE scholarship, I am able to enter into my MA
program without any prior financial aid debt, which is a BIG help. Everything possible should be done to keep this a scholarship that fully pays tuition and does not have to be paid back.

Great Program, it helped out alot. Eased stress on money situations. Recommend to keep program going.

I think that this scholarship is a wonderful scholarship for those students willing to actually work during school. It gives a lot of students a great opportunity to go to college.

PROMISE is a good program for students who would not otherwise have the opportunity to pursue a college career. I do not think the requirements for the program should continue to rise, however. The steady incline in eligibility status only further isolates and thwarts the "average" student from achieving their goals.

I think it is a great program that has kept a lot of college students in WV.

I greatly appreciated this scholarship. It made my decision to stay in state. I do plan to return to WV to work after attending college in TN for speech-language pathology. I believe that this program should be continued for as long as possible. I had a huge financial burden lifted by receiving this scholarship. I was in need of the assistance. For my major in have no choice but to attend graduate school. If the PROMISE would extend for two more years and fund my school I may have stayed in state for graduate school as well. However, I do plan to return to WV and work.

It is an excellent program. Many of my peers would have gone out of state to go to college without it. Maybe the amount of the award could be based on high school performance and SAT/ACT test scores. The higher the performance, the greater the award could be a standard possibly.

I think that for students who pursue degrees such as a 5 years Master's degree in Education or a 6 years Pharm D degree, the PROMISE should cover the additional one to two years of study provided that the student maintain a high GPA and agree to work in the state for the additional one to two years they were in college.

The only reason that I answered no to many of the questions about accepting the Promise Scholarship under different circumstances is because I had another full tuition paid scholarship waiting. Had I not, I would have answered yes. This is a great and wonderful program. Thank you so much for helping me attain my college dreams.

The reason I think that the GPA should be lowered is because it is not fair. Being the first in my family to go to college, I did not know how difficult if would be. Also, I am a biology (pre-med) major; had I known how difficult these classes were going to be, I would have reconsidered things just to keep my scholarship. I could have been a communications major with a 4.0 and still had the scholarship. I preferred to work very hard and get a reputable degree. As a result, I am in debt.

The PROMISE Program is a wonderful program!

My parents and I are greatful that, due to the promise scholarship program, I will graduate from WVU without the burden of any outstanding student loans. This will give me more flexibility to explore other career and educational opportunities free from the worry of burdensome debt.

Thanks!

I am grateful for receiving it and it did affect my decision to attend school in West Virginia. I think that the requirement to take 15 credits each semester should be more flexible in the event that a student needs to work or have some time away from school. I am not sure if I am going to stay in West Virginia if I graduate, because it depends on job offers. I am currently working at a bank in West Virginia.
Not having to pay college loans opened numerous doors of opportunity for me, not only in an educational aspect, but also in my personal life. Thank you for providing the chance to attend school without financial hardships. The Promise is an excellent program that should remain a part of West Virginia.

The State of West Virginia needs to keep the Promise the way it is. By making it harder to get it scares away the best students of West Virginia. West Virginia needs to keep them.

This is a good program. Granted I did look out of state for employment as well as in state, but the fact that WV will be producing me college graduates will benefit employers and hopefully influence them to setup operation in WV.

I think it's a great program and should continue.

I am very thankful for the PROMISE program. I just want to thank the state of West Virginia and former governor Bob Wise for giving me the opportunity to receive this scholarship. I hope the PROMISE is available for many more high school graduates so they may benefit from it as much as I have.

it's been great; i think entry requirements should be more difficult.

Thank you

Thanks to this scholarship, I only accrued $10,000 debt while in college. Otherwise it would have been over $20,000.

I feel it should also take into effect need based students. It has been a tremendous blessing, but hearing it is running out of money and knowing the requirements have been rasied so much makes me feel it is no longer helping those it orginally planned to help.

I'm very thankful for this scholarship! When it came to paying for my college, this helped my parents and I a great deal! Thank You!

I am very thankful for the PROMISE award.

I am very grateful to have had it when I was a freshman, my counseling at WVU is what I can say hurt me in losing it, all my classes were too extreme, no intro classes, even though I did come out of a lot of honors classes in highschool, the load was way too overwelming to grasp, and took the first year to understand and know how to do college.

The PROMISE scholarship is a great way to recognize those students who have performed academically in high school. Often scholarships are only awarded based on financial need, and to have a scholarship that gives based on academics is especially rewarding for those who do not qualify for merit-based scholarhips.

I think students should be evaluated on a case by case basis. I took a summer class that I had to pay for and I had already met the required 30 hours and 2.75 GPA required for renewal, but my summer class was hard and I did pass but it brought my GPA to 2.74 which is 1 one-hundreth of a point away from the required GPA!!! i lost my scholarship because I tried to get ahead!!! Thats not fair

I do not think that you should change the amount or repaiment of the scholarship because that was what it was created under. You do not create a scholarship that rewards hard work that is supposed to pay tuition and then make people pay it back. It is a loan. I do not like that you raised the requirements for receiving the scholarship. I think that things should have remained the way they were. Just because you did not estimate that so many people would have been eligable for the award. If you want to add something on, if you have to, ask that they do community service or something like that which benifits the community or WV directly. We do need help from our citizens and do not really have the money for it.

I was very happy and proud to be a recipient of this award. I beleive that it is wonderful that such an opportunity is being provided within our state.
I am very thankful for the financial support given to me through PROMISE. It has helped me out so much, and I am very lucky to have been among the first group to receive the scholarship!!!

I actually lost my promise scholarship due to my credit hours in my 2nd or 3rd year of college. I was just barely under the limit and felt that it was unfair. The nursing program is extremely difficult and my grades were satisfactory enough to pass the courses and I was taking all the required courses for the program at that time, but not enough keep my scholarship. By the time I failed my math class (which was by 2 points) I had already lost my scholarship and was getting myself too deep in debt with loans so I have decided not to return to college due to rising expenses. I can no longer afford the cost. Had my scholarship still been in effect I am sure my decision would have been different. I feel that my GPA is still quite good (overall 3.4 after failing a class) and I don't think I deserved to have my scholarship taken away due to hours. With the BSN program, sometimes the amount of hours required isn't considered full time but what people fail to realize is that we also have clinical time on top of actual class credit hours. Losing the scholarship due to this was, in my opinion, a shame.

As I indicated in the survey question, the PROMISE scholarship is THE reason that I remained in state for college and, as a result, I received what I consider to be a fantastic education in my field. Others states (like CA) that have progressive programs like the PROMISE program have maintained them for years - it is standard there - and I think WV should follow this lead. This is a way to keep academic excellence in-state, which will only improve the reputations of the colleges and universities and, consequently, attract more students overall. Next we need to work on improving wage rates to make sure that students are able to stay in-state for work and still pay off their student loans, afford to buy houses, pay for the cars (especially given the lack of public transportation in WV), etc.

I feel that the Promise Scholarship Program is very beneficial. It gives opportunities for those that otherwise would not have it to attend a facility of higher education.

The Promise scholarship is the primary reason that I stayed in West Virginia for college. It caused me to strive to receive better grades, and also, go for my Masters Degree. I don't think it's fair to say that if you leave West Virginia after graduating you will be required to pay the scholarship back. (That was a question asked on this survey.) The reason I am leaving West Virginia after I graduate is because there is no future for me here. The reason for this is, no matter what occupation we students choose to pursue, West Virginia pays virtually nothing compared to most other states. Instead of trying to make students pay back a scholarship that they "earned," West Virginia needs to look inside itself and realize why we aren't staying. Why don't jobs pay a higher salary here? What can West Virginia do to better itself? Why does it seem as if West Virginia is lagging behind other states in so many different areas? Instead of trying to force people to stay in West Virginia, we need to strive to make the state better, and then students like myself will willingly stay.

I think it's great that W.V. has this achievement based scholarship. Need based scholarships put accomplished students at a disadvantage if their families make decent money. My mother is an RN, but I don't live with her and she doesn't have $5,000/year to pay for my schooling. Other financial aid and FAFSA forget about people like me. They think my family should be able to contribute $15,000/year-- and that's just not true.

I think the program works well to keep students in West Virginia and allows people to go further with their education than they might otherwise afford. Perhaps leaving promise the way it is will be the best for West Virginia's future economy. If I had not been offered promise I would have gone out of state with a common market agreement and there is no telling if I would have moved back to the state.

I think the program could change its limitations for the usage of the money. Instead of only being able to use the money for an undergraduate degree, it would be available for use towards an advanced degree. (MD, PHD, etc) Kentucky has a similar program and allows the award to be used for a BS or PHD, etc. I know someone who is from KY and attended Marshall...
and is now returning to go to UK. I think WV is capable of bringing students back into the state to further their degrees.

I came from a very small high school, one of the smallest in the state. I did not have the advantages that other kids from bigger schools have in class selection. I'm not making excuses, because I could have done better, but it takes awhile to learn the "tricks of the trade" so to speak of college. High school and college are like daylight and dark. While I don't think a 2.75 gpa is that much to ask, I do think that for the first year, it is a little on the demanding side.

This is a wonderful program that allows students who work hard, regardless of their parents' income, obtain a higher education. Most all scholarships offered through the institutions themselves are based on need, so having the Promise fund my education has been great. I've been able to concentrate more on my classes, and I only need a part-time for extra things. I also really appreciate that when I call the offices of the Promise, I can actually speak to a REAL person, without having to punch numbers or go through voice recordings, and the staff are INCREDIBLY HELPFUL! Keep up the great work!

I am really grateful that the Promise scholarship was created. It made going to college less of a financial burden for me and my family. It also enabled me to go to the school which was my first choice. Had I not received the scholarship, I may have had to go to a smaller school closer to home that would have been less expensive but may not have had the resources for my specific major.

I think that the program should've allowed for a grace period. I got one D the entire time I was in school, and I immediately lost my scholarship when my GPA went down. I think that if it goes down, you should be allotted one semester to bring it back up to a 3.0. I have a lot of debt to pay off now due to loans, but I am thankful that I had PROMISE for as long as I did.

I think the PROMISE program is a wonderful scholarship! It gave me the ability to get a degree in a field I was enthusiastically interested in. If it wasn't for the Promise Scholarship, I might be a construction worker or mechanic right now. I am the first in my family to attend college! Directly leaving college, I have a job waiting for me at a Charleston television station and there seems to be no limit to where my education can take me. Thank you, PROMISE Scholarship, for sending me to college!

The PROMISE scholarship helped me with my tuition, but I wish it would pay more that just four years, because at Shepherd University (I don't know about other schools), it seems that it is very rare for a student to graduate in four years, and now I'll probably need loans to finish my undergraduate degree.

I had taken summer classes to try to make up the difference in my GPA, but when I was unable to I was not even notified that I had lost the scholarship until I went to class. If I had known that I lost it I would have been able to apply for loans and grants so that I did not have to take time off from school.

I think this is an especially wonderful program for the middle class. My parents would not have been able to put me through school without it. I am sure that, if not for the Promise, I would not be going to pharmacy school.

It was a great opportunity for me. I did attend a private school, so my tuition was not paid in full. It was a decision I knew full well what was being paid for though. If the goal is to keep workers in West Virginia, it will not work. I do believe though, it's a great program to encourage WV students to go to college.

It was great for me. I was happy to receive it and keep it all four years!

My first year in college I saw a lot of people take advantage of the promise scholarship as a free ride to play around for a semester. I believe that if the promise was a loan that if you kept
all four years you did not have to pay back then less people would take advantage of this great program and it would also encourage students to do better in their studies.

I feel blessed that this program was started for my graduating high school class and will stay in the State for its contribution towards my education.

It has really decreased the financial burden of college. It is very much appreciated.

Great program really helped me achieve my goals especially considering the circumstances of me becoming a mother at 14 in high school. The renewal requirements we good I think they set the bar high enough to weed out the 'unachievers' in college but it was a realistic goal.

I think it pushes more high school students to keep their grades up so they can get the PROMISE and attend college.

It is a fantastic program that I think other states are jealous of. It helped immensely in allowing me to afford to go to college without having huge loans.

I think if you made it a little tougher to qualify for the awared it would weed out some of the people who aren't really going to put much of an effort into college which would save you a lot of money.

PROMISE program made life easier for me and my family. I am very grateful to the program. I hope it continues to help other under-previledge children like me.

I think the minimum ACT score should be higher and the GPA necessary to keep the scholarship should be higher so that only serious students would get the scholarship.

I feel the PROMISE program is a great benefit to West Virginia students attending WV college's and university's. It should remain as a way for students to attend college/university's without having a huge debt to pay after graduation.

The only complaint I have is originally, if we were attending a 5 year program, the promise was going to cover our 5th year's tuition. It is my understanding that the promise is not covering it now. This makes it extremely hard especially now that I have to get loans to cover a graduate's tuition fee.

I have a suggestion for future thought. I think that if someone accepts the promise scholarship, that they should be required to work in WV for as many years as they accepted it. It isn't fair to the people that want to stay in the state but can not get the scholarship because of increased requirements. I believe that if the state gives you a free ride (pretty much) through school, you should have to give something back to the state.

I think that it is a really great program which allowed a lot of people to complete school without having to take out any loans. I definately believe that it should continue for many years.

Without this scholarship, I would be greatly in debt. I have had to work my way through college anyway, so this program has been incredibly great for me.

When I received the scholarship I remember it stating somewhere that special programs that required 5 years for completion would be taken into consideration for including that 5th year. I'm in the Occupational Therapy program at WVU which is such a program that is 5 years to complete and was just curious what was decided about that since I would be the first group to come into this issue.

It was a tremendous help. A lot of scholarships and financial aid programs are only for low income students. My family is middle income with two of us in college. The PROMISE was a tremendous help and it made my time in school much more productive.
I thank the state for the wonderful opportunity the PROMISE program provided for me.

If funding is low I would raise the requirements for graduating high school seniors to acquire the award. I would not change the requirements to keep the award once in college (3.0 GPA).

I think if you are planning to pursue a degree that takes longer than 4 years to complete (i.e. Pharmacy) the Promise should continue to pay a portion of the tuition for the remaining years as well.

While I probably would have still gone to college without the promise scholarship, it was very helpful at keeping costs manageable and allowed me to accept less student loans that I would have to repay after college.

I think there should be a way for someone to keep their scholarship if, as in my own personal case, I received incomplete grades for a semester, and lost the scholarship due to the renewal requirements, even though I was permitted by my school to make up the grades later in the following semester. My situation was a result of medical illness.

PROMISE is one of the greatest ideas and proposals that I have ever seen. It truly kept kids in the state and although it doesn't guarantee that kids will stay in the state after graduation, it at least will make them think about it. Without PROMISE, I would never have enrolled in the state, let alone even think about staying. I realize that the funding is getting tight, but PROMISE should be focal point for any administration.

The promise is excellent, please don't stop it, but don't make kids stay in WV for 4 years after graduating. there are just no jobs for certain majors, like mine, interior design. i simply can not be employed in WV post graduation.

I think the PROMISE was a great idea for the state of WV. Although, it did not affect my decision for school, it helped me out greatly. I think that students who achieve in high school deserve this reward.

Placing stipulations on PROMISE recipients that require them to stay in WV after graduation or pay off their reward by working in WV will be detrimental. There are simply not enough economically beneficial job opportunities in this state for all the recipients; it would force graduates to take jobs they are overqualified for, and they would be underpaid. Most PROMISE recipients I've talked to wish to return to WV after they've had a chance to build financial independence in more prosperous areas. Do not contradict the aim of the PROMISE scholarship by locking recipients into a contract that will force them to work in WV, a state in which they could probably make the same amount of money doing construction or mining work as they could in jobs that require a degree.

I can only comment that I really hope the PROMISE scholarship will continue for future WV students. This scholarship greatly eased the financial burden of college tuition. It is also refreshing to see a scholarship based solely on academic achievement.

It is a very nice program, please do not ruin it by requiring people to stay in the state afterwards. If funding is running out I suggest raising the high school requirements necessary to achieve the scholarship.

To the members of the West Virginia government who made this program possible, thank you for easing the financial stress of attending college and pushing for higher education.

Seems like you gave away a lot of money fairly easily (GPA requirement seemed a little low for a full-ride scholarship).

I think it was a huge help in my attending college. Although I took out loans, the PROMISE is one less thing I have to pay back and one less stress factor in my life. If I do leave the state, it will simply be because I could not find the kind of job that I want. However, I plan to look in West Virginia before looking elsewhere.
They should offer to pay for schooling if the applicant had kept the scholarship and planned on continuing his/her education.

The scholarship has been very beneficial to me. I have been able to complete my degree in four years thanks to the requirements of 30 hours a semester. I hope that the scholarship will remain in effect for future West Virginia students. I have really appreciated the extra help it has provided my family.

I think PROMISE is a great program. Being the middle child of three, I know it really helped my parents deal with financial pressure of having three kids in college at one time. I think the idea of rewarding all high school seniors, regardless of financial need, is also a great idea. I know that I didn't get much other help, so PROMISE greatly improved the quality of my college life.

The PROMISE scholarship is a wonderful scholarship. It forces high school students to work harder, making better grades in order to go to college. I am currently in pharmacy school at WVU, so PROMISE didn't pay my entire tuition, but I am so thankful for the amount that it paid for. I know many people who were able to go to college because they received the PROMISE scholarship who would not have been able to otherwise. This is a wonderful program for the state of WV.

It was the only thing that got me through my 4 years of college and I am extremely thankful for receiving the Promise Scholarship.

I think the PROMISE program was a great opportunity and helped relieve the enormous financial burden that college can be.

It is a great idea

It should pay more for private schools in WV as well as public. I went to a private school and only received a few thousand instead of the entire tuition.

I think the Promise Scholarship is very important to WV. It is the first step in steering a population away from welfare and state assistance and to a well-educated, self-sustaining society.

I realize how valuable this scholarship is, and I am so grateful and appreciative for it. Undergraduate scholarships are generally extremely competitive, but this scholarship makes it possible for anyone who really tries their hardest in high school to go to college for free. What an opportunity! Thank you, Governor Wise and Governor Mansion.

I am currently in Pharmacy School at WVU, which I was accepted into last Fall. It has been a major help to have this financial backing these past 4 years, but now that I have 3 years remaining in school, I am concerned about my financial burdens.

I think the working in WV after graduation thing to help pay it back would be cool because as a loyal native West Virginian I hate it when people use the money and run to a different state.

I feel this is a wonderful program to encourage young, high school students to work hard in high school. In addition to that, I feel it gives those students who work hard a chance to go to college for free with no restrictions on the amount of money their parents make. Having a required GPA throughout college has also given me motivation to keep my grades up throughout my entire college career. I hope funding for this program continues to be a priority to our governor.

This is one of the first true steps in making our state what it should be.....preserve this program at all costs please........

The PROMISE really helped me financially through college. I still had to take out loans for living
expenses, but it was good to know that my tuition was taken care of. The only thing that I did not like was that I am a very ambitious student and I finished my undergrad in 3.5 years. I started my graduate education immediately following my undergrad and PROMISE did not pay for my first semester. I only received 3.5 years of funding from the PROMISE while some of my other classmates were still getting support from the PROMISE for their final semester.

It has been such a blessing for me. My parents could not help me at all with my schooling, and I would have been stuck with the bill. Now it looks as if I will receive a Masters Degree in Education with virtually no loans. I have always wanted to stay in the state, and I do feel like the PROMISE program has made that goal more attainable and has given me a better start. I do think that it would be nice for the Program to make money available for the 5-year Teachers Ed program at WVU. It is such an excellent and challenging program and I believe that future teachers in our state should be encouraged to enroll in this program. However, currently, the 5th year is not covered under PROMISE.

It's a great program. It gives young people, who may not have had the chance to attend school, a great opportunity. I think with a few adjustments it could be something that is available for a long time.

Thank you!

I think the promise should continue if you are in a 5 year masters program. I do graduate with a bachelors, but I cannot practice in WV as an Occupational Therapist without the Masters degree.

As one of the first to receive the Promise, I was and am still very appreciative of the opportunities it has allowed me. Though in the beginning of the Promise Scholarship discussions there some difficulties, which my own father spoke about at the State Capitol, I find that it has been most beneficial to me. Thank you for instituting something that allows so many in-state students to experience this opportunity. It is my opinion that though the standards for the scholarship not be changed, you may want to look into the availability. Being from a lower income family with more than one child in college at the time, the scholarship was quite helpful. However, I know of many friends who were also awarded the scholarship and whose parents could have more than easily assisted their children in their finances. FASFA is based on financial need, so would it not follow suit that this scholarship could be as well.

My family had three children in college at the same time. One child had to attend school out of state. This has helped in so many ways. I'm ending my senior year with NO debts and now I can go on to get my AuD (doctorate in audiology) with the money I have saved.

I would love to stay in West Virginia after graduation, however it is very hard to find work in West Virginia. Therefore, for this reason it would be wrong to make the PROMISE a forgivable loan unless the graduates were insured of having an actual opportunity to find a good job in their field in West Virginia.

I am very grateful for the award. With 2 other children to put through college around the same time, it saved my parents a lot of money and made it possible to put us all through college without any of us having to go into serious debt.

I am very appreciative to have had the PROMISE. I feel that it was making my hard work in high school worth the while. I would have had a hard time paying for college without the scholarship. There are many people like myself who greatly benefited from the PROMISE. I take my education seriously and feel that I can make a difference in the state of West Virginia.

The PROMISE scholarship has provided enormous financial relief on myself and my family. My mother is an elementary school teacher and my father is a sales director at a hardwood flooring plant. Although we are far from poor, there was no possible way for me to attend college without receiving a substantial amount of money through student loans. The PROMISE allowed me to attend the university I wanted to immediately (rather than spending a year or two at a cheaper community college close to home) and I won't be up to eyeballs in debt when
I graduate. The PROMISE is a wonderful program and I truly appreciate all of the help I have received from my state gov't. It is one of the many advantages of living in this great state.

I believe that the PROMISE scholarship is a wonderful program. My family earns middle class annual income, so this scholarship has really helped out. This is especially true since I am attending an out-of-state institution for my doctoral degree. I think the GPA requirements are perfect and challenge the student to work hard. I do not believe, however, that it would be appropriate to force students to stay in West Virginia if they accept the scholarship. That would only limit their opportunities after graduation. I believe that enough students would stay in West Virginia on their own after graduation. If the program wants to keep more students in WV, then perhaps they should offer special rewards for those who do, instead of punishing those who do not. I was included in the first year that the PROMISE was started. I think it was wonderful from the beginning, please do not change anything and ruin it for future students. Thank you.

I strongly disagree with a few parts of the program. I am currently a pharmacy student at WVU and will graduate in 2008. When I accepted the promise scholarship it paid for all of my tuition at Potomac State College. However, after two years of pre-pharmacy I was accepted into WVU School of Pharmacy. When I chose to attend WVU and enter into a professional field, I was disappointed to find out that I would only receive about 4 thousand dollars for my education. At WVU, my education costs around 18 thousand dollars a year. I feel that the promise scholarship discourages people from choosing careers in pharmacy, dentistry, medicine, etc. It is not fair that students choosing health professions are limited in their scholarships because their education is more expensive. West Virginia should be proud to have such ambitious students and encourage them to choose such fields.

I lost the Promise after my sixth semester. I know I chose a mathematics major but I think different majors should have different requirements on GPA.

THE PROMISE SCHOLARSHIP MEANS ALOT TO A STUDENT THAT HAS WORKED HARD BUT DOESN'T QUALIFY FOR SCHOLARSHIPS BASED ON NEED. I WOULD HAVE WENT TO A COLLEGE CLOSER TO MY HOME AND NOT RECEIVED THE EDUCATION I WANTED IN ACCOUNTING. PROMISE WILL BRING MORE PEOPLE TO OUR STATE- KNOWING THAT THEIR CHILDREN CAN RECIEVE THIS SCHOLARSHIP

I was very grateful for the financial help and truly believe that it should continue in the future for those deserving. Perhaps the requirements needed in high school could be harder so that the students receiving the award are the students who are more likely to maintain the requirements in college.

N/A

I am so thankful for this award. Even though I still had to take out student loans and work I would have had even more loans to worry about paying back if not for PROMISE.

I think it’s good because it keeps students in WV for their education. It’s also good because the price of tuition is outrageous and entirely too expensive.

Honestly, I felt a little guilty accepting the scholarship because I would have been able to go to college without it and have never had plans to stay in West Virginia. From my perspective, a scholarship that is more targeted toward those with financial limitations and that required some and gives some incentive to remain in the state after graduation might be better.

I think that the PROMISE program should try to help Education majors at WVU to pay for the fifth year of the program. The Education program at WVU is a five year program resulting in a Master's. If PROMISE can't cover the total cost for students, then maybe a portion of tuition could be paid for. I feel that I have worked hard the last four years and maintained all the requirements for the PROMISE program and therefore should be assisted in my fifth year at WVU.
The PROMISE program basically kept me from going to Ohio State's College of Pharmacy and staying in WV to attend WVU's school of pharmacy program. My decision was financially based, but without the PROMISE, I may have thought more seriously about attending Ohio State.

This is just an opinion. Some of the majors such as engineering are a lot more difficult and require much more work than other majors offered at the university. Students going into majors that don't require as much effort to do well should have to maintain a higher GPA than a 3.0 in order to force them to work just as hard to keep the promise scholarship as those students with more demanding majors.

I think the PROMISE is a great scholarship program that enables otherwise disadvantaged West Virginians to obtain higher education.

I am very thankful for the program. It's been a blessing. I only wish our state could grow economically to a point where it would be advantageous for graduates to stay here.

It has been a blessing. I am debt free heading into medical school where I will acquire much debt. So, It helps me a lot.

Keep up the good work! I don't like how a person tried to tell me once that I "got too many scholarships" to get the award, when I was clearly under the allowed cap for WVU's cost of attendance. I have a brother who's one year apart from me, and my parents are not rich.

While I was able to keep my scholarship for the full 4 years, I believe that a little bit of emphasis on the GPA requirements should be paid attention to what a person's major is. I am a nursing major and while not mentioning particular majors, there are some where it is no probable to get an A in every single course. While with my major, you have to put serious time into studying just to try to pass the class. I just feel that with these majors that some attention should be paid to the amount of time and effort you have to put into particular courses.

Too many people are getting this scholarship because it is so easy to get, I could sleepwalk my way to a 3.0. I think it would make more sense to raise the requirements and use the rest of the leftover money to reduce state tuition for everyone. If you really want people to stay in WV to attend college, then raise the out of state tuition and lower the in state tuition. It doesn't make sense to me that someone from PA or NJ could come to WV to go to school cheaper than they could in their home state with in state tuition.

I am very upset that since I graduated early, it took away some of the money that was awarded to me. I still attended graduate school in the spring and the money that I would have received if I would not have graduated early was taken away from me. I was punished financially for graduating a semester early. I think this is wrong and that you should get the scholarship for four years, even if you graduate early and go on to a higher degree program.

The Promise Scholarship is a great tool for kids going to college in WV who need the money. I wish that I would have put more of an effort forth in college, but I just got homesick and didn't try hard enough. I think you should keep the Scholarship around for the kids that take advantage of it the way they should like my sister. It has been a big help to her.

I feel that the promise should be able to be used for hospital based programs. I attended Marshall University and West Virginia Northern Community College on the promise, then I attended Wheeling Hospital Radiology Program and West Virginia University Hospital Diagnostic Sonography Program and both of those were not covered by the Promise. I do understand that these two programs do not cost a whole lot of money but I think that it should only be fair that they are also covered. I feel that that promise should look into applying there scholarship into these hospital based programs. A lot of kids in these programs are right out of college and I feel that the education they receive is just as hard if not harder that what the college kids are receiving. I just think that you should consider broading the field of acceptance
to include hospital based programs.

To add to my comment that the number of credit hours required each year should be lowered, I would like to point out that those of taking classes in the natural and social sciences spend numerous hours in the labs and research facilities that are not reflected in credit hours. Most semesters I spent up to 15 extra hours a week in research. Also, I completed a double major in four years and because of the hour requirements was forced to take several classes unrelated to my goals or interests. Please consider this for future recipients of this award.

I have heard that the promise scholarship may last longer for students who have 5 or 6 year degrees. Just wondering where I could find out this information.

Think it should be continued for other students in the state.

I have been really happy with the scholarship, however I am aware of two recipients who had to drop out of college because their mothers diagnosed which cancer and they took on the responsibility to take care of them. Since they took time off to my knowledge they lost the scholarship. I think there should be a stipulation in the award when something like this happens if they are able to show proof of the situation.

As tuition increased, the scholarship should have as well.

Yes thank you, it helped out so much financially and made the decision to choose WVU an easy decision.

I believed the original intent of the PROMISE scholarship was to provide financial aid to students who were not A/B grade point average or high ACT scores and would not be receiving scholarships because they did not have the above qualifications. It seems to have turned in to another one of those scholarships that go to the top 10%.

I think there should be provisions made for students with disabilities to recieve the award. I know of students who make good grades, will apply themselves in college and who work harder than most. However they are not able to make the required ACT score. They have the grades and GPA in high school but they do have documented disability. There should be someway of helping them to recieve some if not all of the full benefits of the PROMISE.

I come from a large family of 4 girls. My twin sister and I were awarded the Promise Scholarship in 2002 for 4 years of college. My other two sisters did not recieve the Promise Scholarship because they graduated from highschool in 1999 and 2000. I am so thankful for this scholarship. I know it made my parents sleep better at night. Putting 4 girls through college at the same time is not an easy task for any family. Now because of this scholarship, West Virginia is adding 2 more civil engineers, a soon to be pharmacist and a veterinarian to its work force. Thanks West Virginia. There is one more thing. I wish West Virginia had a veterinary college.

Without the Promise program I would not have been able to leave college without debt. Right now, I am graduating with NO student loans because of PROMISE. It really helped my financial situation for the better.

raising the standards for the second year recipients is a good idea. first year college students need the break to start out with, but raising it after that is a good plan.

The Promise scholarship greatly reduced the amount of loans I had to take out during my four years of undergrad. I believe the program is an asset to the state of West Virginia, in that it gives many individuals the opportunity to further their education beyond secondary schools. With the Promise program I was able to attend a private institution in the hills of West Virginia. This institution has made immeasurable affects on my life and I will forever hold it dear to my heart. In closing, I would like to thank the Promise program for giving me these numerous, unforgettable memories.

This scholarship is a good program, but I think it is unfair to take it away from a student when
they missed the GPA by a tenth of a point. Sometimes with the way the schools have credit hours and grade numbers; when added all together it can be hard to obtain the 3.0 exactly. I have continued to finish my studies, but it would have been a lot easier if I had the scholarship still. It does not take into consideration of illness or family problems. Aside from the one semester where i missed it by a tenth of a point I have made nothing below a 3.5 and have made many 4.0. But as I was sick and my mother was in a bad car accident I had stress on me. I feel that because of these reasons there should be a probation period for the student to make up the following semester and if they can't obtain the GPA then they lose it, but not just for one mistake!

1. Extend the PROMISE to Grad/Law/Medical/etc. school. If you really want to provide real opprotunities to maximize the success of in state students - give them a chance to really get a head with a professional or advanced degree from one of the state's schools. I'm going to law school at WVU and the PROMISE would have helped been very helpful and welcomed.
2. Amend the process to allow a student to get a waiver from the Executive Director for the requirment of credit hours per year in the event the student recieves an internship or studies abroad. I had a great internship last year (WV state legislature), my grades were way above what they needed to be (3.79), and I was ahead of the pace to graduate (senior standing as a junior). However, I almost lost the scholarship because I took 15 hours first semester and the internship was only worth 12 hours second semester putting me 3 hours short of my 30 hour requirement. I had to do an independent study which took away from my internship experience. I got the 30 hours that year, but I missed out on an important class because I had to do a wasteful and uneducational independent study instead of having a professor teach me in the classroom setting. When I called the PROMISE office to ask about my situation then, the person I talked to on the phone bascially told me they understood my situation, but there was nothing they could do for me unless the rules were changed. Internships and studying abroad are an important part of college, an acomplished and hard working student should not be punished for wanting to expand his or her horizons in the real world setting.

I think this is a great program that should be continued! Thank you!

I think the Promise is a good program, and definetly helps to ease the cost of attending college. However, being one of the first grads of the program I witnessed first hand the hardships in trying to find a job in WV. I graduated in December with a 3.9 GPA in accounting/finance and the best job that I could find was starting out at less then $10 an hour. I love this state and I hope that I never have to relocate outside of the state, but the bottom line is there are not many good paying, professional type jobs in the state. I hope that this may change in the near future. It would be nice to see the state receive some return on their investment by being able to keep the majority of the Promise scholars in state.

Promise was one among many scholarships that I received. I was accepted to Yale University, but almost all of my scholarships came with the stipulation that they had to be used in West Virginia, so I stayed in state and attended Marshall University. I think that this stipulation is good for the state, but not necessarily good for the individual unless West Virginia can start offering some good jobs to our college graduates. A college degree by no means guarantees a job these days, and the good ones are few and far between. I want to stay in West Virginia because I love the people and the state is beautiful, but if I can't earn a living I'll have to move elsewhere.

I really appreciate this program and it has helped make my journey through college easier. I wish it would have provided money for books, being there were a few semesters when I had to spend over $200 just for books.

I believe this is a very good program. If it had not been for the program, I would have been in a great deal of debt right now and would probably have not even been able to complete college. Thank you West Virginia!
I feel the program is very helpful for the youth coming out of highschool and looking for a college. The promise has been wonderful for my college career. However, with some of the questions present in the survey, I don't feel that the students should be penalized for wanting to leave WV after graduation. For some it isn't a choice, I know that if I get a job offer in another state, I will move. I love WV but I can't be without a job waiting for one in west virginia.

I truly thank everyone who was involved in creating the PROMISE scholarship. Without this award, financial matters for me in college would have been a big problem. Thank you so much for making it easier for me to attain an education in my home state!

The people who oversee the Promise program at Fairmont State gave extremely poor advice to the students who got switched to the technical program because of the university stats. It was no fault of mine that the college when to university stats during my four years at Fairmont State and because I was lied to, poorly informed and the fact that it took from May to August to get any answers, I almost was not able to come back and complete my last two semesters. It took so long to get any answers I was to late to file for loans and had to use a credit card with interest to finish. My mom has spent over three months and numerous calls between Fairmont State and long distance calls to the Promise Office and each time one place told her the other was wrong—does anyone know what is going on between the Promise Office and the schools?? I know of several students who relied completely on the Promise Scholarship to attend Fairmont State and due to the incorrect information we were all given were unable to come back to finish the last two semesters because we were not given the information that our scholarships had been taken away because FSC went to FSU until it was time for school to start and no one had time to apply for loans. As for me, I am paying interest on a credit card for part of my fees and a loan for the rest. I stayed in WV to attend school because of the scholarship and not I am sorry that I ever accepted the scholarship or attended Fairmont State—it was a waste of my money. and my time.

The PROMISE Program is great for the state of West Virginia! This program should not be cut, no matter how much it costs. This program helped me strive to do my best at WVU and not go out and party every night. I would raise the academic requirements instead of trying to make it a loan. After all this is the PROMISE Award not the West Virginia Loan Award! As a state, we need to bring more businesses in West Virginia so after graduation there are more opportunities for the recent graduates to pursue. I received a job in the state, but some of my friends have been forced to look elsewhere because the opportunities are limited. Thanks!

If it wasn’t for the Promise scholarships, I would not have went to Marshall University, and I would not have a Bachelor’s degree in Nursing.

I’m very grateful and appreciative of this award. It has helped me, as well as my family, so much.

I think that the Promise Scholarship is a great thing. I know that many students would not have been able to attend college if it were not for the promise scholarship.

I think it is a great award for students who live in WV. It helped me tremendously with my school costs! However, I am in a 5 year program which allows me to get my Masters degree and I feel the PROMISE program should take that into consideration to give students free tuition or partial who are in a 5 year program.

There should be something like the promise for advanced degrees

The promise scholarship is an excellent program!

Requirements to initially receive the PROMISE should be raised.

I believe that the 30 credit hours required for the full year should be lowered.

The promise is a really good scholarship. It definitely gave me motivation to work harder and keep my grades up considering I paid my own way through college, so it helped me
It was very worthwhile and helpful. This is a really good program that has helped many of my friends with me included. If it weren't for the PROMISE I would have had to get loans which I would've had to pay for years to come. The requirements did make me keep my grades up, and also allowed my family the chance to reward me for keeping my grades up.

I feel if the student is enrolled in a 5 yr program the promise should cover that 5th year also. Maybe in the future it would be less confusing if the rules did not change from year to year. It is hard to talk to someone about this scholarship if they are not familiar with the year in which you received this scholarship.

Good program...good money that was very helpful. and the 30 required credits per year keep you on track. could easily up those to 32/34 to possibly put students on an even stricter track. I wish the scholarship was good for 5 years. I am getting a bachelor's degree in architectural engineering and minoring in civil engineering at Fairmont State University, and 5 years is needed to complete them.

The program has impacted my college education in a positive manner that I appreciate greatly. There are some changes that need to be made to the program as well as colleges and universities in our Appalachian region that could make the PROMISE experience better for students from our state.

The PROMISE program is a wonderful program in that it not only encourages more WV students to stay in WV by making higher education more affordable, but that the program also helps students who may not have been able to afford a college education. I am a naturally motivated person; however, I know people who have worked harder than they normally would just to be able to qualify and renew their promise scholarships. Therefore, this program helps to make schooling affordable, encourages students to stay in WV, and helps to motivate students in the classroom.

The whole purpose for this scholarship was to allow more students in WV the opportunity to attend college, however, the initial requirements one has to meet to be awarded this scholarship have continually been raised. This is wrong. Students who have proven through their grades and scores that they are worthy of college should be given this scholarship and the funding should be put into this program to allow every student in WV the chance to go to college without the board trying to find ways to eliminate them. It also should NEVER be made need based. There are enough need based scholarships out there, give the middle class academics the chance for college too, they also deserve it and deserve a financial break especially in light of raising tuition costs. The middle class student needs this scholarship now more than ever and what every student who receives this scholarship needs is for the schools to stop raising costs in the exact amount of this scholarship.

I went to college in 2002. I graduated sixth in my class, I was a straight A student, and I received a 1.0 grade point average my freshman year of college. Doesn't seem right does it? I didn't party at all and as a matter of fact I studied really hard. I firmly believe that since I didn't know what I was doing when I signed up for classes that the counselor knew I had the promise and put me with a load full of difficult classes to test me and see that I would have a hard time. I believe the presumed outcome was that most students would not meet the criteria anyway. My mom and dad work really hard and they don't make enough money to send me college right out. So I lost my scholarship and cut my college stay short. I am now in Nursing school at a community college and I am paying my own way through. I am doing fine now, but if there are any doubts in your mind that I support the promise scholarship, let me reassure you, I DON'T!!!!!! Next time don't promise something then try to make sure people fail out. It might help the poverty level and the welfare level of the state of WV. I love this state, but the politicians ruin it for everyone. Thank you!!!!!!!!!!
I am so grateful for the PROMISE scholarship; it was integral in my receiving an education because I could not have afforded it otherwise. I think it's terrible that the requirements to get and keep the PROMISE are becoming so difficult to meet. By doing this, the students who need it the most can't get it!

Excellent program which creates a unique opportunity for West Virginia students, I hope it continues.

It really helped me out. I had to get loans for living expenses etc., but I am so happy that I didn't have to pay tuition. I wish the promise scholarship would have continued through Grad school though.

Please keep it going for future generations.

The promise helped me pay for my education and I really appreciate the financial assistance!

Without the PROMISE scholarship, I would not have been able to afford college; therefore, I am extremely grateful for the opportunity and the program.

I think it is a wonderful and prestigious scholarship to obtain. The requirements are very legit to reach.

I think this is a great program to help the students of West Virginia.

I have heard that there is a possibility that the PROMISE could become a need-based program. I think that this is unfair because had this been the case, I would not have received the scholarship. My parents have two kids in college right now and having the PROMISE has helped my family tremendously (i.e. putting two kids through college for the price of one). If the PROMISE was need-based, my parents' income would have been too high for my brother and I to receive the scholarship. The fact that our parents make above the income level would be penalizing us, even though we both have worked extremely hard in college and in high school. The PROMISE should be based solely on academic performance.

I am very thankful for having been awarded the PROMISE scholarship, but I still feel like the award was a mixed blessing for a lot of people. I know a lot of people who were awarded the PROMISE scholarship from Morgantown. Many of them would have loved to have the chance to get out of the town they have lived in their whole lives, meet new people, and see new things. However, having free tuition at WVU didn't leave them or their parents with much of a choice. I think the PROMISE Scholarship is a wonderful thing for people in West Virginia, but as with every good thing, it still has its drawbacks. With my personal experience, the PROMISE scholarship enabled me to study abroad for a year in Japan, an experience unlike any other. Therefore, I think along with receiving the PROMISE scholarship, students should be encouraged to study abroad with it to see other places they may not have been able to as a result of staying in West Virginia. Again, I am very thankful for this award.

It's a wonderful program, and my college experience would have been much more complicated without it. Thank you for all your assistance.

The PROMISE program is a great program. It has helped so many highschool seniors attend college that would other wise not have. I hope that the state continues to fund this wonderful program. It would be a shame if it was discontinued!!!!

The PROMISE scholarship was quite beneficial in allowing me to attend college. Had I not received the scholarship I still would have attended college, but it made it a great deal easier financially.

I chose to pursue a Pharm.D. at the University of Kentucky. Therefore, I did not receive the fourth year of the Promise scholarship due to leaving the state to attend another university. However, I did qualify to receive my fourth year of the scholarship had I remained in West Virginia. I did not lose the scholarship, and I feel that this should be recognized in the statistics. I should not be considered a student that "lost" the scholarship due to academic
shortcomings. Since I am from a poor rural area with about 30 recipients from 2002, my leaving the state reflects badly on my community and high school.

I appreciate the opportunity and it has been an enormous help. I am one of two children and I probably would have had to take out loans if I did not receive the scholarship. I have not had to take out other loans or grants because of Promise. Thank you.

The PROMISE scholarship was extremely beneficial for me. My parent’s adequate income kept me from receiving many other scholarships, so the PROMISE program was a great reward. My parents still have 2 more children to put through college, and I hope that the program remains available to my siblings.

I feel that it is a very good program and could do much to help the overall state of the education level in West Virginia.

Promise is a great thing. It has allowed many students to be rewarded for their hard work, not only during high school, but also in college. Please don’t take this program away. It gives students a chance to succeed in their pursuing their career goals and provides a precedent to work hard.

I am really pleased to be a recipient of this award and it helped me pay for my private school expenses. However, the biggest help it has been was making maintain the 3.0 GPA. I really appreciate all that are involved in this program and they were a pleasure to work with when I had a problem.

Thanks

The program is excellent, and I know a lot of my peers who wouldn’t have made it to college without the scholarship. I doubt they will participate in the survey, many probably won’t even know about it inspite of the letters and newspaper article. The program is invaluable if West Virginia ever hopes to climb out of the poverty that currently plagues our beautiful state, and our hopes in retaining our youth population rests in making sure that they receive an education. Although I do not want to stay in the state, I believe that I could return some day if the economy were to improve... however, I again know many of my friends who do not plan on leaving our state, and their higher education will be the foundation of a better state economy with more specialized jobs and a lot more opportunities for our children.

thanks so much. sorry I didn’t take advantage of it like I should’ve but I was not ready for college. I took a break and now I’m doing great and very excited about school.

Thanks for the opportunity...and for a chance. The requirements weren’t too hard...and fair. I know a lot of people who lost their funding because of one “stats” or “math” class. They earned the scholarship and would have kept it otherwise.

A probation period for students with one D or F would help out a lot of students I’m sure.

I would like to stay in WV if at all possible as a Thank You for the PROMISE Scholarship. Salaries are higher in other states. I am going to seek employment at the Women and Children's Hospital in Charleston, WV. If I do not acquire employment there, then I will probably go out of state.

The PROMISE Scholarship was a huge aid for me during my undergraduate years. I am forever grateful to Bob Wise, the WV government, and the state as a whole for making this financial aid possible.

Again, I would like to express my appreciation for the PROMISE scholarship and the assistance it provided to me. I really liked that the GPA requirement was relatively high, keeping me on my toes and not allowing me to fall behind or slack-off.
I qualified for the Promise scholarship all four years of college at WVU. I worked very hard to keep. I think I studied harder than I would have if I hadn't received it. Thank you for letting me finish without any loans.

The PROMISE program is an excellent program and I feel very privileged to have received it. Just an overall thank you for providing an oppurtunity for me to attend college. My first year I needed to attend summer school just to keep the Promise scholarship. If it had not been for the oppurtunity to pull my grades up to the required level, I probably would not have gone back if I would have had to pay.

It would be nice if you have lost the promise that there be a way to regain it. Promise should cover fees in addition to tuition. A lot of money is spent on fees and books, and students who don't have any other sources on income would not be able to attend college even with the PROMISE scholarship.

I think the Promise Scholarship needs to be more flexible for those students like me who leave college for a year and then return to finish a degree. Without the help of the scholarship, I am now struggling financially to finish a degree in business. But I still have dreams of opening a recording studio in Lewisburg,WV someday.

I wish it would have offered me more money instead of only paying a couple thousand dollars a year since I chose a private university in WV.

Thank you ! Thank you ! Thank you! PLEASE keep this program going so that other students will have this chance! I would be paying off student loans forever (and be much more stressed) had it not been for the PROMISE. Thanks! ;)

I am an Elementary Education major in West Virginia University's five-year teacher education program. At the end of our fifth year, we will receive our masters degrees. We first heard the PROMISE would cover our fifth year, but then realized it did not. We did not graduate at the end of our fourth year and moved right into the fifth. Since it is a special program, I think the PROMISE should cover it.

The PROMISE scholarship program really helped my family finance my education. Without this scholarship it would have been more difficult to complete my college education.

Good program but it is stressful for the students to meet its demands.

I think it's a great program and should continue.

I feel that a good change to the current PROMISE program would be if a student does not meet the renewal requirements at any point, instead of the student missing out on the opportunity to benefit from the scholarship and being dropped from the program, instead to offer a low interest loan so the student can remain in school without having to receive money from higher interest loans from an organization which they will be paying off for most of their lives.

It's a great problem but, it needs to help students not pressure them more. I don't deal well with stress largely because I was not prepared for it from High School and the 2.75 overall was stressful. 2.75 in my major would have been much better.

I think the PROMISE scholarship is a great thing and has really helped push higher education in West Virginia. A lot of students need the help.

I liked the Promise scholarship but I think that 30hrs a yr is a lot. 12hrs per semester is
considered full time student, and I think that the hours should go accordingly.

The promise program is great! The money definitely helped defray the cost of my private college education at Davis & Elkins, a school I've grown to love and I can't imagine calling anywhere else my alma mater!! Thanks!

The only thing I didn't like about the promise program is having the requirements so high, I took a lot of classes my first year and it was a hard transition that caused me to overload myself and end up screwing up my GPA and losing the scholarship.

[No Answer Entered]

I was unable to use the PROMISE scholarship during my 4th year of higher education because I graduated college early and entered WVU Law. Friends of mine, however, were allowed to use their PROMISE scholarships in their 4th year of education even though they were enrolled in the Pharmacy Doctoral program at WVU. The revocation of the scholarship for my 4th year was almost like a penalty for doing well and exceeding expectations in my higher education.

The PROMISE helped my financial situation greatly. However, I am saddened by the fact that requirements for the scholarship are now becoming more strict. For this reason my little sister will probably not have the same opportunity that I have had.

I really appreciate the help that the promise provided for my college degree. Thanks.

Absolutely. I feel that I was screwed out of my education due to the fact that I was the "guinea pig" of the promise scholarship. I was in the first graduating class to receive the scholarship. I went to WVU in the fall of 2002 and in the middle of the spring 2004 semester I became very ill and was hospitalized for two weeks. At that point I was advised to take a medical leave of absence for the sake of my grades (at which point I had a cumulative 3.2 GPA which is above the requirements for keeping the promise). When I returned to WVU in the fall of 2004 I attended two weeks of classes until I received an email from WVU informing me that my tuition had not been paid. I called the promise office to see why they hadn't paid my tuition and they told me that because I did not complete the spring 2004 semester (due to my MEDICAL leave of absence), in order for me to retain the scholarship I would have to pay them back for the spring 2004 semester. Living on my own with no help from my parents I was not able to pay them back for that semester nor could I afford to pay the fall 2004 semester's tuition on my own. I was never even notified that I had lost the scholarship until the email from WVU telling me that my tuition had not been paid. Needless to say I have not been able to single-handedly fund my education and I have not been back to school since. I am now working two dead-end jobs and I cannot afford to quit them to go back to school without some help. I should not have been punished for being sick. It was a situation that I had no control over. I would understand if I had just quit school, but I did not quit. I took a medical leave of absence and I was assured not only by my doctors but also by the WVU employee who filled out my leave of absence paperwork that because the leave of absence was for medical reasons, it would not affect my scholarship in any way. I was misinformed and because of this sad situation I will now be forced to make extensive sacrifices in order to complete my education. Since the guinea pig class I have found out that the promise policies have been changed. I have a friend who graduated high school two years after me who took a medical leave of absence, and when she returned to WVU she did not lose her promise scholarship nor was she forced to repay promise for the semester she did not complete. It is unfair that I should be punished because the policies at that time were inadequate. In the fall of 2004 I even wrote a letter to the promise director explaining my situation. I never received any response to my letter. Upon receiving this letter requesting my response to this survey I called the number on the letter and had an extensive conversation with Lisa DeFrank-Cole. She, as everyone else I have spoken to with promise, was unwilling to make an exception for my situation. All she could do was blame me for not taking out a student loan and accuse me of being unambitious. She also attempted to take me on a guilt trip for choosing "the most expensive school in WV." When it became clear that she was unwilling to help me she had the audacity to hang up on me. I should not have to take out a student loan or make any of the
other outrageous sacrifices she suggested. I earned this scholarship and I maintained the requirements to keep it. There is no logical reason why it should not be restored to me. But again seeing how no one is willing to do what is right, as I found out in the fall of 2004 after speaking to several promise employees and writing a futile letter, I again give up.

552. It is a good program that helps hard working students finance their college education.

553. I think the PROMISE scholarship was/is a very good idea for the state of WV. Its especially nice when you have more than one child in a family trying to attend college.

554. no

555. I thought it was a great program and it helped me to keep my grades up.

556. The promise scholarship was very beneficial towards my education. I think it is an excellent program for West Virginia students.

557. I am very lucky to have been able to receive the Promise scholarship. I will be attending medical school this coming year and am lucky to not already be in debt. It has also been very beneficial for my parents because they will be putting my two brothers through college as well, which includes a total of 14 consecutive years of paying college tuition.

558. I received the Promise Scholarship for four semesters. My career choice led me out of state for the remainder of my education due to the program not being available in WV. Under these circumstances, it would have been good to have been able to use the Promise toward my tuition as I have had to pay for the entire amount with my own money and student loans.

559. The Promise Scholarship allowed me to attend the college of my choice in WV; otherwise, I would have had no choice but to attend the college in my hometown.

560. I think it is a wonderful program and hope to see it continue with NO income guidelines for many years to come.

561. First of all, I would like to thank the state for the wonderful opportunity to be a PROMISE scholar. I was highly motivated to finish high school with a good GPA and high ACT scores. However, I would like to express how disappointed I have become with the PROMISIE program. After completing 2 years at Marshall University, my PROMISE was revoked due to my choice to enter the Marshall Community and Technical College and pursue Radiologic Technology. Since I had completed two years and an Associate degree in Radiologic Technology is only 2 years (if you count the pre-requisites it equals to 3 or 4 years) my PROMISE was taken away even though my grades were above average. My family ended up having to pay for the 2 years of x-ray school since my decision was to change my major. I am still very upset that my scholarship was taken away and my family ended up paying thousands of dollars for two years of school that should have been paid for. The fact that an associate's degree is two years and my two years had already been paid for is ludicrous. My grades should have been the basis for the revocation of my scholarship - not my choice of degree. I am getting ready to graduate with my associate's degree in Radiologic Technology and no thanks to PROMISE, my good grades were NOT rewarded by the state of West Virginia. I was, instead, penalized for choosing a good occupation in the medical field that was only a two year program. So, in closing, I do thank the state for the two years of paid tuition - I used the money well and got good grades. As for the other two years, I thank my parents for sacrificing so that I could enter the profession that I wanted to.

562. The PROMISE program was a wonderful scholarship that greatly affected my decision to stay in state and attend WVU. I strongly feel, however, that if the requirements were changed so that a student needed to work within the state of WV after graduation significantly fewer students would take the scholarship. I feel that if there is something needed to be done to lower the financial burden the state is facing due to the program, the minimum GPA requirements needed for eligibility must be raised. I felt no pressure through school to be able to keep the 3.0 GPA, and the entry requirements were not very strict as well. I feel that something as prestigious as the PROMISE scholarship should be made available for only the higher echelon
of achieving students, and the requirements set forth at this time only require the average student to maintain mediocre GPA requirements.

| 562. | NO |
| 563. | Thank you for enabling me to go to a college close to home and to ensure that I can further my education without a financial burden. |
| 564. | I feel the PROMISE program is a beneficial program for students in West Virginia. However, steps should be instituted into the program to rectify a situation where a student may have experienced medical issues during a given semester. Losing the scholarship due to unavoidable medical issues increases the level of stress and seems unfair to the student. |
| 565. | High school requirements should be higher. |
| 566. | Give the same monetary award to people going out of state, as long as they will come back to WV for a certain number of years. If they don't fulfill their commitment, make them pay back the money. |
| 567. | PROMISE had a huge effect on my college attendance. Without its funds, I'm not sure it would've been financially possible for me to attend college—at least not right away. I'm grateful for the assistance it offered. Thank you! |
| 568. | I feel the PROMISE program is a beneficial program for students in West Virginia. However, steps should be instituted into the program to rectify a situation where a student may have experienced medical issues during a given semester. Losing the scholarship due to unavoidable medical issues increases the level of stress and seems unfair to the student. |
| 569. | I am truly thankful for the opportunity to participate and acquire the Promise scholarship. |
| 570. | none |
| 571. | The Promise program is groundbreaking in that it enables so many kids to attend college who normally would not have been able to if not for the scholarship. |
| 572. | I would just like to say thanks to all those who made it possible for the Promise Scholarship to exist. I think that it offers great opportunities to students from West Virginia to continue with their academics and stay in West Virginia. It was a great help to me so thank you! |
| 573. | The Promise Scholarship program is the best thing to come out of West Virginia in a long time. The fact that my tuition would be paid in full was the reason I did not permanently leave the state after I graduated from high school. I will be leaving West Virginia to attend optometry school, but now I am considering coming back to practice. This program made me feel rewarded for my hard work in high school and during college and as though the state of West Virginia cares enough to want its most intelligent and hard-working citizens here. This financial award has helped me and my family with the cost of my college education and I encourage the legislature to keep the scholarship merit-based and not change it to need-based. There are many other sources out there for need-based financial aid, but the ones that recognize those students who "work hard and play by the rules" but yet are not underprivileged or living in poverty, are few and far between. |
| 574. | PROMISE didn't pay my entire tuition was it because I went to a private college? I don't think that's all that fair. Because it was if I punishment for being accepted to a private college. |
| 575. | I really appreciate West Virginia's dedication to our education, which deepens my connection and sense of responsibility to the state. |
| 576. | I think that the Promise Scholarship has been a wonderful advancement for West Virginia. I think that it helps many students pursue their dreams of a good education, that they may not have been able to afford. My sister and I both attended college and are only 1 year apart. The promise scholarship helped to lift some of our financial burden. |
| 577. | I am grateful to have been in the first class of PROMISE recipients. However, I do not believe the new guidelines are fair, nor do they take into account the massive impact a larger class of college graduates will have on the economy of this state. Officials either underestimated the power such an opportunity would have, or they didn't have confidence enough in us to fulfill our promise. There are a lot of current college students and now recent graduates who would
not be where they are had it not been for this scholarship. Every time I see the guidelines being changed to make it more difficult to receive the award, I think of all of those deserving people who will either not go to college, be stuck with loan payments after graduating, or suffer academically because they will need to spend their time working just to make tuition. We are the leaders of tomorrow. If we continue to be treated like another part of some equation that diminishes the government’s bottom line this year instead of a part that multiplies it next year, our tomorrow will come much sooner and the less than insightful leaders of today will no longer hold their cherished positions. Stop and think for a moment about the impact of one point on a silly standardized test. How many people are you that their 4.0 GPA, sleepless nights cramming for tests, and countless hours of community service didn’t matter? Can you look them in the face and tell them that saving the great state of West Virginia less than $24000 matters more than their potentially bright future and the countless thousands of additional dollars they could, but never will pour into the economy? Instead you may be giving them more than $24000 anyway in the form of clothing vouchers and foodstamps because that makes much more sense. There is a reason the sons and daughters of the poor tend to stay poor. Please take a step back and realize that you have to power to end this cycle that those before you have created.

It really was an important factor in making me go to an in state college....yet it was a really nice thing to have

If it were not for the PROMISE scholarship, I would not have been able to attend a university. I would have been limited to a small local college with limited degree programs and courses. I think that the PROMISE program is a great program and gives alot of other young West Virginians the same opportunity it gave me.

I would like to say that I have benefited alot from the Promise Scholarship in the past 4 years, I just wish that if it took you longer than 4 years to finish your undergraduate degree, the Promise Scholarship would pay for the fifth year.

this is a fantastic program and assised me in graduating without any student loans.

Too much pressure to keep up your grades and hours

I would try increasing the high school requirements and some of the college GPA requirements.

I think the Promise program is a great help to students from West Virginia. It helped me immensely and I greatly appreciate the work that goes into keeping it running.

I would have liked for the Promise Scholarship to pay the tuition and fees each semester. I was only attending WVU-Parkersburg, so my tuition was significantly less than other universities across the state. I feel that I should have had my fees paid to make up the difference in cost of tuition. By my senior year I was paying over $500 in fees alone.

the promise scholarship was a great help for myself andmy family. it allowed me to leave undergraduate school debt free. i will attend medical school in wv and probably practice medicine in wv as i feel it is a great place to live and raise a family.

promise scholarship did not pay my full tuition i attended a private institution, also even though promise scholarship stated that previous hours before entering college would not count for semester totals, they are still calculated into cumulative gpas at institution, not knowing this made me loose my promise scholarship bc it wasnst explained to me by the promise scholarship or finiacial advisors at my institution

THANK YOU!

The promise scholarship was great....I wish I would have done better in school to keep the scholarship!

I would like to thank the state and Bob Wise for paying for my education. I think it is a great idea and hope it stays the same.
I am very thankful that I received the PROMISE scholarship. The award helped make obtaining a college degree affordable.

I think there should be slight exceptions to losing your promise. The second week of my first semester, I lost my best friend Josh Hodges, which I considered a brother, due to a tragic auto accident. This disturbed me, as it would anybody, very very greatly. I had to take a couple of days off because I was a pall bearer in the funeral, and I just needed some time to mourn with the family. This plummeted my grades to a 1.4 or so, and was quite difficult to raise back up that semester. The only thing I had left to do is just grit my teeth, pray, and try to pull it up to a 3.0 by the end of the first year. Needless to say, I struggled hard and I pulled my grades up to a 2.9, lacking the 3.0 I needed by just a small fraction. All six semesters after that tragic first year, I made dean's list ALL six times, and graduated with honors. This is not a sob story by any means, however, I really think that it is a 'crock' that situations like this couldn't have been considered an exception to the rules of the promise scholarship. I never once attended a party, I commuted everyday, and on top of it all, I was a great student that never missed class with the exceptions of my tragic loss. If there are any thoughts or anybody that needs more information or proof of this story, of it being true and not an excuse to get financial help, please feel free to email me at GADZOOX632@aol.com, or call me at 304-610-3337, and I will be more than happy to send you my transcript and obituary of my lost brother. Thank you and God Bless!

It's a very good program and helps the hardworking students who may not have enough money to attend college without the scholarship.

overall.........it was very helpful, esp. when i got wv higher ed. grant also.

but the one time i had to deal with your office it was unpleasant----not the office people but mrs. cole! she was very rude and needs to go to pr school!

The Promise scholarship was very beneficial to me during my 4 years of college. However, I felt like the requirements to receive the scholarship in the first place should have been higher.

I greatly appreciate the opportunity the Promise Scholarship gave me. Although I would have attended college with out the scholarship, it has significantly cut back on my student loans.

thank you thank you thank you

Good program.

I would like to say that I think the PROMISE scholarship is an excellent program offered to WV residents. While I would have found a way to fund my college career had I not received the PROMISE Scholarship, I think it definitely aided me and my fellow PROMISE recipients in a way that is greatly appreciated. I know a few friends whom would not have been able to attend a higher education institution w/o the PROMISE scholarship. I know they are extremely grateful. Thank you

The PROMISE scholarship saved me and my family a lot of money, and got me through school. I am very appreciative.

I really think that the PROMISE program has been beneficial to many high school students in West Virginia who want to pursue higher education. Without this program, many students would not have had the money to attend any university. The PROMISE program gives many high school seniors a sense of accomplishment and shows them that through their hard work they can still obtain a college degree even if they do not have a lot of money.

I am very thankful for being given this scholarship. I believe it can give high school students motivation to do well in high school.

It was a very nice program, and saved me money.

This program is wonderful. It's helped me - and has also been a tremendous help to many of my friends.
I realize the first year of college can be the most challenging. On top of being away from home for the first time and dealing with that along with college life in general, and I also was playing in a varsity sport, I couldn't keep my GPA up the first year and lost my PROMISE scholarship. Had the GPA requirements been more relaxed in the first year, I could have done it but I was dealing with too much that first year. Also my High School education did not prepare me for college, so I really struggled the first couple years.

Thank you!

Great help financially. I earned a 4-year degree, and including my other scholarships and grants, I do not owe a penny!

Students should be given the requirements to receive the PROMISE when they are freshmen in high school. I didn't find out about the requirements until half way through my senior year.

I think the PROMISE has been a great thing for West Virginia students. For many it is the very reason that students can attend college if they work just as hard as everyone else regardless of financial standing. I am proud that I was part of the first graduating class to receive the award and to have maintained it for 4 whole years.

The PROMISE scholarship is giving a lot of students the chance to go to college that might have not otherwise went. I think the academic requirements is a good thing because it gets the students to work hard and study. That way they have to work and earn the scholarship instead of it just being handed to them.

I am very grateful for the Promise scholarship. This program kept me on track with the required credit hours pushing me to graduate in four years. I am now a college graduate with no debt and it is a very good feeling.

My sister tried for the scholarship however, the entrance grades were raised and she could not make it. Wish the grade (sat) scores had remained the same as I had.

I had a very difficult time my first year of college and lost my scholarship. I think there should be special consideration for students who have a difficult time their first year and rebound the second year of college. I felt like a failure to my family and myself because of problems that I had. I wish I had been able to get back at least a partial scholarship after proving myself.

I believe that there should be a bit more flexibility in determining which students receive the PROMISE scholarship. For some individuals there are situations that cause them to be extremely close to receiving it, but circumstances cause them to be slightly short (ex. a couple thousandths of a point short in their G.P.A.). In addition, there are some students who are unable to meet certain eligibility requirements due to their ability level, yet they have managed to excel in some areas and plan on going to college. I believe it is those students who have to work hard to earn the grades they get (rather than only those students who God has blessed with a high level of intelligence) who deserve the scholarship the most. I believe there should be some type of appeals and exceptions committee or some way teachers can recommend students who deserve the scholarship and have the work ethic (as a matter of fact some with more work ethic than certain students who learn without a problem because they are extremely smart) that will help them be successful in college despite what the ACT or SAT scores say. As seen recently with the SAT scoring problems, those tests are not the most reliable, and in my opinion not the best/only way to determine if a student will do well in college. There needs to be more opportunity for students who work hard and want to go to college but cannot reach the standards currently set for the PROMISE scholarship because those students are the ones who deserve it the most.

Thanks to the Promise Scholarship, I received a BS in Speech Pathology and Audiology at WVU with a GPA of 3.95 and was able to reside in Morgantown rather than commute from a neighboring city. I have been accepted into the Master's Program in Speech Pathology at WVU.

The PROMISE scholarship was extremely beneficial for my college years. Since I was a
recipient of the scholarship there was a huge amount of stress lifted from my shoulders. Because of this scholarship I was privleged enough to not have to work throughout my first year of college and was able to work minimal hours when employment was necessary. I am extremely proud to be part of the first college graduates who were fortunate enough to receive the WV PROMISE scholarship!

I believe in many cases this allows many people to go to college that may haven't been able to before. To me it really meant the world because my father lost his pension during my undergraduate studies and this scholarship allowed that situation to not burden my parents during a difficult financial time. I now have no debt and am able to afford to go on to graduate school.

I would like to thank the people that developed and established this type of scholarship for West Virginia students. I am free of such a heavy financial burden that other students were not able to avoid. I know that I would of went to college regardless of the scholarship, but it did help a great deal. I have talked to many that will not attend school because they fear the debt they will bring on themselves from the high costs of tuition.

The Promise Scholarship made a huge impact on me. It allowed me to choose the school I really wanted to go to without the burden of a huge expense. I truly appreciate everyone involved in this program. Thank you.

Only that I am disappointed that I did not meet the requirements after my first year of college, which has put a hardship on my parents and myself. It really is an exceptional program and should be not be taken lightly.

I was very thankful to receive the promise scholarship. It really has helped with my finances. I am really grateful there was something available to a middle-class person. There doesn't seem to be much help for the ones who fall into the middle-scale income. I would have graduated within 4 years had I not transferred and had to retake classes. Plus the school that I transferred to had additional requirements in education. I, also, played softball and that was rather tough keeping up with everything.

the promise was a wonderful thing for me to recieve. i had full plans to leave the state after high school no matter what. however because of the promise scholarship alone i decided to stay in the state. now that i have graduated college i plan to pursue a medical degree in west virginia. i believe that all my decisions to stay in state and contribute to the states economy by staying in here is due to the promise scholarship. it is a wonderful incentive to stay in state and i believe will eventually pay off in a huge way for the states economy. i know plenty of other people who are already on thier way to be successful professionals and have stayed in state soley because of the promise. the program will definately increase the well being of this states economy be keeping so many future professionals in the state.

I think it is a good program. I would make a few minor changes. It benefits a lot of students to be able to go to college, and so something great with their lives.

I think it is a useful program, but I think it should be a bit more selective. I think the people with econmic difficulties should be the ones who receive it as they would benefit the most from it. I enjoyed having this program, but I could have found a way to pay for my education on my own. Not all people have this other option.

I am very grateful to everyone who made the Promise Scholarship available to me. My dream was to be the first in my family with a 4 year college degree. I accomplished that. I wanted to make something of myself and the Promise Scholarship gave me that opportunity. I would not have been able to attend a 4 year college, and I would not be a teacher now, if it weren’t for the scholarship. I did not have the money to go to college and would have only been able to afford a community college. Thanks to the Promise program I was given a bigger opportunity and will be forever grateful that I had the chance to become someone who can give back to their country. I only hope that someday my husband and I can find teaching jobs back home in WV so we can give back to our home state.
Thank you for allowing high school graduates to receive the Promise. However, I’m concerned about job prospects in WV. I graduated in December 2005 with a Bachelor's degree in Public Relations and have yet to find a job. Where are the jobs for college grads? Sometimes I think I’d have an easier time finding a job in fast food than I’m having finding a career. Also, I’ve been rejected by jobs because I’ve been told that I’m "overqualified." Perhaps West Virginia government should aim to increase the job market by bringing larger corporations to the area.

For private colleges the PROMISE does not help much with the cost. I know that it cannot pay for all of it, but more aid would be very beneficial.

As I wasn't eligible for any other financial aid, the Promise was a huge help. College is expensive. I've lived away from home for four and a half years and my family has spent approximately $47,000 to keep me in Morgantown and cover the rest of my expenses over this period of time. The criticism of the scholarship helping people who don't need it is untrue. Almost everyone needs financial help with college. The requirements kept me on my toes. I would have felt bad to lose it.

The Promise made my education a lot easier on my parents. I was accepted into WVU Medical School this fall and will have to borrow to finish graduate school. At least I did not have to borrow for undergraduate, and I am greatful to Promise for that.

It was an amazing opportunity to allow me to stay in WV. Without the award, I may not have been able to attend the private college in WV that I did.

The promise scholarship allowed me to attend college with minimal loans. I am very thankful for receiving it. I do think that the renewal requirements pertaining to required hours should be adjusted or money should be given to cover costs of summer courses. It is not always possible to enroll in 15 credit hours per semester at school.

The grade requirements were unfair. I attended a private school which required a higher grade to achieve an A. The public schools were much more liberal. I detest the "bait and switch" game on the Promise program. WV should stick with the original guidelines, not change them in mid-stream because they underestimated the amount of students that would participate. This sends a terrible message to the students. The program now rewards the brightest students and originally it was intended for the "B" students and above. The "A" students have access to many more scholarships than the "B" students.

I would like to thank all of those involved in making the program become a reality. The Promise made it so much easier for me to attend college. I ended up graduating from Concord University with NO student loans thanks to the Promise. The Promise Scholarship also made the financial load on my mom and dad so much less than it would have been if the Promise wasn't available. Thank you so much for helping make the college experience easier for me.

I think the promise program was an innovative idea and has proven to be a wonderful program. I was the valedictorian of my high school and had many options to attend college out of state. Promise made me decide to attend college in state, and in doing so, made me more attached to West Virginia. In addition, I was so impressed with my state for giving me this great opportunity that it instilled in me a sense of civic duty to do good things for the state and to be more active in the government. This program should not be eliminated, restricted, or cut back in any way! All hardworking WV students deserve the same opportunity I was given!

Thank you

Question #9 asked "To what extent, if any, did the PROMISE award affect your decision to stay in West Virginia to attend college?"
I'm not sure if the regulations have changed since I received the Promise in Fall 2002, but I had no choice. Either go to a WV college, or don't get the Promise.

My biggest problem was not getting any more money from the Promise. I had to decide either 2 years or 4 years when I was accepted. I chose a 2 year program and due to scheduling
conflicts, I had to attend for an extra semester; I had to foot the bill for tuition, books and room out of my own pocket. It wasn't my fault they didn't offer certain classes at certain times; so I think that really wasn't fair!

Very good opportunity for high school kids to get a good start at college.; Very good opportunity for high school kids to get a good start at college.; Very good opportunity for high school kids.

The promise scholarship was a wonderful and valuable program for the many residents throughout west virginia.

Great Program

greatly appreciative of the award

It seems unfair to me that the Promise program would not pay my full tuition because I attended a private college...the program I decided on was not offered at any of the public colleges or universities.
Appendix H

Interstate Migration of Adults With the Bachelor’s Degree

Source: WV Higher Education Policy Commission: [http://www.hepc.wvnet.edu/resources/WV_Slides_Feb9_04.ppt](http://www.hepc.wvnet.edu/resources/WV_Slides_Feb9_04.ppt)

Interstate Migration of Adults with a Bachelor’s Degree or Higher:
Change in the Stock of Adults with a Bachelor’s Degree or Higher Minus the
Number of Bachelor’s Degrees Awarded (1990 to 2000) – 25 to 64 Year Olds

From 1990 to 2000, West Virginia Produced 84,106 Bachelor’s Degrees –
While the Number of Adults 25-64 with a Bachelor’s Degree or Higher Rose by
Only 33,577
Family income figures not available in the Bureau’s 2005 American Communities Survey.
Appendix J
WV Net Migration by Occupation

WV Net Migration by Occupation
All 22-29 Year Olds

Source: US Census Bureau, 2000 Census; 5% Public Use Microdata Sample (PUMS) Files.

Source: WV Higher Education Policy Commission:
http://www.hepc.wvnet.edu/resources/WV_Slides_Feb9_04.ppt