

**GOLDEN APPLE SCHOLARS OF ILLINOIS PROGRAM**

**AGREED-UPON PROCEDURES**

For the Year Ended June 30, 2020

Performed as Special Assistant Accountants for the  
Auditor General, State of Illinois

GOLDEN APPLE SCHOLARS OF ILLINOIS PROGRAM

AGREED-UPON PROCEDURES  
Year Ending June 30, 2020

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## GOLDEN APPLE SCHOLARS OF ILLINOIS PROGRAM

### AGREED-UPON PROCEDURES

Year Ending June 30, 2020

#### **Summary**

The Illinois Student Assistance Commission administers the Golden Apple Scholars of Illinois Program which is managed by the Golden Apple Foundation for Excellence in Teaching (Foundation). The agreed-upon procedures report and accompanying schedule of revenues and expenditures is included herein related to this program.

#### **Summary of Findings**

The accountants identified exceptions related to the Golden Apple Scholars of Illinois Program. The exceptions are described within the agreed-upon procedures report. The exceptions apply only to the Golden Apple Scholars of Illinois Program and are directed to Foundation management.



## INDEPENDENT ACCOUNTANT'S REPORT ON APPLYING AGREED-UPON PROCEDURES

Honorable Frank J. Mautino  
Auditor General  
State of Illinois, and

Ms. Niketa Brar, Audit Committee Chair and  
Mr. Eric Zarnikow, Executive Director  
Illinois Student Assistance Commission, and

Ms. Nancy Golder Northrip, Chair of the Board of Directors and  
Ms. Alicia Winckler, Chief Executive Officer  
Golden Apple Foundation

As Special Assistant Accountants for the Auditor General, we have performed the procedures enumerated below, which were agreed to by the management of the Illinois Student Assistance Commission (Commission), management of the Golden Apple Scholars of Illinois Program (Program), and the Office of the Auditor General, on the Program's compliance with the Higher Education Student Assistance Act (110 ILCS 947/52) during the year ended June 30, 2020. The Commission and the Program's management are responsible for its compliance with those requirements. The sufficiency of these procedures is solely the responsibility of the parties specified in this report. Consequently, we make no representation regarding the sufficiency of the procedures enumerated below either for the purpose for which this report has been requested or for any other purpose.

The procedures we performed, and our findings are as follows:

1. We confirmed that the Foundation is registered with the Illinois Office of the Attorney General.
2. We obtained evidence that the Commission and the Foundation Boards met during the period July 1, 2019 through June 30, 2020 (FY2020). We observed that signed minutes were prepared for the following Foundation Board meetings: October 21, 2019, November 19, 2019, and March 23, 2020. We observed that signed minutes were prepared for the following Foundation Executive Board meetings: July 15, 2019, August 18, 2019, September 16, 2019, December 16, 2019, January 28<sup>th</sup>, 2020, and April 20<sup>th</sup>, 2020. We observed that signed minutes were prepared for the following Commission Board meetings: September 12, 2019, December 5, 2019, April 28, 2020, and June 18, 2020. We read the aforementioned meeting minutes.
3. We obtained a listing of participants in the program as of June 30, 2020, provided to us by the Foundation from the Foundation's "FileMaker" database, which is maintained by the Foundation's Director of Research, Analytics, and Accountability, and we extracted and summarized the following data:
  - a. 715 participants received scholarship funding during Fiscal Year 2020.
  - b. 717 participants were in school as of June 30, 2020.
  - c. 599 participants have completed school and are currently fulfilling their teaching requirement as of June 30, 2020.

- d. 20 participants have not fulfilled their teaching requirement and are repaying their scholarship as of June 30, 2020.
  - e. \$145,982 was collected by the Foundation during Fiscal Year 2020 on repayments of scholarships.
4. We obtained and read *23 Illinois Administrative Code Part 2764 Golden Apple Scholars of Illinois Program (Code)* outlining applicant eligibility and statutory limits on scholarship awards. We obtained the total amount of scholarships paid directly by the Commission (see Schedule A “Scholarship-ISAC”), and we obtained a detailed listing of students awarded these scholarships. This information was provided by the Commission’s Director of the Department of Program and Product Services in the Program Services and Compliance Division. From this listing we haphazardly selected 25 students who received a scholarship award. For each student selected, we obtained the student’s file from the Foundation and performed the following:
- a. Inspected the student’s application and other documents pertaining to eligibility and observed the applicant’s eligibility was supported by copies of the following, which were maintained in the file: social security card and personal information (state identification, driver’s license, or passport). No exceptions were noted.
  - b. Inspected the student’s “Program Agreement and Promissory Note” and observed the “Program Agreement and Promissory Note” was complete and signed. No exceptions were noted.
  - c. Compared the total amount of the scholarship awarded to the student to the maximum allowable scholarship as outlined in the Code. No exceptions were noted.
  - d. Compared all semester/quarter hours for scholarships awarded to the student and determined the semester/quarter hours awarded did not exceed 8 semesters or 12 quarters of scholarship assistance. No exceptions were noted.
  - e. Confirmed that the Foundation documented that the individual met the citizenship requirement. We noted the files at the Foundation did not include documentation of citizenship for 2 of the 25 students who received a scholarship award. Past policy noted that citizenship was documented by the student with their respective FAFSA form at the college/university. The Foundation updated its policies in Fiscal Year 2018 so that new scholar applicants now must include citizenship documentation with their application.
5. We obtained a listing of participants in the Program as of June 30, 2020, provided to us by the Foundation from the Foundation’s “FileMaker” database, which is maintained by the Foundation’s Director of Research, Analytics, and Accountability. This listing contains all students receiving scholarship assistance and indicates the county in which the student resides. The Code requires that at least 30% of students receiving scholarship assistance reside in counties having a population of fewer than 500,000. We recalculated the percentage of students receiving scholarship assistance who reside in such counties. We calculated that 36% of students reside in such counties.
6. The Director of Research, Analytics, and Accountability of the Foundation provided policies and procedures for monitoring the continuing eligibility of prior scholarship recipients towards the fulfillment of their teaching obligation, which we read. We obtained a listing of all scholarship recipients who have graduated from college, which includes recipients who have fulfilled their teaching requirement and recipients who have not fulfilled their teaching requirement. This listing came from the Foundation’s “FileMaker” database. From this listing:
- a. We haphazardly selected 25 recipients who have fulfilled their teaching obligation. For the selected recipients we inspected:
    - i. Signed mentoring site visit notes, which indicated that the recipient began teaching within the requisite years by policy following completion of the postsecondary education degree or certificate program for which the scholarship was awarded. No exceptions were noted.
    - ii. Signed mentoring site visit notes (verification of employment form) which supported the scholarship recipients’ fulfillment of their five-year teaching obligation. No exceptions were noted.



funded scholarships totaling \$2,511,080. When considering the expenditures less the ISAC-funded scholarships, actual expenditures of \$4,771,226 exceeded the budget by \$466.

This agreed-upon procedures engagement was conducted in accordance with attestation standards established by the American Institute of Certified Public Accountants. We were not engaged to and did not conduct an examination or review, the objective of which would be the expression of an opinion or conclusion, respectively, on compliance with the Higher Education Student Assistance Act (110 ILCS 947/52) during the year ended June 30, 2020. Accordingly, we do not express such an opinion or conclusion. Had we performed additional procedures, other matters might have come to our attention that would have been reported to you.

This report is intended solely for the information and use of the Commission, management of the Program, and the Office of the Auditor General and is not intended to be, and should not be, used by anyone other than the specified parties.

SIGNED ORIGINAL ON FILE

Crowe LLP

Oak Brook, Illinois  
February 22, 2021

**Schedule A  
Golden Apple Scholars of Illinois Program  
Schedule of Revenue and Expenditures  
for the Year Ending June 30, 2020**

**REVENUES**

<b>Appropriation from the State</b>	\$	7,281,880
<b>Private Funding</b>		566,425
<b>Other Contract Revenue</b>		<u>465,500</u>
<b>Total Program Revenues</b>	\$	<u>8,313,805</u>

**EXPENDITURES**

<b>Personnel Services (Salaries and Benefits)</b>		
Program Staff Salaries and Benefits	\$	954,704
<b>Total Personnel Services (Salaries and Benefits)</b>	\$	954,704
 <b>Summer Institute</b>		
Instructors	52,590	
Reflective Leaders	128,027	
Leads	69,072	
Supplies	9,421	
Room & Board	518,851	
Summer Institute Transportation	59,514	
Background Checks	11,086	
Contracted Services	95,732	
SI Stipends	1,363,000	
<b>Total Summer Institute</b>		2,307,293
 <b>Scholar Induction</b>		
Inductions	2,495	
Technology	2,790	
<b>Total Induction</b>		5,285
 <b>Academic and Social Emotional Support</b>		
Campus Visits and Lodging	1,196	
Meeting	1,125	
Supplies	1,845	
<b>Total Academic and Social Emotional Support</b>		4,166

**Schedule A**  
**Golden Apple Scholars of Illinois Program**  
**Schedule of Revenue and Expenditures**  
**for the Year Ending June 30, 2020**

<b>Recruitment and Selection Expenses</b>		
Technology	9,342	
Recruitment and Placement Activities and Travel	7,470	
Recruitment Resources	9,663	
<b>Total Recruitment and Selection Expenses</b>		26,475
<b>Curriculum, research &amp; Analytics</b>		
Contracted Services	230,420	
General Expenses	380	
Technology	13,266	
<b>Total Curriculum, Research &amp; Analytics</b>		244,066
<b>Accelerator</b>		
Stipend	400,000	
Recruitment Communications	120,426	
Legal	5,902	
Travel	4,128	
Training	68	
Online Platform Development	1,800	
<b>Total Accelerator</b>		532,324
<b>Crystal Ball</b>		
Communication	18,096	
Contracted Services	6,300	
<b>Total Crystal Ball</b>		24,396
<b>Alumni Relations</b>		
Placement Activities		
Alumni Events	2,116	
Technology	102	
<b>Total Alumni Relations</b>	41	
		2,259
<b>Mentoring and Advising</b>		
Technology	16,915	
Travel	61,988	
Scholars Meeting Expenses	3,509	
GATS: Contracted - Mentors	328,901	
GATS: Coneference & Membership	10,232	
Supplies	768	
<b>Total Mentoring and Advising</b>		422,313
<b>Indirect Cost</b>		
Indirect Cost	247,985	
<b>Total Indirect Cost</b>		247,985
<b>Scholarships Paid</b>		
Scholarship-ISAC	2,511,080	
<b>Total Scholarships Paid</b>		2,511,080
<b>Total Expenditures</b>		<u>7,282,346</u>
<b>Revenues in Excess of Expenditures</b>		<u>\$ 1,031,459</u>