



The Office Of State Treasurer  
Denise L. Nappier

# News

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## TREASURER NAPPIER ANNOUNCES 2014 CHET *ADVANCE* SCHOLARSHIP WINNERS *6<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup> Grade Students Gather At Uplifting Awards Ceremony*



HARTFORD, CT – More than 300 people joined State Treasurer Denise L. Nappier recently at an inspirational ceremony at the Legislative Office Building to celebrate 100 sixth-grade students and 100 high school juniors who were selected as recipients of a CHET 2014 *Advance* Scholarship. The awards ceremony was held on June 19.

Excitement was evident in the Atrium of the Legislative Office Building. Families spoke of their appreciation for the awards – an initial \$2,000 to 100 sixth-grade students and \$2,500 to 100 high

school juniors. The sixth graders have the opportunity to receive an additional \$500 if the student's family saves \$500 in a CHET account by the time the student goes to college.

Some families arrived early to have time to tour the State Capitol. Others met with their legislators, who brought citations for the winners. Still others enjoyed jazz music that played in the background and was performed by students from the Hartt School at the University of Hartford and the Berklee College of Music. It was a festive and proud occasion for many families, who said they were surprised, and excited, when their students were notified that they had won.

During the program portion of the ceremony, one of the scholarship recipients, Iliana Lopez of Manchester, told the audience, "Being a student at the Public Safety Academy has given me the knowledge needed to decide my path in college. My plan after high school is to enroll into the University of Connecticut or the University of New Haven, gain a degree in pre-medicine, and pursue my career as an Anesthesiologist. This scholarship will help me to further my education as well as accomplish my goals."

"The CHET *Advance* Scholarships will help 200 students and their families meet the costs of college, and I am so excited to see them one step closer to realizing their academic potential," said Treasurer Nappier, Trustee of the Connecticut Higher Education Trust (CHET).

"Know this: As long as you believe that 'the sky is the limit,' it will be. So, if past is prologue, if entering the CHET *Advance* Scholarship contest and wining has inspired or encouraged you to step up your commitment to pursuing a bright future, you have the right attitude. Now you must sustain it, nurture it and stay focused on preparing to move ahead," Treasurer Nappier told the students.

Also speaking at the ceremony was Francisco Chavarria, Assistant Principal of Wilbur Cross High School in New Haven, who said "Scholarships like the one you are about to receive are so important to our educational system, especially for students in urban settings. In many cases, they can be the difference between going to college or not." Wilbur Cross had seven Scholarship recipients.

Chris Melnyk of Farmington, who attends Saint Paul Catholic High School in Bristol, also spoke. He told the audience. "Preparing for college is intense. What school will I pick? What school will pick me? Are my grades good enough? Do I have enough activities? What should my major be? Overwhelming. Currently, I am looking at colleges that offer Cybersecurity as a major. And when you add financial planning to the mix, it's way too much. The CHET scholarship award is important because it will help me to go to college. Another important benefit is that CHET shows me that there is financial help out there."

Winners were randomly selected from a pool of 3,784 applicants that hail from 101 public schools, 13 parochial schools, and one independent school in Connecticut. All five congressional districts are represented among the winners.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> See Attachment A for a full list of the names of the 2014 CHET *Advance* Scholarship recipients.

For both the 11<sup>th</sup> graders and 6<sup>th</sup> graders, the 2014 CHET *Advance* Scholarship provided 50 awards in each of two categories of schools:

Category 1: All students who attend a public, private, or parochial Connecticut school other than a school identified by the Connecticut Department of Education as a Review or Turnaround school as of December 2013; or attend a public, private or parochial school outside of Connecticut and either the student or one of the student's parents resides in Connecticut; or are home-schooled in Connecticut.

Category 2: All students who attend a Review or Turnaround school. By state law, Review and Turnaround schools are schools subject to intensified supervision and direction by the state Department of Education. These schools receive focused resources to improve the performance of students.

Winning recipients in each category were selected by a random drawing. Also, to ensure there are winners from across the state, no more than 20 winners from each of Connecticut's five Congressional Districts were selected (10 from each category).

A total of 3,784 students applied for the 2014 CHET *Advance* Scholarship, up slightly from the 2013 total of 3,635 applicants. The winners come from 68 towns in all eight counties. Of the winners, 119 are young women; 81 are young men.

CHET *Advance* Scholarship is administered under the banner of the Connecticut Higher Education Trust, Connecticut's 529 college savings plan. As Trustee of CHET, Treasurer Nappier negotiated for the establishment of the scholarship program. TIAA-CREF Tuition Financing, Inc. and The Hartford, plan managers for CHET Direct-Sold and CHET Advisor-Sold, respectively, contribute annually into a Scholarship account to finance the Scholarship program, under their contracts with the Treasurer's Office to manage CHET 529. No state funds will be used for awards issued under CHET *Advance* Scholarship.

To ensure the impartiality of the random drawings, International Scholarship and Tuition Services, which has more than 25 years of scholarship administration experience, set up and ran the selection process with oversight from TIAA-CREF.

### **About CHET**

The Connecticut Higher Education Trust (CHET) was established in 1997. Today the number of CHET 529 college savings accounts stands at more than 100,000 and total assets are more than \$ 2.2 billion. Nearly \$831 million in qualified withdrawals have been taken to cover college costs for 26,000 students. For more information about CHET, visit [www.aboutchet.com](http://www.aboutchet.com) or call the customer service center at (866) 314-3939.

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