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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: California Reaches 1 Million Claimed CalKIDS Scholarship Accounts

Milestone reflects the state's investment in early asset-building, educational opportunity and long-term economic mobility

SACRAMENTO, CA — California has reached a major milestone in expanding educational and economic opportunity for children, with 1 million CalKIDS Scholarship Accounts now claimed by students and families across the state.

This achievement reflects California's bold, long-term commitment to ensuring more children begin with an early financial foundation for college, career training and beyond. For 1 million students and families, higher education is now connected to a tangible financial resource, helping turn educational aspirations into a clearer path toward long-term economic mobility.

Since launching statewide in 2022, CalKIDS has awarded scholarships to more than 5.6 million California children through a $2.4 billion public investment. Administered by the ScholarShare Investment Board, it is the nation's largest child development account program.

"California is leading the nation by investing in children's futures, and reaching 1 million claimed CalKIDS Scholarships is an extraordinary milestone," said California State Treasurer Fiona Ma, CPA, Chair of the ScholarShare Investment Board. "Every scholarship claimed represents a student and family taking an important step toward college or career training. While we celebrate this achievement, our work continues until every eligible student has claimed the scholarship available to them."

"It is our duty to provide kids across the state with a strong foundation to finance their futures. One million CalKIDS Accounts is not just a milestone, but a sign of systemic progress toward lessening the financial burden of higher education, and other forms of career training," said Governor Gavin Newsom.

This milestone was made possible through the collaboration of trusted partners across California. The California Student Aid Commission, California Community Colleges Chancellor's Office, California Association of School Counselors, Riverside County Office of Education and Sacramento City Unified School District have helped connect students and families with CalKIDS through financial aid, counseling and school-based outreach, while First 5 California, the California WIC Association, Covered California, Excite Credit Union, Golden 1 Credit Union, Bright Futures and other community partners have introduced CalKIDS through early childhood, community and financial education initiatives.

“Reaching 1 million claimed scholarships reflects the power of trusted partners helping families take action for their children’s futures,” said Cassandra DiBenedetto, executive director of the ScholarShare Investment Board. “Our work now is to reach the next million by bringing CalKIDS into more schools and communities across California, because there are still millions more reasons to keep claiming.”

For Abreeyonia Thomas, a CalKIDS Scholarship recipient and student at Grand Canyon University, claiming her scholarship came at exactly the right time as she prepared for college.

“It genuinely helped me so much,” Thomas said. “I was enrolled at my college, but I was unaware that they needed a holding fee. I had no income coming out of high school, and then I remembered they mentioned CalKIDS. I made an account and found out more about it. It saved my spot in college.”

Eligible public school students may receive CalKIDS Scholarships worth up to $1,500, while every child born in California on or after July 1, 2022, is automatically awarded a scholarship of up to $175. Scholarship funds can be used at eligible colleges, universities, community colleges, career technical education programs, vocational schools and other qualified institutions.

To see if a student is eligible and claim a CalKIDS Scholarship Account, visit CalKIDS.org.

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