

## **COLLEGE TUITION SAVINGS**

With the cost of a college degree increasing, other options for earning college credit and saving on college costs are becoming more and more popular. These alternate methods include the following.

**Advanced Placement Courses:** These are challenging college level courses that are offered in High schools. A student receives credit for High school graduation and possibly college credit at the same time. Upon completion of the course, a student takes a comprehensive exam. The cost of the exam is approximately \$91. The exams are scored from a 1 to a 5, 5 being the highest level. Colleges usually award college credit for scores of 3 and above. Each college has its own policy for acceptance of AP credits.

**Dual Enrollment Courses:** These courses are offered in high school through a partnership with a local college. Students are required to register and pay a reduced fee for college credits earned. These credits are transferrable to another college of the student's choice depending on the transfer policies of the college.

**Earning credit by exam:** CLEP is a program administered by the College Board in which students can earn college credit by exam. CLEP exams are exams that a student can prepare for and take to earn credit for lower level college courses. There are approximately 33 exams offered through CLEP. A student must receive a passing score in order to receive credit. The exams cost approximately \$80.00 plus the test exam center fee (approximately \$40). There are a number of resources on the web to help students prepare for these exams. Each college has its own policy for acceptance of CLEP credits. For more information:  
<http://clep.collegeboard.org>.

**Online Courses:** Many colleges now offer online course programs. A student can take a course online while living at home, saving the cost of travel, room and board. Some colleges also offer online courses to high school students at a reduced cost. Check with the college of your choice.

**Community College:** Often the cost of attending a Community College is significantly less than attending a four-year college or university right out of high school. Once a student has completed the basic courses (usually two years), they can then transfer to the college of their choice and transfer the credits earned. Each college has its own policy for the acceptance of transfer credits.

**Summer College:** Students can take courses at a local four-year or community college during the summer to supplement four-year degree completion plans.

**Concurrent College Courses:** Some colleges offer high school juniors and seniors the opportunity to take college courses during the summer or in the evening during the school year and for a reduced cost. These courses are then potentially transferable to the college that the student attends subsequent to high school graduation. Parents and students should check with the college of their choice to investigate transfer credit policies and appropriate course selection.

**College Savings Programs:** Two popular programs are the Coverdell Educational Savings Account and the 529 College Tuition Savings Program. More information regarding the Coverdell Educational Savings can be found at [www.scottrade.com/ESAs](http://www.scottrade.com/ESAs). New York's 529 College Tuition Savings Program is available to parents (and grandparents, uncles, aunts, and friends) and offers tax advantages, flexibility, low costs and convenience while helping a child go to college. More information is available at [www.nysaves.org](http://www.nysaves.org). Speak to your financial advisor about the financial options that are best for you and your family.

**Students with Disabilities:** Adult Career and Continuing Education Services-Vocational Rehabilitation (ACCES-VR) offers access to a full range of employment and independent living services that may be needed by persons with disabilities through their lives. ACCES-VR works with students, families and school districts to coordinate appropriate services for students with disabilities who are leaving secondary education and entering adult vocational rehabilitation and related services. These efforts are crucial to enable students to achieve maximum success in post-school activities consisting of integrated employment (including supported employment), post-secondary education, independent living, and community participation. Web sites: <http://www.acces.nysed.gov> and <http://www.highered.nysed.gov/NYLearns>