



# TORCHBEARER ALERT



## IN-STATE TUITION: AFFORDING EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES TO SOLDIERS AND THEIR FAMILIES

### DID YOU KNOW . . . ?

The number-one new issue derived from the November 2002 Army Family Action Plan Conference was soldier and family member eligibility for in-state tuition. The difference between paying in-state or out-of-state tuition to attend college is a significant factor in whether soldiers can afford higher education for their families.

The mobility of the military community, coupled with state-specific criteria for determining eligibility for in-state status for tuition and tuition assistance, results in the military spouse/family member facing a variety of rules and procedures that may not result in designation as an in-state resident for tuition purposes (i.e., status).

**Education is primarily a state responsibility, and the federal government cannot mandate that states provide in-state tuition rates to soldiers and family members. State legislatures or higher education commissions control policy on resident tuition status/rates.** For example, according to Steve Giegerich (*The Washington Post*, 25 August 2003), students attending four-year public universities and colleges in the 2003–2004 school year in 49 of the 50 states will see tuition increases ranging

from 1.7 percent in Montana to 39 percent in Arizona. (Only Mississippi kept tuition rates at the 2002–2003 school-year level.)



The Army has strongly supported the implementation of favorable state policies that ensure in-state tuition status for soldiers and their families. The Army's desired outcome has been eligibility for in-state tuition rates under each of the following conditions:

- in-state tuition for soldiers and family members within the state of legal residence;
- immediate in-state tuition for soldiers and family members in the state of assignment; and
- continuity of in-state tuition once established.

### CURRENT STATUS

As of September 2003, 43 states have favorable policies for soldiers and family members. The policies of 19 states—Arizona, Connecticut, Florida, Georgia, Idaho, Iowa, Kansas, Kentucky, Louisiana, New Jersey, Nevada, New Mexico, Ohio, Oklahoma, Oregon, Tennessee, Texas, Utah and West Virginia—meet all desired outcomes.



## State Progress Report on the In-state Tuition Initiative

- **Kentucky:** In May 2003, the Commanding General, U.S. Army Recruiting Command sent a letter to the governor expressing appreciation for Kentucky's already favorable tuition policies, which meet all the objectives.



- **Georgia:** In May 2003, the Georgia Board of Regents approved the in-state tuition waiver to grant continuity of in-state tuition eligibility to family members after the military sponsor is reassigned outside the state.
- **Virginia:** In May 2003, the Virginia Military Advisory Council (VMAC) Quality of Life Panel identified this initiative as their number-one priority issue and voted to send it forward to the governor for action. A legislative proposal may result.
- **North Carolina:** In May 2003, in-state tuition policies/rates were discussed during a statewide meeting of services' garrison commanders, education officers and university staff. The Fort Bragg garrison commander will be meeting with the state representative in the near future.
- **Pennsylvania:** In May 2003, the Department of Education committee of the Pennsylvania Advisory Council for Veterans/Military Education (PACVME), met and decided the issue will be raised to the state Higher Education Commission and legislature.

- **Texas:** In June 2003, favorable legislation was approved by the state legislature and signed into law by the governor.
- **New York:** Fort Drum and West Point have contacted local state representatives and presented the initiative to receptive audiences.
- **South Carolina:** The Adjutant General of the Army responded to the state Adjutant General's letter addressing his concerns that the initiative in South Carolina be suspended for now due to the state's fiscal dilemmas.
- **Maryland:** A state representative met with the Fort Detrick installation commander and will propose a bill for the next session to include continuity of the in-state benefit.
- **New Jersey:** With assistance from the state Higher Education Commission, the Fort Monmouth Education Services Officer and the Staff Judge Advocate uncovered a section of law granting continuity of the in-state benefit. New Jersey meets all objectives.



- **Alabama:** The Fort Rucker garrison commander spoke with the state Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC) Committee chairman and brought the issue to his attention. The chairman indicated that he would address the issue with appropriate officials.
- **Colorado:** In July 2003, an installation-wide meeting to address this initiative was conducted by the garrison commander. A plan is being developed to present the issue to the appropriate state leaders.

**However, continuity of the benefit, once started, is not always available and remains a major concern for Army families.**

In January 2003, the Department of Defense (DoD) endorsed the Army’s initiative and sent memoranda to the other services requesting they assist the Army in this effort. In a separate memorandum, DoD appointed the Army as the lead in this endeavor. Army officials, in February 2003, presented the initiative to the Civilian Aides to the Secretary of the Army (CASAs), asking their assistance in presenting the initiative to state leaders.

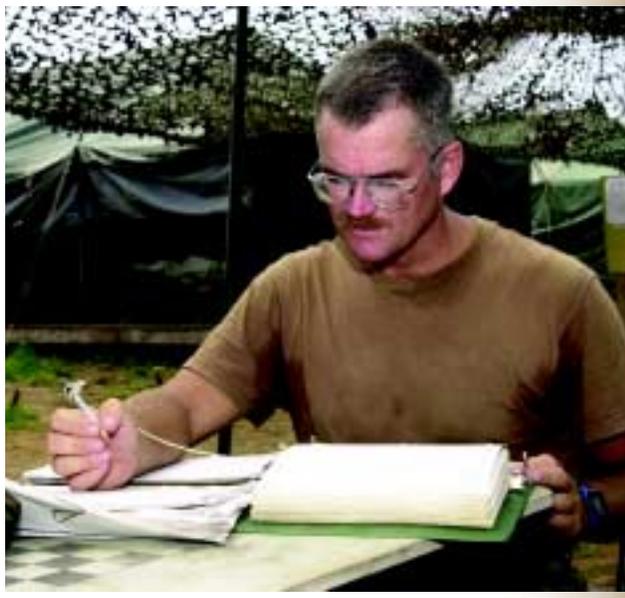


Status of Seven States in Question	
Illinois	University decision; no consistency
Indiana	University decision; no consistency
Michigan	University decision
North Carolina	Military member pays out-of-state cost when using tuition assistance
South Dakota	No policy for military and family members
Vermont	University decision
Virginia	No immediate benefit for military or family members unless they become Virginia residents

### WHAT IS NEEDED

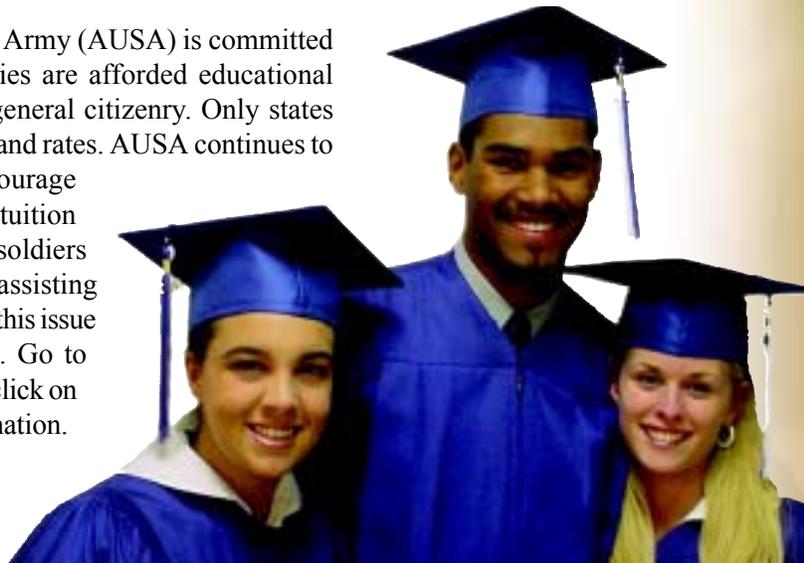
**What is needed is for DoD to present to state governors a proposed policy for tuition for military personnel and their family members living in that state as a result of military orders.** State governors should be made aware of the amount of military dollars invested in their state together with the value military families bring through their volunteer efforts and community service, as they weigh the cost of in-state tuition for military members and their families.

Texas and Georgia have responded by changing their law and policy, respectively, to include the continuity of the benefit on the reassignment of the military sponsor. They now meet the three goals of the Army’s initiative. (Note: There is activity in many states, with military leaders communicating the Army’s message to state leaders. An important lesson learned in Texas and Georgia was the key role of the CASAs in working with state legislatures and getting the issue in front of key state leaders.)



## WHAT YOU CAN DO

The Association of the United States Army (AUSA) is committed to ensuring soldiers and their families are afforded educational opportunities equal to those of the general citizenry. Only states can fix the challenge of tuition status and rates. AUSA continues to be a strong voice for action to encourage state legislatures to support in-state tuition at institutions of higher learning for soldiers and their families. You can help by assisting installation commanders in presenting this issue to local state and education leaders. Go to [www.armyeducation.army.mil](http://www.armyeducation.army.mil) and click on the “IN-STATE” icon for more information. Additional information is also available on the AUSA website at [www.ausa.org/family](http://www.ausa.org/family).



State Ranking by Numbers of Military		State Ranking by Military Dollars Invested / Grants*	
1. California	123,948	1. California	\$36.57 billion / \$361.43 million
2. Texas	115,100	2. Virginia	\$31.23 billion / \$67.50 million
3. North Carolina	94,296	3. Texas	\$23.28 billion / \$166.70 million
4. Virginia	90,851	4. Florida	\$14.73 billion / \$108.65 million
5. Georgia	64,392	5. Georgia	\$11.34 billion / \$26.70 million
6. Florida	55,815	6. Maryland	\$11.34 billion / \$110.70 million
7. Washington	38,521	7. Arizona	\$8.95 billion / \$73.70 million
8. South Carolina	37,943	8. Missouri	\$7.52 billion / \$17.02 million
9. Hawaii	34,608	9. Alabama	\$7.43 billion / \$46.10 million
10. Kentucky	34,081	10. Washington	\$7.22 billion / \$50.50 million

\* Grants: Portion of total for research and development to nonprofit organizations/schools.

Source: Directorate for Information Operations and Reports, Statistical Information Analysis Division Work Force Publications, Fiscal Year 2002

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*Voice for the Army—Support for the Soldier*

[www.ausa.org](http://www.ausa.org)