



# ACADEMIC SCHOLARSHIPS

Tuition Assistance  
Infant/Toddler SCHOLARSHIPS  
Family Child Care Learning Home  
SCHOLARSHIPS

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM  
IN EARLY CARE AND EDUCATION

**Bright from the Start: Georgia Department of Early Care and Learning** is proud to support and encourage Georgia's early care and education professionals through the DECAL Scholars programs. These innovative programs help create a high quality, stable early care and education workforce that benefits families, contributes to the state's economy, and helps prepare Georgia's young children for success in school.



## Application

**SCHOLARSHIPS** is Georgia's statewide educational assistance program for early care and education professionals pursuing credentials or degrees in early childhood education. **SCHOLARSHIPS** assists approved applicants with tuition and mandatory fees and provides a support stipend directly to them. Approved applicants must enroll in any of Georgia's technical colleges or any public or private institution that is SACS-accredited and HOPE-eligible. **SCHOLARSHIPS** funds all levels (through a Master's Degree) of study in early childhood education, child development, and child care administration.

### TO BE ELIGIBLE:

- ✓ You must be a United States citizen, legal permanent resident, qualified alien or non-immigrant.
- ✓ You must be a teacher, assistant teacher, director, or assistant director (all other positions do not qualify) employed and paid by one of the following:
  - ✦ A child care learning center licensed by Bright from the Start or the Department of Defense
  - ✦ An exempt Georgia Head Start center
  - ✦ A Georgia Pre-K teacher/assistant teacher in a public school
  - ✦ A BFTS registered family child care learning home
- ✓ You must earn \$18.50 per hour or less, including bonuses.
- ✓ You must work a minimum of 25 hours per week in your primary role as a teacher or assistant teacher in an infant, toddler, three-year-old **OR** Pre-K classroom during the instructional part of the day (before/after school program personnel do not qualify) or 40 hours per week as a director, assistant director, or family child care learning home provider. Volunteer work does not qualify.
- ✓ Applicants applying for a technical certificate of credit must be employed with their current employer in an eligible position for **three consecutive months**.
- Applicants applying for a technical college diploma or associates degree must be employed with their current employer in an eligible position for **six consecutive months**.
- Applicants applying for a bachelor's or master's degree must be employed with their current employer in an eligible position for **12 consecutive months**.
- ✓ You must have a Georgia Development System (GaPDS) Profile listing the name of your current employer and a "Pending" or "Active" status.
- ✓ You must be accepted into a formal early childhood education program of study leading to the award of a credential or degree at an eligible institution.

### Infant/Toddler Academic SCHOLARSHIPS (In addition to the requirements above)



- ✓ You must work as a teacher or assistant teacher a minimum of 25 hours/week in an **infant or toddler classroom**.
- ✓ You must be enrolled in the in Infant and Child Development bachelor's degree (Fort Valley State University only) or an Infant/Toddler Care Specialist Technical Certificate of Credit program of study.

Applications for **SCHOLARSHIPS** are accepted throughout the year, but we ask that you apply no earlier than 60 days prior to the term you plan to attend.

Rev 8/2019

All rules and eligibility requirements are subject to change without notification. Applications are updated when program revisions occur. Visit [www.DECALscholars.com](http://www.DECALscholars.com) to download the most recent application or to apply online.

DETACH AND RETAIN FOR FUTURE REFERENCE

PROGRAMS OF STUDY	INSTITUTION ELIGIBILITY	AWARDS	AS A RECIPIENT YOU ARE EXPECTED TO:
<p><b>Technical Certificate of Credit (TCC)</b> (Must have been employed with current employer or be a registered family child care learning home for three months)</p>	<p>Any of Georgia's technical colleges</p>	<p>Tuition Payment – 80% of tuition and mandatory fees not covered by the HOPE grant</p> <p>Support stipend each semester of \$250 for 1-3 credit hours or \$500 for 4 or more credit hours (FCCLH owners receive \$750 for 1-3 credit hours and \$1,500 for 4 or more credit hours)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Notify the <b>SCHOLARSHIPS</b> office immediately of any changes in schedule or of a decision to withdraw</li> <li>• Attend all classes and complete all assignments</li> <li>• Submit grades at the end of each term</li> <li>• Maintain a minimum overall GPA of 2.0</li> <li>• Submit a copy of your TCC to <b>SCHOLARSHIPS</b></li> </ul>
<p><b>Technical College Diploma (TCD)</b> (Must have been employed with current employer or be a registered family child care learning home for six months)</p>	<p>Any of Georgia's technical colleges</p>	<p>Tuition Payment – 80% of tuition and mandatory fees not covered by the HOPE or Pell grant</p> <p>Support stipend each semester of \$250 for 1-3 credit hours or \$500 for 4 or more credit hours (FCCLH owners receive \$750 for 1-3 credit hours and \$1,500 for 4 or more credit hours)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Notify the <b>SCHOLARSHIPS</b> office immediately of any changes in schedule or of a decision to withdraw</li> <li>• Attend all classes and complete all assignments</li> <li>• Submit grades at the end of each term</li> <li>• Maintain a minimum overall GPA of 2.0</li> <li>• Submit a copy of your TCD to <b>SCHOLARSHIPS</b></li> </ul>
<p><b>Associate of Applied Science Degree</b> (Must have been employed with current employer or be a registered family child care learning home six months)</p>	<p>Any of Georgia's technical colleges or any SACS-accredited, HOPE-eligible public or private four-year institution offering a two-year degree in Early Childhood Education, Child Development or Child Care Administration.</p>	<p>Tuition Payment – 80% of tuition and mandatory fees not covered by the HOPE scholarship or Pell grant at Georgia public institutions or up to \$2,152 per semester at private institutions</p> <p>Support stipend each semester of \$250 for 1-3 credit hours or \$500 for 4 or more credit hours (FCCLH owners receive \$750 for 1-3 credit hours and \$1,500 for 4 or more credit hours)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Notify the <b>SCHOLARSHIPS</b> office immediately of any changes in schedule or of a decision to withdraw</li> <li>• Attend all classes and complete all assignments</li> <li>• Submit grades at the end of each term</li> <li>• Maintain a minimum overall GPA of 2.0</li> <li>• Submit a copy of your degree to <b>SCHOLARSHIPS</b></li> </ul>
<p><b>Bachelor's Degree</b> (Must have been employed with current employer or be a registered family child care learning home for 12 months)</p>	<p>Any of Georgia's SACS-accredited, public or private, HOPE-eligible institution offering a four-year degree in Early Childhood, Child Development or Child Care Administration</p>	<p>Tuition Payment – 80% of tuition and mandatory fees not covered by the HOPE scholarship or Pell grant at Georgia public institutions or up to \$2,152 per semester at private institutions</p> <p>Support stipend each semester of \$250 for 1-3 credit hours or \$500 for 4 or more credit hours (FCCLH owners receive \$750 for 1-2 credit hours and \$1,500 for 4 or more credit hours)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Notify the <b>SCHOLARSHIPS</b> office immediately of any changes in schedule or of a decision to withdraw</li> <li>• Attend all classes and complete all assignments</li> <li>• Submit grades at the end of each term</li> <li>• Maintain a minimum overall GPA of 2.5</li> <li>• Submit a copy of your degree to <b>SCHOLARSHIPS</b></li> </ul>
<p><b>Master's Degree</b> (Must have been employed with current employer or be a registered family child care learning home for 12 months)</p>	<p>Any of Georgia's SACS-accredited, public or private, HOPE-eligible institution offering a Master's Degree in Early Childhood, Child Development or Child Care Administration</p>	<p>Tuition Payment – Up to \$1,000 per semester toward tuition and mandatory fees at Georgia public and private institutions</p> <p>Support stipend each semester of \$250 for 1-3 credit hours or \$500 for 4 or more credit hours (FCCLH owners receive \$750 for 1-3 credit hours and \$1,500 for 4 or more credit hours)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Notify the <b>SCHOLARSHIPS</b> office immediately of any changes in schedule or of a decision to withdraw</li> <li>• Attend all classes and complete all assignments</li> <li>• Submit grades at the end of each term</li> <li>• Maintain a minimum overall GPA of 2.5</li> <li>• Submit a copy of your degree to <b>SCHOLARSHIPS</b></li> </ul>
<p><b>Infant/Toddler Academic SCHOLARSHIPS</b> (Must have met the tenure requirement for a TCC or Bachelor's Degree as appropriate)</p>	<p>TCC: Any of Georgia's technical colleges offering an Infant/Toddler Care Specialist TCC</p> <p>Bachelor's Degree: Fort Valley State University's Infant &amp; Child Development program</p>	<p>Tuition Payment – 80% of tuition and mandatory fees not covered by the HOPE grant</p> <p>Support stipend of \$500 each semester for 1-3 credit hours or \$1,000 for 4 or more credit hours</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Notify the <b>SCHOLARSHIPS</b> office immediately of any changes in schedule or of a decision to withdraw</li> <li>• Attend all classes and complete all assignments</li> <li>• Submit grades at the end of each term</li> <li>• Maintain a minimum overall GPA of 2.0 (TCC program) or 2.5 (bachelor's degree program)</li> <li>• Submit a copy of your TCC to <b>SCHOLARSHIPS</b></li> </ul>

**You must contact the **SCHOLARSHIPS** office and submit copies of your grades upon completing a term and your schedule of classes for the next term in order to continue.**

**Personal Information (Please print):**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ County of Residence: \_\_\_\_\_  
First-middle initial-last (as it appears on your social security card)  
 Home Address: \_\_\_\_\_ Apartment Number: \_\_\_\_\_  
Street or post office box (Enter only one)  
 City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Home Phone: ( ) \_\_\_\_\_ Cell Phone: ( ) \_\_\_\_\_ Date of Birth: \_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_  
 Social Security Number: \_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_ E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

<b>OFFICE USE ONLY</b>	<b>Gender:</b>	<b>Race:</b>	<b>Ethnicity: (any race)</b>
	<input type="checkbox"/> Female <input type="checkbox"/> Male	<input type="checkbox"/> White <input type="checkbox"/> Black / African-American <input type="checkbox"/> Asian <input type="checkbox"/> Native American / Alaskan Native <input type="checkbox"/> Native Hawaiian / Pacific Islander <input type="checkbox"/> Bi- / Multi-Racial <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____	<input type="checkbox"/> Hispanic / Latino <input type="checkbox"/> Not Hispanic / Latino

**Employment Information (Employer must complete, sign, and date):**

Name of Facility: \_\_\_\_\_  
Enter name as it appears on Bright from the Start license/registration  
 Work Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
Enter address as it appears on Bright from the Start license/registration  
 City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_  
 License/Registration Number: \_\_\_\_\_ County: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Phone: ( ) \_\_\_\_\_

<b>Facility type (check one):</b> <input type="checkbox"/> Child Care Learning Center <input type="checkbox"/> Family Child Care Learning Home	<b>Home or center is licensed by (check one):</b> <input type="checkbox"/> Bright from the Start (BFTS) <input type="checkbox"/> Department of Defense (DOD)	<b>OR</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> Georgia Pre-K in a Public School <input type="checkbox"/> Exempt Georgia Head Start Center
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**Family Child Care Learning Home Owners Only**

Date you opened your family child care home: \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_

Number of hours your family child care home operates each week: \_\_\_\_\_

Number of children currently enrolled in your family child care home: \_\_\_\_\_

Ages of children currently enrolled (circle all that apply):  
 Birth - 1    1    2    3    4    5

Your Net Income from previous year's IRS Schedule C tax form: \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP)?  
 Yes     No

Serve GACAPS subsidized children?  
 Yes     No

**Applicant's Employment Information**

Applicant's Job Title (mark all that apply):  
 Asst. Teacher     Asst. Director     Owner  
 Teacher     Director (other positions do not qualify)

Is the applicant a Georgia lottery-funded Pre-K teacher?     Yes     No

Is the applicant a Head Start or Early Head Start teacher?     Yes     No

Number of hours applicant works each week: \_\_\_\_\_

Number of months per year applicant works (circle one):    9    10    12

Number of months per year applicant is paid (circle one):    9    10    12

Applicant's current hourly wage: \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Applicant is paid:    Weekly    Bi-Weekly    Bi-Monthly    Monthly (circle one)

Applicant's date of hire: \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_ (use original hire date if employment has been continuous with present employer, but at different locations)


If applicant is in the classroom, # of children in applicant's classroom: \_\_\_\_\_

If applicant is in the classroom, ages of children in class (check all that apply):  
 Birth-1     1-2     2-3     3-4     4-5     5-12

*As Owner, Director, Principal, or Human Resources Manager, I verify that the above employment information for this applicant is true and accurate. I understand and agree that receipt of SCHOLARSHIPS monies by the applicant will not affect any salary adjustments the applicant may be eligible to receive through our program. If the applicant is participating in the Infant/Toddler Academic SCHOLARSHIPS program, I agree to give the applicant paid leave time to allow the applicant time to attend class, study, and complete classwork.*

Name (print): \_\_\_\_\_ Title (print): \_\_\_\_\_  
 Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**Select the early childhood education credential or degree you wish to earn:**

- TCC-Technical Certificate of Credit
- TCD-Technical College Diploma
- Bachelor's Degree
- Infant Child Development Bachelor's Degree (Fort Valley State University only)
- Infant/Toddler Care Specialist TCC 
- Associate of Applied Science Degree  
(Must contain 30 semester or 39 quarter hours of ECE specific courses)
- Master's Degree


Name of institution you attend/will attend: \_\_\_\_\_

What is the first term/year you wish to be considered for **SCHOLARSHIPS** (Example - Spring 2019): \_\_\_\_\_

**Attach the following documents to your SCHOLARSHIPS application:**

- A copy of two recent pay stubs reflecting the name of your employer, your name, and your gross (before deductions) wages. Family child care learning home providers and owners who do not pay themselves W2 wages submit a copy of last year's Schedule C or other federal tax form documenting net business income.
- A copy of award/denial letter from HOPE and/or Pell (Not Applicable for a Master's Degree.)
- A copy of your schedule of classes
- A copy of your Georgia Professional Development System profile reflecting your GaPDS number, the name of your current employer, and a "Pending" or "Active" status (see page seven for information.)
- Copy of the **FRONT** and **BACK** of a secure and verifiable document (see page six for information)

**Infant/Toddler Academic SCHOLARSHIPS:**

- Proof of enrollment in the Infant and Child Development program at Fort Valley State University (BA degree) or a copy of your DegreeWorks profile showing proof of enrollment in the Infant/Toddler Care Specialist TCC program**
  - Monthly Substitute logs signed by the Director and Infant/Toddler Academic SCHOLARSHIPS recipient** (see [www.DECALscholars.com](http://www.DECALscholars.com) for the form).
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**Sign and date the application:****STATEMENT OF AFFIRMATION: Read carefully before signing and dating. Unsigned applications will not be processed.**

I \_\_\_\_\_ (**Applicant's Name**), attest that all of the information appearing on this application and in supporting documentation is true to the best of my knowledge. I understand that any false or incomplete information knowingly provided on this application or in supporting documents may be grounds to be denied participation in this program and may prevent me from future participation in any DECAL Scholars programs. I understand that intentionally providing false information on this application or in supporting documents is a violation of state law and may result in civil or criminal proceedings. I authorize any agent or employee of Bright from the Start: Georgia Department of Early Care and Learning to verify this information and release it to any necessary party for my consideration in this program.

I also understand and agree that my personal information may be shared with the Georgia Professional Development System.

\_\_\_\_\_  
*Applicant's Signature*

\_\_\_\_\_  
*Date*

***Affidavit For Lawful Presence Verification  
For  
Bright from the Start: Georgia Department of Early Care and Learning  
SCHOLARSHIPS***

By executing this affidavit under oath, as an applicant for a SCHOLARSHIPS payment or for other public benefit as referenced in O.C.G.A. §50-36-1(a)(3)(A), I hereby swear and affirm that the following is true and correct with respect to my application for an SCHOLARSHIPS payment from Bright from the Start: Georgia Department of Early Care and Learning.

Name of Person Receiving Benefit: \_\_\_\_\_

**Check only ONE of the following:**

- 1) \_\_\_\_\_ I am a United States citizen 18 years of age or older.
- 2) \_\_\_\_\_ I am a legal permanent resident of the United States, 18 years of age or older.  
(You must submit a copy of the FRONT and BACK of your Legal Permanent Resident card).
- 3) \_\_\_\_\_ I am a qualified alien or non-immigrant under the Federal Immigration and Nationality Act, 18 years of age or older, with an alien registration number issued by the Department of Homeland Security or other federal immigration agency  
(You must submit a copy of the FRONT and BACK of your Alien Registration Receipt card).

My alien registration number issued by the Department of Homeland Security or other federal immigration agency is: \_\_\_\_\_ **(Required if #2 or #3 is checked).**  
(You must submit the FRONT and BACK of your LPR/QA card).

I also verify I am providing **A COPY OF THE FRONT AND BACK** of at least one secure and verifiable document, as required by O.C.G.A. Sec. 50-36-1(e)(1), with this affidavit. **A complete list of acceptable documents is on page 8 of this application.**

The **FRONT AND BACK** of the secure and verifiable document I am providing with this affidavit is:

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Identify the document, such as driver’s license, birth certificate if last name is still the same, permanent resident card, etc.)

**In providing the above information under oath, I understand that any person who knowingly and willfully makes a false, fictitious, or fraudulent statement or representation in an affidavit in any matter within the jurisdiction of any department or agency of state government shall be guilty of a violation of O.C.G.A. §16-10-20 and face criminal penalties as allowed by such criminal statute.**

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Applicant Date

Printed Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Printed Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
Mailing Address

\_\_\_\_\_  
City State Zip

SUBSCRIBED AND SWORN BEFORE ME ON THIS THE \_\_\_\_ DAY OF \_\_\_\_\_, 20\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
Notary Public

My Commission Expires: \_\_\_/\_\_\_, 20\_\_

**Secure and Verifiable Documents Under O.C.G.A. § 50-36-2***Issued August 1, 2012 by the Office of the Attorney General, Georgia*

The Illegal Immigration Reform and Enforcement Act of 2011 (“IIREA”) provides that “[n]ot later than August 1, 2011, the Attorney General shall provide and make public on the Department of Law’s website a list of acceptable secure and verifiable documents. The list shall be reviewed and updated annually by the Attorney General.” O.C.G.A. § 50-36-2(f). The Attorney General may modify this list on a more frequent basis, if necessary.

The following list of secure and verifiable documents, published under the authority of O.C.G.A. § 50-36-2, contains documents that are verifiable for identification purposes, and documents on this list may not necessarily be indicative of residency or immigration status.

- **A driver’s license** issued by one of the United States, the District of Columbia, the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, Guam, the Commonwealth of the Northern Marianas Islands, the United States Virgin Island, American Samoa, or the Swain Islands, providing that it contains a photograph of the bearer or lists sufficient identifying information regarding the bearer, such as name, date of birth, gender, height, eye color, and address to enable the identification of the bearer [O.C.G.A. § 50-36-2(b)(3); 8 CFR § 274a.2]
- **A United States passport or passport card** [O.C.G.A. § 50-36-2(b)(3); 8 CFR § 274a.2]
- **An original or certified copy of a birth certificate** issued by a State, county, municipal authority, or territory of the United States bearing an official seal [O.C.G.A. § 50-36-2(b)(3); 8 CFR § 274a.2]
- **A United States Permanent Resident Card or Alien Registration Receipt Card** [O.C.G.A. § 50-36-2(b)(3); 8 CFR § 274a.2]
- **A United States military identification card** [O.C.G.A. § 50-36-2(b)(3); 8 CFR § 274a.2]
- **An identification card** issued by one of the United States, the District of Columbia, the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, Guam, the Commonwealth of the Northern Marianas Islands, the United States Virgin Island, American Samoa, or the Swain Islands, providing that it contains a photograph of the bearer or lists sufficient identifying information regarding the bearer, such as name, date of birth, gender, height, eye color, and address to enable the identification of the bearer [O.C.G.A. § 50-36-2(b)(3); 8 CFR § 274a.2]
- **A tribal identification card** of a federally recognized Native American tribe, provided it contains a photograph of the bearer, such as name, date of birth, gender, height, eye color, and address to enable the identification of the bearer. A listing of federally recognized Native American tribes may be found at: <http://www.bia.gov/WhoWeAre?BIA/OIS/TribalGovernmentServices/TribalDirectory/index.htm> [O.C.G.A. § 50-36-2(b)(3); 8 CFR § 274a.2]
- **An Employment Authorization Document** that contains a photograph of the bearer [O.C.G.A. § 50-36-2(b)(3); 8 CFR § 274a.2]
- **A passport issued by a foreign government** [O.C.G.A. § 50-36-2(b)(3); 8 CFR § 274a.2]
- **A Merchant Mariner Document or Merchant Mariner Credential** issued by the United States Coast Guard [O.C.G.A. § 50-36-2(b)(3); 8 CFR § 274a.2]
- **A Free and secure Trade (FAST) card** [O.C.G.A. § 50-36-2(b)(3); 8 CFR § 274a.2]
- **A NEXUS card** [O.C.G.A. § 50-36-2(b)(3); 8 CFR § 274a.2]
- **A Secure Electronic Network for Travelers Rapid Inspection (SENTRI) card** [O.C.G.A. § 50-36-2(b)(3); 8 CFR § 274a.2]
- **A driver’s license issued by a Canadian government authority** [O.C.G.A. § 50-36-2(b)(3); 8 CFR § 274a.2]
- **A Certificate of Citizenship** issued by the United States Department of Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) (Form N-560 or Form N-561) [O.C.G.A. § 50-36-2(b)(3); 8 CFR § 274a.2]
- **A Certificate of Naturalization** issued by the United States Department of Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) (Form N-550 or Form N-570) [O.C.G.A. § 50-36-2(b)(3); 8 CFR § 274a.2]
- **Certification of Report of Birth** issued by the United States Department of State (Form DS-1350) [O.C.G.A. § 50-36-2(b)(3); 8 CFR § 274a.2]
- **Certification of Birth Abroad** issued by the United States Department of State (Form FS-240) [O.C.G.A. § 50-36-2(b)(3); 8 CFR § 274a.2]
- **Consular Report of Birth Abroad** issued by the United States Department of State (Form FS-240) [O.C.G.A. § 50-36-2(b)(3); 8 CFR § 274a.2]
- In addition to the documents listed herein, if, in administering a public benefit or program, an agency is required by federal law to accept a document or other form of identification for proof of or documentation of identity, that document or other form of identification will be deemed a secure and verifiable document solely for that particular program or administration of that particular public benefit. [O.C.G.A. § 50-36-2(c) ]



## GEORGIA PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT SYSTEM

All individuals applying for **SCHOLARSHIPS** must register with the Georgia Professional Development System for Early Childhood Educators (GaPDS) as a part of the application process. The GaPDS is separate from DECAL Scholars. It records and maintains your professional development information – your training and/or any credentials or degrees you earn, in one convenient location.

Registering is easy! You can sign up immediately, even if you have not earned a credential or degree, by entering any recent early childhood or related training you have received.

1. Gather your relevant training certificates, credentials, and/or transcript(s).
2. Go to <https://gapds.dec.al.ga.gov>. Click the Login/Register button.
3. Click **“Create new account for GaPDS.”**
4. Select **“I want to create and manage my Georgia Professional Development System profile or enroll in training”** and click Continue.
5. Follow the directions, including selecting your employer, to create your confidential account. Be sure to record your username and password and secure them for future use. You will receive a confirmation email. Follow the instructions in the email to complete your account.
6. After completing and saving the Contact, Education, Employment, and Training sections, scroll to the bottom of the page and look for the message **“Ready for Submission?”** Click on **“My Profile”**.
7. Scroll to the bottom of the screen and click on the **“Continue to Submission”** button.
8. Check the box next to **“I certify that the statements I have made to Bright from the Start: Georgia Department of Early Care and Learning . . .”** and click Submit. This will change your GaPDS status from Incomplete to Pending and you will be assigned a GaPDS Number.
9. Click the **“Profile”** link in the Reports box on the left side of the screen, print your GaPDS profile and submit with your **SCHOLARSHIPS** application. Your GaPDS profile must reflect your name, your GaPDS number, **the name of your current employer**, and a Pending or Active status.
10. You will receive an email identifying what you need to submit to the GaPDS to verify the information you entered. **The documents are not shared with the DECAL Scholars programs.**

Two other tabs appear when you enter the system to view your profile: Other Career Data and Demographics. Completing the information under these tabs is voluntary; this data is used by Bright from the Start to determine additional supports and services needed across the state.

You can update your profile at any time by submitting documentation of state-approved trainings, credentials, degrees, conference attendance, etc. as you complete them.

The GaPDS is a tool that benefits the early care and education community in Georgia, and we encourage you to take advantage of this opportunity. Thank you for your continued dedication to your professional development and your commitment to improving the quality of care for young children.

If you have questions or need technical support, contact the GaPDS at 404-334-6461 (866-258-7737 outside the metro Atlanta area) or email [gapds@dec.al.ga.gov](mailto:gapds@dec.al.ga.gov).

## AWARDS for Early Educators

**AWARDS for Early Educators** is a federally-funded program with 3 levels of awards. Each level provides a single payment award for earning a higher credential or degree.

# 1

**CDA/TCC**  
**\$1,200** for attaining a CDA Credential issued by the Council for Professional Recognition or a Technical Certificate of Credit (\$1,300 for an Infant/Toddler CDA or an Infant Toddler Specialist TCC)

# 2

**TCD/AAS**  
**\$1,500** for attaining a Technical College Diploma or Associate of Applied Science Degree

# 3

**BA/MA**  
**\$2,500** for attaining a Bachelor's or Master's Degree

## INCENTIVES

**INCENTIVES** is a salary bonus program that rewards education and tenure (the length of time you stay at one job). The more you increase your education level, and the longer you stay at your job, the more bonus! You can get up to 2 payments for an entry-level credential and up to 4 payments for higher academic credentials and degrees.

LEVEL	CREDENTIAL/DEGREE	AMOUNT	MAXIMUM PAYMENTS
Entry Level	CDA	\$250	2
	Intro to Child Care TCC	\$250	2
Higher Level	Technical Certificate of Credit	\$375	4
	Technical College Diploma	\$500	4
	AAS, AAT	\$750	4
	BA, BS	\$1000	4
	BA in Birth Through Five	\$1150	4
	MA, MEd, MS	\$1250	4

Submit your application with your supporting documents to:

### DECAL Scholars Programs

c/o Care Solutions, Inc.

1117 Perimeter Center West, Suite W-300 Atlanta, GA 30338

support@DECALscholars.com

If you have already earned an Early Childhood Education degree or credential, you may be eligible for **INCENTIVES** and/or **AWARDS for Early Educators**. For information call 800-227-3410 or 770-642-6722.  
[www.DECALscholars.com](http://www.DECALscholars.com)



DECAL Scholars programs are managed by Care Solutions, Inc.

Rev 8/2019

All rules and eligibility requirements are subject to change without notification. Applications are updated when program revisions occur. Visit [www.DECALscholars.com](http://www.DECALscholars.com) to download the most recent application or to apply online.