

# Be a Keystone Scholars CHAMPION



## Meet Keystone Scholars: Pennsylvania's Child Development Account

The Pennsylvania Treasury Department invests \$100 for every baby born to a Pennsylvania resident on or after January 1, 2019 for their post-secondary education.<sup>1</sup>

[Child Development Accounts \(CDAs\)](#) like [Keystone Scholars](#) were developed so that all children, especially financially vulnerable ones, have a college savings account invested for them early in life. But state governments cannot fund them alone.<sup>2</sup> The account structure is designed for community partners to help grow the investment and build assets for financially vulnerable kids. Meanwhile, families are encouraged to open their own [PA 529 accounts](#) to build their savings as they are able.

## Calling All Donors with a Vision

Champions can be anyone—individuals, employers, community-based organizations, government entities, philanthropic foundations, etc.—who make additional deposits into the accounts of children in their communities. Champions can make a one-time deposit, or multiple deposits at various milestones in children's lives. Champions can also target their deposits—by designating them for all children within a particular community, or for certain populations, such as low-income or minority children, for example. Keystone Scholars Champions build upon the initial \$100 investment to help children grow wealth and envision their future from early on.

## Make A Smart Investment

If you are seeking a new way to make a positive impact on children and their families, contributing additional deposits for Keystone Scholars accounts is a forward-thinking investment. [Research](#) shows that when low-income children have an education savings account in their name, even with less than \$500 in it, they are three times more likely to enroll in a two- or four-year degree program and four times more likely to graduate. But CDAs are [about more than the money in them](#). They signal to kids that their community believes in them now and into the future. As children grow up knowing that the account is there, it leads to improved social and emotional development, particularly among [financially vulnerable](#) children. By building the account balances of kids in your community, you are actually doing so much more: you are helping them [visualize themselves](#) going on to do great things.


You can think about the additional deposits like an “[early scholarship](#).” Many scholarship programs exist in the U.S. because as a country we recognize the value of higher education. Adults with postsecondary degrees have [higher lifetime earnings](#) and better [health outcomes](#). The [My Alford Grant](#) is an example of a \$500 early scholarship that the Harold Alford Foundation provides to every baby born in Maine.

Early scholarships into a CDA promise not only a longer time horizon for the funds to grow, but also the added social-emotional benefits for [children and their parents](#) of focusing on the future. And, through equitable asset-building, early scholarships into CDAs can [reduce the wealth gap](#) and bring more kids' dreams within reach.



## Together We Can Fund Kids' Dreams

Your early scholarship can reward local families for taking positive steps in their child's development like:

- Staying current on pediatric vaccines
- Reading together at home
- Starting pre-school
- *Propose your own idea!* 

You know the families in your community best and we want to work with you to help them save for their children's future. Let's think creatively together to raise funds and make a plan.

## Champion Benefits

In addition to providing you with a new resource you can share with the families in your community, becoming a Keystone Scholars Champion provides the following benefits:



Recognition of your generous contribution and placement of your organization's logo on joint marketing materials.



Aggregate data on the proportion of Keystone Scholars families in your community who have registered their account and who have opened and linked a PA 529 account to it.

These metrics gauge awareness of the Keystone Scholars program and can bring you key insights into how families are planning for the future.

## Champion Spotlight

### Adagio Health and Keystone Scholars - WIC Milestone Program

Pennsylvania Treasury, the Henry L. Hillman Foundation, and Adagio Health partnered to incent participation in the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) program through the child's first five years. Adagio Health is the WIC provider for Armstrong, Beaver, Butler, Indiana, and Lawrence counties. [The WIC Milestone Program](#) provides additional deposits into the Keystone Scholars accounts of eligible children whom Adagio serves for each year the child remains enrolled in WIC. Funding for the deposits is made possible by a generous grant from the Henry L. Hillman Foundation. Treasury and Adagio Health are working closely to raise awareness among eligible mothers and ensure they are able to log in to their accounts online.

The program is an excellent example of a partnership that equals more than the sum of its parts; it aims to strengthen the early childhood development of financially vulnerable families by promoting the array of financial, social and emotional benefits CDAs provide, while encouraging retention in a critical public health program.

## Become a Keystone Scholars Champion Today

Contact [Anne DeCecco](#), Director of Keystone Scholars at Pennsylvania Treasury, to learn about becoming a Keystone Scholars Champion today.



<sup>1</sup> Includes all children born on or after January 1, 2019 who are subsequently adopted by Pennsylvania residents. Keystone Scholars funds can be used for qualified higher education expenses at community college, vocational or training school, apprenticeships, and four-year university.

<sup>2</sup> Keystone Scholars starter deposits are funded from surplus earnings on the PA 529 Guaranteed Savings Plan and use no taxpayer funds.

*Keystone Scholars is open to Pennsylvania residents born after December 31, 2018 and children born after December 31, 2018 who are subsequently adopted by a Pennsylvania resident. The child must be a Pennsylvania resident at birth or adoption and at the time the Keystone Scholars funds are used. The child must also be the Beneficiary of a PA 529 account other than the Keystone Scholars Account at the time Keystone Scholars funds are used. If not used by the beneficiary's 29th birthday, the funds will be returned to the Pennsylvania Treasury Department (Treasury). Funds in a Keystone Scholars Account will be invested in a PA 529 GSP account and will remain under the sole custody of Treasury until they are used for the purposes of paying for qualified higher education expenses at an institution of higher education. A list of qualified higher education expenses may be found at [www.pa529.com](http://www.pa529.com). No additional funds may be contributed to a Keystone Scholars Account. However, families are encouraged to save in their own PA 529 account.*

