

Ohio

Department of  
Higher Education



Choose **1**Ohio First  
2019-2020 Annual Report





## History and Overview

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The General Assembly created the Choose Ohio First Program in 2007 to increase the number of Ohio residents completing postsecondary studies in the fields of science, technology, engineering, mathematics, and medicine (STEMM), and STEMM education. Lieutenant Governor Jon Husted championed the passage of the Choose Ohio First Scholarship Program while serving as Speaker of the Ohio House of Representatives and has taken an active role in the program ever since. The goal of the program is to advance the economic growth of each region of the state in STEMM-related fields and to support the success of program participants.

To be awarded Choose Ohio First designation, Ohio's public and independent colleges and universities participate in a competitive process. Choose Ohio First scholars enrolled in designated STEMM and STEMM education programs at these selected institutions receive scholarships and are provided a system of support.

As required by [Ohio Revised Code 3333.041](#) (3), this report summarizes the Chancellor's strategies in assigning Choose Ohio First scholarships and describes how the awards are consistent with those strategies.

## Chancellor's Strategy in Assigning Choose Ohio First Scholarships

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In awarding Choose Ohio First Scholarships, the Chancellor conducts a competitive process for program awards. In evaluating proposals submitted by colleges and universities, determinations for awards include evaluation of how each proposal addresses state priorities, including the elements from [ORC 3333.62](#):

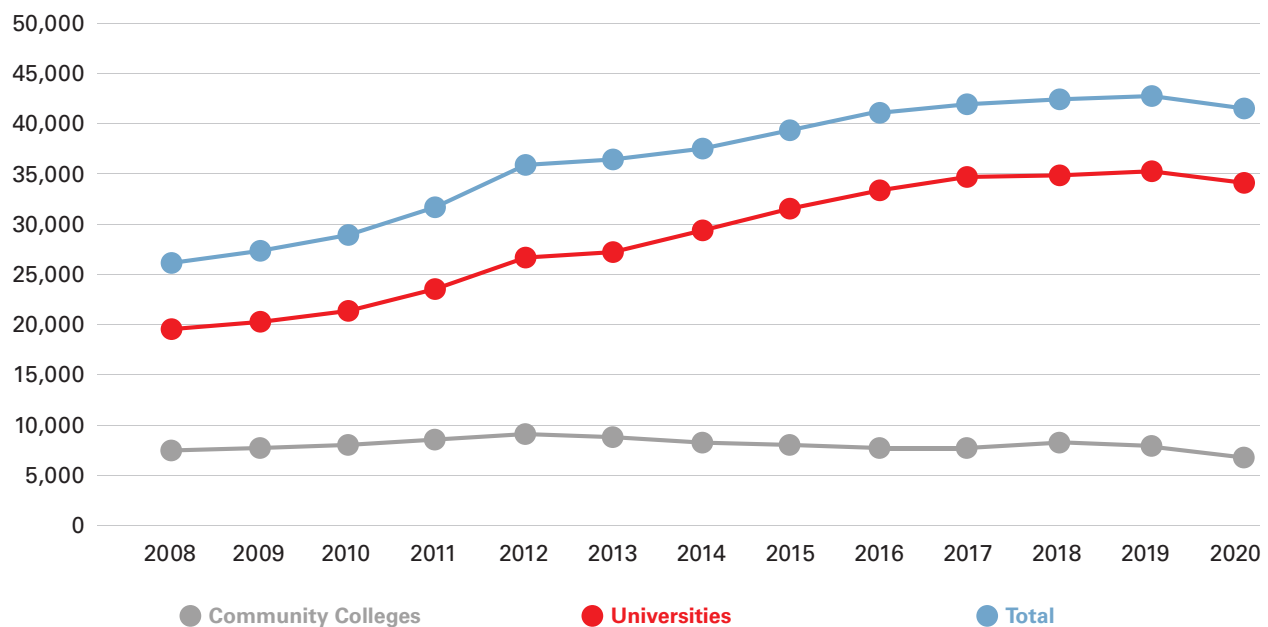
- State and regional economic and educational needs;
- Recruitment into STEMM fields, including historically under-represented populations;
- Systems of support for scholars;
- Cost-effectiveness and facilitation of low-cost completion;
- Collaboration among colleges and universities; and
- Ease of two-year to four-year transfer for scholars.

# Award Alignment to Chancellor's Strategy

## Recruitment and Enrollment into STEMM fields to Meet State and Regional Economic and Educational Needs

Since its inception, the Choose Ohio First Program has complemented the Chancellor's strategies to strengthen Ohio's workforce by recruiting and supporting students in STEMM fields. The number of STEMM degrees awarded at Ohio's public colleges and universities increased from 26,644 in FY 2008 to more than 40,000 in each of the last five years.

**STEMM Degrees Awarded at Ohio's Public Colleges and Universities**  
FY 2008 to FY 2020



## Systems of Support for Scholars

Institutions with Choose Ohio First designation provide support targeted to Choose Ohio First scholars that will help students succeed. The forms of this support vary among institutions; systems provided by Choose Ohio First colleges and universities include:

- Summer bridge programs designed to affirm first year student commitment and promote academic preparedness;
- Faculty mentoring;
- Designated internships and co-op experiences; and
- Cohort-based research projects and publications in STEMM areas.

These support systems are designed to increase retention and graduation rates for Choose Ohio First scholars. Institutions assist and connect Choose Ohio First scholars to work-based learning experiences ranging from internships and co-ops to laboratory research. The opportunities help students develop and strengthen career and educational goals that can be part of Ohio's growing STEMM economy. Many colleges and universities also offer career and post-graduation advising, helping to connect Choose Ohio First graduates with Ohio employers. Ohio's Workforce Success Measures website reports that 70% of Choose Ohio First's public college and university completers, from Academic Years 2015 through 2018, were found to be employed six months and one year after graduation.

## Cost Effectiveness and Facilitation of Low-cost Completion

Recent annual report data submitted by Ohio's public and independent institutions show that overall, graduation rates for Choose Ohio First scholars are nearly twice that of all first-time entering undergraduate STEMM students not receiving a Choose Ohio First scholarship. According to the most recent graduate outcome data, 68% of Choose Ohio First scholars obtained a certificate or degree within four years, while 80% did so in six years. Through strong recruitment efforts and built-in systems of support, Ohio's public and independent institutions are able to retain a majority of Choose Ohio First scholars through degree completion.

## Institutional Collaboration and Ease of Transfer

Many of the programs that received Choose Ohio First awards included structures for institutional collaboration. These collaborations involve articulation agreements between institutions so that students can move from a two-year degree to a four-year degree with a seamless transfer. In many cases, students will be able to continue to receive the Choose Ohio First scholarship.

## Matching Resources

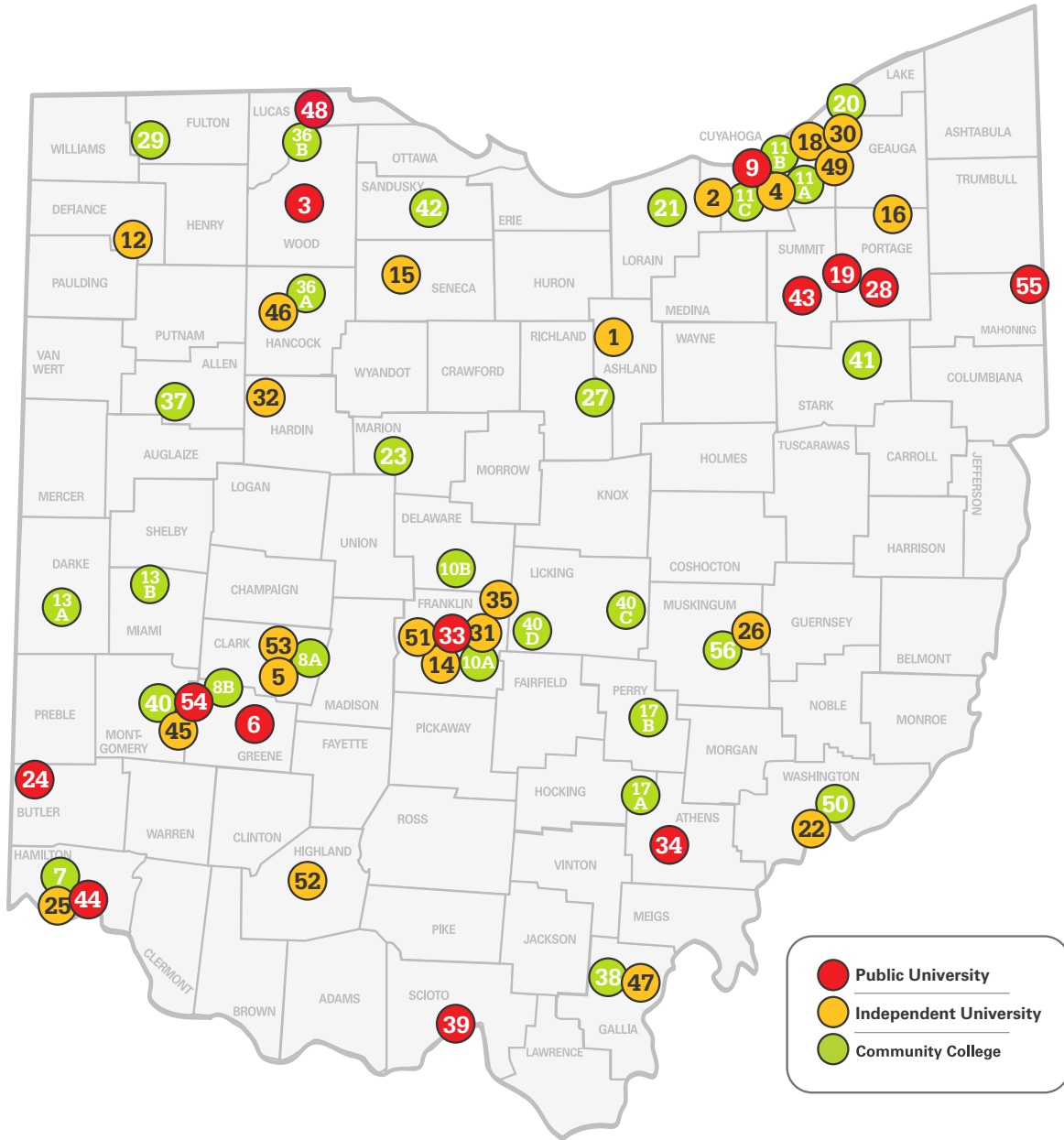
In the 2019-2020 academic year, \$13.7 million was awarded and disbursed to 3,375 Choose Ohio First scholars attending an Ohio college or university. It was reported that the participating institutions provided matching contributions totaling \$31 million in cost-share opportunities and programs helping to support Choose Ohio First scholars. Matching funds are used to revise and develop new curricula in the STEMM disciplines awarded Choose Ohio First funds, supplement student travel to industry conferences and research symposia, and leverage the involvement of businesses in the professional development of Ohio's future innovation. Eighty-one percent (approximately \$25 million) of the total institutional matching dollars was reported in the form of scholarship dollars.

## Conclusion

Ohio's Choose Ohio First colleges and universities supported 3,375 STEMM students this past year, of which 464 graduates were reported. Moreover, funding was awarded to 1,275 new Choose Ohio First scholars, many of whom (51%) were identified as past College Credit Plus students. Retention and graduation rates were high as a result of targeted recruitment, strong wrap-around student support services, and matching scholarship dollars to complement the Choose Ohio First awards.

## Geographic Distribution

Since the program's launch, 56 public and independent colleges and universities have received the Choose Ohio First designation, with enrolled scholars receiving scholarship funds.





# Choose Ohio First

## Participating Colleges & Universities

1. Ashland University
2. Baldwin Wallace University
3. Bowling Green State University
4. Case Western Reserve University
5. Cedarville University
6. Central State University
7. Cincinnati State Technical & Community College
8. Clark State Community College
9. Cleveland State University
10. Columbus State Community College
11. Cuyahoga Community College
12. Defiance College
13. Edison State Community College
14. Franklin University
15. Heidelberg University
16. Hiram College
17. Hocking College
18. John Carroll University
19. Kent State University
20. Lakeland Community College
21. Lorain County Community College
22. Marietta College
23. Marion Technical College
24. Miami University
25. Mount St. Joseph University
26. Muskingum University
27. North Central State College
28. Northeast Ohio Medical University
29. Northwest State Community College
30. Notre Dame College
31. Ohio Dominican University
32. Ohio Northern University
33. The Ohio State University
34. Ohio University
35. Otterbein University
36. Owens Community College
37. Rhodes State College
38. Rio Grande Community College
39. Shawnee State University
40. Sinclair Community College
41. Stark State College
42. Terra State Community College
43. The University of Akron
44. University of Cincinnati
45. University of Dayton
46. University of Findlay
47. University of Rio Grande
48. The University of Toledo
49. Ursuline College
50. Washington State Community College
51. Western Governors University
52. Wilmington College
53. Wittenberg University
54. Wright State University
55. Youngstown State University
56. Zane State College



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