

Achievement Awards and Complete Certification List

Active Year 1 options | Program year 2026-27

\$500 shared annual limit	Paid after completion	Optional accomplishments only	First-come, first-served
All Achievement Awards and Access Grants combined.	Submit the required proof and a brief reflection.	Ordinary course and program requirements do not qualify.	Awards depend on the remaining \$12,000 Year 1 pool.

Achievement Award Menu

These six Achievement Award categories are active in Year 1. RSF confirms final eligibility and payment based on the scholar's remaining annual balance and available program funds.

Opportunity	Year 1 amount	What qualifies	What to submit
Certification	\$250-\$500	Earn an approved elective industry certification or professional credential. See Certification List.	Certificate or passing score report + brief reflection.
Internship / Apprenticeship	\$250-\$500	Complete a meaningful optional, self-sought internship, co-op, or apprenticeship.	Supervisor verification + brief reflection.
Research	\$300-\$500	Make a meaningful contribution to faculty-supervised research and present or publish the work.	Faculty sign-off + proof of presentation or publication.
Portfolio / Project	\$300-\$400	Complete a substantial, original, career-related project or portfolio outside an ordinary course requirement.	Project link or file + brief written explanation.
Informational Interviews	\$100 / \$175 / \$250	3 interviews = \$100; 5 interviews = \$175 total; 8-10 interviews plus a final reflection or presentation = \$250 total.	Interview/reflection form + mentor verification.
Job Shadowing	\$150 / \$250	6-8 total hours = \$150. At least 12 total hours over two or more days or sessions = \$250 total.	Host verification + brief reflection.

THE INITIATIVE RULE	Awards recognize something a scholar chose to pursue. Required clinical hours, student teaching, practicums, ordinary course requirements, and credentials required by a course, degree, or program do not qualify.
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Certification Achievement Awards

Complete approved Year 1 schedule | 56 certifications and credentials

The listed award is paid after the scholar passes the credential. Where shown, the \$50 Northern Virginia demand bonus is already included in the listed Year 1 award. Every payment counts toward the same \$500 annual scholar limit.

Career field	Certification / credential	Year 1 award after passing	NoVA bonus included
Technology	CompTIA Security+	\$500	+\$50
Technology	CompTIA A+	\$450	+\$50
Technology	AWS Certified Cloud Practitioner (CCP)	\$500	+\$50
Technology	CISSP	\$500	+\$50
Technology	PMP	\$500	+\$50
Technology	CompTIA Network+	\$500	+\$50
Technology	CompTIA Linux+	\$500	+\$50
Technology	CompTIA Data+	\$500	+\$50
Technology	Microsoft Azure Fundamentals (AZ-900)	\$500	+\$50
Technology	Microsoft Azure Administrator (AZ-104)	\$500	+\$50
Technology	Microsoft Power BI Data Analyst (PL-300)	\$500	+\$50
Technology	Google Cybersecurity Certificate	\$500	+\$50
Technology	Google Data Analytics Certificate	\$500	+\$50
Technology	Google IT Support Certificate	\$450	+\$50
Technology	Cisco CCNA	\$500	+\$50
Technology	ITIL Foundation	\$500	+\$50
Technology	Certified Ethical Hacker (CEH)	\$500	+\$50
Technology	AWS Solutions Architect - Associate	\$500	+\$50
Technology	CompTIA PenTest+	\$500	+\$50
Business & Project Management	CAPM	\$500	+\$50
Business & Project Management / Human Resources	SHRM-CP	\$500	+\$50
Business & Project Management	Lean Six Sigma Yellow Belt	\$500	+\$50
Business & Project Management	Lean Six Sigma Green Belt	\$500	+\$50
Business & Project Management	Salesforce Administrator	\$500	+\$50
Business & Project Management	QuickBooks Online Certification	\$300	-
Business & Project Management	Six Sigma Black Belt	\$500	+\$50
Business & Project Management	Certified ScrumMaster (CSM)	\$500	+\$50
Accounting & Finance	QuickBooks ProAdvisor	\$300	-

Career field	Certification / credential	Year 1 award after passing	NoVA bonus included
Accounting & Finance	Bloomberg Market Concepts (BMC)	\$500	-
Accounting & Finance	IRS Enrolled Agent (EA)	\$500	-
Accounting & Finance	CPA (all 4 sections)	\$500	-
Accounting & Finance	Certified Internal Auditor (CIA)	\$500	-
Healthcare	CNA state exam	\$250	-
Healthcare	Pharmacy Tech (PTCE)	\$250	-
Healthcare	NREMT	\$300	-
Healthcare	CPC Medical Coding	\$300	-
Healthcare	Certified Clinical Medical Assistant (CCMA)	\$300	-
Healthcare	Certified Phlebotomy Technician (CPT)	\$300	-
Healthcare	ECG/EKG Technician (CET)	\$400	-
Healthcare	Certified Medical Assistant (CMA)	\$300	-
Healthcare	Certified Coding Associate (CCA)	\$300	-
Education	Praxis exams	\$450	-
Education	Virginia teacher licensure	\$450	-
Education	ESL endorsement exam	\$450	-
Engineering & Construction	AutoCAD Certification (Certiport ACU)	\$400	-
Engineering & Construction	Autodesk Certified Professional	\$400	-
Engineering & Construction	SolidWorks Certification (CSWA)	\$400	-
Marketing & Communications	Google Ads Certification	\$500	-
Marketing & Communications	Google Analytics Certification	\$500	-
Marketing & Communications	HubSpot Inbound Marketing	\$500	-
Marketing & Communications	HubSpot Content Marketing	\$500	-
Marketing & Communications	Meta Digital Marketing Associate	\$500	-
Marketing & Communications	Adobe Certified Professional (Photoshop/Illustrator/Premiere)	\$500	-
Human Resources	aPHR	\$450	-
Human Resources	PHR (Professional in Human Resources)	\$450	-
Legal	Certified Paralegal Exam (NALA)	\$400	-

NOT LISTED?

Ask RSF before purchasing or enrolling. Credentials required by a course, degree, or program are not eligible. Gateway or prerequisite credentials such as BLS, OSHA, and notary commissions do not carry an Achievement Award under the current schedule.

Access Grants - Active Year 1 Areas

Only these three categories are available in program year 2026-27

\$500 shared annual limit	\$100 minimum request	Approval before purchase	Documentation required
All Achievement Awards and Access Grants combined.	Related eligible expenses may be combined.	Discuss the request with the scholar's mentor first.	Keep estimates, invoices, logs, and itemized receipts.

The Three Year 1 Access Grant Areas

Grant area	Year 1 limit	What it can cover
Certification & Exam	Up to \$300	Elective exam or certification fees, one documented retake, approved study materials or preparation, and certification renewals.
Career-Opportunity Transportation	Up to \$250 per semester	Transit, gas, rideshare, or parking directly tied to an internship, job shadow, employment interview, certification exam, industry visit, conference, or approved career event.
Professional Clothing	Up to \$250 per year	Reasonable interview or workplace attire, shoes, trade clothing, scrubs, lab coat, safety gear, or limited dry cleaning.

TRANSPORTATION BOUNDARY	Routine travel to and from NOVA or GMU classes, ordinary campus parking, and general vehicle expenses are not covered. Transportation must be directly tied to an approved career-building opportunity.
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Access Grants - Covered Expenses and Documentation

Use this list to plan a request before spending money

Grant area	Covered expense	Year 1 limit	What to submit	Important condition
Certification & Exam	Exam or certification fee	Shared cap: up to \$300	Registration page or invoice; itemized receipt after payment.	Credential must be elective-not required by a course, degree, or program-and not already covered by tuition or other aid.
Certification & Exam	One retake after an unsuccessful attempt	Within the shared \$300 cap	Unsuccessful score report + new registration fee.	One retake per certification.
Certification & Exam	Study guide, practice test, or preparation course	Within the shared \$300 cap	Cost estimate or receipt + brief preparation plan.	Free and school-provided preparation resources must be used first.
Certification & Exam	Certification renewal	Within the shared \$300 cap	Renewal notice or invoice + itemized receipt.	Renewal must support the student's career path.
Career-Opportunity Transportation	Public transit to an internship, job shadow, employment interview, certification exam, industry visit, conference, or approved career event	Shared cap: up to \$250 / semester	Proposed schedule and fare estimate; pass or fare records after payment.	Routine travel to and from NOVA or GMU classes is not covered. All eligible transportation costs share one \$250 semester cap.
Career-Opportunity Transportation	Gas for an internship or another approved career-building activity	Within the shared \$250 semester cap	Proposed schedule and mileage estimate; then fuel receipts + mileage log showing date, destination, purpose, and miles.	Routine driving to and from NOVA or GMU classes and general vehicle expenses are not covered.
Career-Opportunity Transportation	Rideshare for an internship or approved career-building activity	Within the shared \$250 semester cap	Trip estimate before purchase; trip receipt + date and career-related purpose after payment.	Must be necessary for the approved opportunity; ordinary trips to regular classes are not covered.
Career-Opportunity Transportation	Parking at an internship, employment interview, certification exam, job shadow, or approved career event	Within the shared \$250 semester cap	Parking estimate or published rate; receipt + date and purpose after payment.	Ordinary NOVA or GMU campus parking is not covered. A small parking cost may be included in a larger eligible request.
Career-Opportunity Transportation	Combined transportation costs for a recurring internship or other approved career-building opportunity	Within the shared \$250 semester cap	Schedule, route, expected transit/gas/rideshare/parking costs, and supporting documentation.	Related eligible transportation costs may be bundled into one request. The total Access Grant request must be at least \$100.
Professional Clothing	Interview or workplace attire: suit, blazer, dress, pants or skirt, and shoes	Shared cap: up to \$250 / year	Cost estimate or itemized receipt.	Items must be reasonable and appropriate for the student's career setting.
Professional Clothing	Trade clothing or required gear: scrubs, lab coat, steel-toed boots, or safety gear	Within the shared \$250 yearly cap	Cost estimate or itemized receipt + opportunity or program information.	Items must be needed for an approved career-related setting.
Professional Clothing	Dry cleaning for interview or professional attire	Up to \$50 within the \$250 yearly cap	Itemized dry-cleaning receipt.	May be combined with other eligible professional-clothing expenses; not paid as a standalone request below \$100.

BEFORE SPENDING

Discuss the request with the mentor > check free and school resources > combine related eligible expenses into a request of at least \$100 > obtain RSF approval before purchase > save itemized receipts > submit the required documentation.