

EDUCATION PAYS

A Partnership between Hinds Community College and The Craig H. Neilsen Foundation

Ray Neilsen, the Co-Trustee of The Craig H. Neilsen Foundation and the innovator of the “Education Pays” concept “wants to change lives.” Mr. Neilsen is very proud of this program and the opportunities that it can offer to people who did not finish high school or obtain a GED. He wants to be involved with the students. Hinds Community College is pleased to extend an invitation to Mr. Neilsen to address the students at the beginning of a semester as well as meet with individual award recipients at the end of process. Mr. Neilsen will make himself available to come to the classes and share his vision for the importance of obtaining a GED. Mr. Neilsen developed the idea of offering a financial award to successful graduates of the Education Pays program.

A one-time award of \$500 will be provided to eligible individuals who:

- a. Participate in a certified GED course at a site certified by Hinds Community College;
- b. Successfully pass all components of the General Education Development (GED) test; and
- c. Receive a certificate of high school equivalency from the Mississippi State Board of Community and Junior Colleges.

The eligibility requirements for the \$500 award are:

- a. A GED student must be a resident of Warren County, Mississippi for at least 90 days before participating in Education Pays.
- b. A student must also be 21 or older to participate in the program.

Students who wish to participate in the Education Pays program will need to sign an agreement when they register for the GED program.

In addition, a student must agree to:

- a. Complete registration process and pre-testing;
- b. Participate in a minimum of 12 class hours;
- c. Attend classes on a regular basis. No more than 3 absences per term are allowed. Make up work is permitted;
- d. Remain an active member in the program until the GED is attained (returning each consecutive semester.);
- e. Participate in the GED program in the classroom without significant classroom disruption;
- f. Provide the original State of Mississippi GED score sheet and GED diploma documentation to the instructor for verification within two weeks of the document date.
- g. Return to class to accept award.

The Hinds Community College instructors will explain the Education Pays program to incoming GED students. Students choosing to participate in the program will complete the student agreement and present a current Mississippi driver's license or state identification card to verify age and residency.

Instructors will maintain signed student agreement form, copy of GED registration form and copy of driver's license or state identification card until successful program completion is verified. Original student agreement, signed by the instructor, will be sent to Betty Caraway at the Hinds CC Development Foundation office along with copy of the GED certificate, GED registration form and student's driver's license or state identification card.

A representative from the Hinds CC Development Foundation will secure a check for the award and schedule time for award with student's instructor. Ray Neilson, the Co-Trustee of the Neilsen Foundation, may also attend the class when the check is presented. The check will be awarded to the student in the classroom.

Initially, the Education Pays program will be promoted through community resources and word-of-mouth. An information piece will be distributed to churches, the WIN Center and community organizations.