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## Scholarships target 1 person at each school Program would pay tuition at community, tech college



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A new scholarship program spearheaded by the grandson of former Ohio Gov. James A. Rhodes hopes to provide for one person from every high school in the state an education at a two-year community or technical college.

Ric Moore, the chief executive officer of the James A. Rhodes Leadership Foundation Scholarship Fund, is carrying on his grandfather's efforts to promote college education to help Ohioans get jobs and boost the state's economy.

**'The venture is certainly a noble one. Anybody who is in the two year college business has to appreciate the effort [the foundation is] putting out.'** Marsha Bordner, Terra Community College president.

"When he was looking around, bringing businesses to the state, he saw that they really needed an educated work force," Mr. Moore said.

"The only way to do that was to really spark up these two-year schools to get the trades that students need to get the jobs," he said

In June, the foundation got a boost from the state of Ohio with \$10 million in seed money to help attract donations from other groups. The foundation needs to raise at least \$10 million in matching funds on its own to receive the state money.

The foundation hopes to raise \$65 million by 2010 for its scholarship fund through public and private partnerships.

As an endowment, the fund is expected to generate \$3.25 million to pay for scholarships that will be awarded to students who are Ohio residents, have a high school diploma or GED, have a financial need, and are accepted to one of the state's 23 two-year community or technical colleges.

"The two-year schools have done a good job of keeping in touch with the economy and what the hot jobs are," Mr. Moore said. "This is definitely a partnership between us and the two-year schools. "We're all working for the same goal, and that's to educate the students and get them out and get them working."

And part of the Rhodes foundation's goal is to keep those students working in Ohio. It's called the "Diploma to Work Initiative." Students who have received an associate's degree or a certificate with scholarship money are required to work in their field of study in the state for at least four years.

Those who do not stay in Ohio or fail to maintain a C+ grade-point average will have to repay the scholarship.

An Internet social networking aspect is also a part of the foundation's program that will promote success among the students and help them network with others in their field of study and potential employers, said Ian James, the chief operating officer of the foundation.

The foundation plans to begin accepting applications and distributing scholarships next fall. It is a quick turnaround, Mr. James admits, but he says it's doable.

"I don't think we're dreaming," he said. "This is the real deal."

The foundation was established in 2002 but really took off about nine months ago with government support behind higher education to help propel it.

As part of the agreement to receive state money, the foundation needs to work out a contract detailing the scholarship program with Ohio Board of Regents Chancellor Eric Fingerhut.

The chancellor said he will work with the foundation to ensure scholarships are made available to people not eligible for assistance through other state and federal programs.

"One of our objectives would be to make sure it is additional to, closing the gap, if you will, of what is otherwise available," he said.

Mr. Moore and Mr. James are traveling across the state, speaking to community and technical colleges to inform the administrations about their program and to get input on what would best help their students. The two visited Terra Community College in Fremont last week.

"The venture is certainly a noble one," Terra President Marsha Bordner said. "Anybody who is in the two-year college business has to appreciate the effort they're putting out."

The foundation will ask for support from college foundations in the future, but the pair are touring the state now just to spread the word.

Ms. Bordner said the Rhodes team might run into roadblocks when trying to solicit funds from college foundations that are trying to increase their own assets. But at the same time, she said, college foundation money has the potential to do more through the Rhodes foundation because any money given would essentially double, because it would go toward matching the state's promised \$10 million. "It's likely to be successful," she said.

The Rhodes foundation is relatively unparalleled because it specifically targets community and technical colleges, which the former governor championed during his four terms leading the state. There are other scholarship and grant programs available to students at all state schools and others that are geared toward particular areas of study.

Mr. Rhodes, who didn't finish college himself, promoted ideas such as having a college within 30 miles of every Ohio student and campaigned under the mantra of "jobs and progress." He served as governor from 1963 to 1971 and 1975 to 1983.

Mr. Rhodes died March 4, 2001, when he was 91 years old. In 2002, Lima Technical College was renamed James A. Rhodes State College in his honor.

"He got them accessible, but we want to make them affordable," Mr. Moore said.

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