



The Office Of State Treasurer Denise L. Nappier

Press Release

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STATE TREASURER NAPIER INVITES CONNECTICUT STUDENTS TO DREAM BIG ABOUT LIFE AFTER COLLEGE

2014 Dream Big! Competition Kicks Off With Highest Prizes Ever

HARTFORD, CT – State Treasurer Denise L. Nappier announced today the launch of the seventh annual CHET Dream Big! Competition, aimed at getting kindergarten through fifth grade students across the state to think about their education and careers.

Treasurer Nappier, Trustee for the Connecticut Higher Education Trust (CHET), Connecticut's 529 college savings plan, said, "This is one competition where the value of award prizes, while an incentive to draw contestants, is outweighed by its reputation for inspiring young people to think about what they would like to be or accomplish as adults, and reinforcing the importance of working hard in school and then going to college to help their dreams come true."

"It's also rewarding to see how proud the parents are to learn about their children's amazing imagination regarding their bright future, which helps to emphasize the value of saving today to pay for tomorrow's college costs," said Treasurer Nappier.

In 2013, the Dream Big! Competition received more than 2,300 entries from schools in two-thirds of the municipalities in the state. This year, the goal is to reach even more schools in even more towns to inform students, teachers and parents about the value of saving for college early.

The Dream Big! Competition, which officially launches January 27th, will award three grand prizes of \$1,000 CHET 529 college savings accounts – the highest prize amount in the competition's history. An additional 60 students will win a \$500 CHET account.

The competition features two entry categories based on grade level. Students in grades K through 3 are asked to submit an original drawing that answers the question, "What do I want to do after I go to college?" Fourth and fifth graders are asked to write an essay that responds to the question, "How will I change the world after I go to college?"

Entries are judged on five criteria: creativity, originality, portrayal of theme, spelling and grammar. Winners will be announced and recognized during a ceremony in May.

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The three \$1,000 grand prize winners will be chosen from all entries; one winner each will be chosen from grades K and 1; 2 and 3; and 4 and 5. Forty-eight winners (six per county) will be awarded a \$500 CHET account. Twelve statewide winners representing Connecticut's Review and Turnaround Schools also will be awarded a \$500 CHET account.

New Incentive Added for Teachers To Promote Contest

The Competition also has a new feature to encourage teachers to have their students participate in the program: The school with the highest number of entries will win \$500, and the 10 teachers who submit the greatest number of entries will win an iPad mini for their classroom.

“Teachers play a key role in prompting young students to dream about life after college, and we want to reward them for their continued support of the Dream Big! Competition,” said Treasurer Nappier.

Students who don't enter through their school can enter on their own. Parents or other caregivers may download the entry form and materials at www.CHETDreamBig.com.

Treasurer Nappier said the competition raises awareness of the importance of saving early for college. “All children deserve a chance to pursue their dreams. Parents who invest in a CHET account when their children are in elementary school are setting them up for a bright future. We want all Connecticut families to avail themselves of this affordable, accessible and tax advantaged way to save for higher education costs,” Treasurer Nappier said.

The Dream Big! Competition is sponsored by the State Treasurer's Office, TIAA-CREF Tuition Financing, Inc. and CHET. The deadline for entries is March 26, 2014. Official rules and full entry details can be found at www.CHETDreamBig.com or on Facebook at www.facebook.com/CHETcollegesavings. No purchase is necessary to enter or win.

The CHET direct-sold 529 college savings plan was established in 1997, and as of December 31, 2013 has grown to more than \$2 billion in assets and more than 91,000 accounts. For more information about CHET, visit www.aboutchet.com or call the customer service center at (866) 314-3939.

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