



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**COLLEGEINVEST'S FIRST STEP PROGRAM KICKS OFF 2025
WITH SURGE IN ENROLLMENT AND SAVINGS**

*Steadily Increasing Enrollment and \$12.8 Million in Matching Contributions
Strengthen the Path to Affordable Higher Education for Colorado Families*

Denver, CO, January 28, 2025 – CollegenInvest, Colorado's self-sustaining not-for-profit higher education savings resource, is continuing to incentivize young families to start saving for higher education through its innovative kickstarter program, First Step. Colorado families enrolling in the program surged by nearly 30% in 2024 and are now supporting education savings for more than 18,000 children born or adopted in Colorado since it launched in 2020. With steady growth in enrollment and ongoing savings contributions of more than 96% of those enrolled, CollegenInvest is helping to cut the cost of higher education for Colorado families.

First Step was created to encourage Colorado families to start saving for their children's postsecondary education. The program is the result of bipartisan legislation that was overwhelmingly passed by Colorado lawmakers and signed by Governor Jared Polis in 2019. It provides a one-time contribution, currently \$118, to a CollegenInvest account for all children born or adopted in the State of Colorado since January 1, 2020. The program is administered by CollegenInvest without using any taxpayer dollars or administrative fees and has disbursed \$2 million in awards. Parents have until their child's eighth birthday to claim their award.

In 2022, CollegenInvest enhanced the original legislation with a separate incentive that helps families develop strong savings habits that continue to build upon themselves. Every First Step family receives matching dollars on a portion of their future contributions, up to \$500 a year for 5 years; \$2,500 total. To date, this additional incentive has deposited more than \$12.8 million directly into the savings accounts of thousands of families. Based on new enrollments in 2024, First Step will add to the savings of Colorado families with approximately an additional \$10 million on April 1. In total, that will bring the amount of additional starter awards to more than \$22.8 million since 2020.

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“We are proud to see the continued success and growth of the First Step program as more and more Colorado families embrace the opportunity to invest in their children’s future,” commented Angela Baier, CollegenInvest’s chief executive officer. “With the additional incentives offered to First Step families, we are making higher education more accessible and affordable for the next generation. With the support of our state lawmakers and the commitment of Colorado families, First Step is not only helping to build savings accounts but also fostering a culture of financial literacy that will have lasting benefits for years to come.”

Parents or legal guardians of newborns or newly adopted children can find more information about First Step and its incentive program online by visiting www.collegeninvest.org/first-step.

Based on the principle that saving for post-secondary education is a vastly more effective strategy than borrowing, CollegenInvest is Colorado’s trusted resource in breaking down the financial barriers to attaining higher education, whether through an apprenticeship, trade or vocational schools, community college, or a four-year university. For more information, please visit us at collegeninvest.org

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About CollegenInvest

CollegenInvest is Colorado’s foremost resource designed specifically to help break down the financial barriers to attaining a higher education or vocational training. By providing expert information, easy-to-use planning tools, and an exceptionally diverse menu of tax-advantaged college savings plans, CollegenInvest works to help Coloradans maximize their potential to save for college. CollegenInvest currently represents \$12.7 billion in savings and 426,000 accounts, the majority of which are held by Colorado residents. Money saved in a CollegenInvest 529 savings plan can be used at any public or private college, university, community college, or vocational school, and now apprenticeships, anywhere in the country. For more information, visit collegeninvest.org, call 1-800-448-2424, or contact your financial advisor.

Important Considerations

To learn about CollegenInvest’s 529 programs, its objectives, risks, charges, expenses, limitations, restrictions and qualifications regarding the Plans’ benefits and potential tax advantages, please read and consider carefully the Program Disclosure Statements (PDS) available at collegeninvest.org before investing. Also, check with your or your beneficiary’s home state to learn if it offers tax or other benefits for investing in its own plan. Administered and issued by CollegenInvest. CollegenInvest and the CollegenInvest logo are registered trademarks of CollegenInvest. Copyright ©2025 CollegenInvest.

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