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President

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Members of the Senate Workforce Higher Education Committee:

On behalf of the entire Tiffin University (Tiffin/TU) community, thank you for this opportunity to express my very strong support for your consideration of increasing the Ohio College Opportunity Grant (OCOG) by 92 percent for Fiscal Year 2023 and an additional 60 percent in Fiscal Year 2024 as proposed in the Executive Budget.

Doing so would have tremendous impact on the students we serve as 31% are first-generation and the average household income for our entire student body is \$32,914. In FY 22-23, 536 of our students received OCOG and we estimate that this will be significantly more for the FY 23-24 incoming class as we have already surpassed that number. TU regularly enrolls students during the summer months, so this final number will be determined in September.

73% of Tiffin University students are Ohio residents. In FY 22-23, 999 of these Ohioans reported having a balance of cash, savings, and checking under \$1,000. With cost being one of the greatest hurdles for the neediest of our students, you will be essentially providing the single-most important resource they need to be successful.

We are especially grateful for the leadership of Governor DeWine and Chancellor Gardner as this continues their pursuit to impact Ohio students while focusing on building a workforce that leads the nation. Evidence of this is the Choose Ohio First Scholarship, which has been awarded to Tiffin University for the past three years.

Tiffin is equally committed to providing an affordable education, focused on meaningful academic majors as to equip graduates with the skills they need to be successful innovators in the 21st century workforce. Demonstrating this, TU opened the Center for Science & Technology in 2022, an 18,100 square foot facility that provides space for three labs, two large classrooms, and an exercise science lab. This investment allows us to continue to expand STEAM programs at a cost that regularly places our tuition as one of the most affordable in the state.

We share in the financial burden too. Tiffin University's institutional aid surpassed \$25 million in FY 22-23 and we also awarded over \$190,000 in annual and endowed scholarships to our students. We are working tirelessly to increase the amount of private funding our students receive.

Breaking from a traditional college model over a century ago, TU offers an alternative to conventional higher education. This divergence transformed TU into a new kind of institution reflected in our mission, which is to "educate students by linking knowledge to professional practice." With sustainable wages in high demand careers in mind, each graduate completes an internship in her/his respective discipline. In addition, each student experiences curriculum across all courses that integrates cultural intelligence and aptitude which further prepares the graduates for work in our globally vibrant society. Every student receives training and a credential in intercultural intelligence. See: <https://www.tiffin.edu/academics/dragon-core-curriculum/>.

Our programs are cutting-edge and all are focused on workforce. Two examples to highlight:

Tiffin University Cyber Center: <https://www.tiffin.edu/academics/school-of-science-tech-health/center-for-cyber-defense-forensics/>

- Received National Security Agency, CAE Community and the White House Office of the National Cyber Director (Federal) designation
- Ohio Cyber Range Institute, Ohio Department of Higher Education (State)
- Partnered with several organizations for training, consulting, research and development (Regional/Local) including CISCO Technologies Company (International Technology Company)

Tiffin University Drone Academy: <https://www.tiffin.edu/academics/drone-academy/>

- Launched in Spring 2022
- Designated to participate in the Unmanned Aircraft Systems Collegiate Training Initiative (UAS-CTI) by the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) and allows the Academy and University to collaborate with the FAA, in order to provide aid to students pursuing a career in drone aviation.
- Received a grant through the Ohio State Transportation Innovation Council. These innovative programs contribute to our student's ability to produce.

Having just celebrated Commencement, I'm happy to share that over the last five years 85-94% of our graduates (national average is 83%) are either employed or are continuing their education within 6 months of graduating.

Since 1888, Tiffin University's grit and determination has empowered generations of students to become their very best – in our communities and in the workforce. We stand ready to continue to provide a professional education for another 135 years.

Again, thank you for this opportunity to express my strong support for increases in the OCOG. It will have a meaningful and long-lasting impact on Tiffin students, our fellow citizens and the future workforce.

Sincerely,



Dr. Lillian Schumacher
President