



Indian Diaspora Council

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Shared heritage, aspirations and interests

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Indian Diaspora Council Celebrates Passage of New York State Excelsior Scholarship Program

In a letter dated April 10, 2017 to Hon. Andrew Cuomo, Governor of the State of New York, the **Indian Diaspora Council (IDC)** congratulated the Governor, his staff and the New York State Legislature, in combination with overwhelming community and constituent support, for passage of the Excelsior Scholarship program, making New York home of the nation's first accessible college program. New York State is leading the way for college affordability.

The IDC statement read: “Education should be a right, not a privilege; and education is crucial for individual financial security as well as continued progress of the nation. A highly educated population bodes well for the country and we should provide all children the opportunity to obtain a college education and succeed in life. The benefits far outweigh the savings in investing in the youths of today and provides a more secure guarantee of benefits to retirees.

The IDC statement continued: “Too many of our nation's young people cannot afford higher education or end up saddled with enormous debt which affects their achievement of financial security and a more progressive livelihood for themselves and their children. Too often the student loans are beneficial to the loaners and become long term burdens for the graduates.

The IDC statement continued: “We consider the passage of the Excelsior Scholarship program a significant achievement in the history of New York and we are grateful for your vision and determination for its passage. In New York State, every child will have the opportunity that education provides.

The IDC statement continued: “We place high value in your position as Governor of the State of New York working hard to address the needs and concerns of a very diverse and progressive state while leading the way for better and more secure livelihoods for all segments of society”.

Under the groundbreaking Excelsior Scholarship program, more than 940,000 middle-class families and individuals making up to \$125,000 per year will qualify to attend college tuition-free at all CUNY and SUNY two- and four-year colleges in New York State. The new program begins in the fall of 2017 and will be phased in over three years.

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