



Michael W. Frerichs

ILLINOIS STATE TREASURER

NOVEMBER 2018 E-NEWSLETTER



Treasurer's Note

College Plans Rated Best in Nation

Since I took office, I've made it a priority to create college savings programs that Illinois families can trust. I am very proud to announce that our 529 college savings plans have been rated best in the nation by independent analyst Morningstar.

Bright Start received gold medal honors for the second consecutive year. Bright Start plans are purchased directly by individuals. Illinois' Bright Start was one of only four 529 plans in the country to earn a Gold rating.

Bright Directions received a Silver medal for the fourth consecutive year. Silver is the highest rating available because there is no Gold medal in this category. Bright Directions plans are sold through investment advisors.

We are proud of these rankings and the progress we have made to improve our 529 plans and ensure that Bright Start and Bright Directions continues to offer high quality investment options at a low cost. We are honored that Morningstar sees the value in our programs.

According to Morningstar, Bright Start is considered a "Valedictorian" among its peers and continue to be one of the highest-rated plans in the country, thanks to its investment diversity and choice, low costs, and overall structure.

Morningstar recognized Bright Directions for its low-cost, well-constructed age-based portfolios, and exceptional selection of individual options.

Morningstar assigns Gold, Silver, and Bronze ratings based on five key pillars: Process, Performance, People, Parent, and Price. This year, both Bright Start and Bright Directions earned an upgrade in the Parent Pillar, which measures if the plan's leaders are good caretakers of college savers' investments.

In the past four years, we have worked to reduce fees so that more investment dollars go directly to college savings, which will result in less student debt. These changes have helped the plans grow to more than 600,000 accounts and more than \$10 billion in assets.

The Bright Start and Bright Directions programs are another way the Illinois Treasurer's Office is invested in you. We hope it pays dividends for your children through their lifetimes.

Sincerely,
Michael W. Frerichs
Illinois State Treasurer



Unclaimed Property

Military Medals

The Illinois Treasurer's Office secures more than 100 military medals as part of its unclaimed property program.

Examples of military medals include the Purple Heart, campaign ribbons, and accomplishment designations. The medals typically come to the treasurer's office by way of a bank's safe deposit box. For example, a family member might pass away and not tell relatives that the box exists.

Reuniting military medals is important and the medals are kept until the owners or family members are found. Since 2015, state treasurer Michael Frerichs' team has returned six Purple Heart medals to soldiers and their families. Four of the medals were earned in Vietnam; one from the Korean War and one from World War II.

The office also secures medals from World War I and items from the Civil War.

The treasurer's office is the custodian of unclaimed property, including lost bank accounts, insurance policy proceeds, and forgotten safe deposit boxes. Items are surrendered after private entities typically tried for at least three years to locate the owners. Because thousands of items are surrendered each year, residents should check I-Cash every six months. Visit www.illinoistreasurer.gov/ICASH for more information.

Frerichs' office never charges money to search for unclaimed property.



Illinois 200

Celebrate Illinois' Bicentennial With a Commemorative Coin

Illinois residents can celebrate our state's 200th birthday with a commemorative coin.

The silver coins are available for purchase at www.illinoistreasurer.gov. The price covers the cost to create and ship the coin. No taxpayer money is involved.

The Commemorative Medallions Act passed by the General Assembly authorizes the state treasurer to issue medallions or coins to commemorate popular events of statewide interest. The State of Illinois will celebrate its 200th birthday on Dec. 3, 2018. For more information and to follow updates about the Illinois Bicentennial events and celebrations, visit www.illinois200.com.

Illinois voters selected the coin design in a contest open to the state's residents. The design, called "The First 200," was chosen, through a statewide vote, among five finalists.



Rock Island, Rockford, Chicago and Orland Park

Illinois College Savings Summit

Illinois State Treasurer Michael Frerichs announced dates for the Illinois College Savings Summit to provide tax and investment professionals with important updates on Illinois' [Bright Start](#) and [Bright Directions](#) college savings programs, both considered among the best in the country, according to Morningstar. If you're interested in attending, please register by clicking [here](#).

Sessions will run at the following dates and times:

Monday, December 3

Rock Island

Holiday Inn Rock Island
226 17th Street.
Rock Island, IL 61201
2:30 – 4:30 p.m.

Tuesday, December 4

Rockford

Hilton Garden Inn
7675 Walton Street
Champaign, IL 61108
7:30 – 9:30 a.m.

Tuesday, December 4

Orland Park

Georgios Quality Inn & Suites
8800 West 159th Street
Orland Park, IL 60462
2:30 – 4:30 p.m.

Wednesday, December 12

Chicago

University of Chicago's Gleacher Center
450 Cityfront Plaza Drive
Chicago, IL 60611
1:30 – 3:30pm

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