



STUDENT APPLICATION

Seeking 9th through 11th grade college-bound youth in care

WHAT IS THE ACADEMY?

First Star Academy is a college preparation program which supports the academic and social emotional goals of youth in care throughout high school. This program includes monthly Saturday workshops that focus on life skills and academic preparation on the Illinois State University campus throughout the school year, opportunities for peer connections with other college-bound youth in care, and a three-week summer residential campus immersion program at Illinois State University. During the three-week summer immersion program, students will participate in academic enrichment classes, social support seminars, creative arts, and community service-learning projects. Caregiver engagement workshops are also provided as part of this program. First Star Academy students receive:

- College academic instruction (Math and English) – a real start toward college immersion
- Encouragement, motivational training, life skills instruction
- Mentoring opportunities with Illinois State University college students and college professors
- Individualized attention and services focused on college admissions
- Theatrical and artistic expression
- Group reflections and team building
- Enrichment activities (e.g., recreation; physical education; game nights)
- Field trips and Service learning
- A laptop computer and technical support





GETTING INVOLVED

1. **We are seeking students who meet these eligibility requirements by being:**
 - Current foster care youth
 - Currently in the 9th, 10th, or 11th grade with at least a 2.0 GPA
 - Youth interested in college and academic support
 - Youth interested in social emotional supports and life skill enrichment
 - Able to participate in Saturday Academies once a month at Illinois State University
 - Able to participate in the three-week residency Summer Immersion Program on Illinois State University campus **June 4, 2022 – June 25, 2022**
 - Have caregivers or a concerned adult who can provide supports
2. **Students should complete the student portion of the application and attach essay.**
3. **Student's caseworker should complete the Caseworker Recommendation portion.**
4. **Provide student's most recent report card noting student's GPA with guardian permission to release academic information to First Star Illinois State University Academy Director.**
5. **Email the entire application packet (3 items listed below) to: Stacey Wiggins, Interim Academy Director at firststaracademy@ilstu.edu.**
 - ✓ *Student Application with essay*
 - ✓ *Caseworker/Counselor Recommendation*
 - ✓ *Academic Report Card*

It is important that you complete your application as soon as possible, as there are a limited number of slots in the Program. **Priority deadline for application is December 18, 2021.**





SELECTION PROCESS

Once the completed application has been received, a selection committee will review all eligible candidates in order to select the top students to participate in First Star Academy. Selection will be based on a combination of:

- ✓ Academic potential
- ✓ Student written responses
- ✓ Adult and Caseworker recommendations
- ✓ Interview

Both the student and the adults making the recommendation will be notified regarding acceptance into First Star Academy. The student and caregiver will be required to attend a New Scholar Orientation; Scholars officially begin in March 2021.

For more information, please contact:

Stacey Wiggins
First Star Academy ISU Interim Director
Illinois State University
School of Social Work
275 S. University Street
Campus Box 4650
201 Rachel Cooper
Normal, IL 61790-4650

Phone: 309-438-8541

Email: swiggin@ilstu.edu

<https://adoptionresearch.illinoisstate.edu/projects/first-star-academy/>





STUDENT-PORTION OF APPLICATION

CONTACT INFORMATION	
Student Name:	Phone No.:
Student Email:	
Caregiver Name:	Phone No.:
Caregiver Email:	
Mailing Address:	
BACKGROUND INFORMATION	
Gender: ___ Male ___ Female	Date of Birth: / /
Ethnicity: <input type="checkbox"/> African-American/Black <input type="checkbox"/> American Indian <input type="checkbox"/> Asian-American <input type="checkbox"/> Chicano-a/Mexican-American <input type="checkbox"/> Latino-a <input type="checkbox"/> Pacific Islander <input type="checkbox"/> Filipino-American <input type="checkbox"/> White/Caucasian <input type="checkbox"/> Other <input type="checkbox"/> Prefer not to answer	
Caseworker Name:	Phone No.:
Caseworker's Email:	
Association/Agency:	
Placement: <input type="checkbox"/> Relative Foster Home <input type="checkbox"/> Non-relative Foster Home <input type="checkbox"/> Group Home <input type="checkbox"/> Legal Guardian <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____	



SCHOOL/EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

Current Grade Level:

Current cumulative GPA (use a 4.0 scale):

High School Name:

School Social Worker/liaison:

Phone No.:

School Social Worker/liaison's Email:

Please mark the programs in which you are a member (if any):

- AVID
 The College Partnership Program (CPP)
 The Early Identification Program (EIP)
 The Pathway to the Baccalaureate Program
 Project Discovery

List any other programs and extracurricular activities in which you have participated (i.e. sports, clubs, band, volunteer groups, student government, etc.):

Name of Club or Organization	Role	Years of Involvement (please circle)	Hours Per Month/ Months Per Year
		9 th 10 th 11 th	
		9 th 10 th 11 th	
		9 th 10 th 11 th	
		9 th 10 th 11 th	
		9 th 10 th 11 th	

Do you have a conflict with attending the monthly Saturday Academies on Illinois State University campus?
 Yes No

Do you have a conflict attending the 3-week Summer Immersion Program on Illinois State University campus, **scheduled June 4, 2022 – June 25, 2022?** Yes No





STUDENT-PORTION OF APPLICATION (Continued)

Open-ended Essay Response: 100 or more words (submit as attachment):

1. What are your career goals after high school?
2. What do you like most about yourself AND what would you like to improve?
3. What brings you the greatest joy in life?
4. What is something that you do best?
5. Why do you wish to enroll in First Star Academy?

Signature

The information presented in my application is accurate, honestly presented, and has been written solely by me.

Student Signature

Date

Caregiver's or Caseworker's Signature

Date





Mandatory Caseworker Recommendation

(This section is to be completed in confidence by the caseworker).

Name of Student you are recommending:

Name:		Agency:	
Phone:		Email:	
Student's Therapist Name:		Phone No.:	
Therapist's Email:			
Association/Agency:			

STUDENT'S INFORMATION

Does this student have a significant history of behavioral or school disciplinary concerns?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Does this student have significant mental health or medical needs that would prevent participation?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Does this student currently have an Individualized Education Program, Section 504, or receive other academic supports?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Is this student self-sufficient to manage his or her own health (i.e., able to commit to taking and self-administering their prescribed medication regularly and timely)?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Are there any topics and/or instances that may cause the student to display intense emotion?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Has this student ever been adjudicated delinquent based on the commission of first degree murder, attempt to commit first degree murder, aggravated criminal sexual assault, a felony, act in furtherance of a felony or act that would be a classified as a felony except for the applicant's age?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Is there additional necessary information that is pertinent and relevant to the health, safety or social-emotional development of the student or the student's contact with other youth or adults?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No

Please note: Yes responses must include proper consent for release of information forms for any confidential and or protected information.



I recommend this student for First Star Academy:	Recommended Enthusiastically	Not Recommended	Recommend with Reservation
For academic potential:	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
For character and personal promise	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
For ability to work well with others	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Overall recommendation	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Please respond to the following questions below (Submit as attachment):

1. Discuss the student's ability to succeed in a classroom setting without significant specialized academic resources or behavioral supports.
2. Share information about the student's goals, aptitude, character, and enthusiasm.
3. What coping strategies does the student utilize when in a stressful situation?
4. How would you describe the student's ability to self-regulate and self-soothe?

Submit Application to Stacey Wiggins Interim Director at firststaracademy@ilstu.edu.

For more information contact:

Stacey Wiggins
 First Star Academy ISU Interim Director
 309-438-5841
Swiggin@ilstu.edu

Illinois State University School of Social Work and Center for Child Welfare and Adoption Studies are proud partners of First Star Academy.

Dr. Deneca Avant
 Interim Department Chair, School of Social Work, Planning
 Planning and Development Specialist, ISU First Star Academy
 (309)438-4498
dwinfre@ilstu.edu
<http://socialwork.illinoisstate.edu/>
<http://adoptionresearch.illinoisstate.edu/>

