October 30, 2020

To the Joint Committee on Appropriations:

South Dakota One Call began safety training at Mitchell Technical Institute in 2013 and has expanded this training over several years to include each of the technical institutes. During this time, the South Dakota One Call Notification Board has recognized a need and opportunity to assist some of these students in their education. One Call partnered with Build Dakota in 2020 to educate students on the importance of safety, contacting 811 before digging, protecting buried utility infrastructure, and understanding South Dakota One Call laws.

Eighty-four percent of all students require financial aid to attend technical schools. Of those, 41 percent qualify for a federal Pell Grant indicating that they have significant financial need. Scholarships become crucial to their success. These scholarships not only encourage students to further their education, they also encourage students to remain in their South Dakota communities. Technology continues to advance, requiring an array of new skills. Competition for employees is fierce, and those with training and experience are needed. This makes great business sense for South Dakota. And employers investing in hiring educated employees through industry partnerships are likely to experience a greater return on their investment and higher profitability.

In January 2020, the South Dakota One Call Notification Board presented JCA with a request for authority to use One Call funds up to $20,000 to provide scholarships through the technical institutes in South Dakota. Students involved in areas of study which involve excavation would be eligible to participate. A large percentage of the required funds to support the scholarship program will be offset by penalties collected throughout the year through the One Call Complaint process. The Board believes that moving penalty payments to scholarships is a prudent use of One Call funds and that these scholarships are a solid practice in educating students and limiting future damages to buried infrastructure. In May 2020, JCA forwarded a Letter of Intent and requested a report by November 1st.

TECHNICAL SCHOOLS AND BOARD APPROVED STUDY AREAS

Lake Area Technical Institute, Watertown, South Dakota
--Building Trades and Heavy Equipment Operator

Western Dakota Technical Institute, Rapid City, South Dakota
--Construction Technology, Electrical Trades, and Plumbing Technology

Southeast Technical Institute, Sioux Falls, South Dakota
--Electrician, Plumbing, Civil Engineering Technology, Construction Management, and Land Surveying

Mitchell Technical Institute, Mitchell South Dakota
--Electrical Construction and Maintenance, Electrical Utilities and Substation Technology, and Telecommunications

SOUTH DAKOTA ONE CALL NOTIFICATION BOARD 811 SCHOLARSHIP POLICIES and GUIDELINES

Requirements to receive a South Dakota 811 Build Dakota Industry Partner scholarship include:

--The South Dakota One Call Board will work with an industry partner through Build Dakota to sponsor a student.
--Each student is offered a full tuition scholarship if they meet the following criteria through a signed contract with each school:
--The student will maintain a minimum of a C average or better.
--The student agrees to meet and maintain attendance requirements of the institute.
--The student agrees to attend a South Dakota One Call Damage Prevention presentation.
--The student agrees to provide a letter to the One Call Board describing why this scholarship is important to them and what it means to their career.
--The student agrees to work in South Dakota with the industry partner for a minimum of three years.
--If any of these contract requirements are not met, the student agrees to repay the sponsorship in full, at which time the scholarship money will also be returned and awarded to another deserving student.

Industry Partners and Scholarships Awarded at Technical Institutes

Lake Area Technical Institute
$5,000 South Dakota 811 Scholarship awarded to one Heavy Equipment Operator student.
Industry Partner - Kyburz-Carlson Construction, Aberdeen, South Dakota.

Western Dakota Technical Institute
Industry Partner – Jim Scull Construction, Rapid City, South Dakota.
$5,000 South Dakota 811 Scholarship awarded to one student in Electrical Trades.
$5,000 South Dakota 811 Scholarship awarded to one student in Construction Trades.

Southeast Technical Institute
No scholarship awarded in 2020.

Mitchell Technical Institute
No scholarship awarded in 2020.

The South Dakota One Call Notification Board is pleased to have been able to award these scholarships, along with industry partners, and the Build Dakota Scholarship Program. It is the belief of the One Call Board that assisting students in trades that involve digging will benefit from these scholarships by instilling knowledge of safety in a meaningful way through the use of best safety practices.

The South Dakota One Call Board wishes to thank the Joint Committee on Appropriations for its leadership and support in granting the authority to spend One Call Board funds for this program.

Respectfully,

Larry L. Janes
Executive Director
South Dakota One Call Notification Board

SOUTH DAKOTA ONE CALL, established in 1993
SOUTH DAKOTA 811, since 2013

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For information about South Dakota One Call, please visit www.SD811.com.