

RESEARCH NOTE

Achieving the Dream's Awards and Recognitions

The Achieving the Dream (ATD) Network recognizes the improvements and achievements of its network colleges with annual awards and recognitions.

ATD Student Awards

Each year the organization provides two types of awards to students attending ATD institutions. ATD awards the DREAM Student Scholars award and the Harvey Lincoln Student Scholarship annually to students.

- **DREAM Student Scholars:** “The DREAM Student Scholars is a student engagement and professional development opportunity for students from ATD institutions. It is a robust learning experience for student leaders (up to eight students) looking to make a difference on their campus and in their communities. In addition to the learning experience provided to students, the DREAM Scholars program integrates student voice and student experience into Achieving the Dream's annual DREAM conference.”¹
- **Harvey Lincoln Scholarship Fund:** “The Harvey Lincoln Scholarship Fund provides need-based scholarships for community college students who have persisted in their studies despite educational, personal, or financial obstacles and are attending Achieving the Dream Institutions. The scholarship award is \$1,000.” Scholarship funds may be used to cover any cost related to attending College (tuition, fees, books, supplies, equipment, transportation, food, and other living expenses).²

As an ATD Network institution, NOVA is eligible to nominate students to be recipients of the scholarship and award opportunities. If you would like to nominate a deserving student for an award, please send your nomination to NOVA's ATD Core Team Leader, Dr. George Gabriel (ggabriel@nvcc.edu), for college submission.

Network College Awards and Recognition

ATD provides three types of recognition to network colleges annually and celebrates the awards and recognition at the annual DREAM conference. ATD awards the designations of Leader College and Leader College of Distinction (new in 2019) and the most esteemed award, the Leah Meyer Austin Award.

¹ ATD DREAM Student Scholars: <https://www.achievingthedream.org/dream-student-scholars>

² ATD's Harvey Lincoln Student Scholarship: <https://www.achievingthedream.org/harvey-lincoln-student-scholarship>

- **Leader College:** An active, ATD Network institution that has identified and implemented strategies that have been proven to be successful, showing at least three years of sustained improvement can apply for the Leader College designation. The institution must demonstrate their sustained improved in a set of “Key Performance Indicators” and demonstrate good standing within the ATD network and their accrediting body (e.g., SACSCOC).³
 - In 2010, NOVA was recognized as an ATD Leader College and has continued to earn the designation.
- **Leader College of Distinction:** A new award developed in 2019 to “honor colleges who have gone above and beyond in closing the gaps and increasing student success.” “The Leader College of Distinction must show improvement on three student outcome metrics including at least one lagging indicator such as completion or transfer. In addition, they must show the narrowing of equity gaps on at least two metrics. These more rigorous requirements are meant to motivate sustained and aggressive reform efforts that result in far greater student success and equity.”⁴
 - As a Leader College for the past ten years, one of NOVA’s goals is to receive the Leader College of Distinction designation in the near future.
- **Leah Meyer Austin (LMA) Award:** The “Leah Meyer Austin Award [is] the highest distinction a college in the Achieving the Dream (ATD) Network can earn. ATD gives this award annually to a college that employs a holistic approach to reducing equity gaps between student groups and increasing success for all. The award recognizes institutional strength, aligned policies and procedures, a student-focused culture, and notable increases in student outcomes.”⁵
 - In order for NOVA to join the ranks of the top performing community colleges in the nation and to receive the LMA Award, the College must improve in the following set of metrics considered for the award:
 - Four-year improvement in the IPEDS graduation rate of at least three percentage points⁶
 - Four-year improvement in the National Student Clearinghouse (NSC) two-year college graduation rate of at least three percentage points⁷
 - Six-year bachelor's degree completion rate at or above the national level
 - Selection as one of the top 150 colleges in the competition for the Aspen Prize for Community College Excellence⁸

NOVA has been a member of the ATD Network for 12 years and made significant improvements in the field of student success. The college has developed a robust student success agenda that is intended to improve outcomes within the student success metrics. Achieving these goals will better position NOVA to increase the college’s status within the network and the opportunity to apply for the Leah Meyer Austin Award.

³ ATD Leader College: <https://www.achievingthedream.org/leader-college>

⁴ ATD Leader College of Distinction: <https://www.achievingthedream.org/leader-college-of-distinction>

⁵ ATD Leah Meyer Austin Award <https://www.achievingthedream.org/awards-recognition/leah-meyer-austin-award>

⁶ Graduation rate as defined by the Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS): graduation of first-time, full-time students within 150 percent of normal time.

⁷ Graduation rate as defined by the National Student Clearinghouse (NSC): graduation of first time ever in (two-year) college, degree seeking, both full-time and part-time students within six years of initial enrollment.

⁸ See Research Note 68-19 for the Aspen Prize criteria and process.