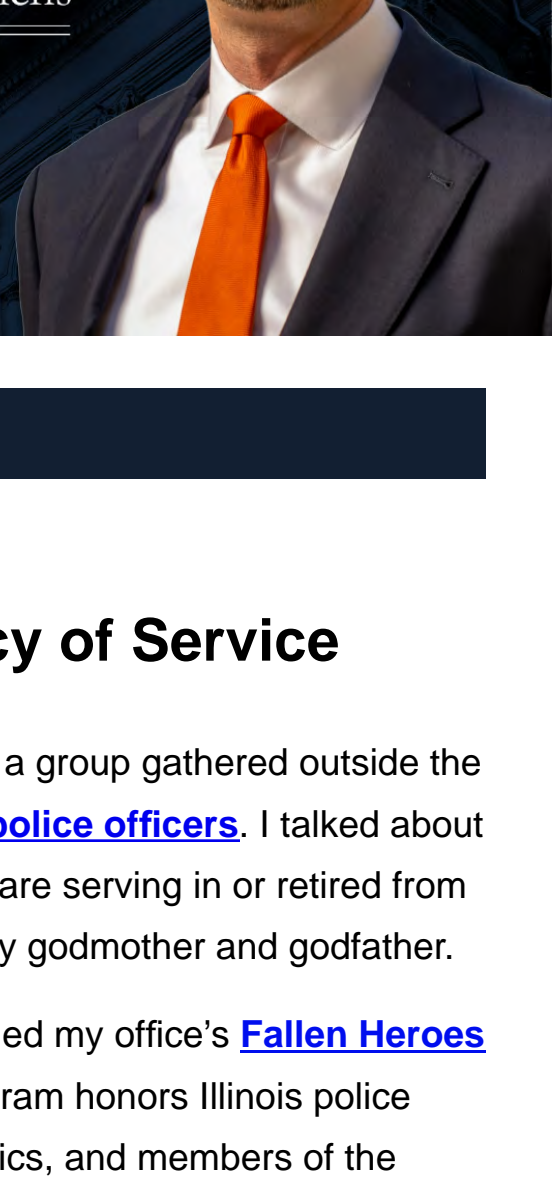


Helping the children of deceased first responders achieve their educational goals after high school.

[View online version](#)



Michael W. Frerichs
ILLINOIS STATE TREASURER



Treasurer's Note

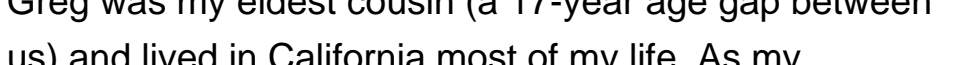
August 21, 2024

Honoring a Legacy of Service

Back in the spring, I spoke to a group gathered outside the Capitol [to remember fallen police officers](#). I talked about several family members who are serving in or retired from law enforcement, including my godmother and godfather.

During that speech, I mentioned my office's [Fallen Heroes Scholarship Fund](#). The program honors Illinois police officers, firefighters, paramedics, and members of the Armed Forces who died while serving their state and country at home or overseas. The families of these fallen heroes can apply to receive a \$5,000 [Bright Start College Savings scholarship](#) for each child.

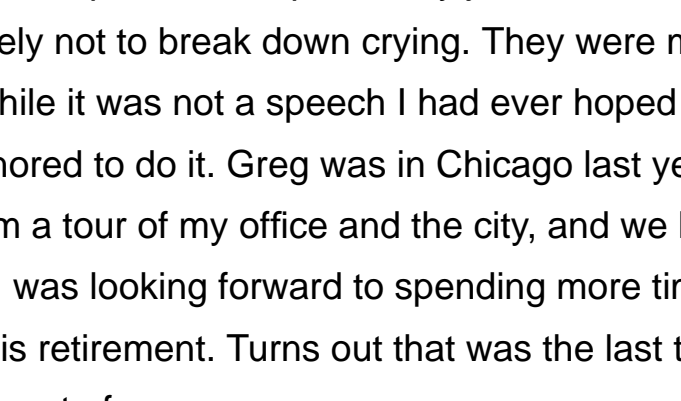
This program was in my thoughts recently when I was asked to give the eulogy at my godfather's funeral in Rantoul. Greg Palmer was a police officer for 29 years. He received many accolades, including two life-saving awards from his department and recognition from Mothers Against Drunk Driving.



My godfather, Greg Palmer, served as a police officer for nearly three decades. He is standing next to his sister and my godmother, Kathy. The photo below shows the two of them with me as a baby.

Greg died on my birthday. Ten days before, he thought he had a bad cold, went to the hospital, and was diagnosed with pneumonia. During his stay, sepsis set in, and a few days later, he passed. He had just turned 68 and was planning to retire in September.

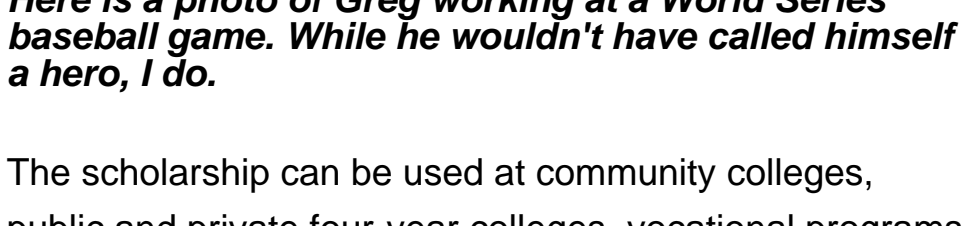
Greg was my eldest cousin (a 17-year age gap between us) and lived in California most of my life. As my godfather, he always remembered my birthday. Greg loved to travel. As I got older, we would trade stories and recommendations on what we should see and do on trips.



Family asked me to give the eulogy because they figured I give a lot of speeches as part of my job, so I'd be the one most likely not to break down crying. They were mostly right. While it was not a speech I had ever hoped to give, I was honored to do it. Greg was in Chicago last year, and I gave him a tour of my office and the city, and we had dinner. I was looking forward to spending more time with him in his retirement. Turns out that was the last time we spoke face to face.

Greg was buried next to his father, a Kankakee police officer, in a cemetery in the country. At the gravesite, I thought about the danger Greg had put himself in over the years.

Some police officers don't make it to retirement. There are children of fallen police officers, firefighters, and soldiers whose dad or mom didn't return home. We want to be there to support them through our [Fallen Heroes Scholarship](#).



Here is a photo of Greg working at a World Series baseball game. While he wouldn't have called himself a hero, I do.

The scholarship can be used at community colleges, public and private four-year colleges, vocational programs, trade schools, and now, apprenticeships.

Greg took his job protecting the public very seriously. He also worked to take care of the families of fallen heroes and told me he appreciated this scholarship program. If you know someone who would qualify for a Fallen Hero Scholarship, please reach out to them, or my office to [let us know](#). It was tough to lose my godfather, but helping children who lost a parent seems like a fitting way to honor his legacy of service.

Sincerely,

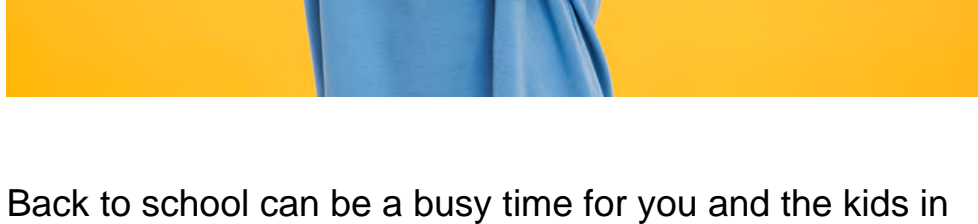
Michael W. Frerichs

Illinois State Treasurer

In Fiscal Year 2024,
We Returned a Record
\$301 MILLION
in Missing Money to
321,558 PEOPLE

ILLINOIS STATE TREASURER
MICHAEL W. FRERICHS
ICASH
DISCOVER WHAT'S YOURS

Back to School Isn't Just for Kids



Back to school can be a busy time for you and the kids in your life – buying school supplies, re-adjusting schedules, and getting back in the learning mindset. What if kids weren't the only ones getting into a learning mindset this fall?

Expanding your knowledge and growing your skills in money management can help you build a brighter financial future. The [Illinois Financial Wellness Hub](#) is a free platform with educational tools and resources to help you do just that.

Whether you're just getting started on your financial journey or nearing the finish line, FinWell Hub is here for you through it all.

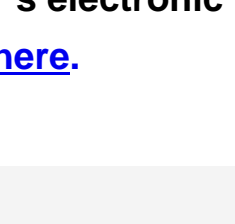
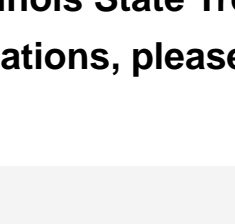
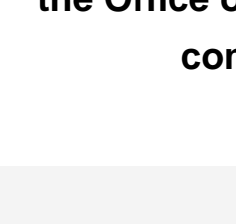
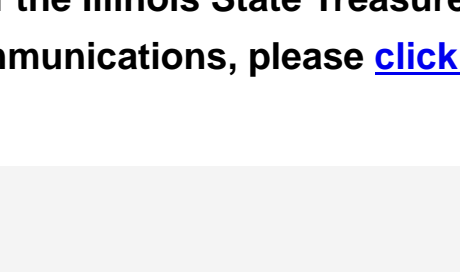
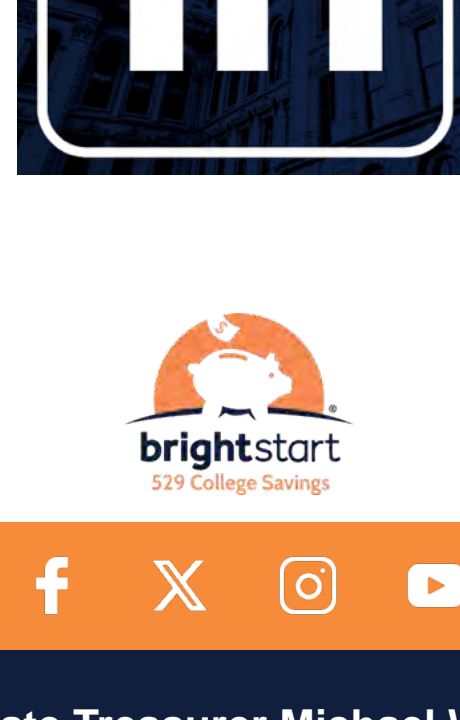
- Budgeting
- Saving for an emergency
- Managing debt
- Buying a home
- Retirement planning
- Estate planning
- Investing
- And more! The FinWell Hub has different ways to learn, like videos, articles, courses, and more.

[Courses](#) are short, interactive modules and many of them take only 20 minutes to complete.

Finding answers to your money questions from a reliable source can also be an opportunity to be a role model to your children. Set aside learning time where you both sit down together, them with homework and you with FinWell Hub. Tell them what you're learning about and ask if they have any questions. Opening the door to money conversations can be a great start to [teach kids healthy financial habits](#).

Content on the FinWell Hub is available online and on-demand 24/7/365. You can access it from a phone, tablet, or computer – no need to download an app. What are you waiting for? [Create a free account today](#) and start building the foundation to your financial future.

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