



# OFFICE OF ILLINOIS STATE TREASURER

MICHAEL W. FRERICHS

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CONTACT:

Adriana Colindres 217.558.1920

Eric Krol 312.814.1252

## **In Observance of 529 Day, Treasurer Michael Frerichs Encourages Families to Save for Future Education through 529 College Savings Accounts**

Visit [BrightStart.com](https://BrightStart.com) or call 877.432.7444

With the arrival of May 29, also known as 529 Day and National College Savings Day, State Treasurer Michael Frerichs is reminding families it's always a good time to open or add to an [Illinois 529 college savings plan](#).

Frerichs' office has been partnering with Illinois children's museums to create special opportunities for families to learn more about college savings plans while taking advantage of a free or discounted admission.

"If a child knows he or she has a college savings plan, that child is three times more likely to attend college. When an adult opens and contributes to a child's savings account, it is a way of saying, 'I believe in you.' This is an especially powerful message to send to young people," Frerichs said. "529 Day is a fun designation meant to help families learn about the crucial role that a 529 account can play in children's future success."

The Treasurer's Office recently has sponsored free and discounted admission days at other children's museums throughout Illinois, including in Oak Park, Naperville, Peoria and Edwardsville. A Springfield event is scheduled for June. Families have picked up information about Bright Start 529 College Savings and asked State Treasurer's staff questions about the program.

Several years ago, Illinois lawmakers approved designating May 29 as 529 College Savings Day "to help raise awareness about the escalating costs of higher education and the importance of saving for college with the help of 529 college savings plans."

Earlier this month, state lawmakers adopted a resolution encouraging "all Illinoisans to explore the benefits that 529 college savings plans offer families." The resolution pointed out that college savings plans such as Bright Start and Bright Directions help families reduce or eliminate future student loan debt and that the "contributions families make today pay off in the form of an increased earning potential for their children in the future."

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In Illinois, 529 college savings plans are tax-advantaged investment vehicles to help save for college. Individuals ages 18 and over, with a Social Security Number or Tax Identification Number, and a U.S. address can open an account. Families have the option to open a Bright Start College Savings account directly online or, for those who prefer to work with a financial advisor, Treasurer Frerichs also administers the Bright Directions Advisor-Guided 529 College Savings plan. During Treasurer Frerichs' administration, the combined 529 plans have more than doubled in assets to \$19 billion and have grown to more than 890,000 accounts. Additionally, Frerichs has worked with program manager Union Bank & Trust to reduce fees to ensure more investment dollars go directly to college savings.

The Illinois Treasurer's Office's 529 plans offer a variety of investment options and flexibilities for families. Anyone can contribute to an account, and there are no enrollment fees, minimum contributions or minimum balance requirements to open or maintain one. There are tax benefits, too. Earnings are free from federal and state taxes if used for qualified education expenses, and up to \$10,000 per year in contributions (\$20,000 per year for married couples filing jointly) to an account are eligible for an Illinois income tax deduction.

For more information, visit [BrightStart.com](https://BrightStart.com) or call 877.432.7444.

### **About Illinois Treasurer Michael Frerichs**

The Illinois State Treasurer's Office is a powerful economic engine that invests in people to drive prosperity, development and growth throughout the state. As State Treasurer, Michael Frerichs (FRAIR'iks) is the state's Chief Investment and Banking Officer and actively manages approximately \$60 billion. The investments help families pay for college and trade school; workers save for a dignified retirement; and local governments process bill payments more efficiently so they can pass along the savings to taxpayers. The office provides financial institutions money to loan to farmers, small business owners, and qualified individuals at below-market rates because better jobs create stronger communities. The office operates the state's largest consumer-protection initiative, the missing money I-Cash program, which has returned a record-breaking \$1.9 billion since Frerichs was elected. For more news about the State Treasurer's Office, please follow Treasurer Frerichs on X (formerly Twitter) at [@ILTreasurer](https://twitter.com/ILTreasurer), Threads [@iltreasurer](https://www.threads.net/@iltreasurer), Instagram at [ILTreasurer](https://www.instagram.com/ILTreasurer), [LinkedIn](https://www.linkedin.com/company/iltreasurer) and on Facebook at [Invested in You – Treasurer Michael Frerichs](https://www.facebook.com/InvestedInYou-TreasurerMichaelFrerichs).

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The Bright Start Direct-Sold College Savings Program (“Bright Start”) and the Bright Directions Advisor-Guided 529 College Savings Program (“Bright Directions”) are part of the Illinois College Savings Pool and are designed to qualify as qualified tuition programs under the provisions of Section 529 of the Internal Revenue Code. Bright Start and Bright Directions are sponsored by the State of Illinois and administered by the Illinois State Treasurer, as Trustee. Union Bank & Trust Company serves as Program Manager, and Northern Trust Securities, Inc. acts as Distributor of the advisor-sold plan. Investments in Bright Start and Bright Directions are not guaranteed or insured by the State of Illinois, the Illinois State Treasurer, Union Bank & Trust Company, Northern Trust Securities, Inc., the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation, or any other entity.

**An investor should consider the investment objectives, risks, and charges and expenses associated with municipal fund securities before investing. This and other important information is contained in the fund prospectuses and the Bright Start Program Disclosure Statement and Bright Directions Program Disclosure Statement (issuer’s official statement), which can be obtained from your financial professional, on [BrightStart.com](http://BrightStart.com), and [BrightDirections.com](http://BrightDirections.com) and should be read carefully before investing. You can lose money by investing in a portfolio. Each of the portfolios involves investment risks, which are described in the Program Disclosure Statement.**

**An investor should consider, before investing, whether the investor’s or designated beneficiary’s home state offers any state tax or other benefits such as financial aid, scholarship funds, and protection from creditors that are only available for investments in such state’s 529 plan. Investors should consult a tax advisor.**

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