



785.625.7070 [Office] 877.625.7872 [Toll Free] 2418 Vine, Hays, KS 67601

Technology Education Sponsorship Program Agreement

Program Intent

It is Nex-Tech’s intent to sponsor the below-mentioned student to an eighteen-month, NCK Tech telecommunications or information technology program by covering the cost of the student’s required tuition and books (and tools, if applicable) and providing internship and employment opportunities for the student, as outlined. Equally, the participating student intends to complete this Technology Education Sponsorship Program as outlined, including program completion at NCK Tech, and interning and agreeing to a three-year, post-graduation employment commitment with Nex-Tech.

To have qualified for this opportunity, the student must have applied for and been accepted to NCK Tech’s Telecommunications & Network Technology, Information Technology, or other Information Technology block program and must have applied for and been accepted to Nex-Tech’s Technology Education Sponsorship Program. While not required, the student may also have completed at least one internship or work study/apprenticeship in a telecommunications or technology-related field during high school through Nex-Generation Round Up for Youth, Inc.

Agreement

This agreement confirms Nex-Tech’s intent to sponsor this student, and, subsequently, provide internship and employment, as outlined. The agreement also confirms the student’s acceptance of the sponsorship and intention to complete the program, intern with Nex-Tech for the specified period(s), and to accept employment with Nex-Tech for the minimum, three-year period following graduation.

This agreement is made and entered into as of _____(Date) by and between:

Rural Telephone Service Co., Inc. (dba Nex-Tech)
P.O. Box 158, 145 N. Main
Lenora, KS 67645

AND

Student: _____

Address: _____

City, State ZIP: _____

_____ (herein, “STUDENT”) has been accepted into the eighteen-month, ___TELECOMMUNICATIONS or ___INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY program at NCK Tech in _____, Kansas. Upon successful completion of the program, STUDENT expects to receive an Associate of Applied Science Degree.



Nex-Tech's Technology Education Sponsorship Program will enable STUDENT to receive an education and training that will result in a full-time employment commitment by the student for a **minimum of three years** with Nex-Tech in one of a variety of communications-related fields, including, but not limited to, construction, help desk, engineering, field operations, and information technology, to be determined by Nex-Tech.

Tuition and Fee Assistance

Nex-Tech agrees to sponsor STUDENT in attending the program at NCK Tech by paying 100% of NCK Tech's required costs for tuition, books, and required tools* for the eighteen-month program. Nex-Tech will pay the fees directly to NCK Tech in STUDENT'S name in semester installments. STUDENT is responsible for all additional expenses incurred while attending NCK Tech. OTHER SCHOLARSHIPS: If STUDENT receives scholarships from other sources, those will be applied to STUDENT's NCK Tech account prior to Nex-Tech's sponsorship.

***TOOLS:** *The tools allowance (currently up to \$500) is based on NCK Tech's required, telecommunications tools list for the school year in which the student enters the program. Sponsored students may purchase the required tools on their own or may request them from Nex-Tech's available inventory. Only one set will be provided. If STUDENT loses or damages a tool due to negligence, he or she will be responsible for replacing it. If STUDENT withdraws from the program, he or she will either return the tools to Nex-Tech or reimburse Nex-Tech, as noted under Early Withdrawal & Forfeiture. "Tools" does not include computers / computer devices / computer equipment, fiber-optics splicing equipment, or other items not included on NCK Tech's tools list.*

If STUDENT withdraws or discontinues from NCK Tech's program for any reason prior to graduation, he or she forfeits the sponsorship agreement and will be responsible for reimbursing Nex-Tech for paid tuition, books, and tools, as noted under "Employment Requirements" below, as well as paid housing allowance (if applicable) – see attached HOUSING ADDENDUM.

Academic Performance

STUDENT agrees to participate fully in the program at NCK Tech, to the best of his or her ability; remain in good standing with NCK Tech; and maintain at least a "C" grade point average. STUDENT must submit transcripts or posted grades within 15 days of completion of each semester to Nex-Tech's Human Resources department.

Internship Requirements

- 1) Nex-Tech may give preference to students who have completed at least one, internship or work study/apprenticeship program in a telecommunications or technology-related field through Nex-Generation Round Up for Youth, Inc.
- 2) STUDENT is required to intern at Nex-Tech through the Nex-Generation Student Internship Program during the summer between their first and second years in NCK Tech's program. (Depending upon STUDENT'S schedule, he or she may request to participate in work study or work part-time for Nex-Tech during the school year.)
- 3) As part of state accreditation for completion of the degree program, NCK Tech may also require STUDENT to participate in an internship for credit hours during program completion.

Employment Requirements

This sponsorship program requires STUDENT to employ with Nex-Tech for a minimum of three years following graduation from NCK Tech's eighteen-month program. During employment, Nex-Tech may provide additional on-the-job or certification trainings, which may be paid by Nex-Tech on behalf of the STUDENT/employee. Consistent with Nex-Tech's Employee Training Reimbursement policy, if the employment relationship is terminated, voluntarily or involuntarily, prior to completion of the three years, STUDENT will be responsible for reimbursing Nex-Tech for total training expenses, including sponsored tuition, books, and tools, as follows:



Early Withdrawal & Forfeiture:

If STUDENT withdraws or discontinues from NCK Tech's program for any reason prior to graduation or elects not to employ with Nex-Tech, STUDENT forfeits the sponsorship agreement and must immediately reimburse Nex-Tech for **100% of paid tuition, books, and tools**, within 15 days of forfeiture.

Reimbursement Policy – Within Year 1:

If STUDENT leaves Nex-Tech within the first year of employment following graduation at NCK Tech, STUDENT will be responsible for reimbursing Nex-Tech for **100% of paid tuition, books, and tools, as well as 100% of any "total training expenses" of \$3,000 or more provided during employment by Nex-Tech.** ("Total training expenses" will include the cost of class enrollment, professional certification testing fees, travel, hotel, meals, and any other associated expenses of \$3,000 or more.) Payment will be withheld from STUDENT'S final paycheck, with any remaining balance due within 15 days of employment termination.

Reimbursement Policy – Within Year 2:

If STUDENT leaves the employment of Nex-Tech within the second year of employment, STUDENT will be responsible for **75% of paid tuition, books, and tools, as well as 100% of any additional training expenses provided during employment by Nex-Tech.** (Total training expenses will include the cost of class enrollment, professional certification testing fees, travel, hotel, meals, and any other associated expenses of \$3,000 or more.) Payment will be withheld from STUDENT'S final paycheck, with any remaining balance due within 15 days of employment termination.

Reimbursement Policy – Within Year 3:

If STUDENT leaves the employment of Nex-Tech within the third year of employment, STUDENT will be responsible for **50% of paid tuition, books, and tools.** Payment will be withheld from STUDENT'S final paycheck, with any remaining balance due within 15 days of employment termination.

Reimbursement Policy – Years 3+:

Once STUDENT has completed three, full years of employment at Nex-Tech, subject to current Nex-Tech policy, STUDENT will be exempt from tuition, books, and tools reimbursement.

Employee Benefits

Nex-Tech provides a comprehensive benefit package. Some benefits are specific to full-time employment; others are available to part-time, seasonal, and intern employees. All benefits are subject to current company policy and plan specifications and are outlined in the Employee Handbook (available by contacting Human Resources).

Following are benefit examples:

- 401K Retirement Plan
- Paid Holidays
- Accrued Vacation and Sick Leave
- Health/Vision/Dental Insurance
- Life and Accident Insurance
- Supplemental Plans and Health Savings Accounts
- Free and Discounted Residential Communication Services
- E-billing and ACH Payment of Communications Services
- Participation in Wellness, Safety, and Other Company Committees
- Employee Training and Development
- Uniform Allowance
- Employee Assistance Plan



Our Culture: The Nex-Tech Way

Customer service is our passion and our hallmark. Since 1951, Nex-Tech has been a provider of communication services to rural communities, offering state-of-the-art technology services to both residential and business customers. Participating students will experience and become an integral part of Nex-Tech's culture, *The Nex-Tech Way*:

Enjoying the small-town environment we live in ourselves, our passion is to make life better for our friends and neighbors, our customers, by giving them access to high-speed, high-tech services that some only dream about, and supporting them like no other. Our team believes in the following top ten culture initiatives:

1. **Communication** – we expect communication in all directions to ensure everyone understands where we are going as a team;
2. **Transparency** – transparency is critical to making sure everyone is on the same page and has the most up-to-date information to make the best decisions possible;
3. **Integrity** – doing the right thing is always the right thing;
4. **Consistency** – having consistent processes allows us to scale in an efficient way;
5. **Questioning** – we expect everyone to ask questions in a professional manner, if they don't understand why we are doing what we are doing;
6. **Humility** – we can all learn from others, and this begins with an open mind;
7. **Innovation** – there is always a better way to do something; if you have an idea, share it;
8. **Accountability** – we are all accountable for our actions; we are also responsible to hold others accountable no matter their position, department, or title;
9. **Growth** – in an ever-changing world, we must all continually grow our skill sets; and
10. **Fun** – we are never too busy to have fun.

Participating students represent Nex-Tech in all facets of their internship and employment and are expected to help maintain the goodwill and esteem of Nex-Tech and the operations owned by, operated by, or affiliated with Nex-Tech or any of its members, suppliers, employees, patrons, customers, or others who may have – now or at any time hereafter – business relations with Nex-Tech. Depending upon position, students may be subject to non-compete agreements and criminal background checks. Consistent with Nex-Tech's policies, each participant must sign a confidentiality agreement.

Questions: Contact Nex-Tech Human Resources at 877-625-7872.

Signatures: See Page 5.

Housing Addendum: See Page 6.



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Technology Education Sponsorship Program Agreement

STUDENT and Nex-Tech agree to comply with the terms and conditions outlined in this agreement.

STUDENT'S EMPLOYMENT COMMITMENT

(Please initial beside the level of employment commitment to which you are agreeing.)

_____ 3 Years

_____ 4 Years (with Housing Allowance)

SIGNATURES

**RURAL TELEPHONE SERVICE CO INC
(DBA NEX-TECH):**

(Print Name)

(Title)

(Signature)

(Date)

STUDENT*:

(Print Name)

(Signature)

(Date)

***PARENTAL CONSENT (required if student is under 18 years of age):**

(Print Name)

(Date)

(Parent's Signature)



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Technology Education Sponsorship Program Agreement HOUSING ADDENDUM

Housing Allowance Available with Four-year Employment Commitment

Nex-Tech will offer an allowance towards on- or off-campus housing to a student who commits to **four years of employment** with Nex-Tech. The allowance will be determined by Nex-Tech's management, with consideration of current on-campus housing rates posted by NCK Tech and Fort Hays State University, as well as rental rates in the local market. Final determination will also be based on the student's need. *The student must provide proof of on- or off-campus housing by presenting documentation from the college or a copy of their current rental agreement.*

If the student's housing is already covered by other funding sources (scholarships, grants, etc.), Nex-Tech reserves the right to withdraw its offer to provide a housing allowance to the student. Additionally, no allowance will be provided to students who reside with their parents or at the residence of other family members.

Following graduation from NCK Tech and the student becoming employed in a full-time position with Nex-Tech, he or she will no longer be eligible for a housing allowance.

Early Withdrawal & Forfeiture:

If STUDENT withdraws or discontinues from NCK Tech's program for any reason prior to graduation or elects to not become employed by Nex-Tech, STUDENT forfeits the sponsorship agreement and must immediately reimburse Nex-Tech for **100% of paid tuition, books, tools, and housing allowance**, within 15 days of forfeiture.

Reimbursement Policy – Within Year 1:

If STUDENT leaves Nex-Tech within the first year of employment following graduation at NCK Tech, STUDENT will be responsible for reimbursing Nex-Tech for **100% of paid tuition, books, tools, and housing allowance, as well as 100% of any "total training expenses" of \$3,000 or more provided during employment by Nex-Tech.** ("Total training expenses" will include the cost of class enrollment, professional certification testing fees, travel, hotel, meals, and any other associated expenses of \$3,000 or more.) Payment will be withheld from STUDENT'S final paycheck, with any remaining balance due within 15 days of employment termination.

Reimbursement Policy – Within Year 2:

If STUDENT leaves the employment of Nex-Tech within the second year of employment, STUDENT will be responsible for **75% of paid tuition, books, tools, and housing allowance, as well as 100% of any additional training expenses provided during employment by Nex-Tech.** (Total training expenses will include the cost of class enrollment, professional certification testing fees, travel, hotel, meals, and any other associated expenses of \$3,000 or more.) Payment will be withheld from STUDENT'S final paycheck, with any remaining balance due within 15 days of employment termination.

Reimbursement Policy – Within Year 3:

If STUDENT leaves the employment of Nex-Tech within the third year of employment, **STUDENT will be responsible for 50% of paid tuition, books, tools, and housing allowance.** Payment will be withheld from STUDENT'S final paycheck, with any remaining balance due within 15 days of employment termination.

Reimbursement Policy – Years 3+:

If STUDENT leaves the employment of Nex-Tech within the fourth year of employment, without having completed a full, fourth year, STUDENT will be responsible for **25% of paid housing allowance.** Payment will be withheld from STUDENT's final paycheck, with any remaining balance due within 15 days of employment termination.

Subject to current Nex-Tech policy, STUDENT is **exempt from tuition, books, tools, and training expense reimbursement** upon completion of three, full years of employment.