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## **Our Opinion: Sound investment**

**Envision contributes \$175,000 to local students**

In June, the credit union, which has been the top sponsor of the wildly popular Best and Brightest Awards program, announced that it was committing \$175,000 to the program. On Wednesday, the organization made good on that promise by delivering a check in the amount promised.

This type of financial commitment says a lot about Tallahassee's business community and its support of programs that have strong track records. But more important, it says a lot about Envision's faith in our local middle- and high-school students. The \$175,000 investment ensures that the awards program will go on through 2017.

Since 2006, when the program was created by Tallahassee philanthropist and business owner Ron Sachs, 900 students have walked the stage to be honored for their achievements in a myriad of fields, including the arts, drama, social science and technology. Envision's commitment is important because these students are not selected just for their grade-point averages, but for the commitment and potential that they demonstrate to fellow students, teachers and staff. In other words, they are judged not only on their talent but also for their school involvement and community service.

Applications are available for seniors interested in applying through their school's guidance offices. The deadline is Feb. 1. The students are vying for a share of \$55,000 in scholarships. Eighth-grade students also can compete through an essay contest that awards \$500 to the winner, with the runner-up and honorable-mention winner also receiving cash prizes.

Laura Rogers, program director for World Class Schools and coordinator for the annual awards program, said, "This act of tremendous generosity will have a profound impact on the future education of so many of Leon County's students. We simply could not do it without Envision's leadership."

Envision isn't the only business putting its financial resources behind this program, and we applaud all who contribute. This week's major commitment is a good example for any business that is making decisions on ways to support its community.