

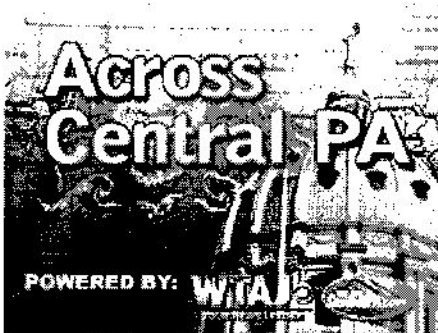
## Challenge Program Gets Big Grant

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Reported by: Kevin Flanigan  
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SOMERSET, SOMERSET COUNTY - A program that uses cash rewards to encourage high school students has landed some significant financial support. The Challenge Program is getting a big grant from a major retailer.

In the eight years since the Challenge Program was established in Johnstown, hundreds of high achieving students have gotten cash rewards though the effort.

It's a program that is now getting significant support from the Walmart Corporation.

A special assembly was held in the auditorium of the Somerset Senior High because it is one of the schools that will share in the funding announced on Friday.

Thanks to a \$51,000 grant from the Walmart Foundation, dozens of students across the region will be getting \$250 Challenge Program Checks at the end of this school year.

The Challenge Grant Awards are given to four sophomores, four juniors and four seniors from each participating school at the end of the academic year.

Past winners say these checks make a difference.

The individual awards are based on academic excellence, attendance, community service, and academic improvement. Because these checks can inspire students, sponsors say they are stepping forward to fund the effort.

The \$51,000 donation announced in Somerset will provide the cash rewards that will be handed out at 16 different Pennsylvania schools at the end of the current school year. The Challenge Program currently offers these incentive checks at 125 different high schools and has given away more than \$1.3 million in direct awards to students.