

High School Shout Out !!!

News and Updates for High School Counselors from The California Student Aid Commission

RANCHO CORDOVA, CA

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A MESSAGE FROM EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, DIANA FUENTES-MICHEL



Welcome again from the Commission to our readers, California's talented and dedicated high school college advisors, counselors and outreach staff.

As you are aware, the Commission has launched its official start of the 2011 financial aid and Cal Grant application period.

In this time of economic uncertainties, the current budget crisis facing our state cannot become a deterrent to the next generation of California's workforce. Now, more than ever, students need to continue to pursue a postsecondary path for their own future and the future prosperity of our state. As President Obama noted in his State of the Union speech: *"Over the next ten years, nearly half of all new jobs will require education that goes beyond a high school education"*.

It is important to remember that, in addition to Cal Grants, many other types of financial aid are available for college or technical training. To that point, we are encouraging all students to fill out the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) to determine their individual eligibility. Remind your students not to "opt out", but "opt in"!

I am sure many of you will take a well deserved break next Sunday to enjoy the Super Bowl. To quote again from the President's speech:

"We need to teach our kids that it's not just the winner of the Super Bowl who deserves to be celebrated, but the winner of the science fair."

To that point, thank you for encouraging your students to be winners and achieve all of their educational (and sports!) goals.

Diana Fuentes-Michel
(1975-1979 Cal Grant B Recipient)



2011 Cash for College workshops are being held right now!

At these informative and interactive workshops, students can receive "hands on" assistance in completing the FAFSA. Statistically, 87% of students who attend Cash for College workshops actually submit the FAFSA.

Students interested in finding a workshop near their home can use the workshop locator at www.calgrants.org/workshops.



Arthur Marmaduke Award Nomination Forms Available

The Arthur Marmaduke High School Counselor award honors excellence in high school student counseling. Named after Arthur Marmaduke, the first California Student Aid Commission Executive Director, the award is made based on nominations from high school principals or their designee.

Prior award winners have demonstrated excellent counseling and motivational skills helping students pursue an education after high school. Information on submitting nominations for the Marmaduke award can be found at <http://www.csac.ca.gov/doc.asp?id=1425>.

Nominations are due March 30, 2011!

**The 2011-12 Cal Grant
and GPA deadline
for submission is
Wednesday, March 2, 2011**



NAVIGATING THE FAFSA INFORMATION HIGHWAY

FAFSA On The Web Video

Students and parents can view a video on using *FAFSA on the Web* to apply for federal and state financial aid. Various sources of financial aid are discussed, where they can be used, and, for foster youth transitioning into college, information is included on the Chafee Grant. The video talks through getting a PIN code to electronically sign the FAFSA and advises student to talk to their college and career counselors for more information.

This light and whimsical video is a great way to bring up what to do to apply for financial aid and the steps a student must take to complete the FAFSA. To access the video at www.calgrants.org students should look for the "How to Apply" button and locate the "FAFSA on the Web" link. There are English and Spanish versions available.

After Filing the FAFSA

Once the student completes the FAFSA, several things can be done to make sure that the FAFSA is processed properly and that follow-up information can be exchanged.

1. In their e-mail program, mark calgrantoffice@csac.ca.gov and studentsupport@csac.ca.gov as "safe" or "trusted" e-mail addresses so e-mail from the Student Aid Commission will not be treated as "junk" e-mail.
2. Look for an e-mail from the FAFSA processor within 72 hours of filing the on-line FAFSA. If they do not receive a confirmation of filing within that time frame, the student should call the Federal Student Aid Information Center at (800) 433.3243.
3. When the student receives their Student Aid Report (SAR) from the FAFSA processor, every entry should be checked for accuracy. The SAR will give instructions on making corrections, if necessary.
4. Students can add or correct colleges by going to the *FAFSA on the Web* home page (www.fafsa.ed.gov) and clicking **Start Here** to log in. The student will be given the option to **Make FAFSA Corrections**. Colleges may be added or removed, and any corrections can be submitted.

WebGrants for Students (WGS)

Seventy-two hours after filing the FAFSA, students should establish a WebGrants for Students (WGS) account.

WGS can be accessed 24/7 and is an efficient way for students to stay on top of their application and, if awarded, their Cal Grant award. To establish a WGS account, students should go to www.webgrants4students.org and follow the instructions!

Robert C. Byrd Honors Scholarship

The Robert C. Byrd Honors Scholarship Program (Scholarship) is a federally funded, merit based scholarship. The Commission awards these scholarships to recognize students who show promise of continued academic excellence. Nominations are submitted by high schools. Each high school shall select up to two (2) nominees who:

1. Have demonstrated outstanding academic achievement in high school and show promise of continued academic achievement in college;
2. Will graduate from high school at the end of the current academic year and agree to enroll in and attend an institution of higher education on a full-time basis for the 2011-12 academic year; and
3. Submit the completed application to the designated coordinator at the applicant's California high school by the deadline.

The 2011-12 Robert C. Byrd Honors Scholarship Application Packet and Coordinator's Guide is available on the Commission's Website. To view these materials, on the Commission's Home page, select "Financial Aid Programs," click on "Robert C. Byrd Honors Scholarship Program."

The filing deadline is April 1, 2011. The Scholarship is \$1,500 annually, available for up to four years, and subject to federal budget appropriations.

If students should inquire about the 2011-12 scholarship, please direct them to the fact sheet which is also available on the Commission's Web site. The fact sheet provides a summary of eligibility and general scholarship information.

We Want to Help You Help Your Students!

The monthly High School Shout Out newsletter highlights the critical steps and processes to help you guide your students through the college financial aid application process. We invite your comments and suggestions. What topics would you like to see in the Shout Out? What would you like to learn more about? Contact Bryan Dickason (916) 464.8919 or bryand@csac.ca.gov

CONTACTING THE COMMISSION

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