



NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
April 20, 2001

CONTACT: Sarah Tyson-Joshua (916) 526-7991

Historic Wave of CAL GRANT Awards Released To California's Graduating High School Seniors

RANCHO CORDOVA, CA — As part of California's historic endeavor to make college more available than ever, the California Student Aid Commission today announced the awarding of the first wave of Entitlement Grant Awards to California's graduating high school seniors. Entitlement Grant Award notifications have now been sent to 43,500 graduating high school seniors statewide – one out of every seven graduating high school seniors. Additionally, the Commission notified another 26,000 graduating high school seniors that they could still qualify for an award if they submit information to the Commission correcting their original application by **Friday, May 11, 2001**.

"I am extremely pleased that the Commission, enabled by the Legislation embodied in Senate Bill 1644 of last Fall, is offering California's graduating high school seniors this historic opportunity to receive the very financial assistance that will allow them to pursue their dreams of a college education," said Wally Boeck, Executive Director of the Commission. "I also want to stress, however, that those seniors whose possible eligibility for an award remains undetermined have until May 11 to submit corrected information to the Commission to qualify for an award!"

The May 11 deadline to submit corrected information gives the 26,000 graduating high school seniors a second chance to qualify for an Entitlement Grant Award that will provide significant financial assistance for tuition, books and living expenses at California colleges or universities.

The entitlement award distribution represents a dramatic increase over awards distributed last year. To qualify for an Entitlement Grant Award, high school seniors had to submit both a Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) to the federal processor and a verified high school Grade Point Average (GPA) to the Commission by March 2nd. While the time between enactment of the legislation and the March 2nd deadline was limited, considerable outreach was done by the Legislature, the Commission and California's colleges and high schools. As a result, the number of students submitting both the required FAFSA and a high school verified GPA increased by nearly 19 percent. GPA verifications, alone, submitted to the Commission by high schools increased by nearly 33 percent over last year.

-more-

P.O. Box 419045, Rancho Cordova, CA 95741-9045

As soon as this Entitlement Grant Award cycle is completed, the Commission will be making Cal Grant Competitive Awards. Applying students who are not recent high school graduates, as well as those high school seniors who did not qualify for the March 2nd Entitlement Grant Award will automatically participate in the Competitive Award cycle. Competitive awards are expected in May. In addition, students who will be enrolled in a California Community College in the Fall of 2001 and meet the basic eligibility requirements may apply for another competitive Cal Grant Award and other financial aid by submitting a FAFSA and verified GPA by the **September 2nd** deadline. Interested students should contact their community college financial aid office for qualification and application information. Further information is available on the Commission's Web site at www.csac.ca.gov. Information about the FAFSA is available at www.fafsa.ed.gov.

#

The California Student Aid Commission is the state's principal provider of intersegmental statewide grant aid to postsecondary students. Founded in 1955 as the California State Scholarship Commission, the Commission's primary programmatic responsibilities include operation of the Cal Grant program, which will distribute over \$500 million to California college students during the 2000-2001 school year, and several targeted state scholarship and loan forgiveness programs. The 15-member Commission oversees the activities of its non-profit student loan services auxiliary, EDFUND. The Commission is headquartered in Rancho Cordova, California.

California Student Aid Commission and its associated graphic are the service mark of the California Student Aid Commission.

P.O. Box 419045, Rancho Cordova, CA 95741-9045