

FAST BLAST

A MONTHLY NEWSLETTER FROM
THE CALIFORNIA STUDENT AID COMMISSION



CALIFORNIA
STUDENT AID
COMMISSION

OUR MISSION: "MAKE EDUCATION BEYOND HIGH SCHOOL FINANCIALLY ACCESSIBLE TO ALL CALIFORNIANS"

RANCHO CORDOVA, CA

DECEMBER 2011



A MESSAGE FROM EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, DIANA FUENTES-MICHEL

As we rapidly move toward a new year, the Commission is honored to have the opportunity to welcome four new appointees by Governor Brown:

Jamillah Moore, President of Los Angeles City College and former senior vice chancellor at the California Community Colleges Chancellor's Office from 2004 to 2007.

Michele Siqueiros, Executive Director of the Campaign for College Opportunity and board member for the Institute of Higher Education Policy.

Of particular note, the Commission is pleased to regain student representation. Given the significant financial challenges facing California's youth, these new members' ideas and vision will enhance the work of the Commission and its staff.

Ishan Shah, of Fremont, is pursuing a degree in political science at Ohlone College and has served as a commissioner on the Human Relations Commission in Alameda County and as a student senator for the California Community Colleges.

Johnny Garcia Vasquez, of Berkeley, is pursuing a degree in ethnic studies at the University of California, Berkeley and is currently working at Thelton E. Henderson Center for Social Justice at Berkeley School of Law as a student assistant.

All of the Commission's signature **Fund Your Future** publications are now available! The collaboration with our partner, ECMC, resulted in an earlier finalization of these tools -- and the volume of orders clearly speaks to the critical need for a comprehensive resource of this type for students, parents and administrators.

Enjoy the Holidays!

Diana Fuentes-Michel
1975-1979 Cal Grant B Recipient



The complimentary **Fund Your Future** financial aid publications provide a valuable resource for administrators, parents and students.

These products are produced in a brochure format and a comprehensive workbook in both English and Spanish.

Fund Your Future provides extensive information designed to encourage California students to seek financial aid and assistance.

Place Orders At:

https://www.edfund.org/pubs_order/publications.cfm

Or, order through fax or mail using the Publications Order Form.

**Fund Your Future Counselors Guide
Now On Line!**

The 2012-13 **Fund Your Future** Counselors Guide provides a template for high school counselors, financial aid administrators and other outreach personnel to customize an instructive and up to date PowerPoint presentation on financial aid that is specific to your students and community. Access the [presentation](#) on line!

CCCSFAAA and CASFAA December Meetings

Each year, the Commission participates in the annual conferences for the college financial aid administrator associations. The California Community College Student Financial Administrators Association (CCCSFAAA) and the California Association of Student Financial Aid Administrators (CASFAA) design their annual conferences to train members on the changes in financial aid for the coming year and provide professional enrichment seminars.

The [CCCSFAAA conference](#) will be conducted December 9-11, and the [CASFAA conference](#) will follow from December 11-13. Both events will be held at the Sacramento Convention Center.

Executive Director Diana Fuentes-Michel will present an update on the 2011 accomplishments of the Commission and a preview of agency initiatives for the coming year.

This year, the Commission will be presenting two sessions on the Chafee Program, as well as sessions on the Assumption Program for Loans in Education (APLE), a beginning Cal Grants administrator session and a presentation on using WebGrants to disburse Cal Grant funds to eligible students. The opening CASFAA Conference session features Justin Dreager, President of the National Association of Student Financial Aid Administrators (NASFAA) and a panel discussion on AB 131, the Dream Act.



2012 Cash for College Workshop
Registration Deadline is
December 21, 2011

Log In Now....

To get started with registration, you'll need your e-mail address and password. If you've forgotten the password, it will be resent to your e-mail address. Just click below to Log in or create a new account and begin Workshop Registration:

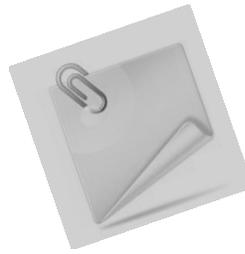
[<http://www.calgrants.org/applications/workshops>](http://www.calgrants.org/applications/workshops)

Order pages have been redesigned to include images....

Free flyers and posters are again available. Order materials as soon as possible after registration for shipping before your first workshop.

\$1,000 Incentive Scholarships....

Through the Commission's partnership with ECMC, we are once again offering the \$1,000 Cash for College incentive scholarship. The program will continue to ask high school seniors to attend a CFC workshop, complete an exit survey, and submit the FAFSA and a verified Cal Grant GPA by the March 2 deadline and can be used in Fall 2012 at an accredited 2 or 4 year degree-granting institution in the nation. For a fourth year, AB 540 high school seniors are also eligible to participate in the scholarship program, but do **not** apply for state or federal aid to participate.



REMINDER! **PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD** **Cal Grant** **Institutional Participation** **Agreement**

The California Student Aid Commission (Commission) is continuing the process of reviewing and updating the current (2008-12) Cal Grant Institutional Participation Agreement (Agreement) in preparation for its expiration on June 30, 2012 and the adoption of the new (2012-16) Agreement in February 2012.

We are soliciting public comment from representatives of Cal Grant participating institutions, institutional segments and student financial aid organizations and would like to remind school officials to review the current Agreement and provide suggestions and identify specific areas that may require further clarification.

A sample copy of the draft 2012-16 [Agreement](#) is available for review at this link. The next scheduled webinar presentation for proposed changes has been scheduled for December 6, 2011. Please refer to [GOM 2011-34](#) for additional detail.

TIMELINE FOR **IPA REVISIONS AND IMPLEMENTATION**

SEPTEMBER - DECEMBER 2011:

Review and discussion of proposed changes and public comment.

JANUARY 2012:

Special January Commission meeting to discuss revised draft.

FEBRUARY 2012:

Review of proposed changes and adoption of revised IPA.

FEBRUARY- JUNE 2012:

Implementation and new agreements completed.

JULY 2012:

Effective date.

Please submit comments to Gloria Falcon at GFalcon@csac.ca.gov, or by mail:

Program Administration & Services Division
Attention: Gloria Falcon
California Student Aid Commission
P.O. Box 419028
Rancho Cordova, CA 95741-9028

KEEPING UP WITH THE COMMISSION

To provide timely operational updates to our constituents, the Commission utilizes electronic technology in the forms of Operations Memos, Policy Bulletins and Special Alerts. Following are links to the most recent communications. To begin receiving these publications, sign up through CSAC List Services. From the CSAC home page, select "[Links](#)" and then select "[CSAC List Services](#)."

Operation Memos (Grant Operations Memo/GOM):

GOM 2011-35, issued 11/22, announced update capability on the 2012-13 WebGrants Cost Estimate screen.

GOM 2011-34, issued 11/14, announced an additional webinar presentation for proposed changes to the 2012-16 Cal Grant Program Institutional Participation Agreement has been scheduled for December 6, 2011.

GOM 2011-33, issued 11/14, announced the new capability of WebGrants to upload high school grade point averages (GPA) without a Social Security Number.

GOM 2011-32, issued 11/14, releases the 2012-13 Student Expense Budgets and Income & Asset Ceilings.

GOM 2011-31, issued 11/8, announced that the review of the 2012-16 Cal Grant Program Institutional Participation Agreement is underway.

GOM 2011-30, issued 10/18, informed participating institutions that the 2011-12 California National Guard Education Assistance Award Program renewals are ready for payment.

GOM 2011-29, issued 10/11, announced the 2012-13 Cal Grant Grade Point Average Submission Training starts October 2011 and runs through February 2012.

GOM 2011-28, issued 10/11, informed institutions the Commission began processing the 2011-12 September 2 award cycle October 7, 2011.

GOM 2011-27, issued 9/30, provided information regarding certified Cal Grant institutions affected by Senate Bill 70 (SB 70) CDR requirements for the 2012-13 academic year.

Read all GOMs at

<http://www.csac.ca.gov/secured/operationmemos/2011.asp>

Read all GSAs at

<http://www.csac.ca.gov/secured/specialalerts/2011.asp>

Read all GPBs at

<http://www.csac.ca.gov/secured/policybulletins/2011.asp>



FEDERAL LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

As part of the Budget Control Act of 2011, the Joint Committee on Deficit Reduction, (the "Super Committee"), was tasked with finding cuts or revenues to reduce the federal debt by \$1.5 trillion over ten years. On November 21, the committee announced they were unable to come to an agreement. This lack of action triggers a process known as "sequestration," which will automatically cut \$1.2 trillion over ten years. Pell Grant is exempt (at least for the 2013-14 academic year), but FSEOG, Federal Work-study, and Federal TRIO and GEAR-UP would realize a total of \$221.8 million in cuts.

Congress has one entire legislative session before the automatic cuts go into effect to do the work that the Super Committee was unable to accomplish. Bills have been introduced in each house making changes to federal financial aid to reduce costs while maintaining the maximum Pell Grant amount of \$5,550. In the Senate, S 1599 (Harkin) proposes to eliminate the six month grace period subsidy on student loans in order to fund the increasing utilization of the Pell Grant program. However, it is possible that the savings will not be enough to entirely cover the Pell shortfall. In the House, HR 3070 (Rehberg) would make several changes to Pell Grant program eligibility affecting almost two million Pell Grant recipients.

The Commission forwarded a letter to the Super Committee and members of the California Congressional delegation in opposition to Pell Grant cuts. We will continue to provide stakeholder updates.

CAL GRANT AWARDS UPDATE

As of November 2011, the Commission has offered over 113,000 High School Entitlement Cal Grant awards to eligible students. This award total exceeds the 2010-11 year by over nineteen percent.

Commission Contact Information

Mailing address:

California Student Aid Commission
Attn: (Insert Name of Branch) *
P.O. Box 419026
Rancho Cordova, CA 95741-9026

***Please direct mail to**

one of the following branches:

Executive Office
Program Administration & Services
Information Technology Services
Federal Policy & Programs
Legal & Audit Services

For UPS & overnight delivery only:

California Student Aid Commission
Attn: (Insert Name of Branch) *
10834 International Drive, Suite100
Rancho Cordova, CA 95670

Websites:

<http://www.csac.ca.gov/>
<https://mygrantinfo.csac.ca.gov/logon.asp>
<http://www.calgrants.org/>



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