

# FAST BLAST

A MONTHLY NEWSLETTER FROM  
THE CALIFORNIA STUDENT AID COMMISSION

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



RANCHO CORDOVA, CA

FEBRUARY 2012



## A MESSAGE FROM EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, DIANA FUENTES-MICHEL

The California Student Aid Commission launched its official start of the 2012 financial aid and Cal Grant application period in January. As we rapidly move toward the March 2 final filing date, the short month of February is a particularly busy time for teachers, counselors, students and parents. It is important to keep in mind that, in addition to Cal Grants, many other types of financial aid are available for college or technical training. We are encouraging all students to fill out the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) to determine their individual eligibility.

### The Commission is honored to welcome two new members:

**Terri Bishop** was appointed by Governor Jerry Brown. Ms. Bishop has worked at the Apollo Group since 1997, serving most recently as executive vice president of academic strategy and senior advisor to the chief executive officer.

**John McDowell** was appointed by Speaker John A. Pérez. Mr. McDowell is a professor of labor relations and director of the Labor Center at Los Angeles Trade Technical College.

These appointees replace former Commissioner's Lawrence Hershman and Dr. Enrique Murillo. We thank them for their service and look forward to their continued advocacy for students.

On January, 5, 2012, Governor Jerry Brown released his proposed 2012-13 budget. At the next meeting on February 23<sup>rd</sup> and 24<sup>th</sup>, the Commission will analyze the provisions and proposed cuts to Cal Grant and Commission programs. We will keep you informed via our website and through special alerts on any significant developments between now and the May revision. In addition, the Commission will be conducting a hearing on February 23 regarding online education and Cal Grants. More information on the hearing is available at this [link](#).

**Diana Fuentes-Michel**  
1975-1979 Cal Grant B Recipient



## Your Students Can Attend a Cash for College Workshop Until The Cal Grant Deadline!

You can locate a Cash for College workshop in the final weeks of the Cal Grant application period at [www.calgrants.org/workshops](http://www.calgrants.org/workshops). More than 100 workshops remain! Remember, we are offering seniors who attend a Cash for College workshop and apply for a Cal Grant an extra **\$1,000 scholarship incentive**. AB 540 seniors can also participate in the scholarship program. Find out more at [www.calgrants.org/cashforcollege](http://www.calgrants.org/cashforcollege). To stay connected to *After the FAFSA* activities and support, "Like" our page at:

[www.facebook.com/cashforcollegecalifornia](http://www.facebook.com/cashforcollegecalifornia)

### "Why I Apply"

**\$4,000 Cash for College Video Contest Scholarship**  
Deadline to submit video entries is March 2!

Help your students qualify for this large scholarship for use this fall! Download the scholarship flyer [here](#), or at the [www.WhyIApply.com](http://www.WhyIApply.com) website under the Counselors and Teachers tab.



Click here & listen to  
the girls from San  
Francisco Mission  
High encourage  
seniors to apply by  
March 2!

## Arthur Marmaduke High School Counselor Award

The Arthur Marmaduke High School Counselor award honors excellence in student counseling. Named after Arthur Marmaduke, the first California Student Aid Commission Executive Director, the recipients is selected based on nominations from high school principals or their designee. For further information, please visit this [link](#) on the Commission's website.

**Nominations are due March 30, 2012!**

## 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](#)."

### [Operations Memo \(Grant Operations Memo/GOM\)](#)

**GOM 2012-03**, issued 1/20 reported that the 2011-12 winter term payments (checks) for the Child Development Grant were mailed to institutions on January 20, 2012.

**GOM 2012-02**, issued 1/19 reminded institutions about two important deadlines.

**GOM 2012-01**, issued 1/18 announced the 2012 Webinar Training Schedule for Cal Grant and Specialized Programs.

**GOM 2011-36**, issued 12/16 informed Cal Grant schools of a new federal regulation that impacts schools participating in the Commission's Electronic Funds Transfer disbursement process.

### [Special Alert \(Grant Special Alert/GSA\)](#)

**GSA 2011-36**, issued 12/22, announced that the second draft of the proposed changes to the 2012-16 Cal Grant Program Participation Agreement are available for review and comment.

**GSA 2011-35**, issued 12/16, provided an update on the Cal Grant 2011-12 year-end process, including final reconciliation, invoicing, and interest remission.



## Interest Remittance

**Interest earned on Cal Grant funds for the 2011 calendar year is due by March 2011**

To remit, use the interest remission form at:  
<http://www.csac.ca.gov/doc.asp?id=1317>.

Submit the completed form & interest payment to the Commission. Contact Justin Watkins at [jwatkins@csac.ca.gov](mailto:jwatkins@csac.ca.gov) or (916) 464.6425 if you have any questions.

## Governor's Proposed Budget & Cal Grant Awards

The Governor's proposed 2012-13 State Budget released on January 5, 2012 could potentially impact the California Student Aid Commission's (Commission) Cal Grant and Loan Assumption programs.

The proposals may affect the Cal Grant program in four ways:

1. Raise the required Grade Point Averages (GPA)
2. Reduce the maximum Cal Grant tuition award amount for new and renewal students attending independent colleges or universities from \$9,708 to \$5,472.
3. Reduce the maximum Cal Grant tuition award amount for new and renewal students attending proprietary schools from \$9,708 to \$4,000.
4. Establish in statute the prior Commission practice of requiring uninterrupted enrollment between community college and transfer to a four-year college or university to meet Cal Grant Transfer Entitlement requirements.

In addition, the Governor proposes to phase out loan assumption programs for teachers and nurses by eliminating all new award offers, eliminating loan assumption payments to any participant who has not already received their first year of benefits, and continuing to provide loan assumption payments through 2015-16 to participants who have already received at least one year of benefits.

Commission staff understands the uncertainty that surrounds the Governor's proposals. Our practice is to release new Cal Grant award notifications using existing statutory eligibility requirements and provide updates and final communications if changes to program requirements are later approved in the State Budget.

Further information can be found in this [Special Alert](#) issued on February 16, 2012



**EXTENDED  
CUSTOMER  
RELATIONS BRANCH  
HOURS!**

To assist with questions regarding the March 2 Cal Grant and GPA submission deadline, Customer Relations Branch hours will be:  
**8:00 a.m. until 4:45 p.m. effective February 21, 2012 through March 9, 2012**

**(Currently, hours are 10 a.m. until 4:45 p.m.)**

**CALL: 1.888.224.7268**  
E-MAIL: [student.support@csac.ca.gov](mailto:student.support@csac.ca.gov)