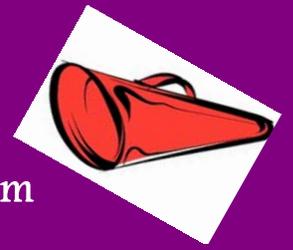


High School Shout Out !!

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



RANCHO CORDOVA, CA

DECEMBER, 2010

A MESSAGE FROM EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, DIANA FUENTES-MICHEL



Welcome to the second edition of the California Student Aid Commission's "High School Shout Out"!

This monthly publication was created for high school college advisors, counselors and outreach staff who provide guidance to their students as they navigate the often confusing process of applying for and receiving financial aid to pay college expenses.

In December, thoughts turn to the holidays, and activity at college admissions and financial aid offices decreases. For all of you who have unselfishly dedicated your time during the past year to your students, we hope you will find time to enjoy a well deserved break with family and friends.

Given the economic conditions and budget challenges facing our state this coming year, it is more important than ever to encourage our future leaders to pursue an education beyond high school.

Your efforts are a priceless holiday gift for those who are the fortunate beneficiaries of your time and expertise.

Happy Holidays!

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

REMINDER:

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



Local and National Scholarship Applications

It is very important that high school students contact their guidance or college advice counselor to learn about local scholarships available to students at that school. Deadlines for scholarships may vary.

Nationally awarded scholarships also have various filing deadlines. Web sites such as www.fastweb.com allow students to complete a personal profile to receive information about national scholarships they can apply for. Essays and other qualifiers may be required.

December is a great time to write essays. Advice for students about writing college scholarship and admissions essays can be found on-line.

The back cover of the Commission's Fund Your Future student financial aid workbook has web links to sources of scholarships and financial aid information. Fund Your Future workbooks and companion brochures are available in both English and Spanish.

Beware of Scholarship Scams!

A scholarship or grant is **free** money and an applicant should never have to pay to find, apply for or receive one. Students should be wary of companies that make promises and charge money to apply for or receive a scholarship, or attempt to get the student to send money by claiming the student is a finalist in a scholarship contest. Also, some web sites, seminars or "consultants" attempt to charge for student financial aid information that is readily available free on-line and in campus financial aid offices.



December Preparation ***(No Down Time for Students!!)***

Following are helpful hints for tasks a student and parents can do in December to prepare for the New Year financial aid application season.

A great time to make the most of the break!

- ❖ The Free Application for Federal Student Aid {FAFSA} on the Web (FOTW) Worksheet is available on-line at www.fafsa.ed.gov. It allows financial aid applicants to read and complete FAFSA questions before entering the information on-line. The questions are listed in the same order that they appear on the FOTW Web site.
- ❖ Most financial aid deadlines, including the March 2 Cal Grant deadline, occur prior to when most parents complete their federal income tax returns. As a result, when initially completing the FAFSA, estimates of federal taxes paid and Adjusted Gross Income are allowed.
- ❖ Any income estimates should be made carefully so as to not misrepresent (either too high or too low) the family's income status. These estimates are allowed as long as the final taxable income is updated on the FAFSA as soon as it is available. With estimates, or actual tax data, the FAFSA must be filed by the appropriate deadline. Corrections to tax data can be made later.
- ❖ Students and parents are encouraged to complete their federal tax forms as soon after January 1, 2011 as possible.



Honor the "Best of the Best" ... Time to Consider Potential Marmaduke Award Nominees

Each year, the California Student Aid Commission accepts applications for the Arthur Marmaduke High School Counselor award. This award pays tribute to Arthur Marmaduke, the first California Student Aid Commission Executive Director, by honoring one of the most outstanding high school counselors in California.

Now is the time to begin considering who you might nominate from your school. The scholarship award is based on many factors, including exceptional outreach techniques a counselor employs to inform students and families about higher education opportunities and financial aid options and a demonstration of special efforts to reach students who may not be likely to consider attending college due to family issues, economic hardships, cultural barriers and more.

Marmaduke award nomination forms will be available on the CSAC web site by January 17, 2011.



Invierta En Su Futuro!!!

The 2011-12 Fund Your Future Workbook & Brochure series is now available in Spanish and English.

Fund Your Future is designed for students, parents and families to provide basic steps for preparing and paying for college, applying for financial aid and managing money. Check out the "major financial aid programs" chart and help your students apply for a Cal Grant by the March 2 deadline! By applying early, students can maximize their federal and state financial aid options.

For more information and to order Fund Your Future publications go to www.csac.ca.gov, select the "Publications" tab and submit your order today!

<p align="center">On-line Cal Grant GPA Submission Training</p>	<p align="center">School of Origin Report</p>
<p>The Commission will continue on-line Cal Grant GPA submission training in January. This training is an introduction to submitting Cal Grant GPAs and using WebGrants, the Commission's high school on-line data and information portal. Schools can register on-line at http://www.csac.ca.gov/doc.asp?id=988.</p> <p>Cal Grant GPAs can be submitted in batches, or keyed in directly on-line. A school can use multiple submission methods, including paper forms, to best meet their needs. With a WebGrants account, high schools can access several useful reports to track GPA submission and Cal Grant program student award offers.</p> <p>Counselors can also use WebGrants to assist high school graduates confirm their high school graduation, a requirement for the High School Entitlement Cal Grant program.</p>	<p>Once FAFSA processing begins annually in January, the Commission will begin making Cal Grant award offers. The WebGrants School of Origin Report identifies students who attended the high school and have been offered Cal Grant assistance. Many schools include information from the report in scholarship award ceremonies and school scholarship winner announcements. This report is found on the Report Download menu in WebGrants.</p> <p>The School of Origin Report, produced annually in January, is regularly updated to and beyond the March 2 filing deadline as GPA's are received. GPA's submitted on-time, but with errors preventing processing, can be corrected and then processed. Awards resulting from corrections will be listed on later School of Origin reports.</p>
<p align="center">Changes to WebGrants GPA Summary Report</p>	<p align="center">How to Update Your School's Contact Information</p>
<p>The WebGrants GPA Summary Report allows a high school to download student reports for which a GPA was received and processed. These reports are available now if the high school has certified Cal Grant GPAs.</p> <p>Starting in January, as FAFSAs are processed, FAFSAs will be matched to any processed GPAs and, if they match a processed GPA, information will be placed on the GPA Summary Report. On-time, matched GPAs summaries will show the word YES in the FAFSA column. NONE means that no GPA FAFSA match has been made. After March 2, the word LATE means that a GPA was received but too late for the March 2 deadline. Late GPAs will be used for the September 2 award consideration.</p> <p>Matching GPAs to FAFSAs will have tremendous value for high schools. Schools will be able to contact those students who have not submitted a FAFSA. To see how reports look, high schools with WebGrants access can view a GPA Summary for the 2010-11 academic year. 2011-12 processing begins in January.</p> <p>Individuals without WebGrants access who serve high school populations can sign up for the Commission's High School Professionals List-Serv by going on-line to http://www.csac.ca.gov/login.asp and entering the requested information. The username is "students". The password is "1SEC2001". Choose the list for High School Professionals (HSP).</p>	<p>Cal Grant program financial aid awards are available to undergraduate students who are California residents who also meet the financial and academic selection criteria. Entitlement Cal Grant awards are potentially available to any recent high school graduate. For a high school to certify a Cal Grant GPA, the school must be accredited by the Western Association of Schools and Colleges or the school must have a current approved University of California A – G course list. The Commission recommends that schools take advantage of WebGrants benefits. High school WebGrants applications can be found on-line at http://www.csac.ca.gov/doc.asp?id=1191.</p> <hr/> <div style="display: flex; align-items: center;">  <div> <p align="center"><u>Contacting the Commission</u></p> <p>If you have any questions about our programs, please contact the following staff:</p> <p>Tabitha Frost: (916) 464.2113 or at tfrost@csac.ca.gov Janice Wright: (916) 464.6420 or at jwright@csac.ca.gov Justin Watkins: (916) 464.6425 or at jwatkins@csac.ca.gov</p> <p>www.csac.ca.gov www.webgrants4students.org www.calgrants.org</p> <p align="center"><i>Or, call toll-free at (888) 294.0153</i></p> </div> </div> <div style="text-align: right; margin-top: 20px;">  <p>CALIFORNIA STUDENT AID COMMISSION</p> </div>