

California Student Aid Commission

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
JANUARY 21, 2011

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California Student Aid Commission Launches Financial Aid Application Period *Students Can Maximize Aid Options by Applying by March 2, 2011*

RANCHO CORDOVA, CA—The California Student Aid Commission is launching its official start of the 2011 financial aid and Cal Grant application period.

Cal Grants cover tuition and fees at California's public colleges and universities and some private institutions for over 300,000 low income students. Grants can also help students pay for textbooks, living expenses and equipment for Community College and career technical education.

California Student Aid Commission Executive Director Diana Fuentes-Michel stated, "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".

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", said Fuentes-Michel.

High school seniors or recent graduates who meet eligibility and financial requirements and submit the FAFSA and a Cal Grant GPA verification form before the March 2 deadline can receive up to \$11,124 per year to attend all California public colleges and most private and independent colleges or career schools.

At more than 500 Cash for College financial aid workshops in 50 counties throughout the state, students and their families can receive one-on-one, multi-lingual assistance on the FAFSA and other financial aid forms. Financial aid and outreach professionals, high school counselors and trained community volunteers will be on hand to help students at workshops during the Cal Grant application window from January 1 until March 2.

An extra \$1,000 incentive scholarship is offered at each qualifying workshop for high school seniors who attend a Cash for College workshop, complete an exit survey and apply for a Cal Grant by the March 2 deadline. Cash for College scholarships are provided through a partnership with Educational Credit Management Corporation (ECMC), a federally-designated loan guaranty agency. Cash for College scholarships will be announced in late May. Students can visit www.calgrants.org to locate a workshop or call 888.CA.Grant (888.224.7268).

The California Student Aid Commission is the principal state agency responsible for administering financial aid programs for students attending public and private universities, colleges, and vocational schools in California. The Commission distributed over \$1 billion to California's college students during the 2009-10 academic year through its Cal Grant, specialized and loan forgiveness programs. The Commission also administers financial aid awareness and outreach programs, such as Cal-SOAP and Cash for College, in collaboration with business, private industry and community-based organizations.

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