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Local Sites Across Massachusetts Host Free, Important Financial Aid Program

Parents, Students Invited to 'College Goal Sunday' Jan. 31

BOSTON – College-bound students and their parents can receive free assistance in filing the federal financial aid application on College Goal Sunday, January 31, at 2 p.m. The Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) is required to receive many types of federal, state and private financial aid, and must be completed by college deadlines, some as early as February 1.

The sixth annual Massachusetts College Goal Sunday will provide information on college financial aid and free on-site help to complete the FAFSA. At 26 locations across Massachusetts, College Goal Sunday's team of volunteer financial aid and higher education experts will offer information on the many viable post-high school options. Locations are listed at www.MassCollegeGoalSunday.org.

College Goal Sunday services are free and available to anyone entering college in 2010, and low-income, first-generation students are especially encouraged to attend. Assistance is also available for adult students preparing to enroll in college in 2010.

“The goal in College Goal Sunday is to increase the amount of financial aid provided to Massachusetts students, and we can do that by helping them to successfully complete the financial aid application,” said Julie Shields-Rutyna, College Goal Sunday tri-chair.

The FAFSA is required to be eligible for federal student aid programs, such as Pell grants, Stafford and Perkins loan, and federal work-study programs. Also, most states and colleges use FAFSA information to award financial aid packages.

“The cost of college and the complexity of the FAFSA form may intimidate some people, and that's why we are here to help parents fill it out correctly and prevent unnecessary delays in receiving financial aid offers, said Catherine Nelson, College Goal Sunday tri-chair.

“I encourage every family to file the FAFSA or they will never know how much financial aid they might have received,” said Beth Feinberg Keenan, CGS tri-chair.

College Goal Sunday will feature a presentation on college financial aid, as well as one-on-one counseling on how to complete the FAFSA. Parents and students are encouraged to bring as much of the following information as possible in order to complete the FAFSA:

- A FAFSA Personal Identification Number, available at www.pin.ed.gov, to be used to electronically file the form.
- Most recent tax returns
- Social Security number
- Driver's license
- 2009 W-2
- 2009 untaxed income records
- 2009 bank statements
- 2009 business and investment records
- Alien registration card for non-U.S. citizens

Applying for financial aid may intimidate some college-bound students, particularly those who are first-generation and adults. In other cases, completing the FAFSA is complicated for filers who are non-English speakers. College Goal Sunday offers trained volunteers and translators to assist.

Students and families are encouraged to attend College Goal Sunday at a location near them, and may visit www.MassCollegeGoalSunday.org to find directions and location details. Unless otherwise noted, College Goal Sunday is held on Sunday, January 31, 2010 at 2 p.m.

- Amherst: Amherst-Pelham Regional High School (January 28, 7 p.m.)
- Boston: Boston Public Library
- Brockton: Brockton High School
- Charlestown: Bunker Hill Community College
- Cambridge: Cambridge Rindge and Latin School
- Chestnut Hill: Pine Manor College
- Fall River: Bristol Community College
- Fitchburg: Fitchburg State College
- Framingham: Framingham High School
- Franklin: Dean College
- Lawrence: Northern Essex Community College
- Lowell: Middlesex Community College
- Lynn: North Shore Community College
- Malden: Malden High School
- Marlborough: Marlborough High School
- Orange: Mahar Regional High School
- Pittsfield: Intermodal Education Center (January 31, 12 p.m.)
- Revere: Office of Student Financial Assistance
- Somerville: Somerville High School
- Springfield: American International College
- Upton: Blackstone Valley Vocational RSD
- Wakefield: Northeast Metro Tech High School (February 3, 6 p.m.)
- Waltham: Waltham High School
- West Barnstable: Cape Cod Community College
- Worcester: Quinsigamond Community College

College Goal Sunday is a volunteer-driven effort sponsored by Massachusetts Association of Student Financial Aid Administrators, MEFA, American Student Assistance, and the Lumina Foundation for

Education. College Goal Sunday was founded by the Indiana Student Financial Aid Administrators.

To register or find more information on College Goal Sunday, please visit www.MassCollegeGoalSunday.org. For questions or additional information, email mcgsinfo@masscollegegoalsunday.org or call 877-4CGSMAS.

About Massachusetts College Goal Sunday

Massachusetts College Goal Sunday is a statewide non-profit program administered by the Massachusetts Association of Student Financial Aid Administrators (MASFAA) with the assistance of many community-based organizations working with underserved populations. Massachusetts College Goal Sunday is sponsored in part by the generosity of American Student Assistance, Citizens Bank, the Massachusetts Educational Financing Authority, Sallie Mae, TERI (The Education Resources Institute) and WNEU Telemundo Boston. The College Goal SundaySM program was created by the Indiana Student Financial Aid Association with funding from Lilly Endowment, Inc. and with supplemental support from Lumina Foundation for Education.

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