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Your Financial Aid Connection

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## **NEWS RELEASE**

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**Iowa College Aid Recognizes National School Counselor Week**  
*National School Counselor Week: “School Counseling: Building Magical Futures” will be held February 3-7, 2014*

**Des Moines, IA, January 31, 2014** – In recognition of National School Counselor Week, the Iowa College Student Aid Commission (Iowa College Aid) would like to commend all of Iowa’s school counselors for their dedication in assisting students with career planning, including utilization of I Have A Plan Iowa®, College Application Campaign and GEAR UP Iowa. National School Counseling Week, sponsored by the American School Counselor Association (ASCA), takes place on Feb. 3-7, 2014. The week honors school counselors and recognizes the tremendous impact their work has on student academic achievement and plans for postsecondary success.

“School counselors are an essential component to a student’s educational experience,” explained Karen Misjak, executive director of Iowa College Aid. “Not only do school counselors help students overcome social and personal issues, but they positively affect students’ postsecondary aspirations and attainment. We’d like to thank all of Iowa’s school counselors and show our appreciation for their commitment to students.”

This week provides schools and communities the opportunity to recognize school counselors for the diverse roles they take on to help enrich the lives of students. Among these roles, schools counselors: help students examine their abilities, strengths, interests and talents; work in a partnership with parents as they encounter the challenges of raising children in today's world; focus on positive ways to enhance students' social/personal, educational and career development; and work with teachers and other educators to provide an educational system where students can realize their potential and set healthy, realistic and optimistic aspirations for themselves. Professional school counselors are certified, experienced educators with master’s degrees in guidance and counseling. The combination of their training and experience makes them an integral part of the total educational program.

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"School counselors work with all students to remove barriers to learning by addressing academic concerns, career awareness in postsecondary options and personal/social skills," said Kwok-Sze Wong, Ed.D., ASCA executive director. "Comprehensive school counseling programs help to increase student achievement and provide a much-needed resource for students, parents, teachers and administrators. School counselors are integral to student success."

More information about National School Counseling Week can be found on the American School Counselor Association website, [www.schoolcounselor.org](http://www.schoolcounselor.org). Students and families who have questions about the resources available for college and career planning can contact Iowa College Aid at 877-272-4456, or visit their website, [www.IowaCollegeAid.gov](http://www.IowaCollegeAid.gov).

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***About the Iowa College Student Aid Commission***

*Iowa College Aid provides college access, financial literacy and outreach services to Iowa's students and families as they prepare, plan and pay for college. Iowa College Aid also administers state scholarship, grant, work study, and loan forgiveness programs totaling over \$68.0 million annually, conducts research and distributes higher education data, and offers Iowans assistance in obtaining student financial aid and college-related information. Through its role, Iowa College Aid also serves as the state-designated administrator of the U.S. Department of Education's College Access Challenge Grant, which is designed to increase the college-going culture in Iowa. Additionally, Iowa College Aid is the administrator of the Federal GEAR-UP Grant, a multi-year state-wide grant which is being utilized to provide early awareness programming and outreach initiatives to thousands of Iowa's students and families. More information is available at [www.IowaCollegeAid.gov](http://www.IowaCollegeAid.gov).*

***About the American School Counselor Association***

*The American School Counselor Association (ASCA) is a worldwide nonprofit organization based in Alexandria, Va. Founded in 1952, ASCA supports school counselors' efforts to help students focus on academic, personal/social and career development so they not only achieve success in school but are prepared to lead fulfilling lives as responsible members of society. The association, which is the school counseling division of the American Counseling Association, provides professional development, publications and other resources, research and advocacy to more professional school counselors around the globe.*