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## NEWS RELEASE

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### **Drake University and Iowa College Aid Empower Students with Financial and Student Loan Decision-Making Skills** *Online Platform Develops Skills Necessary for Future Financial Security*

**Des Moines, IA, October 24, 2011** –Drake University is partnering with the Iowa College Student Aid Commission (Iowa College Aid) to bring students instruction and assessment in core financial literacy and student loan debt management topics. Iowa College Aid provides access to Buttonwood™, a personal finance and student loan debt management platform designed for college students, to Iowa postsecondary institutions for free through its statewide web portal, [www.IHaveAPlanIowa.gov](http://www.IHaveAPlanIowa.gov). Drake is the first university in Iowa to adopt the program.

"This program puts our students in a position to better understand key financial concepts as they prepare to leave Drake and go out into the professional world," said Sentwali Bakari, Drake University dean of students. "After completing modules on topics from savings and banking to credit reports and investing, they're more capable of managing their money. We think it's a terrific resource for students and a good compliment to comprehensive wellness programming initiatives on campus."

Buttonwood™ was developed by EverFi, Inc., the leading education technology platform, to directly tackle the nation's trillion-dollar student loan crisis. The program addresses over 600 key financial literacy concepts, contained in seven modules, with a focus on financial aid and loan management. Buttonwood™ includes a simulation that is personalized for each student user, allowing him or her to make financial decisions in virtual environments which directly reflect real-life situations. Variables, such as enrollment status, marital status, debt level and more are taken into consideration by the system when adapting the user's experience.

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“In today’s economic climate, it is essential that our college students learn how to make wise financial decisions,” says Karen Misjak, executive director of Iowa College Aid. “Decisions students make while in college have a lasting impact on their financial future. Iowa’s average student loan debt for college graduates is one of the highest in the nation. Buttonwood™ is a preventative solution to ensure students have the financial knowledge necessary to make the right choices and set themselves up for success after graduation. We are very excited to partner with Drake University on this critical issue.”

For more information about how Drake University is implementing Buttonwood™, please contact Brianne Sanchez, Drake University public relations specialist at [brianne.sanchez@drake.edu](mailto:brianne.sanchez@drake.edu). To learn more about Buttonwood™ in general, or to schedule a demonstration, please 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 nearly \$60.0 million annually, administers the Federal Family Education Loan Program (FFELP) program, provides borrowers with assistance to avoid the serious consequences of default, 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 used 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 EverFi, Inc.***

*EverFi provides the leading education media platform to teach students the core concepts of financial literacy, student loan management, health and nutrition and other key life skills. Through its proprietary technology platform, the company is powering a national movement that enables foundations, corporations, school districts and universities to launch community-based programs in a variety of off-curriculum subjects. Currently in over 2,000 schools across 49 states, EverFi’s award-winning platform is designed to provide an exciting and engaging experience for students. The program features the latest in new media, including 3D simulations, messaging tools, animations, high-definition video and adaptive-pathing.*