



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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GEAR UP Iowa to Host Parent Meeting at Keokuk High School

Parents of high school juniors invited to learn more about program services and scholarship opportunity

Des Moines, IA., January 8, 2013 – The Iowa College Student Aid Commission (Iowa College Aid), in partnership with Keokuk High School, announced today it will host a GEAR UP Iowa meeting for parents of high school juniors on Thursday, January 10, 2013 at 6:30 p.m. in the Keokuk High School cafeteria. Parents will be provided detailed information on the transformative Gaining Early Awareness and Readiness for Undergraduate Programs (GEAR UP) and the services available to help students prepare for success in postsecondary programs after high school. Parents are invited to attend to learn more about:

- The GEAR UP Iowa Scholarship, which is available for all GEAR UP Iowa students upon high school graduation in 2014, to help pay college costs.
- Mileage reimbursement for parents who take their student(s) on college visits.
- Free ACT and SAT testing for up to three attempts for GEAR UP Iowa students.
- GEAR UP Iowa’s statewide video challenge.
- Information on financial aid for college.

“The mission of GEAR UP Iowa is to significantly increase the number of students who are prepared to enter and succeed in postsecondary education,” explained John Gilman, GEAR UP Iowa Project Coordinator for Iowa College Aid. “We recognize the important role parents play in the educational success of their students,” Gilman said. “It is our intent to share information about the GEAR UP Iowa program with parents and to foster relationships between home, school and GEAR UP Iowa to enhance college preparation for the students in our program.”

Iowa College Aid administers the GEAR UP Iowa program in partnership with the Iowa Department of Education and through support from state agencies, local school districts, postsecondary education institutions, community organizations, and local businesses. Funded by a \$16.8 million federal grant, the program works to create a college-going culture through statewide and school-based services to a cohort of approximately 7,000 Iowa high school students and their families.

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GEAR UP Iowa began in 2008 by serving a cohort of seventh grade students. Currently in its fifth year, the students who are part of the GEAR UP Iowa cohort are now high school juniors. More information on GEAR UP Iowa can be found on its website, www.gearupiowa.gov. In addition, information to help Iowa families plan, prepare and pay for college is available on Iowa College Aid's website at 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 plan, prepare and pay for college. Iowa College Aid also administers state scholarship, grant, work study, and loan forgiveness programs totaling over \$60.0 million annually; provides I Have A Plan Iowa™, the state-designated career information system, free to all Iowans; partners with financial institutions in the state to offer an online financial literacy platform free to all Iowa high schools; conducts research and distributes higher education data; and offers Iowans assistance in obtaining student financial aid and college-related information. 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. 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. Iowa College Aid is also responsible for registering postsecondary institutions and other instructional schools under Iowa Code Chapter 261B and sections of Chapter 714. More information is available at www.IowaCollegeAid.gov.