



IowaCollegeAid.gov

NEWS RELEASE

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Iowa College Student Aid Commission Celebrates 50th Anniversary *State Agency Commemorates 50 years with Open House on December 13*

Des Moines, IA., December 10, 2013 – Today, the Iowa College Student Aid Commission (Iowa College Aid) announced it will host an open house on Friday, December 13, 2013 from 3:00 to 4:30 pm to commemorate its 50th anniversary. The open house will be hosted at Iowa College Aid’s office for local education leaders, legislative members and advocates.

Iowa College Aid was established in 1963 by the Iowa General Assembly to implement the federal assistance program for construction of academic facilities provided by the Higher Education Act of 1963. Today the scope of the agency’s responsibilities has grown to include the administration of over \$68 million in state scholarships, grants, work study and loan forgiveness programs; registration of postsecondary institutions; research and distribution of higher education data; and administration and support of I Have A Plan Iowa[®], the state-designated career information system. In partnership with local financial institutions, Iowa College Aid helps improve the financial literacy of students by providing the Iowa Financial Literacy Program and Vault at no cost to schools.

The agency also serves a cohort of over 7,000 students through the Gaining Early Awareness and Readiness for Undergraduate Programs (GEAR UP) Grant. The purpose of the grant is to create a college-going culture throughout the state by providing students in low-income areas with a scholarship and other college prep resources.

“I would like to commend the Iowa College Student Aid Commission for the work it has done over the past 50 years to promote postsecondary education in the state,” applauded Governor Terry Branstad. “Having a skilled workforce is essential to Iowa’s economy.”

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“We hear from employers throughout the state that they need a more educated workforce to fill their needs,” said Lieutenant Governor Kim Reynolds. “Iowa College Aid’s crucial resources and programs to help Iowans plan, prepare and pay for college are increasing the educational attainment of our citizens.”

“Our vision at Iowa College Aid is that all Iowans can achieve an education beyond high school,” said Karen Misjak, executive director of Iowa College Aid. “As educational achievement increases, we see not only a significant impact on poverty levels and unemployment rates, but also on life expectancy, health and civic engagement which directly influences communities. We will continue our work over the next 50 years to improve levels of college readiness, make college more affordable for Iowa residents and ultimately prepare Iowans for sustainable careers in the state.” said Misjak.

For information about the resources and services provided by Iowa College Aid to help Iowa families plan, prepare and pay for college, visit www.IowaCollegeAid.gov or contact Iowa College Aid at 877-272-4456.

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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, 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 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.