



For Immediate Release

Contact: Kristin Boyer
(800) 252-9743, ext. 4990
kristin.boyer@tgslc.org

Embracing community colleges' role in changing higher education landscape, TG creates new policy center

ROUND ROCK, TEXAS – In response to the unprecedented growth in community college enrollment nationwide, TG created a Center for Financial Aid Policy in Community Colleges to help community colleges meet their enrollment and graduation goals. The center's mission is to shape effective financial aid policy and practices that impact student enrollment, retention, and graduation rates at community colleges across the nation.

Vickie Murillo, Ph.D., former director of national sales operations for TG, has been named director of the center. As the center's director, Murillo will work with state and national education and policy organizations to lead policy development, provide professional development programs and resources for community college financial aid administrators, and conduct or commission research studies.

In 2004, TG and the Texas Association of Community Colleges conducted a needs assessment to examine the impact that enrollment growth will have on community college financial aid offices. Murillo conducted interviews with community college financial aid directors representing a wide variety of institution types, sizes, locations, and enrolled populations. Based on this assessment, TG determined that a need existed for a center to focus on financial aid policy with the specific concerns of community colleges in mind.

“Nationally, community college enrollment is growing, spurred by increasing tuition costs at 4-year schools and more people seeking a higher education,” said Sue McMillin, TG president and CEO. “TG believes that the center will serve as an invaluable resource to colleges as they address the many financial aid challenges of the students and families we all serve.”

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“The Texas Higher Education Plan, *Closing the Gaps by 2015*, projects that 60 percent of higher education enrollment growth will occur at community and technical colleges. Based on our research, we know there are many factors that will heavily impact financial aid offices at community colleges, and we are looking forward to meeting those challenges through collaboration and partnerships,” added Murillo.

The center will focus its efforts on four core components:

- **Advocacy:** The center will work to strengthen the understanding of financial aid policies and practices at community colleges with policy makers and others to increase support for improved policies and resources.
- **Research:** The center will conduct or commission research regarding financial aid and its impact on student enrollment, retention, and graduation at community colleges.
- **Professional development:** The center will provide initiatives to enhance financial aid operations and best practices at community colleges.
- **Information:** The center will serve as a clearinghouse for analyzing, publishing, and providing information relevant to financial aid professionals at 2-year colleges.

About the director

Vickie Murillo joined TG in 1999 as director of community and public affairs and provided leadership to the Council for the Management of Educational Finance. In 2003, she became the director of TG's national sales operations. Before joining TG, Murillo held various recruitment, counseling, advising, and financial aid positions at Austin Community College. She holds a doctorate from the Community College Leadership Program at the University of Texas at Austin. To find out more about the center, call (800) 252-9743, ext. 4531, or send an e-mail message to vickie.murillo@tgslc.org.

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About TG

TG is a public, nonprofit corporation that helps create access to higher education for millions of families and students through its role as an administrator of the Federal Family Education Loan Program (FFELP). Its vision is to be the premier source of information, financing, and assistance to help all families and students realize their educational and career dreams. Additional information about TG can be found online at www.tgslc.org. This press release can be downloaded from www.tgslc.org/newsroom/.