



For Immediate Release

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TG publishes new report

Financial barriers to higher education significant for Texas students

ROUND ROCK, TEXAS – An estimated 47,000 bachelor’s degrees may be lost each year in Texas due to financial barriers students face, according to a new TG report prepared for the 80th Regular Session of the Texas Legislature that convened this week.

TG, the nation’s fourth-largest student loan guarantor, assessed the enrollment rates of Texas high school graduates in 2004, and determined that economically disadvantaged but college-prepared students were 20 percent less likely to attend a college or university than their more affluent peers.

The report to the Legislature -- “Ready, willing, and unable: How financial barriers obstruct bachelor-degree attainment in Texas” -- was required of the public non-profit organization by its most recent Sunset review. TG will provide legislators with similar annual reports.

Sue McMillin, TG President and CEO, said the financial barriers faced by many Texas high school graduates pose a threat to the success of the “Closing the Gaps” initiative that calls for college enrollment to increase by 500,000 students in Texas by 2015.

“As a Texas-based and Texas-founded company serving more than one million Texas students each year, we share a common goal expressed in the ‘Closing the Gaps’ initiative that must be achieved if we are to ensure the future economic and social well-being of Texas through a well-educated population,” McMillin said. “It is our hope that these annual reports to the Texas Legislature can become a reliable tool for current and future policymakers.”

The report also examined other perceived barriers such as academic readiness and availability of information about planning and paying for college. In general, more Texas students are graduating from high school and more of those students are completing a college preparatory curriculum than ever before.

“The findings presented in this report align with similar reports in the national arena, namely the most recent publications from the Secretary of Education’s Commission on the Future of Higher Education and the Congressional Advisory Committee on Student Financial Assistance,” said Jeff Webster, TG assistant vice president for research and analytical services. “Many of the barriers to higher education are related. That’s why we believe that focusing efforts on financial barriers can go a long way toward changing family expectations, promoting academic preparation, and giving students the hope needed to learn how to navigate the various pathways to college enrollment.”

The report concludes with several policy recommendations and proposals for further research to be conducted in the future. The complete report is available online at www.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/tgslc/newsroom/.