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FEDERAL UPDATES

SFA Moves to New Washington, D.C., Location

Student Financial Assistance (SFA), the division of the Department of Education that administers Title IV student aid, is moving to a new Washington, D.C., address. There are five phases to the move, with the last phase scheduled to begin October 26.

Contacting SFA by Phone

As a result of this move, SFA staff members will obtain new phone numbers. If, in the interim, you call an SFA staff member using his or her old telephone number, you will get a voice mail message providing you with the new number. This service will be in place for 30 days after the move.

As of October 29, if you need assistance from SFA Chief Operating Officer Greg Woods' office, you should call (202) 377-3000.

SFA's New Address

SFA's mailing address has also changed due to the move. Regular U.S. mail should be sent to:
Student Financial Assistance,
U.S. Department of Education
ATTN: [staff member or office name]
830 First Street, N.E.
Mail Stop: XXXX [mail stop numbers will remain the same]
Washington, D.C. 20202

For express mail, the address is the same except for the zip code, which is 20002.

Fiscal Management Training Available

The Department of Education's (ED's) Student Financial Assistance (SFA) division will be providing workshops on Fiscal Management Training for 2001-2002 across the country starting this month. These are two-day workshops, offered through the SFA University, that cover Return of Title IV funds, accounting, record keeping, and reporting elements that schools need to know to administer the Title IV student financial aid programs.

SFA University

Every year, Student Financial Assistance (SFA) offers a variety of free training opportunities for financial aid professionals through its recently formed SFA University. All SFA University training is free; however, for workshops, registrants will need to arrange and pay for their own transportation, meals, and lodging. This year, in addition to the new 2001-02 Fiscal Management Training, SFA University is also offering two other new training events—the Packaging in EDExpress Workshops and a videoconference entitled Access for All: 2002-03 Application Processing Update.

Workshop Locations and Dates

SFA is offering a total of 77 Fiscal Management Training workshops, from October 15 through December 13, 2001, and from January 8 through February 14, 2002. To view the locations and dates of the individual workshops, go to <http://bcol01.ed.gov/CFAPPS/SFA/register3a.cfm> and click "View Training Options."

More Information

For more information and an agenda for the Fiscal Management Training workshops, visit www.ed.gov/offices/OSFAP/sfau/fmt.html. For more information on the SFA University, visit www.ed.gov/offices/OSFAP/sfau/index.html.

TG UPDATES

Reminder: TG Users Group Meeting Scheduled for November

The fall meeting of the TG Users Group (TUG) is scheduled for November 9, 2001, at the J.J. "Jake" Pickle Research Center in Austin, TX. You still have time to make plans to attend the meeting, which will include a variety of sessions and activities to help you make the most of TG's Solutions and Tools.

More Information and Questions

If you're new to TUG, you can find out more about it on *TGWorks Online* at www.tgslc.org/tgslc/tug/index.htm. You'll find an agenda for the November meeting, the by-laws that govern the group, and a link to the registration page for the TUG listserv.

For questions, contact Sheila Casey in TG Customer Services at (800) 252-9743, ext. 4576, or send an e-mail message to sheila.casey@tgslc.org.

TRENDS AND ISSUES

Distance Education Conference Rescheduled

Higher Education Washington, Inc. (HEWI) has announced a change in the dates for its distance education conference originally planned for the end of October 2001. (See the May 2001 edition of *Shoptalk*.) The conference, “Distance Learning: The Future of Education” has been rescheduled for March 11-12, 2002. The changes relate to travel restrictions in and around the Washington National Airport and the tornado that recently struck the campus of the University of Maryland University College.

The March conference will be held in the original location and registrations will be carried over to the March date. If you made reservations to attend in October, however, you should take steps to reschedule your own room reservations by calling the Inn and Conference Center at (800) 727-8622, or the hotel with which you made your reservations. You will also need to adjust your travel arrangements.

More Information

More information about the conference, including information about TG and the sponsors as well as online registration, is available at www.hewi.net.

COMMON MANUAL

e-Collection Hits the Street

The long-awaited release of the *Common Manual e-Collection* has finally come! This CD version of the July 2001 edition of the manual is in the mail and on the way to guarantors across the nation for distribution to their customers.

Features of the *e-Collection*

The *e-Collection* CD contains the *Electronic Common Manual*—and even more. It includes additional resources valuable to members of the financial aid community. Here are the other features of the *e-Collection*:

- National Council of Higher Education Loan Programs (NCHELP) Topical Index
- NCHELP Integrated Regulations (Parts 600, 668, and 682)
- NCHELP Integrated Higher Education Act (Part B – FFELP and Part G – General Provisions)
- Higher Education Act (all parts)
- 2001-2002 *Student Financial Aid Handbook*

Technical Difficulties

The highly anticipated *e-Collection* was delayed earlier this year due to technical difficulties stemming from the large size of the *Common Manual* and the number of links connecting interrelated information. Almost all of the bugs have been worked out, but one worth noting still remains:

- *Common Manual Appendix F (Forms)*—Both the Total and Permanent Disability Cancellation Request and Loan Discharge Application: Unauthorized Signature/Unauthorized Payment forms are not listed in the Appendix F table of contents. These two forms are in the manual, however.

Electronic Common Manual on Diskette

The *Electronic Common Manual* is available in another electronic format, which is on diskette. That product is also in the mail and on the way to guarantors for distribution to customers.

Integrated Common Manual

Of course, the manual is also available in its most easily accessed version—the online, *Integrated Common Manual*. Customers can download the latest version of the manual, with updates that have been tracked since its last printing, by going to www.tgslc.org/tgslc/integrated_online_manual.htm.

Questions

If you have questions about the *Common Manual* in all its various formats or would like to order a CD or diskette, call Joyce Henderson in TG Customer Services at (800) 252-9743, ext. 4546, or send an e-mail message to customer.services@tgslc.org.

TG'S LEGISLATIVE REPORTS

TG's October 5 *Legislative Report* is available online. It includes an article about subcommittee approval of the Labor-HHS-Education FY 2002 Appropriations Bill and another about a bill introduced by Senator Kit Bond to close immigration loopholes exploited by the terrorists responsible for the September 11 attacks (including the bill's provisions for student visas). Read the entire publication at www.tgslc.org/tgslc/publications/lege_report/2001/lr_011005.htm#bond.

THIS, THAT, AND THE OTHER

The national cohort default rate has declined dramatically since fiscal year (FY) 1990, when it peaked at 22.4 percent. The latest rate released for FY 1999 is 5.6 percent, 75 percent lower than the peak rate! For a look at additional historical data, see www.tgslc.org/tgslc/newsroom/news/2001/press010925.htm.

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