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FEDERAL UPDATES

New Look for ED Web Site

ED's web site has received a makeover. Launched on October 15, 2001, the site was redesigned, according to an ED press release, "to improve its organization and function for all customers and to offer users interested in customizing the Web site the option to personalize it."

ED's site is located at www.ed.gov. According to Secretary of Education Rod Paige, "The new www.ed.gov is part of what will be an ongoing effort to make the information and resources of the Department of Education available and understandable to policymakers, government leaders, educators, parents, and students alike."

Options

The front page of the site is broken down into several options for the user. These options are:

- News
- Education Resources (which include PreK-12, Higher Education, and Career & Lifelong Learning options)
- Grants and Contracts
- Financial Aid
- Policy
- Research and Statistics

Portals

In addition, the front page has several customized portals for each different “Audience” that it serves:

- Students
- Parents & Families
- Teachers
- Principals
- Higher Education Administrators
- Grantees & Assistance Providers

My.ED.gov.

Finally, ED’s web site allows users to personalize their own version of ED’s page. Under “My.ED.gov.” users can sign-in and tailor the page so that they see their favorite topics each time they visit.

More Information

For more information about the redesign of ED’s web site, go to www.ed.gov/about/welcome.jsp.

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

The Student Financial Assistance (SFA) Ombudsman staff recently moved to its new Washington, D.C., address. The SFA Ombudsman works with student loan borrowers to informally resolve disputes on loans in the Federal Family Education Loan, Direct Loan, and Perkins Loan Programs. Its offices are now located at 830 First Street, N.E., Washington, D.C. 20202-5144.

Contacting the Ombudsman by Phone and Fax

The new main number for the Ombudsman’s office is (202) 377-3800. As a result of this move, staff phone numbers have also changed and can be obtained by calling the old number before November 30, 2001. The new main fax number is (202) 257-0549.

New Mailing Address

The Ombudsman’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: 5144
Washington, D.C. 20202

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

SFA Videoconference to Focus on Application Processing Issue

The Department of Education's (ED's) Student Financial Assistance (SFA) has scheduled a satellite videoconference titled *Access for All: 2002-03 Application Processing System Update* for November 1, 2001, from 12-2 p.m. (CST).

The free broadcast is scheduled to cover numerous topics, including the following:

- New Web Initiatives for Financial Aid Administrators
- FAFSA, FAFSA on the Web, and PINs
- The Renewal Application Process, SAR, ISIR, and Data Matches
- EDEXpress Updates

More Information and Questions

Additional details are available in Dear Colleague Letter ANN-01-08 at <http://ifap.ed.gov/dpcletters/ANN0108.html>.

To learn more about the videoconference or to register to participate, visit ED's official site for all upcoming SFA videoconferences at www.edvideo.walcoff.com/.

For questions, or if you experience difficulty accessing the registration site, contact Lynn Mikelatis at lmikelat@walcoff.com.

Closed School Corner

NEWLY REPORTED CLOSURES				
TG SCHOOL ID#	SCHOOL NAME	SCHOOL ADDRESS	UNOFFICIAL CLOSURE DATE	ED'S OFFICIAL CLOSURE DATE
008924000	Classic Beauty Colleges	42 N. Stapley Dr. Mesa, AZ 85203	N/A	12/31/1999
010810000	Commercial College of Baton Rouge	400 W. Washington Ste. 307 Shreveport, LA 71101	N/A	11/29/1995

TRENDS AND ISSUES

MYF Schedules Online Training, Chat Events

Mapping Your Future (MYF) (mapping-your-future.org) has announced some fall events designed to help make the process of preparing for college easier:

- Online training events for financial aid professionals on November 1 and 8 and
- A chat event for families and students on November 15.

Online Training for Financial Aid Professionals

MYF will conduct its first-ever, nationwide training sessions for schools via an online presentation and conference call on the following dates and times in November:

- November 1, 2001, at 2 p.m. (Eastern); 1 p.m. (Central); 12 p.m. (Mountain); and 11 a.m. (Pacific).
- November 8, 2001, at 12 p.m. (Eastern); 11 a.m. (Central); 10 a.m. (Mountain); and 9 a.m. Pacific.

The hour-long sessions will offer professionals an opportunity to learn more about MYF's Online Student Loan Counseling (OSLC) and Financial Aid Office (FAO) Access. Participants will have plenty of time for questions and answers.

Participating in Online Training

To join the training sessions, professionals will sign onto a special web site and join the audio portion of the presentation via conference call. Reservations are requested and should be submitted to Cathy Mueller at cathy.mueller@mapping-your-future.org. Once a school has registered, confirmation and instructions will be sent via e-mail. If necessary, MYF will schedule additional training sessions to accommodate additional participants.

OSLC, a free service offered by MYF's sponsors, enables schools and students to meet federal loan counseling requirements and involves students in their own counseling, which in turn makes OSLC an important default prevention tool. It also offers busy financial aid professionals an opportunity to spend more time with students needing assistance with the loan process.

November 15 Chat Event

Experts in career counseling from all over the country will take part in the Careers and Internships Chat on November 15, 2001. They will respond to questions from Chat Event participants concerning a variety of topics, including the following:

- Career planning,
- Setting career goals,
- Determining the best career,
- Resources for additional assistance or information about careers, and
- Job search techniques.

The live event, scheduled for 3-4 p.m. (Eastern), 2-3 p.m. (Central), 1-2 p.m. (Mountain), and 12-1 p.m. (Pacific), is available to anyone with Internet access.

Participating in the Chat Event

Those wishing to participate can visit mapping-your-future.org at the time of the event. If they prefer, students and parents can pre-register and have a reminder sent a few days before the event. At the time of the Chat Event, visitors will go to mapping-your-future.org and select the Chat session. Simple instructions will guide them through the process of joining the event.

Questions and More Information

For questions about MYF, the online training sessions, or the chat event, contact Cathy Mueller at cathy.mueller@mapping-your-future.org.

MYF is a public service web site sponsored by Texas Guaranteed (TG) and other student loan guaranty agencies. The site, which was recently named one of the top 50 Internet sites in the fourth annual CIO-100 Awards, offers college, career, and financial aid information and services to students, schools, and families. (See TG's August 16 press release for details about MYF's recent award at www.tgslc.org/tgslc/newsroom/news/2001/press010816.htm.)

TG'S LEGISLATIVE REPORTS

The October 15 edition of TG's Legislative Report includes an article about committee approval of the Senate's 2002 Labor-HHS-Education Appropriations Bill and another about the student visa provision Senator Feinstein is considering as part of her proposed INS legislation. Read the details at www.tgslc.org/tgslc/publications/lege_report/2001/lr_011015.htm#funding.

THIS, THAT, AND THE OTHER

The Department of Education recently awarded \$10.5 million in grants to higher education institutions across the nation to provide low-income students with affordable child care. Low-income students are defined as those eligible for Pell grants. For more information on the grant program and a list of the institutions that received grant funds, visit www.ed.gov/PressReleases/10-2001/10052001f.html.

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