



## IN THIS EDITION:

### FEDERAL UPDATES

- **STROUP BECOMES ASSISTANT SECRETARY FOR POSTSECONDARY EDUCATION..... 1**

### TG UPDATES

- **“THE BIG PICTURE” PREMIÈRE APPROACHES ..... 2**
- **TG RELEASES FY 2001 SCHOOL FACT SHEETS ..... 3**
- **FEEDBACK AUGMENTS SUCCESS OF 2002 FAFSA TELECONFERENCE..... 4**
- **TG PRINTS NEW PLUS APP/PROM NOTE..... 4**
- **CLICK ME IN..... 5**

### TRENDS AND ISSUES

- **MAPPING YOUR FUTURE CHATS PLANNED..... 5**

THIS, THAT, AND THE OTHER..... 7

## FEDERAL UPDATES

### Stroup Becomes Assistant Secretary for Postsecondary Education

Sally Stroup has become ED’s top higher-education policy maker. She was sworn in as Assistant Secretary for Postsecondary Education soon after she was unanimously confirmed by the Senate on March 15, 2002.

#### Nomination

President Bush announced last October that he would nominate Stroup for the Assistant Secretary post. The nomination came on February 11, 2002. Stroup has been working as an ED consultant for the last few months, which should aid in an efficient transition into her new role.

#### Background

Stroup has many years of experience in higher-education positions. From 1981 to 1993, she worked in the Pennsylvania Higher Education Assistance Agency. Later, from 1993 to 2001, she was a staff member for the House Committee on Education and the Workforce, where she was top aide for Representative William Goodling, committee chair from 1995 to 2001. Even more recently, Stroup served as director of industry and government affairs for the Apollo Group Inc., parent company of the University of Phoenix.

## TG UPDATES

### “The Big Picture” Première Approaches

All that’s left are the last-minute preparations. The guests are invited, the stage is set, and the entertainment is booked. We hope that you’re looking forward to the première of the 2002 TG Annual Conference—The Big Picture: Take a Leading Role—as much as we are.

Here are some final reminders about the scheduled events during and related to the Conference:

- April 9, TG Conference Golf Tournament, Forest Creek Golf Club in Round Rock, 12:30 p.m.
- April 10, TG Users Group (TUG) Meeting, Austin Marriott at the Capitol – Salon D, 8 a.m. to 12 noon, with Continental Breakfast at 7:30 a.m.
- April 10, Welcome and Opening Remarks, Austin Marriott at the Capitol – Ballroom, 1 p.m.
- April 10, Keynote Address, Ballroom, Steve Ford, Actor and Motivational Speaker, following the Welcome until 2:45 p.m.
- April 10, Cast Party, Ballroom, 4:15 to 5:45 p.m.
- April 11, Reception, Bob Bullock Texas State History Museum (charter buses run from the Marriott to the museum and 6<sup>th</sup> Street area from 6 p.m. to midnight)
- April 12, Presentation of TG Academy Awards for Leadership, Ballroom, 11:45 a.m. to 12:45 p.m.

Nominees for the TG Academy Awards for Leadership will be announced during the opening session of the conference. The excitement will build until the closing session when the winners will be revealed. Make plans to stay until the final wrap-up!

Remember to visit the TG Demo Room Theatres in the Tannehill and Bickler rooms during the conference. You’ll learn about AdvanTG Web™, *Adventures In Education*, Electronic Funds Transfer, TG Loans By Web™, TG’s Support Knowledgebase, Real Time Access, and Report Request/Distribution System.

In addition, the Cyber Café will be available throughout the conference. Drop by and spend some time discovering what TG’s web sites have to offer—and check your e-mail while you’re at it.

In between all this fun, remember to take advantage of the talent that will be on display in the general sessions and concurrent sessions. A list of sessions is available in the online agenda at [www.tgslc.org/tgslc/Conference/agenda.htm](http://www.tgslc.org/tgslc/Conference/agenda.htm). It includes times, locations, information about the presenters, and summaries of the session topics.

#### Last Minute Questions

For last-minute questions about the TUG meeting, contact Sheila Casey at (800) 252-9743, ext. 4576, or send an e-mail message to [sheila.casey@tgslc.org](mailto:sheila.casey@tgslc.org). For questions about the conference, contact Judy Cunningham at ext. 2905 or [judy.cunningham@tgslc.org](mailto:judy.cunningham@tgslc.org). And for questions about the golf tournament, contact Chuck Ramos at ext. 4646 or at [chuck.ramos@tgslc.org](mailto:chuck.ramos@tgslc.org).

See you at the première!

## TG Releases FY 2001 School Fact Sheets

TG has released the Fiscal Year 2001 School Fact Sheets. The fact sheets are available in printed form, in an easy-to-use online searchable format, and in PDF for printing individual fact sheets.

Each year, TG provides the Fact Sheets to offer relevant information about Texas two- and four-year public and private educational institutions and proprietary schools. The two-volume resource includes key data about schools, lenders, and students, such as population served, dependence on loans, and cohort default rates.

“The Fact Sheets contain data pertinent to legislators and the school and lender communities,” said Jeff Webster, TG’s Assistant Vice President for Research and Analytical Services.

“Schools can get information about their lender business partners; likewise, lenders can obtain information about their school business partners, such as cohort default rates, median borrower indebtedness, and graduation rates.”

Students and families also use the information to help make informed decisions about postsecondary education and financial service providers.

### Customized School List

A new feature added to the web version of the School Fact Sheets this year is the ability to customize a list of schools based on selected criteria. Several options are available: enrollment, school type, cohort default rate, net loan volume, cost of attendance, and several options relating to location.

Here’s how the option works.

1. From the School Fact Sheets page ([www.tgslc.org/tgslc/schlfs/](http://www.tgslc.org/tgslc/schlfs/)), select the HTML version.
2. Click the second link “Select School by cohort rate, enrollment, region, etc.” Nine drop-down boxes appear.
3. To locate schools matching specified criteria, click the arrow beside the appropriate drop-down lists and make your selections. You can specify one criterion or all nine to narrow your search even further.

### Additional Features

Web users can print either individual Fact Sheets or the complete publication. In addition, they can obtain a list of every TG lender that provides loans to students at a given school by referring to the last two tables of that school's Fact Sheet. From this section, users can print a list of the lenders or link to an individual Lender Fact Sheet.

“TG updates the electronic lists monthly to reflect changes in year-to-date loan volume statistics,” said Jeff. “In a matter of seconds, viewers can learn more about a particular school, its use of student aid programs, enrollment changes, ethnic and gender composition, retention and graduation rates, student costs, and much more. The lender lists also contain links to TG’s Lender Fact Sheets, which include the lender’s address, lender code, loan volume, lender servicing, and secondary loan holder arrangements.”

Both the School and Lender Fact Sheets include data from TG, the Department of Education, the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board, the Independent Colleges and Universities of Texas, and various publications.

## Questions and More Information

TG's Lender Fact Sheets are available online at [www.tgslc.org/tgslc/schlfs/new\\_lender.cfm](http://www.tgslc.org/tgslc/schlfs/new_lender.cfm). The Lender Fact Sheets also offer help in narrowing your search criteria and include a discussion of factors to consider when selecting a lender.

For questions about TG's School or Lender Fact Sheets, contact Jeff Webster at (800) 252-9743, ext. 4504, or send an e-mail message to [jeff.webster@tgslc.org](mailto:jeff.webster@tgslc.org).

## Feedback Augments Success of 2002 FAFSA Teleconference

The February 19 edition of *Shoptalk Online* included a review of the successful 2002 FAFSA Teleconference. After a few weeks to gather feedback from participants, we're happy to say that this year's teleconference proved to be one of the best ever.

Here's some basic information that depicts the teleconference success:

- 69 sites hosted the teleconference, up from 35 sites in 2001.
- Registered sites included 8 television stations and 9 education service centers in Texas, and one site in New York.
- Overall satisfaction rating from students/families was 4.15 out of 5.
- Overall satisfaction rating from host site coordinators was 4.45 out of 5.

Here's some feedback from students who viewed the teleconference:

- "This was an exceptionally good program. It taught me all the steps in filling out my FAFSA form."
- "I was glad that I was able to attend this Teleconference. It helped me in so many ways."

Here are some typical comments from host site coordinators:

- "This year's teleconference was well done. I liked the way participants were interviewed."
- "I can see a great improvement from the first teleconference. You are providing the necessary pauses for filling in information. It went very well and the parents were impressed. Thank you."

Tapes of the broadcast in Spanish and English are still available. Contact [richard.sapp@tgslc.org](mailto:richard.sapp@tgslc.org) for more information.

## TG Prints New PLUS App/Prom Note

TG has begun printing the newest version of the Application and Promissory Note for Federal PLUS Loan, updated by ED with an extended expiration date of October 31, 2004. TG first reported the existence of the new version of the application and its new expiration date in *Shoptalk Online*, Edition 131.

### How to Spot the New

The new PLUS application, available for download at [www.tgslc.org/tgslc/forms/index.htm](http://www.tgslc.org/tgslc/forms/index.htm), shows the extended expiration date in the top left-hand corner: "Exp. Date 10/31/2004." To further assist customers in identifying the newest version, TG has also developed a new wrap around the PLUS application that has a distinguishing mark to differentiate it from the expired form.

## What to Do with the Old

Customers are encouraged to use their remaining supply of PLUS applications. TG recently began printing because it has exhausted its own supply of the old forms.

## To Order New Forms

When you are ready to order the new PLUS applications, contact Customer Services by calling (800) 252-9743, ext. 4546, faxing (512) 219-4525, or sending an e-mail message to [customer.services@tgslc.org](mailto:customer.services@tgslc.org). Forms may also be ordered online at <http://www.tgslc.org/tgslc/forms.cfm>.

## Questions

For questions about the Application and Promissory Note for Federal PLUS Loan, call TG Customer Assistance at (800) 845-6267, or send an e-mail message to [cust.assist@tgslc.org](mailto:cust.assist@tgslc.org).

## Click Me In

Even though the upcoming TG conference and TG Users Group meeting offer information about a broad range of topics, you might want to consider attending some additional events in the next few weeks that also promise to offer valuable information. Here are a few of those events:

- Remember the Regional Rallies from the Texas Association of Student Financial Aid Administrators (TASF AA) scheduled for April 4, Dallas Region; April 5, San Antonio Region; April 25-26, South Texas Region; May 3, El Paso Region; and May 13-14, East Texas Region. You'll find more details about the 2002 rallies online at [www.tasfaa.org](http://www.tasfaa.org).
- In Abilene, TX, on May 1, 2002, TG and the Council for the Management of Educational Finance will host Practical Strategies for Effective Default Aversion. Find out more about this, and subsequent workshops on the same topic, at [www.tgslc.org/tgslc/Default\\_Workshops/index.cfm](http://www.tgslc.org/tgslc/Default_Workshops/index.cfm).

And remember to visit the TG Events Calendar on a regular basis to find out what other events might interest you. You'll find the calendar online at [www.tgslc.org/tgslc/abouttg/dates.htm](http://www.tgslc.org/tgslc/abouttg/dates.htm).

## TRENDS AND ISSUES

### ***Mapping Your Future Chats Planned***

Students and parents can find out about online college, financial aid, and scholarship resources during an April 11, 2002, Chat Event on *Mapping Your Future* ([www.mapping-your-future.org](http://www.mapping-your-future.org)) (MYF). Financial aid experts from all over the country will answer questions during the "How to Find Financial Aid, Colleges, and Scholarships Online" Chat Event.

During the chat, students and their families will learn more about:

- College admission applications via the Web
- Where to find online scholarship search services and what to look for in those services
- Online tools for determining how much college costs and how to pay for it
- Completing the FAFSA online
- Other financial aid and college admission topics

This live event, scheduled for 7–8 p.m. (Eastern), 6–7 p.m. (Central), 5–6 p.m. (Mountain), and 4–5 p.m. (Pacific), provides a unique opportunity for students and parents to receive information on these important topics.

Anyone with Internet access can join the Chat Event by visiting MYF on the World Wide Web. On the evening of the Chat Event, visitors will log on to the site and select the Chat session. Simple instructions will help them join the event.

### **More Chats**

Several additional chat events are planned for the remaining months of the school year, through the summer months, and the early fall.

- May 9, 2002 Daytime Chat\*—Financial Aid Planning and the FAFSA
- June 13, 2002 Evening Chat—Summer Financial Aid Questions and Career Planning
- July 11, 2002 Daytime Chat—Online and Distance Education
- August 8, 2002 Evening Chat\*—FAFSA and College Admission
- September 12, 2002 Daytime Chat—Deferments, Forbearances, and Default Prevention

Daytime chats are held from 2–3 p.m. Central time, and evening chats are held from 6–7 p.m. Central time. Chats marked with an asterisk are scheduled for an hour and a half rather than the customary hour.

To read transcripts of the questions and answers from previous chat events, visit the Chat Event page on MYF at [www.mapping-your-future.org/services/chatnight.htm](http://www.mapping-your-future.org/services/chatnight.htm). A link to the questions and answers from each event is listed at the bottom of the page. The page also offers a search feature through which you can find questions and answers relating to topics of interest.

### **More Information and Questions**

For more information about MYF chats or for questions about MYF, contact Cathy Mueller at [cathy.mueller@mapping-your-future.org](mailto:cathy.mueller@mapping-your-future.org).

MYF is a public service web site sponsored by TG and other student loan guaranty agencies. It offers college, career, and financial aid information and services to students, schools, and families.

## THIS, THAT, AND THE OTHER

A recent report by the State Public Interest Research Groups' (PIRGs') Higher Education Project asserts that higher numbers of student borrowers are graduating with unmanageable levels of debt. The report, entitled *The Burden of Borrowing*, provides research that shows that 39% of student borrowers graduate with unmanageable debt, which the report defines as monthly payments that are more than 8% of borrowers' monthly incomes.

The report offers additional statistics for the years 1999-2000:

- 64% of students graduated with student loan debt, up from 42% in 1992-1993.
- The average student loan debt for a graduate who attended full time at a four-year institution was \$16,928, almost double the 1992-1993 figure of \$9,188.
- 71% of dependent student borrowers from families with incomes below \$20,000 graduated with debt, compared to 44% from families with incomes above \$100,000.

The report points to three possible causes for the increasing trends in borrowing: the decline in the buying power of Pell grants, the shift from the use of savings to the use of student loans, and rising tuition outpacing inflation.

To access *The Burden of Borrowing*, visit [www.pirg.org/highered/BurdenofBorrowing.pdf](http://www.pirg.org/highered/BurdenofBorrowing.pdf).

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To ask questions about the articles in *Shoptalk Online*, subscribe or order additional copies, please contact Communications at (800) 252-9743, ext. 2878 or [communications@tgscl.org](mailto:communications@tgscl.org).

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