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Tip^{of} the Week

Help your students understand the consequences of heavy credit card spending with TG's online video, *Credit Card Debt — A Student's Story*, available through *Adventures In Education* at www.aie.org/College/Paying/Earning/Credit/index.cfm.

Federal updates

ED reminds lenders to renew Organizational Participation Agreement

On June 3, 2008, ED posted an announcement to the Federal Student Aid Financial Partners Portal reminding FFELP lenders to renew their Organizational Participation Agreement (OPA) by September 30, 2008. Renewal of the OPA, which occurs on a two-year cycle, will ensure that a lender — and if applicable, its servicer — may continue reporting the Lender's Interest and Special Allowance Request and Report (LaRS) electronically without interruption.

The OPA is available online at www.fp.ed.gov/fp/attachments/fms_data_nsls/2010LenSerOPAv2.doc.

More information

If you have any questions, please contact ED at (202) 377-3002 or fps.lidprocess@ed.gov.

ED issues reminder of change in lender reviews

In a *Dear Guaranty Agency Director* letter dated May 19, ED issued a reminder that guarantors must include the review of prohibited inducements in the scope of comprehensive lender reviews required under 34 CFR 682.410(c)(1).

In their role of overseeing lenders that participate in the FFELP, guarantors must conduct comprehensive biennial on-site program reviews of lenders for which they have guaranteed FFELP loans. Beginning January 1, 2008, the review of prohibited inducements has been added to the scope of the comprehensive lender reviews that are performed under the Common Review Initiative (CRI) process. This will ensure compliance with federal laws and regulations that prohibit lenders from using inducements to increase loan volume. Procedures for non-CRI reviews will also be updated accordingly.

More information

The *Dear Guaranty Agency Director* letter is available online at www.fp.ed.gov/fp/attachments/activities_whatsnew/CRILetteronInducements.pdf. *Shoptalk Online* will keep readers informed as the prohibited inducement procedures are finalized.

NSLDS Newsletter #17 available

On June 2, ED released *NSLDS Newsletter #17*, which discusses NSLDS changes implemented in January 2008 as part of the annual system updates, as well as the new NSLDS e-mail notification process.

Highlights of the changes include:

- Enhanced data match so the Central Processing System (CPS) can include a flag for fraud on the Institutional Student Information Record (ISIR);
- New loan limit indicators displayed on the NSLDS Financial Aid Professionals (FAP) Web site and reported to CPS for inclusion on the ISIR;
- Updated grant information as reported by Common Origination and Disbursement (COD) for display on the NSLDS FAP Web site and reported to CPS for inclusion on the ISIR;
- Updates to the Transfer Student Monitoring/Financial Aid History (TSM/FAH) processes and batch file layout; and
- E-mail notifications that replace NSLDS User ID letters and Enrollment Late Letters.

More information

To access NSLDS Newsletter #17, visit the Information for Financial Aid Professionals (IFAP) Web site at <http://ifap.ed.gov/nsldsmaterials/08NSLDSNewsletter17.html>.

TG updates

Southern State Community College's Highland County College Access Network reaches students and families with help of TG grant



Highland County is a rural Appalachian County located in southern Ohio. According to census data, the county has an estimated population of over 42,000 and an 11.8 percent poverty rate. Southern State Community College (SSCC), located in the county seat of Hillsboro, serves a five-county rural area. The college offers transfer and technical credit programs and a wide range of community service initiatives, including workforce training programs.

One of these initiatives — the Highland County College Access Network (HighlandCAN!) program — provides direct services to students and their families and pre-college outreach services to first-generation college students and others.

HighlandCAN! offers four college access and success programs in the five school districts, including a college resource center staffed with an advisor; a College Club which recruits approximately 430 low-income first-generation students for tutoring and help in navigating the college pathway; the 8th Grade Pathway program, which promotes career skills-building and financial literacy at an early age; and a College Cohort group of high school seniors that attend SSCC.

TG supports the work of SSCC's HighlandCAN! with a grant from its Public Benefit Grant Program. Recently, *Shoptalk Online* asked program administrator Brenda Martin a few questions to learn more about the varied services the program offers.

Q.: Describe how your program generally helps the school districts in Highland County.

A.: Our schools often operate in a "silo" with very little support from outside. Many students in our Appalachian area come to school with unmet social and emotional needs that inhibit their ability to learn. And our school districts do not have the resources to meet those needs, yet are held accountable for the students' performance. The HighlandCan! Program is closely linked with the Highland County P-16 Council whose members provide many of the services that the students need. Our school's leaders, including board members and

superintendents, are actively involved in the P-16 Council and work closely with the council. Schools definitely feel supported by the council and, by extension, the HighlandCan! Program.

Q.: The 8th Grade Pathway program offers a path for students interested in learning about careers. What's the value of starting at such an early age?

A.: The Highland County P-16 Council reviewed all of the key transition points along the P-16 pipeline. The transition from junior high — or middle school — to high school emerged as one of the points that needed to be addressed. Eighth-grade students choose their high school courses at this point and many students who have not done well drop out. Also, choosing high school courses without having a career direction may mean students do not take the necessary courses for higher education. Or they may not understand the relationship between education and future jobs. The value of providing career assessments at this age is to help students make the connection between school and future jobs; to identify areas of interest so high school courses align with future education goals; and to identify areas of academic weakness at an earlier age.

Q.: Can you describe some of the “enrichment activities” that the College Club offers students?

A.: HighlandCan! serves 692 students in the College Clubs. The students were taken on college campus tours to a local community college and to four-year universities. Enrichment activities include a variety of things, including visits to The Ohio State University stadium, the Wetlands, and the John Glenn Center. Other enrichment activities included College Goal Sunday, a variety of knowledge games including College BINGO, college-themed “scavenger hunts” which serve as learning activities, and many of the learning games provided by the Ohio College Access Network (OCAN).

Q.: Can you describe current developments in the HighlandCAN! program?

A.: We hired a college success advisor who works with our cohort students as they make the transition to college. An orientation for this group has been scheduled and a summer bridge program called College Success is being developed. The college success advisor will connect seniors to social services outside the college; monitor students' grades and help facilitate tutors if necessary; and be available in the lab for students to ask questions. We should be able to follow the students during their two years at SSCC.

Q.: Are there other results so far?

A.: Our college access advisor says that tests on college awareness and financial literacy show positive results. Students have improved their knowledge in all areas related to college access. Senior in the college cohort program show the highest increases.

About TG's Public Benefit Award Program

To receive funds, organizations are required to submit proposals that address the issue of access to postsecondary education for low-to-moderate income students.

To learn more

If you'd like to learn more about TG's Public Benefit Grant Program, you'll find a description of its purpose and process on *TG Online* at www.tgslc.org/publicbenefit/index.cfm.

Join TG at its summer regional trainings

TG's upcoming regional training offers a great way to learn about the latest regulatory changes. The day-long workshops offer a menu of training opportunities in a variety of areas, including policy and industry trends.

Trainings will be held in Phoenix, Ariz., in Houston, Texas, and at the University of Texas – Pan American in June and July. To learn more about the trainings, read through the following short descriptions of sessions offered. A complete listing of dates and an agenda for the regional trainings can be found at www.tgslc.org/training/regional/index.cfm.

- **Federal Update:** With this session, attendees learn more about recent activities that may affect the FFELP. Updates on various issues including federal common forms, *Dear Colleague* letters issued by the Department of Education, proposed and final federal regulations, and pending legislation are all explored in this workshop.
- **Policy Potpourri:** During this session, presenters use a game-show format to test the audience's knowledge of regulatory policy and federal student aid trends. The interactive presentation leaves participants knowing more about financial aid and entertains them at the same time.

To learn more

Would you like to learn more about the many training opportunities TG offers through its Speakers Bureau? Visit www.tgslc.org/speakers/index.cfm to read the training catalog. Keep in mind that TG can adapt a training session to meet the needs of your school campus. To find out how, contact your account executive at (800) 252-9743.

Trends and issues

Question of the week

Q.: Since changes in the November 1, 2007, final rules will limit the use of current-year Title IV funds for payment of minor prior-year charges to no more

than \$200 after July 1, 2008, what other options does a school have for resolving these situations?

A.: The regulations do not address the use of non-Title IV (i.e., state or institutional) funds to pay prior-year charges, so the school may consider the use of those funds after determining that there are no restrictions specific to the non-Title IV fund source on doing so. A school may also consider proactively contacting affected students to make them aware of the situation and the need to secure alternative means of payment of prior-year debts.

Do you have a question?

If you have a question that needs an answer, feel free to *Ask TG™*. *Ask TG* is TG's online query tool for borrowers, schools, and lenders. It includes a database of frequently asked questions about financial aid, student loan processing, and TG's products and services. To submit a question to *Ask TG*, visit tgslc.custhelp.com.

Legislative update

Congress has extended the Higher Education Act through June 30, 2008, and partially addressed the student loan "liquidity problem" by passing H.R. 5715 — the Ensuring Continued Access to Student Loans Act.

Also, the Federal Reserve Board decided to begin accepting federally-insured student loan securities as collateral through its Term Securities Lending Facility. ED and the FFELP lending community reached a temporary agreement on how the Department will implement its temporary role as the FFELP "secondary market of last resort." The program will provide lenders a one-year opportunity to obtain liquidity from the Department sufficient to cover costs and originate new FFELP loans. These policy changes will provide immediate, if only temporary, liquidity for the FFELP lending arena.

A related bill is still pending in committee. H.R. 5914 — The Student Loan Access Act — proposes to provide the Treasury Department's Federal Financing Bank the authority to purchase federally-insured student loans, invest in securities backed by federally-insured student loans, and make advances to lenders to originate federally-insured student loans.

Learn more by reading the full Legislative Report on *TG Online* at www.tgslc.org/lege_report/2008/lr_080605.cfm.

This, that, and the other

Not that it's news to financial aid offices, but a recent study confirms the connection between social prosperity and a graduate education. The study, conducted by the Council on Graduate Schools' Advisory Committee on Graduate Education and the Public Good, says there is a strong link between a U.S. graduate education and economic and social success.

In their report, *Graduation and the Public Good*, the committee focuses on how a world-class graduate education system has benefited the U.S. and the world.

Surprisingly, the study found that over 70 percent of doctoral degree-holders worked outside of academia — in a range of fields from health and legal services to manufacturing and educational occupations.

Having such a highly educated population has allowed the U.S. to reap the benefits of "increased tax revenues, greater productivity, increased workforce flexibility, decreased reliance on government financial assistance, and improved ability to adapt to, and use, technology."

Some of the other societal benefits described in the report include increased revenue, better health, improved employment, greater civic responsibility, next-generation researchers, and entrepreneurial development.

Read the complete article at

www.nasfaa.org/publications/2008/rgraduate060608.html.



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