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TG

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Tip of the Week

TG offers many workshops and seminars on issues important to you, including federal regulatory changes, professional development, and industry topics. If you're planning fall training for staff, consider the TG Speakers Bureau, which offers a full roster of presentations that can be adapted to meet your office's needs.

Federal updates

Guidance on updates to recent loan purchase programs

ED recently announced updates to Ensuring Continued Access to Student Loans (ECASLA) announcement #68 (see *Shoptalk Online* edition 516), which provided information about the four new servicers that have been awarded contracts to service student loans held by ED, including loans sold to ED through the Loan Purchase Programs authorized under ECASLA. The update includes several revised attachments.

More information

The updated announcement and attachments are available on ED's ECASLA Web site at http://federalstudentaid.ed.gov/ffelp.

New TEACH Grant guidance

ED has published a *Dear Colleague Letter* (DCL-GEN-09-10) that summarizes a change made by the Higher Education Opportunity Act (HEOA) to the TEACH Grant Program requirement that a grant recipient teach in a high-need field to fulfill the TEACH Grant service obligation.

In addition to the specific high-need fields identified in the Higher Education Act (HEA), a grant recipient may also fulfill the service obligation by teaching in another field documented as high-need by the federal government, a state government, or a local education agency, and approved by the Secretary. Federal regulations currently state that a TEACH Grant recipient may satisfy his or her service obligation by this method only if that field is designated by a state as high-need at the time the recipient begins qualifying teaching in that field in that state.

Under the HEOA, however, beginning with the 2010-11 academic year, a TEACH Grant recipient may satisfy the obligation if a field was designated as high-need for any award year in which the student received a TEACH Grant, even if the field is no longer designated as such when the grant recipient begins teaching.

Because the change made by the HEOA does not become effective until July 1, 2010, teaching service performed prior to the 2010-11 school year will not count toward satisfying the requirement to teach in a high-need field unless the field is designated as such when the TEACH Grant recipient begins teaching.

ED will publish regulations reflecting this change in the Final Rules that are developed to carry out the changes made to the TEACH Grant Program by the HEOA.

More information

The complete DCL is available on the Information for Financial Aid Professionals (IFAP) Web site at http://www.ifap.ed.gov/dpcletters/GEN0910.html.

Additional ED guidance on excluding veterans' benefits from estimated financial assistance

To provide clarification about veterans' educational benefits that are excluded from estimated financial assistance (EFA), ED recently provided additional information in an electronic announcement posted on the Information for Financial Aid Professional's Web site (IFAP). The announcement indicates that the programs, administered by the Department of Veteran Affairs (VA) and the Department of Defense (DOD), are eligible to be excluded effective July 1, 2009. The announcement also includes questions and answers that may be helpful as financial aid professionals package veterans' financial aid for the 2009-10 award year. The announcement can be viewed online.

More information

For more information about the exclusion of veterans' education benefits from EFA, see *Shoptalk Online* editions 510 and 511.

TG updates

TG to roll out redesigned *TG Online*

TG works to make sure your experience of its Web sites is intuitive and reflects your priorities as a financial aid professional. Later this week, TG will launch an enhanced version of its corporate Web site, *TG Online*, designed to provide you financial aid information in a more efficient, user-friendly way.

TG Online offers resources to a wide variety of audiences, including schools, borrowers, students and their families. Among other things, the site answers college finance questions for students, supplies timely regulatory information for schools, and guides all of its users to tools that help them navigate the federal student loan process.

The newest version of *TG Online* will introduce a number of Web site efficiencies. These changes will make navigation simpler, offer more links to resources on popular topics, such as financial literacy, and integrate the latest Web technology, which makes sharing information easier. A more detailed overview of changes will appear in next week's *Shoptalk Online*.

Learn more

Watch for a redesigned *TG Online* later this week. Upcoming issues of *Shoptalk Online* will highlight key changes and offer you an opportunity to provide feedback on the enhancements.

Enhanced List Assist℠ now available

Last week, TG released an enhanced version of List Assist℠, TG's lender survey tool. List Assist provides an online resource for generating, communicating, and tracking surveys used in creating a FFELP lender list. For schools, List Assist simplifies information-gathering. For lenders, it streamlines the survey process and can help in prioritizing work.

TG's revised version of List Assist offers a variety of processing efficiencies, many suggested by users. Among other things, List Assist now allows schools to update contact information and survey end dates, send and resend survey requests more efficiently, and view a distribution list for specific surveys. List Assist now allows lenders to view the survey invitation with the school name and code in the subject line and more easily access the school's survey end date.

A complete summary of List Assist enhancements is available in last week's *Shoptalk Online*.

Find out more

To learn more about the latest enhancements, schools and lenders can register for one of the following training webinars.

- Monday, September 28, 2009; 2 p.m.–3 p.m. Central Time
- Tuesday, September 29, 2009; 10 a.m.–11 a.m. Central Time (repeat)

User Guide and online help

Information on the latest enhancements is provided through List Assist's *User Guide* and online help. The *User Guide* is located on the List Assist main menu under the Resources section.

To learn more

If you have questions about the latest changes, or would like to register to use List Assist, please contact your TG account executive at (800) 252-9743. You can also send an e-mail message to relationship.management@tgslc.org.

Register today for this week's webinar on IBR

On Thursday, August 20, TG will offer a webinar covering the basics of Income-Based Repayment (IBR). The webinar will provide a concise yet thorough overview of the new repayment plan, which could potentially benefit many borrowers experiencing difficulty making student loan payments. The hour-long webinar will start at 2 p.m. Central Time.

Available to FFELP and Direct Loan borrowers, IBR benefits eligible borrowers by minimizing monthly payments; it provides loan forgiveness in some cases as well. Making borrowers aware of the repayment plan is important to realizing IBR's potential benefits. TG's webinar will explain many of the components of the plan, including how borrowers qualify for IBR as well as the key advantages IBR offers to borrowers and schools. The webinar will also provide ideas for educating borrowers about IBR.

To register

Registration information for the IBR webinar is available at www.tgslc.org/training/webinars/industry.cfm. Archived recordings of webinars are available from this link also, including "R2T4 — Basics and Beyond," "Verification in the Financial Aid Office," and "Satisfactory Academic Progress."

Latest edition of *TG Connection* focuses on college access and outreach efforts to support students

Many colleges and universities offer more than degree opportunities to students. They reach out to families and students through altruistic efforts that make college more accessible and the academic experience easier to navigate. By offering

mentoring programs, tutoring services, and outreach initiatives, schools work to create a community of support for today's students. TG's newest issue of its quarterly news magazine, *TG Connection*, considers a few of the many ways that colleges and universities nurture that community. Here's a preview of the edition's articles.

- **Spreading the word on college access** — Schools are looking for more and better ways of sharing the message that a higher education is possible. While most colleges and universities make plenty of college-readiness resources available on campus, other schools are putting their awareness and access campaigns on the road through Mobile Go Centers.

- **First-generation tutoring and mentoring** — First-generation and foreign-born residents make up a growing portion of the U.S. population — over 60 million. Providing these individuals and their children with the benefit of a postsecondary education will be key to the success of America's economy. To promote college access for this important demographic, many colleges offer support, including tutoring and mentoring programs.

- **Branching out: Volunteers make higher education possible one connection at a time** — Volunteers make a difference in countless lives. Many financial aid professionals donate time, knowledge, and skills to people outside their offices. These efforts come in many forms but often focus on enabling students to reap the long-term benefits of a higher education.

- **Answering the call: Four financial aid professionals share why they volunteer** — A few financial aid professionals share how they help students during the day and then devote more of their time after work to outreach efforts or other worthy causes. For these individuals, helping others is their life's mission, and sowing the seeds of hope and opportunity offers its own reward.

- **Going green** — Almost four decades after it was first observed, Earth Day has evolved into a worldwide environmental movement. Colleges and universities play key roles in this work. Schools lead research into clean energy. Many universities use their campuses as laboratories where energy-saving technology can be tested. Still other schools, like Binghamton University of the State University of New York system, endeavor to raise consciousness by engaging students and local communities in environmental projects.

Order your issue

If you would like to request one or more issues of *TG Connection*, please send an e-mail message to TG communications at communications@tgslc.org. Please allow one to two weeks for delivery.

Legislative update

When Congress returns from its August recess, the House will take up the Student Aid and Fiscal Responsibility Act of 2009 (H.R. 3221). Learn more about the latest legislation moving through Congress.

This, that, and the other

To commemorate the Constitution and to bring alive the circumstances surrounding its creation, Congress established September 17 as Constitution Day. If you're looking for resources for celebrating Constitution Day, consider the information that ED provides through its Web site. You'll find biographies of the Constitution's signers, suggested ways of teaching the articles of the Constitution, and links to recommended federal sites, including one for the Library of Congress.

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To ask questions about *Shoptalk Online*, please contact Communications at (800) 252-9743, ext. 4732, or send an e-mail message to communications@tgslc.org.

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