Joan Buchanan

Assemblymember, 15th District

For more information about financial aid, contact your high school or community college counselor, or check out my website.

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Rev. 1/09

Cal Grant Program

It could help put you through college.

California State Assembly

Joan Buchanan

Assemblymember, 15th District

Dear Friend,

The California State Legislature understands that the search for financial aid sources can sometimes be challenging and expensive for many families. However, there are many programs available to help you and your family obtain the support you need.

California's Cal Grant Financial Aid Program guarantees financial assistance to every qualified student who applies. Depending on the type of financial aid for which you qualify, books and room and board may also be subsidized.

Applications can be mailed or submitted online. Check with your high school counselor, college financial aid advisor, or simply download the application at **www.fafsa.ed.gov.**

Remember, you can't get the money unless you fill out the application and meet the **March 2nd deadline.** So don't delay.

If you have any questions, please contact my office.

Sincerely,

Joan Buchanan

Joan Buchanan
State Assemblymember
15th Assembly District

APPLICATION PROCEDURES

Basic Eligibility Requirements

- Have a 2.0 GPA or better.
- Be a California resident.
- Meet financial need requirements.

Who Can Apply?

- High school seniors.
- High school graduates that completed school within the last year.
- GED holders within one year of completion.
- Community college transfer students under the age of 24 years old.

How To Apply?

1. Pick up a Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) at a high school or college counseling office. You can also apply for financial aid online at www.fafsa.ed.gov or call (800) 433-3243 or TTY (800) 730-8913 to have it mailed to you. Submit the application by the March 2nd deadline.
2. Pick up a GPA Verification Form from your high school and send it in. Most of time the school will fill out a majority of the form.
3. Review your Student Aid Report (SAR) and return it. Within four weeks of submitting the FAFSA, you should receive your SAR containing your Expected Family Contribution. Check it for accuracy and submit any corrections immediately. Keep a copy for your records.

FINANCIAL AID PROGRAMS

FEDERAL FINANCIAL AID — This includes the federal Pell Grant, federal SEOG Grant, federal work-study and the federal Perkins Loan programs. The federal Stafford Loan programs and federal direct loan programs are available to almost all college students.

LOAN PROGRAMS — Qualified students and their parents can borrow money for education through low-interest federally supported loans. The loans are made by banks, savings and loans and credit unions and are guaranteed by the commission's subsidiary, the EdFund.

STATE FINANCIAL AID — Administered by the California Student Aid Commission, state aid, for the most part, is reserved for California resident students with financial need as determined by the information contained on their free application for Federal Student Aid. In addition, the well-funded Cal Grant programs require academic qualification; a GPA Verification Form must be postmarked by March 2nd each year.

PRIVATE SCHOLARSHIPS — Hundreds of privately funded scholarships are available nationally to qualified students. Scholarships are considered gift aid, which does not have to be repaid, and are often awarded for merit in academics, athletics, or a particular field of study. Scholarships may also be awarded by ethnic background, religious affiliation and special interests.

No matter what type of financial aid you may need, be sure to start looking early! Many programs have specific filing deadlines.

MILESTONES ON THE FINANCIAL AID CALENDAR

It's never too early to start thinking about going to college, planning where you would like to attend and researching what financial resources may be available to you.

As you begin the process of planning, be sure to keep these tasks and time frames in mind:

High School Juniors

MARCH AND AUGUST — Sign up with your counselor to take the SAT or ACT test.

MAY AND AUGUST — Visit your high school counselor's office, browse through college directories at your library, communicate with colleges in which you're interested and meet with college representatives.

Financial aid can help make your dream of getting a college diploma come true.

High School Seniors

OCTOBER — Obtain college admission application packets at high school counseling offices or at nearby UC, CSU, or other campuses. Contact independent colleges and occupational career schools for admission materials and financial aid application procedures.

NOVEMBER — File your application for fall admission to UC and CSU campuses for priority consideration. If you're applying for a Cal Grant, pick up the FAFSA and GPA Verification Form.

Remember, do not file the FAFSA before January 1st, but no later than March 2nd.

JANUARY — Submit your financial aid applications for most state and federal aid.

FEBRUARY — Check with each college for information on its unique grant and scholarship programs.

MARCH 2ND — ***Cal Grant A, B, And C Application Deadline.***

Send your FAFSA to the federal processor postmarked no later than March 2nd.

For Cal Grants A, B, and C, you must submit a GPA Verification Form to the California Student Aid Commission by March 2nd, if required. Be sure to send it by registered mail at a post office to ensure that the forms were mailed on time.

RESOURCES

You can learn more about California's many fine colleges and universities by contacting:

California Community Colleges
1102 Q Street
Sacramento, CA
95811-6549
www.cccco.edu

University of California System
1111 Franklin Street
Oakland, CA
94607-5200
www.ucop.edu

Association of Independent California Colleges
1100 11th Street
Suite 10
Sacramento, CA
95814-3812
www.aiccu.edu

California State University System
401 Golden Shore
Long Beach, CA
90802-4210
www.calstate.edu

Scholarship Searches

Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA)
(800) 4-FED-AID (433-3243)
www.fafsa.ed.gov

California Student Aid Commission
(888) CA GRANT (224-7268)
www.csac.ca.gov

EdFund
(877) 2 EDFUND (233-3863)
www.edfund.org

College Connection Scholarships
(302) 765-3880
www.collegescholarships.com

FastWeb: Internet Scholarship Service
www.fastweb.com

California College Explorer
www.californiacolleges.edu

Smart Student Guide to Financial Aid
www.finaid.org