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2011 College Goal Sunday Update

Although, we've recently held 21 of our College Goal Sunday events; we still have another 11 sites that we will host their events on February 13th. Continued help to spread the word to students and their families about the importance of attending College Goal Sunday is appreciated. Check out the website, www.tn.gov/collegegoalsunday for the most current information about the locations. If you're considering volunteering your financial aid expertise and have questions about where you might serve, please call or email Darolyn Porter, 615.253.7472 or darolyn.porter@tn.gov.



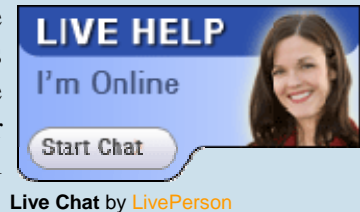
- | CGS Sites | February 13 |
|--------------------|------------------------------|
| Chattanooga | Chattanooga State CC |
| Cookeville | TN Tech University |
| Covington | TTC at Covington |
| Franklin | Columbia State CC |
| Jackson | TTC at Jackson |
| Knoxville | Pellissippi State CC |
| Knoxville | C.W. Cansler YMCA |
| Memphis | Southwest TN CC |
| Nashville | Nashville State CC |
| Nashville | Nashville College Connection |
| Oak Ridge | Roane State CC |



TSAC Call Center Resource

In any given month, the TSAC Call Center receives anywhere between 3,000 to over 7,000 calls from students, parents, school counselors, and financial aid professionals. The call center is staffed by the Director of Counselor Services, Janice Maddox and three Student Assistant Information Specialists: Robert Warfield, Janise Powell, and Anta Dozier. These individuals spend their time answering questions regarding all TSAC grant and scholarship programs. Whether it's regarding a particular requirement, issues with the TSAC Student Portal, or the FAFSA, they can assist you. The call center hours are Monday through Friday, 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. The local number is 615.741.1346 and the long distance number is 800.342.1663.

Additionally, the call center provides Live Chat. The live chat portal can be found on the TSAC website at www.tn.gov/collegepays. The Live Chat link is the last button on the right across the top navigation bar. The Live Chat feature is open as well Monday through Friday, 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. If a student or parent chooses to leave a message outside these hours, an email message will be generated and sent to the staff to be answered the following business day.



Please remind your students to fill out the Free Application for Federal Aid (FAFSA) at www.fafsa.gov as soon as possible. While there is no set deadline for the TSAA grant, students must apply early for consideration.

Higher Education Public Policy Issues

As a new governor and legislature begin their work on the state budget, numerous public policy issues have recently been highlighted in the news. Among these policies are those facing higher education, including the anticipated shortfall of Tennessee Education Lottery Scholarship (TELS) funds. Specifically, several reports have indicated that the TELS program is facing an "\$86 million shortfall." While it is true that there is a shortfall in the TELS program, TSAC would like to clarify the reported amount.

The projected shortfall for the 2010-11 academic year is approximately \$17 million, not \$86 million. If no changes are made to the program, the deficit will fluctuate around \$20 million annually for the next three years, then begin to decline. The \$86 million referenced in these articles actually represents the total dollar amount that needy, full-time students under the age of 24 could receive from the Tennessee Student Assistance Award (TSAA), if sufficient TSAA funds existed. These students are not denied TSAA funds because of a shortfall in the TELS program, but are denied because of insufficient TSAA funding.

The TELS shortfall is currently being made up with funds from the TELS reserve. Although sufficient funds exist in the reserve to cover the anticipated shortfall, the legislature is looking at ways to change the TELS program in order to correct the current imbalance between funding and expenditures. The TSAC newsletter will provide updates throughout the legislative session on the progress of bills that impact the TELS program.



College Goal Sunday - January 30, 2011



The first College Goal Sunday event this year was a great success. The weather cooperated and all locations were up and running at 2:00 p.m. staffed with very helpful volunteers. Here are some pictures of a few of the sites:



Lottery Legislation

There have been several bills introduced that propose to modify existing lottery programs. Most bills that have been filed are intended to reduce expenditures by increasing the GPA and/or ACT requirements (House Bill 13 and House Bill 14). Additionally, House Bill 15 changes the terminating events.



Two bills, House Bill 105 and House Bill 111, expand the HOPE Scholarship by easing continuation requirements or allowing ineligible high school graduates to work their way into the program. Below are the bill numbers along with a brief description. The bill number is linked to a summary page if you would like to read more information about the bill. If you have questions, please contact Tim Phelps at 615.253.7441 or tim.phelps@tn.gov.

Bill Number

Description

[House Bill 13](#)

Gradually increases eligibility requirements for entering freshmen beginning in 2014-15 academic year

[House Bill 14](#)

Changes eligibility requirement to 3.0 **and** 21 for eligible high school students and increases ACT requirement for all other students to 23

[House Bill 15](#)

Changes terminating events to receipt of degree or eight (8) semesters or four years; if student is in program of study of more than 120 hours, award can be received for ten (10) semesters or five years

[House Bill 78](#)

Establishes a work-study program for recipients of the HOPE with Aspire program

[House Bill 79](#)

Requires TSAC to develop, implement, and administer a student loan repayment program for nurses who perform community service or accept employment with the State of Tennessee

[House Bill 105](#)

Divides the Aspire supplement into half grant (\$750) and half work-study (\$750). Students would have opportunity to earn work-study through employment with LEAs

[House Bill 106](#)

Allows HOPE Scholarship recipients to retain award by maintaining good academic standing

[House Bill 111](#)

Allows entering freshmen who did not meet initial eligibility requirements to qualify for the HOPE Scholarship if they meet the GPA requirement at the first benchmark

[House Bill 170](#)

Allows award to be used in summer; also, changes terminating events to receipt of degree or five years, or student can receive award for 10 full-time equivalent semesters. Students enrolled half time will use half of an award; students enrolled three fourths will use three fourths of an award

[Senate Bill 271](#)

Creates a new lottery scholarship for students preparing to become teachers