



Statewide FAFSA Workshops Assist Families In Completing Financial Aid Applications

College Goal FAFSA Helps Ensure Students Don't Miss Opportunities for Free College Money

PHOENIX (September 29, 2016) – Every high school senior, college student, and adult student who plans to attend college during the 2017-2018 academic year should complete Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) to apply for federal and state financial aid as well as many private-donor scholarships and work study programs. College Goal FAFSA, part of the national College Goal Sunday initiative, provides FREE help statewide to students and families completing the FAFSA beginning this October at more than 46 high school and community site across the state.

The Arizona Commission for Postsecondary Education in partnership with the Arizona Association of Student Financial Aid Administrators announces the 21st Annual FAFSA campaign. Over 47,000 students and families have been served by the Arizona's College Goal FAFSA workshops. Workshops are hosted at more than 46 locations statewide. High schools, Colleges and Community sites across the state will host FAFSA completion workshops. Workshops are designed to give college-bound students and their families free on-site assistance in completing the FAFSA. This initiative supports the recently announced *Achieve60AZ: Education Advances Everyone* campaign in meeting the 60% statewide postsecondary attainment goals.

“Completing the FAFSA early is the key to removing one of the most common barriers students face in going to college,” said Dr. April Osborn, Executive Director for the Arizona Commission for Postsecondary Education. “There is more than \$150 billion of financial aid funding available and every student should be taking advantage of that. The FAFSA is the critical first step in applying for any type of assistance.”

The mission of College Goal FAFSA is to increase the number of first-generation and under-served students entering postsecondary education. The goal is to provide awareness of the financial aid process, increase access to accurate and timely information regarding financial aid, as well as offer in-person events where students and families can get help to complete the FAFSA. Of the students surveyed during the 2016 College Goal FAFSA events, 74% stated that they completed and submitted the FAFSA that day and 95% of students surveyed stated that participating in the workshop increased the likelihood that they would enroll in college or vocational school in the next academic year.

According to the U.S. Department of Education, 90% of students who complete the FAFSA application receive some form of federal aid to attend a postsecondary institution. In addition, a data analysis study performed by *NerdWallet* showed that in the state of Arizona 54% of the graduating class of 2014 did not complete the FAFSA, and left more than \$68 million dollars of federal Pell grant money on the table. That works out to \$3,462 per student – enough to cover a full year of classes at a local community college with money left over for books.

College Goal FAFSA is staffed by volunteer financial aid and higher education professionals, as well as community members who provide families with one-on-one assistance. A full list of [high school](#) and

community locations, dates, times and information of what attending families will need to bring – identification, financial information, etc. – can be found at: <https://collegegoal.az.gov/college-goal-fafsa>.

About Arizona Commission for Postsecondary Education

The Arizona Commission for Postsecondary Education’s mission is to expand access and increase success in postsecondary education. The Commission offers the Arizona Family College Savings Program, administers student financial aid programs, hosts College Goal FAFSA and College Application Campaign, as well as numerous other postsecondary education initiatives. For more information on the Commission visit www.highered.az.gov.

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