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SAF Offers Circle of Succe\$\$ Grants to Students in 56 Montana Counties

(HELENA) Nonprofit Student Assistance Foundation (SAF) is offering a \$1,000 grant in each of Montana's 56 counties to help students attain their dreams of postsecondary education.

Beginning Jan. 1, 2009, Montana students may apply for a Circle of Succe\$\$ grant to help cover the cost of tuition and related expenses.

"When it comes to paying for college, every little bit counts," said Marti Johnson, grants manager for SAF. "It's especially important now given the current state of the economy and the fact that many grant and scholarship programs are being scaled back as a result of the situation. It's SAF's privilege to be able to invest in Montana students' futures in this way."

This marks the fourth year that SAF has sponsored the Circle of Succe\$\$ grant program. Since the inception of the program, SAF and its generous donors have been able to provide \$175,000 to help students continue their higher education.

The grant program was originally funded solely through payroll deductions by SAF employees. Now, funds raised through SAF's annual golf scramble also are used to provide the grants.

"Please know that the grant from SAF has made it possible for me to work toward continuing my education so that I can share my knowledge with young minds," said grant recipient Stephanie (Nikki) Hawe, a secondary education student at The University of Montana Western in Dillon.

In order to qualify for a Circle of Succe\$\$ grant, applicants must be Montana residents attending a Montana college or university at least half time, be in their second, third or fourth year of postsecondary education and maintaining at least a 2.5 grade point average (GPA). A committee of SAF employees evaluates the applications to determine who receives the grants.

To apply, students may visit www.SmartAboutCollege.org before the March 15, 2009 deadline, click on the "Circle of Succe\$\$ grants" tab and follow the instructions. For more information, call toll free 877-COLG4ME (265-4463).

Student Assistance Foundation is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit Montana corporation that provides students with knowledge and tools to finance and pursue their postsecondary education. Funds generated by SAF are returned to Montanans in the form of education grants and public benefit programs - to date more than \$13.5 million. For more information, visit www.safmt.org or www.SmartAboutCollege.org