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**SAF to Distribute \$1.2 Million in Grant Funds to Montana Schools**

(HELENA) Nonprofit Student Assistance Foundation (SAF) is in the process of distributing \$1.2 million in Acce\$\$ Grant funds to 21 Montana universities and colleges.

Acce\$\$ Grants are awarded each year by SAF to financial aid offices at all Montana postsecondary schools, including tribal and private institutions, and two-year and four-year schools. The amount awarded to each school is determined by enrollment numbers.

Financial aid officers use the grants to help students in need pay for their education. Individual award amounts vary by individual and are determined by the financial aid office.

“Student Assistance Foundation’s Acce\$\$ Grant allowed 34 Carroll College students to enroll in the 2007-2008 academic year,” said Janet Riis, financial aid administrator at Carroll College in Helena. “Many times the difference between staying in school and dropping out can be just \$1,000 to \$2,000. This grant helps relieve financial stress and lets the student focus on what’s important — their academics. We are very grateful for the support SAF has provided higher education in the state of Montana.”

The Acce\$\$ Grant program was established eight years ago in an effort by SAF to better meet the financial needs of students at Montana colleges and universities. In that time, SAF has distributed \$5.7 million in Acce\$\$ Grant funds for distribution by financial aid officers to students who meet their school’s criteria.

“Acce\$\$ grants are the largest source of non-federal, need-based grant aid in Montana and serve as the cornerstone for SAF’s public benefit work,” said Kelly Chapman, SAF’s executive vice president of Foundation Activities. “We are pleased that we are able to support Montana students’ dreams of attaining postsecondary education in this manner.”

Schools receiving Acce\$\$ Grants include Blackfeet Community College, Carroll College, Chief Dull Knife College, Dawson Community College, Flathead Valley Community College, Fort Belknap College, Fort Peck Community College, Little Big Horn College, Miles Community College, Montana State University, MSU-Billings, MSU-Northern, Montana Tech of the University of Montana and College of Technology, MSU-Great Falls College of Technology, Rocky Mountain College, Salish Kootenai College, Stone Child College, University of Great Falls, The University of Montana and College of

Technology, UM-Helena College of Technology, and The University of Montana-Western.

*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.SmartAboutCollege.org](http://www.SmartAboutCollege.org) or [www.safmt.org](http://www.safmt.org).*