

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

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College Goal Montana 2012: Free FAFSA Help Coming to a Community Near You!

Financial aid professionals and volunteers will be available at College Goal Montana locations across the state in February to help students and families complete the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA).

Filling out the FAFSA is an important step in the process to securing federal, state and institutional aid to help pay for school, and 2012 marks the eighth year that nonprofit Student Assistance Foundation (SAF) and its community partners have coordinated College Goal Montana to assist families with that effort.

This year, the event will take place at 16 sites on **Wednesday, Feb. 8 and Sunday, Feb. 12**. Not all sites will host the event on both days, so visit SmartAboutCollege.org and click on the "College Goal Montana" sign, or call 877-COLG4ME, to check event details in your community.

"To date, we have been able to help more than 10,000 students and families through this important program," said Rhonda Safford, statewide coordinator for College Goal Montana. "We are constantly seeking better ways to provide this service, and this year, we have expanded our College Goal Montana webinar efforts to more communities than ever."

In addition to the traditional College Goal Montana events, SAF is working in cooperation with guidance counselors at schools across the state to offer more than 50, free webinar sessions focused on FAFSA completion assistance throughout the months of January and February.

Webinar participants listen to a 30-minute presentation about the FAFSA, log on to fafsa.gov and complete the form. Assistance will be provided by site hosts and subject matter experts via telephone. Webinar schedules are available at SmartAboutCollege.org under the "College Goal Montana" sign.

All College Goal Montana participants who complete event evaluations at physical and webinar sites will be entered to win one of several \$500 scholarships.

Students and parents should arrive at College Goal Montana webinar locations prepared to complete and submit the FAFSA. No appointments necessary. Don't forget to bring:

- FAFSA PIN number — to get your pin, log on to www.pin.ed.gov
- Social Security numbers (students and parents)
- 2011 federal tax returns (or 2010 tax returns if 2011 are not complete)

- W-2s, tribal income, other aid information (TANF, child support, other benefits)
- Additional asset information (money market funds, stocks, other investments)

And, don't forget to "like" Student Assistance Foundation on Facebook to receive reminders and tips about how to prepare for College Goal Montana and more.

College Goal Montana is affiliated with College Goal Sunday — a national program that was originally created by the Indiana Student Financial Aid Association with funding from Lilly Endowment, Inc. and with supplemental support from Lumina Foundation for Education.

Student Assistance Foundation is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit Montana corporation that provides students with knowledge and tools to pursue and fund 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 \$22.4 million. For more information, visit www.safmt.org or www.SmartAboutCollege.org.

Additional Information

College Goal Montana physical site locations include:

Billings, Bozeman, Browning, Butte, Dillon, Glendive, Great Falls, Havre, Helena, Kalispell, Lame Deer, Libby, Miles City, Missoula, Pablo, and Poplar.