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College Goal Montana: Providing Free Help Completing the FAFSA Virtually Everywhere!

As part of nonprofit Student Assistance Foundation's (SAF) ongoing effort to bring free, one-on-one assistance to Montanans completing the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA), students and parents are invited to attend Webinar sessions in 34 communities.

"We are excited to have the opportunity to expand the reach of the College Goal Montana event by using the Web as a tool," said Rhonda Safford, statewide coordinator of the event. "We try to assist the greatest number of people possible through our 18 physical College Goal Montana sites, but by using Webinars, we will be able to connect with even more students and families to complete this important form."

2011 marks the seventh year that SAF has organized this event geared to ensuring that no qualifying Montana student misses out on attaining student aid to help pay for his or her postsecondary education.

Students and parents who participate in the College Goal Montana Webinars will 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 the Webinar chat function.

In many cases, the Webinars will be offered in association with parent/financial aid nights and will not necessarily take place on the same dates as the traditional College Goal Montana event. Students should check with their high school counselors and/or at SmartAboutCollege.org for more details.

Webinar participants will be entered to win one of four, \$500 scholarships. Those scholarships are in addition to the 18 scholarships marked for attendees at the College Goal Montana physical sites.

Last year marked the first time SAF offered College Goal Montana support through Webinars at four pilot sites. Safford said 105 students and families attended those sessions — 49 students completed their FAFSAs.

"We're pleased at the response we received to the program last year and look forward to seeing this effort really take off in Montana communities," Safford said.

For more information about College Goal Montana sites and Webinar locations, dates and times, visit SmartAboutCollege.org or call (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 \$19.6 million. For more information, visit www.SmartAboutCollege.org or www.safmt.org

College Goal Montana Webinar locations include:

Anaconda, Alberton, Baker, Big Timber (Sweetgrass), Bigfork, Boulder (Jefferson), Carter (Ekalaka), Chinook, Clyde Park (Shields Valley High School), Columbia Falls, Cut Bank, Darby, Drummond, Dutton/Brady, Fergus (Lewistown), Fort Benton, Frenchtown, Geraldine, Glasgow, Great Falls Central Catholic High, Hardin, Harlowton, Livingston (Park), Noxon, Plains, Plentywood, Saco, Sentinel, Sheridan, Thompson Falls, White Sulpher Springs, Whitehall, Winfred, and Human Resource Council XI/Bitterroot College Program of The University of Montana.