



PRESS RELEASE

From the Louisiana Office of Student Financial Assistance

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UnlockMyFuture.org: New LOSFA College Match and Fit Website Launched

BATON ROUGE – The Louisiana Office of Student Financial Assistance (LOSFA) today announced the launch of its new “Match and Fit” College Access and Career Planning website: <http://www.unlockmyfuture.org>.

The Website utilizes LOSFA’s “Five Point Match” approach to career and postsecondary education provider selection.

“Our goal for the website is to help each student discover that special talent or attribute which allows them to do something better than anyone else,” said LOSFA Executive Director Dr. Sujuan Boutté. “Our mission,” she continued, “is to help them target that talent toward a career choice which in turn leads to the college choice that provides the best fit for them.”

What am I good at?

The first Match Point assists students in identifying their aptitude, skills and interests. Several career preference quizzes are included to assist the student in identifying a career that will pay them to do something they love to do. The section also includes informational videos about hundreds of career options. Finally, the Louisiana Workforce Commission’s STAR JOB rating for selected careers is displayed along with links to the STAR JOBS site where salary ranges and demand status may also be determined.

Can I get in?

The second Match Point is the Academic Match which allows the student to identify postsecondary programs that will fulfill their post-high school educational requirements for the career they choose and gives them the eligibility requirements they will have to meet in order to qualify for program admission. Depending on the career chosen, options may include 4-year university degree programs, 2-year community/technical certificate programs, skill and occupational training programs, etc. The section also includes easy to access direct links to all in-state postsecondary admissions applications.

Can I afford it?

The third Match Point is the Cost of Choice Match. This section will make students aware of the costs associated with each postsecondary option that offers the training necessary for their chosen career. This will allow the student and his or her family to choose the right institution and program of study that will result in completion with the best income to loan ratio. This section also provides direct links to information on all available forms of student financial aid along with instructions on how to apply for federal, state, institutional, and private scholarships, grants, student loans, and on-campus work-study programs.

Who gets me?

The fourth Match Point is the Social and Emotional Match. It asks the student to consider the environment in which he or she will be most comfortable and most likely to succeed, and to factor those answers into their postsecondary education destination decision. Students from a small town might not be comfortable on a large campus with tens of thousands of students in a major city. Students from a small high school where they knew all the teachers and other students may not thrive in amphitheater classroom settings with hundreds of students and minimal interaction with instructors. Some students might prefer being within an hour or two of home, while others might wish to start a new adventure further away from home. All of these considerations are important to the student's ability to succeed.

Will I stay or will I go?

The fifth and final Match point is the Retention Match. This factor asks the student to consider which program has the greatest success rate with graduating students in their selected field of study and in retaining students from similar backgrounds. Students are encouraged to visit the schools/programs on their "short list" of postsecondary options. When doing so, they should talk to other students and get their input on things of concern. They are also urged to determine the retention rate for other students from similar backgrounds and fields of study who have attended the schools under consideration.

"In summary", Dr. Boutté said, "we define college as any education beyond high school and we encourage students to discover themselves before they decide to discover a school. In other words," she added, "we don't want them to just apply to college, we want them to apply to a college that is the best match and fit for them. The Unlock My Future website is designed to facilitate those discoveries and decisions."

For more information, contact LOSFA at 1-800-259-5626 or visit us online at www.osfa.la.gov.

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