



College Goal Sunday Special Edition



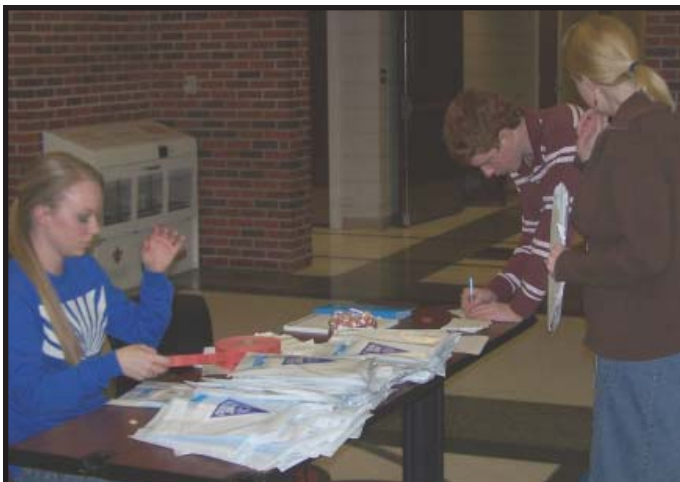
LOSFA LOOP

March 2009 Special Edition

Louisiana College Goal Sunday is co-sponsored by the Louisiana Office of Student Financial Assistance (LOSFA) and the Louisiana Association of Financial Aid Administrators (LASFAA) in conjunction with the Louisiana Gear-UP and TRIO programs and made possible by a start up grant from the Lumina Foundation.



College Goal Sunday began in Indiana in 1989 as a joint project of the Indiana Student Financial Aid Association (ISFAA) and the State Student Assistance Commission of Indiana (SSACI), with funding from Lilly Endowment, Inc. Like most successful projects, it was designed to meet a specific need. Research had shown that Indiana families often cited high cost as the main barrier to college attendance, even though tens of millions of dollars in various forms of financial aid were available to Indiana students. Too many families - particularly those of color, low income and no tradition of pursuing an education beyond high school - simply were not applying for those funds. It was clear that the mere availability of funds wasn't enough to push these students over the threshold to higher education. These students and their families needed two more things: First, they needed to receive more information through a variety of channels about the availability of financial aid; second, they needed expert assistance in filling out the paperwork required to qualify for that aid.



A two-part strategy was devised to address the problem. First, ISFAA members, who primarily staff college financial aid offices throughout the state, volunteered their expertise on one particular day of the year. On College Goal Sunday (traditionally, a week or two after Super Bowl Sunday), these professionals would fan out to selected community sites in Indiana to help families complete the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA), the universally required financial aid application. Second, as a prelude to College Goal Sunday, the group

implemented an extensive public information campaign to reach low-income Indiana residents. The campaign used the news media, direct mail and celebrity appearances at key high schools to inform the public about the importance of an education beyond high school, the availability of financial aid, and the existence of College Goal Sunday to help them complete the FAFSA.

Over time, College Goal Sunday has attracted a number of important and loyal allies in Indiana, including the Indiana Career and Postsecondary Advancement Center (ICPAC), the Twenty-first Century Scholars Program and former National Football League standout Bill Brooks, who volunteered his personal endorsement for the first College Goal Sunday and remains the program's faithful celebrity spokesman. College Goal Sunday also has garnered generous financial support beyond that of Lilly Endowment. For several years, USA Group (then the nation's largest guarantor and administrator of student loans) and its affiliates co-funded the program with the Endowment. Also, employees of USA Group and its philanthropic division, USA Group Foundation, served as College Goal Sunday volunteers. In the past 14 years, the program has assisted more than 60,000 Indiana residents. The event has more than tripled its reach from 10 sites statewide the first year to 34 sites in 29 Indiana cities and towns in 2003. In addition, the Foundation provided matching grants to replicate the College Goal Sunday program in Arizona in 1997, in Kansas in 1999, in Kentucky in 2001, and in the Washington, DC/Baltimore area and California in 2002.

Since 2001, Lumina Foundation has provided funds and the model to help establish College Goal Sunday in other states. They lead this effort with the encouragement of ISFAA because College Goal Sunday works. In 2004, NASFAA was awarded a grant to manage the College Goal Sunday program that served 20,000 students and families in 2003. In February 2008, the state of Louisiana held its very first College Goal Sunday event at 12 sites throughout the state and over 400 families attended. Louisiana added 4 additional sites for its 2009 College Goal Sunday event which took place on Sunday February 15th. Another additional component of the 2009 event was having a LOSFA staff member at each location to do a presentation on the Taylor Opportunity Program for Students (TOPS), Loui-



siana's premier merit based scholarship. One important aspect of Louisiana's College Goal Sunday event that didn't change from the previous year is the fact that private donors made it possible to raffle off one small scholarship at each location. The small scholarship, of which the exact dollar amount is yet to be determined, is redeemable upon fall 2009 college enrollment. Preliminary estimates indicate that well over 450 families attended this year's event and we are looking for even greater numbers in 2010.













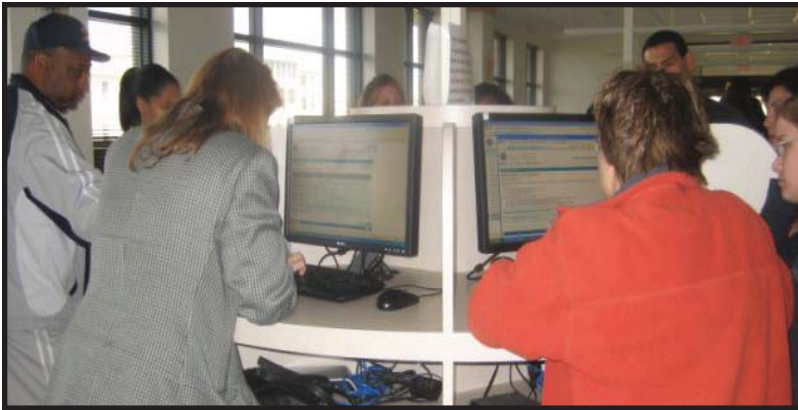
















For more information, contact the
Louisiana Office of Student Financial Assistance:

By Phone: 800-259-5626, Ext. 1012

By E-mail: custserv@osfa.la.gov

By Mail: P.O. Box 91202, Baton Rouge, LA 70821-9202

Web Address: www.osfa.la.gov

For submissions, opinions or comments for LOSFA Loop, please contact
David Roberts at droberts@osfa.la.gov.