



## From the Desk of the Executive Director



Dr. Sujuan Boutté

**Shannon Schuyler, Principal; US Corporate Responsibility Leader; Chief Purpose Officer, PwC; President, PwC Charitable Foundation, Inc.**

"By giving students the tools to help them succeed financially, we can build a stronger and more economically resilient society."

Although February is Financial Aid Awareness Month the job of connecting students to available aid is an ongoing challenge that spans their elementary, secondary and postsecondary careers. There is no shortage of research indicating that students who are aware of financial aid options for postsecondary education are more likely to pursue college. There is also no shortage of research indicating the vast knowledge gap young adults have with respect to personal finance.

As college access professionals, we see the problem up close and personal every day. We hear the stories and comments, we get the questions and...we spend our days forging partnerships, designing strategies, disseminating information and providing direct assistance to students and families

"Millennials' financial practices are of concern because of the potential for these behaviors to become firmly established. Indeed, the research has documented that the gap between

the amount of financial responsibility given to young Americans and their demonstrated ability to manage financial decisions is rapidly widening. Furthermore, their knowledge deficit could prove disastrous for them, the economy, and society."

Millennials and Financial Literacy- The Struggle with Personal Finance  
<http://online.wsj.com/public/resources/documents/pwc.pdf>

LOSFA's response to our students' struggles with financial literacy was to launch the FLY Tour. FLY stands for Financial Literacy for You. FLY is a dynamic theatrical presentation that uses poetry, music and drama to communicate the importance of financial literacy and fiscal responsibility. Students will learn about financial aid for college, money management, on-campus support services for students and more!

The 2016 FLY Tour will be held at postsecondary schools around the state. This gives students a chance to experience a campus visit and learn about being fiscally responsible at the same time. This year we are proud to announce partnerships with 10 postsecondary institutions; up from 6 last year!

Another recurring issue we see is students and families leaving money on the table by failing to fill out the FAFSA form. A new study by NerdWallet indicates:

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## From the Desk of the Executive Director *(continued)*

“High school graduates missed out on as much as \$2.7 billion in free federal grant money in the past academic year, according to a new analysis from NerdWallet. This money went unclaimed mainly because of incomplete or unsubmitted Free Application for Federal Student Aid forms.

Our analysis shows that in 2014, a total of 1,445,732 high school graduates didn't fill out a FAFSA application. Of those, we believe 747,579 of them would have been Pell eligible...”

**How Students Missed Out on \$2.7 Billion in Free FAFSA College Aid** Victoria Simons & Anna Helhoski <http://www.nerdwallet.com/blog/loans/student-loans/college-students-fafsa-money/#table>

This policy is gaining national attention due to the statistics in the table below. This requirement does not take effect until the 2017-18 school year. However, via College Goal Sunday, LOSFA continues to not only emphasize the importance of filing the FAFSA but to partner with high schools and postsecondary institutions to provide hands-on assistance with the process.

LOSFA partners with the Louisiana Association of State Financial Aid Administrators (LASFAA) to provide free FAFSA completion assistance. College Goal Sunday 2016 boasts two dates at 19 locations statewide. In addition, we have staff working daily to provide assistance with advance creation of the FSA ID; general questions about how and when to file based upon your family situation; what to bring to the event and how and where low income families get free assistance with income tax preparation.

Here's how Louisiana fared according to NerdWallet:

### Pell Grant money left on the table: Full breakdown

STATE	PERCENTAGE OF HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATES NOT COMPLETING THE FAFSA	GRADUATES WHO DIDN'T COMPLETE THE FAFSA	PELL GRANT-ELIGIBLE GRADUATES WHO DIDN'T COMPLETE THE FAFSA	AVERAGE PELL GRANT IN 2014-15	TOTAL PELL GRANT MONEY LEFT ON THE TABLE
Louisiana	49%	22,460	11,698	\$3,822	\$44,443,402

In December of last year the Board of Elementary and Secondary Education (BESE) approved a policy requiring each graduating senior to complete the FAFSA or the Online Application for TOPS (Note that the Online Application for TOPS should only be filled out by families who can certify that they do not qualify for need based aid. Families electing to file for TOPS using this method are among the first to be eliminated at each ACT level in the case of insufficient funding for TOPS)

Promoting and Providing College Access is the reason our agency exists-We know firsthand that students and parents have questions and we are here with assistance and answers. Read on for more...

Best,  
S.

## Why is money being left on the table?

*How Students Missed Out on \$2.7 Billion in Free FAFSA College Aid* Victoria Simons & Anna Helhoski <http://www.nerdwallet.com/blog/loans/student-loans/college-students-fafsa-money/#table>

**Students aren't applying.** Some people think they're not eligible for assistance, but there's no income cutoff to apply for federal student aid, experts say. Families can use the FAFSA4caster to gauge how much federal financial aid they may receive based on an estimation of expected family contribution.

"A lot of parents feel they won't qualify," says Cora Manuel, assistant financial aid director at Saint Mary's College of California. "They want to know what that hard-and-fast income number is in order to qualify for financial aid, and there never is a hard-and-fast number because of the different variables that determine expected family contribution."

Without a FAFSA on file with the college you plan to attend, you may not be able to qualify for need-based aid. You also may not qualify for certain merit-based aid, which doesn't use finances as a determining factor. In addition, while undocumented students are not eligible for federal student aid, they could still qualify for financial assistance offered by states and colleges if they submit an application. The FAFSA needs to be completed each year you plan to attend college.

Even if you don't qualify for financial aid after you initially submit your FAFSA, you might qualify later that year if there is a change of income or if you have another special circumstance. "If you don't have anything on file, the college can't give you any aid," says Kevin Fudge, manager of government relations and community affairs for American Student Assistance, a nonprofit organization dedicated to empowering students to finance their own education.

**They don't finish their applications.** It's free and it takes 21 minutes, on average, to complete a FAFSA application, according to the Department of Education.

Have all your information prepared before you start the application, suggests Jim Kennedy, associate vice president for university services and systems at Indiana University. The FAFSA site lists the information that you'll need to complete the form.

**They're being rejected due to mistakes.** Errors on your FAFSA application delay your financial aid determination and possibly qualify you for less aid than you deserve — or disqualify you altogether.

Top 10 Mistakes Students Make on the FAFSA

Anna Helhoski

Reprinted from NerdWallet <http://www.nerdwallet.com/blog/loans/student-loans/top-10-fafsa-mistakes/>

High school seniors left as much as \$2.7 billion in free student aid on the table in the last academic year, according to a NerdWallet study. Part of that cash is missed because of errors students are making on their Free Application for Federal Student Aid forms. Here are some of the most common FAFSA mistakes, according to financial aid experts and the U.S. Department of Education.

### 1. Entering the wrong Social Security number

If you make a mistake with your Social Security number, the online FAFSA won't allow you to make a change and you may have to submit a new application. You'll have to ask the financial aid office at the school you plan to attend whether to start the process over again with a new form.

### 2. Submitting a name that doesn't match your legal name

If your name is legally Jonathan Smith according to your Social Security card, but you submit your name as John Smith on your FAFSA, it could delay your application. Since the FAFSA verifies your legal information with the Social Security Administration, you have to make sure the name you use to start the FAFSA is the legal name on your Social Security card.

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## Why is money being left on the table? *(continued)*

### 3. Forgetting to include a school on your form

You can designate only 10 schools on your online FAFSA to receive your financial information. If you don't include a school you've applied to, it won't receive your information. By adding another school to the list of 10, one of the previous schools will be removed, but you can choose which one to replace.

If you're applying to more than 10 colleges you can make your information available to the additional ones after you receive your Student Aid Report by making a correction to your FAFSA. You can do this yourself through FAFSA.gov or by mailing a correction on your paper report. Or, you can have the additional colleges or Federal Student Aid Information Center add the schools to your FAFSA for you by contacting them directly.

### 4. Taking too long to file

The federal deadline to submit your FAFSA this year is June 30, so it may seem like you have plenty of time to file. But if you wait to submit your application until the last minute, you may miss out on certain grants and scholarships. Schools will have their own deadlines, some as early as February. Make sure to submit well before individual and state college deadlines — before schools run out of money to offer.

### 5. You qualify — but haven't registered — for the Selective Service

Male students ages 18 to 25 must register for the Selective Service to be considered for federal financial aid.

### 6. Miscalculating dependency or household size

"A question I always get is, if the student is living off campus, are they counted in the household size — and of course they are," says Cora Manuel, assistant financial aid director at Saint Mary's College of California. "In theory, parents are still providing support and are responsible for educational expenses and things like that."

If anything changes with your dependency status — except a marital status change — you will need to update your application.

If the student filer is a parent, then he or she is considered an independent only if the student provides the majority of the financial support for the child. "In some cases, that child is staying at home with the student's parents," Manuel says. "With that situation, we have to work with the family, and the parents will have to report income and assets on the student's FAFSA."

### 7. Failing to note that your divorced parent is remarried

If your parents are separated or divorced, you must report information on the one you live with more often or who provides more than 51% of support to you. If the parent who supports you is remarried, then your stepparent must provide information on the FAFSA as well.

### 8. Waiting until you file taxes to apply

You don't have to wait until you or your parents file taxes; there's an option on the form to choose "will file" and estimate income using the previous year's pay stubs.

Estimations or mistakes in income can be corrected later when you update your FAFSA with you or your parents' current year tax information using the IRS Data Retrieval Tool to automatically transfer tax information. Your information should be available on the tool two weeks after you file, according to the U.S. Department of Education.

### 9. Not reporting untaxed income

"Some families have more untaxed income than they realize they do, like a retirement fund contribution," says Elizabeth McDuffie, executive director of the North Carolina State Education Assistance Authority, the state agency in North Carolina responsible for financial aid for students preparing for college. "Retirement funds

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## Why is money being left on the table? (continued)

don't count, but any contribution you make to that account does." McDuffie suggests taking advantage of the tools on the side of the online form that can give you additional information about what you should be reporting.

### 10. Forgetting to sign and submit

If you don't sign your application, it won't be submitted properly. Use the new Federal Student Aid ID to sign electronically or you can opt to print a page and submit regular signatures. Confirm your FAFSA was submitted

by checking your status immediately after you file on the My FAFSA page of FAFSA.gov.

### How to correct mistakes on your FAFSA

Most mistakes on a submitted FAFSA application can be corrected. You can make changes by logging in to the My FAFSA page of FAFSA.gov and submitting changes under the category called Make FAFSA Corrections. You can also make changes electronically with the financial aid office at the school you plan to attend.

## 2016 FLY TOUR IS IN FULL SWING

The 2016 FLY (Financial Literacy for You) Tour is in full swing, and is educating and engaging high school students across the state by providing them information about an array of topics ranging from financial aid to college readiness.

The FLY Tour is a theatrical presentation that provides college access information and resources in an effort to increase financial awareness, academic performance and participation in college preparatory events.

The importance of being financially responsible is a recurring theme throughout the production. Whether it's on-the-job training or attending a community college or four-year university, the event also highlights that any education received after high school is considered college.

The FLY Tour has already stopped by three college campuses: Central Louisiana Technical Community College - Ferriday Campus, Southern University and A&M College in Baton Rouge and SOWELA Technical Community College.

Livonia High School senior Trinity Christopher attended the FLY Tour Feb. 17, at Southern University in Baton Rouge. She said it was informative and presented in a student-friendly manner.

"It was very entertaining, it spoke to a younger crowd and it got through to us," Christopher said. "I learned that you have to complete the FAFSA every year that you are in college. I thought you only had to fill it out once. In order to go to college, you should know stuff like this and most of us don't."

To participate in the conversation on social media, use the hashtags: #FLYTOUR2016 #LOSFAisFLY and #GetFLYwithLOSFA



**Livonia High School seniors (left to right): Sadie Biggs, Amanda Bazile, Sarah Biggs and Trinity Christopher.**

### FLY Tour 2016 Schedule:

Tuesday, Feb. 16

Central Louisiana Technical Community College (Ferriday Campus)

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**FLY**

**TOUR 2016**

**FLY Tour**

theatrical production  
poetry, music, drama  
Classic Man remix  
money for college/FAFSA  
try not to borrow money  
how to use credit  
decisions today = quality of life tomorrow  
ACT  
things to do between high school and college  
scholarships and grants  
LOSFA  
5 point Match

**COMING TO A CAMPUS NEAR YOU:**

Date:	Site
Tuesday, 2/16/16	CLTCC - Ferriday Campus
Wednesday, 2/17/16	Southern Univ. and A&M College
Friday, 2/19/16	SOWELA Technical CC
Monday, 2/22/16	CLTCC - Alexandria
Tuesday, 2/23/16	Southern Univ. at Shreveport
Wednesday, 2/24/16	Southeastern LA Univ.
Thursday, 2/25/16	Northwestern State Univ.
Friday, 2/26/16	Dillard Univ.
Wednesday, 3/2/16	Grambling State Univ.
Monday, 3/7/16	Nunez CC

CC = Community College

**Starring!**

CLAIRE CAILLIER	ISABEL REYES
KRISTOPHER HOBBS	TIMENEE THOMAS
EBONY HOLMES	KYLEIGH QUIROGA
SCOTT BURKE	POST-SECONDARY
CHARLIE LEWIS	PARTNERS
JUTERH NMAH	

**FEBRUARY 2016**

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12

**CREATIVE ASSIGNMENTS**

KYLEIGH QUIROGA  
KENDRA WILLIAMS  
SABRINA JOHNSON

**FLY**

**LOSFA**

**FLY Tour 2016 Schedule: (Continued)**

Wednesday, Feb. 17  
Southern University and  
A&M College  
Baton Rouge, LA

Friday, Feb. 19  
SOWELA Technical  
Community College  
Lake Charles, LA

Monday, Feb. 22  
Central Louisiana  
Technical Community  
College  
Alexandria, LA

Tuesday, Feb. 23  
Southern University at  
Shreveport  
Shreveport, LA

Wednesday, Feb. 24  
Southeastern Louisiana  
University  
Hammond, LA

Thursday, Feb. 25  
Northwestern State  
University  
Natchitoches, LA

Friday, Feb. 26  
Dillard University  
New Orleans, LA

Wednesday, March 2  
Grambling State  
University  
Grambling, LA

Monday, March 7  
Nunez Community  
College  
New Orleans, LA

## February 28th and March 6th are College Goal Sundays in Louisiana

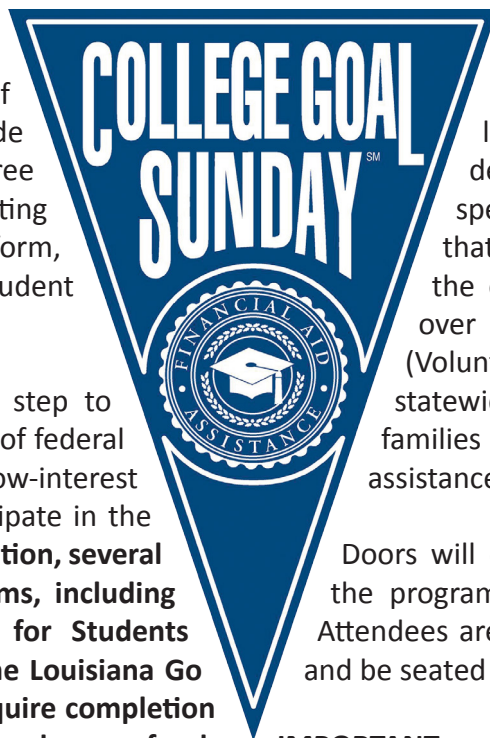
Louisiana's ninth annual College Goal Sunday events will be held on two consecutive Sundays, February 28 and March 6, 2016, from 1:30-4:00 p.m. at nineteen locations around the state. The purpose of College Goal Sunday is to provide students and their families with free professional assistance in completing the primary student financial aid form, the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA).

Completing the FAFSA is the first step to take in order to receive most forms of federal student aid including Pell Grants, low-interest federal student loans and to participate in the federal Work Study program. **In addition, several state student financial aid programs, including the Taylor Opportunity Program for Students (TOPS) scholarship program and the Louisiana Go Grant need-based aid program, require completion of the FAFSA in order to qualify for and access funds.**

Many campus-based institutional scholarships also require completion of the FAFSA.

College Goal Sunday is a national initiative designed to help students and parents navigate the paperwork barriers that stand between them and the money they need to attend college. Completing the form correctly with detailed income, tax and other information can be a daunting task. On College Goal Sunday, financial aid professionals from Louisiana colleges and universities will be on hand to provide free line-by-line assistance.

Anyone, from a soon-to-be high school graduate to a returning adult student, who is planning to attend any post secondary institution that participates in the Federal Title IV Aid programs during the 2016-2017 academic year can benefit from attendance. This includes public, private, technical, community, proprietary and career colleges.



Pre-registration for the event is encouraged to ensure that each site has the resources needed to assist all participants. To do so, log on to <http://www.osfa.la.gov> and click the on College Goal Sunday link. The website also contains detailed information including the specific records and documentation that participants will need to bring to the event. In addition, the website lists over 170 Internal Revenue Service VITA (Volunteer Income Tax Assistance) sites statewide where low to moderate income families may receive free tax preparation assistance prior to College Goal Sunday.

Doors will open at each site at 1:30 p.m. and the program will begin promptly at 2:00 p.m. Attendees are advised to arrive in time to sign in and be seated prior to 2:00 p.m.

### IMPORTANT

Both the student and a parent must have a Federal Student Aid ID (FSAid) in order to electronically sign their completed FAFSA. Students and parents planning to attend a College Goal Sunday event, or to file a FAFSA later this spring, should apply for an FSAid now at <https://fsaid.ed.gov/npas/index.htm> as it can take from 3 to 5 days to receive the ID after applying. Students and parents who previously had a FAFSA Personal Identification Number (PIN) must also apply for and receive an FSAid as the PIN numbers are no longer a valid means of signing your FAFSA. For assistance in completing the FSAid request, contact LOSFA at [custserv@la.gov](mailto:custserv@la.gov) or 800-259-5626.

College Goal Sunday Louisiana is sponsored by the Louisiana Association of Student Financial Aid Administrators (LASFAA) and the Louisiana Office of

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## February 28th and March 6th are College Goal Sundays in Louisiana

Student Financial Assistance (LOSFA). Funding for College Goal Sunday is provided by a grant from the National College Access Network (NCAN).

In addition to FAFSA completion assistance and information on federal and state aid programs, College Goal Sunday attendees will have the opportunity to learn about several related topics:

- LOSFA staff will be in attendance at all sites to explain the TOPS processing cycle and to answer any questions relating to TOPS and other state aid programs
- Members of the Louisiana Council of Student Body Presidents (COSPB) (the organization for postsecondary Student Government Association members) will be in attendance at a number of sites to provide information about college life in general, adjusting from high school to college, and other helpful social and study tips.
- The Louisiana Jump\$tart Coalition will have representatives present at the Baton Rouge Community College, Xavier University and Southeastern Louisiana University sites on February 28 and at the Southern University Baton Rouge and University of Louisiana Lafayette, sites on March 6 to provide free financial literacy information to attendees.

**LOSFA Field Outreach Services Coordinator Khristopher Hobbs assists students and parents at the 2015 College Goal Sunday event.**



The nineteen 2016 Louisiana College Goal Sunday site locations in Louisiana are:

### February 28, 2016

#### **Alexandria**

- Louisiana State University-Alexandria

#### **Baton Rouge**

- Baton Rouge Community College

#### **Bossier City**

- Bossier Parish Community College

#### **Hammond**

- Southeastern Louisiana University

#### **Lake Charles**

- SOWELA Technical Community College

#### **Monroe**

- Louisiana Delta Community College

#### **New Orleans**

- Delgado Community College – West Bank Campus
  - Dillard University
  - Xavier University

#### **Schriever**

- Fletcher Technical Community College

### March 6, 2016

#### **Alexandria**

- Central Louisiana Technical Community College

#### **Baton Rouge**

- Southern University

#### **Gonzales**

- River Parishes Community College

#### **Lafayette**

- University of Louisiana at Lafayette

#### **Morgan City**

- South Central Louisiana Community College

#### **New Orleans**

- Southern University (SUNO)

#### **Ruston**

- Louisiana Tech University

#### **Shreveport**

- Louisiana State University Shreveport
  - Southern University Shreveport



## Student Feature: How East St. John High School Senior Aaron Bacon Handled the Admission Process

As a part of Louisiana College Application Month, LOSFA helped students not only apply to colleges, but also assisted students with applying for their FSA IDs.

East St. John High School senior Aaron Bacon applied for his FSA ID during a Louisiana College Application Month event hosted by LOSFA.

East St. John High School business, engineering and finance pathway counselor Demecca Jones said the road to college is gradual, but necessary.

"It's a slow process for them to do in little pieces, but walking them through is the best way to ensure that they get it done," Jones said. "Once our students get accepted into school, we help them apply for their FSA IDs in support with LOSFA."

By providing services and hosting events, LOSFA hopes to ease the stress experienced by high school seniors and counselors. LOSFA will return to East St. John High School in the spring to aid in FAFSA completion.

Senior year of high school can be extremely stressful as students begin to plan for the next steps to take after their high school career, but Bacon's senior year is significantly less stressful.

Bacon will become a Tiger at Louisiana State University this upcoming fall 2016 semester.

Jones has known Bacon since he was in the 10th grade. "He's very studious and has been on track since he started high school," Jones said. "He's been a superstar student."

He paved the way for a stress-free senior year by taking the ACT three times his junior year and also enrolling in dual-enrollment classes at Southeastern Louisiana University. "The classes at Southeastern gave me an idea of what college courses will be like," Bacon said. "It was hard, but it was helpful to have a good teacher."

Bacon also applied to the University of Louisiana at Lafayette.

"I applied to more than one school because I wanted a back-up plan in case I didn't get into LSU," Bacon said. Now that he has been accepted into LSU, he plans to maintain his grades, prepare for his journey to college and work this summer.

Jones said he will be able to enjoy the last few months of his senior year.

"He won't be the senior that will be running around overly stressed," Jones said. "He's done all what he needs to do. He has been groomed for success and will do well."

She believes he will be successful and thrive at LSU.

"He would be a great asset to any university, but he really wanted to go to LSU," Jones said. "I think LSU is an excellent fit for him."

Bacon advises future seniors to be prepared to meet the requirements of the post-secondary institutions they are interested in, apply early and try to earn as many scholarships as possible.

**East St. John High School Senior Aaron Bacon has been admitted to Louisiana State University and will attend in the Fall 2016.**



# LOSFA's Social Media Sites



<http://www.facebook.com/LOSFA>



<http://www.twitter.com/LOSFA>



<http://www.youtube.com/LOSFA1000>



<http://instagram.com/LOSFA001>



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

By Phone: 800-259-5626

By E-mail: [custserv@la.gov](mailto:custserv@la.gov)

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

Web Address: [www.osfa.la.gov](http://www.osfa.la.gov)

For submissions, opinions, or comments for the LOSFA LOOP,  
please contact Gus Wales at [Gus.Wales@la.gov](mailto:Gus.Wales@la.gov).