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College Goal Montana: Don't Miss Out on Essential Financial Aid for School

Postsecondary education doesn't come cheap, so students and parents should explore every avenue to acquire the funds they need — that effort begins with completing the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA).

In Montana, Student Assistance Foundation works with financial aid professionals and volunteers to provide free, one-on-one assistance filling out this important form at 16 communities throughout the state on Feb. 8 and/or Feb. 12 through the College Goal Montana program. Check SmartAboutCollege.org for locations and times, or call 877-COLG4ME.

"Everyone who wants to attend college next fall should complete the FAFSA," said Rhonda Safford, statewide coordinator of College Goal Montana. "Statistics show that 28 percent of eligible families did not complete the FAFSA last academic year because they didn't know that help to pay for school was available, or they didn't think they'd qualify. We don't want anyone to miss out on this valuable aid resource."

In addition, numerous communities will host virtual College Goal Montana sites on various dates at which students and their parents can listen to a 30-minute presentation about the FAFSA, log on to fafsa.gov and complete the form. Help from site hosts and subject matter experts via telephone will be available. Check SmartAboutCollege.org for locations and times, or call 877-COLG4ME.

In addition to receiving FAFSA completion help, attendees at any event who complete event evaluations at any of the College Goal Montana locations will be entered to win a \$500 scholarship.

2012 will mark the eighth year that SAF has coordinated this event. To date, more than 10,000 Montanans have been served through the program.

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.