

~NEWSLETTER~

COLLEGE FINANCIAL AID COUNSELING AND EDUCATION SERVICES

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2010-2011

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The CFACES services have increasingly moved from college financial aid planning to include college advisory services. The current costs of a college education, requires more and more of the family resources. It is of some urgency that the student considers colleges that are realistically affordable as well as having quality of instruction.

Basically there are four concerns in selecting a college of choice; college major with quality of instruction, happiness (good food, housing, campus life, etc.), security and affordability.

Of course our service is very specialized and is targeted on affordability. However, it really does not matter how successfully we achieve affordability if the other concerns are not fulfilled. During the past few years, I have had to spend a considerable amount of time doing college counseling to assure that all concerns are met. This action is not a problem, because I performed these tasks as a Professor at Montgomery College doing financial aid and college transfer counseling. As a result of assisting with college selection for students, we have been able to secure greater financial aid packages and improved planning service. There are additional benefits to the student/family for this service.

2010-2011 FINANCIAL AID ACTIVITIES

CFACES is now accepting appointments for financial aid planning and completion of the appropriate financial aid forms for the 2010-2011 academic year. Many of you have already been in to see me and your file is in the processing stage.

What is a PIN and how do I apply for it?

For first time college students, parent(s), [continuing students and parent(s) who do not have a PIN], it would be advisable to secure a Personal Identification Number (PIN) very soon. This web address is www.pin.ed.gov and it takes about 5 minutes to register. Each student and one custodial parent must have a number. The PIN takes the place of each student's and parent's signature and allows for easy access to required FAFSA on-line activities.

Appointment Scheduling

For renewal clients, now is the time to call for an appointment. I have reserved weekday times in October, November, December and early January to accommodate your scheduling. I do not plan to leave the area during the December holiday season; therefore, I can meet with you and your college students during their time at home. Be sure to ask each of your students to go to the financial aid office on campus and request a financial aid renewal packet for next year. Forward this information to me or bring the forms to our office for completion.

Fees: Fees are established to provide academic year services. This means that I will be on call to give service throughout the academic year that the student is applying for aid. Fees for new clients for the 2010-2011 school year will vary between \$300 - \$900, depending on the colleges and level of activities required. **Please reference our website for the fee schedule.**

Continuing clients will receive reductions each year of service. Returning clients pay fees at the same level as they paid on their first visit with consideration of discounts.

How does the service work?

The first session will include the assessment of the student's college of choice for affordability. This assessment will include recommendation of quality institutions that meet the four concerns required in having a quality list of potential colleges. This listing will be used to guide the need analysis process, to determine documents required, and deadline dates to assure maximum financial aid.

A completed FAFSA will be prepared to be submitted at the appropriate date (after January 1st, 2010). In addition, if a CSS Profile is required for a student to apply or continue financial aid, then this form will be prepared, tested and submitted after October 1st, 2009.

Therefore, after meeting with each family, I shall be responsible for completing and submitting the appropriate need-analysis documents to various processing centers. ie: FAFSA, PROFILE (if required), or Graduate Need Analysis Forms.

The primary document for Federal, State and most institutional aid is the **Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA)**. The on-line application, directions and preparation worksheet will be available after January 1, 2010. www.fafsa.ed.gov

Additionally, the following forms may be required by the colleges: Non-custodial Parent Statement, Business and Farm Statement, Verification Worksheets and Institutional Aid Applications. I shall assist each family in completing these documents when required.

Families that have come in to see me to plan for the 2010-2011 school year have already had drafts of required forms prepared. When the new FAFSA documents become available, we shall transfer the information. We shall then submit the 2010-2011 FAFSA after January 1, 2010 to the processor, as required (Note: the Federal processor will not accept these documents prior to this date.)

After submitting the FAFSA electronically to the processor, the results are available immediately. The primary reason for submitting a FAFSA is to receive an evaluation number. This number is referred to as an Expected Family Contribution (EFC).

The EFC number is then forwarded to each college of choice by the Federal processor. The colleges use the EFC number in their formula to award aid. (More discussion on this subject later in this newsletter.)

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