



IowaCollegeAid.gov
Your Financial Aid Connection

NEWS RELEASE

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I Have a Plan Iowa™ Celebrates its First Anniversary *Over 131,000 accounts created during program's first year*

Des Moines, IA., September 14, 2010 – Today, the Iowa College Student Aid Commission (Iowa College Aid) announced the first anniversary of I Have a Plan Iowa™, a statewide community web portal that helps students transition through middle school, high school, college and beyond. It also provides tools for adults seeking education and employment opportunities. Launched last fall, www.IHaveaPlanIowa.gov, revolutionized career and college planning in Iowa by providing a streamlined solution to assist everyone from college-bound students and their parents to dislocated workers plan for their futures.

“I Have a Plan Iowa™ has exceeded our expectations during its first year,” said Karen Misjak, executive director of Iowa College Aid. “Over 131,000 accounts were created at www.IHaveaPlanIowa.gov in its first year. Of those accounts, 101,488 were for middle and high school students. There were over 752,000 visits to the site and more than 14 million pages were viewed,” explained Misjak. “In addition, Iowa College Aid provides free training and support to Iowa educators charged with implementing I Have a Plan Iowa™ in their schools. Last year we conducted 287 training workshops where approximately 2,700 educators and professionals were trained to use the system in the classroom.”

As early as middle school, students can explore their interests and develop course plans to connect high school course work with education and career goals. High school and college students, as well as adults looking to return to college, can research colleges and majors, prepare for college admissions exams, practice completing college admissions applications, research financial aid options, search for scholarships, and apply for state financial aid. Iowans looking for a career change or who are in need of additional skills to reenter the workforce can match their interests and abilities to career options, build résumés, prepare for job interviews, as well as search for employment opportunities in Iowa.

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After a successful first year, there are plans to continue to augment www.IHaveaPlanIowa.gov with value added tools and resources. Future enhancements include:

- Access to the Iowa Department of Education e-transcript process for Iowa students.
- Convenient online college admission applications for Iowa colleges and universities.
- Addition of an online financial literacy curriculum for high school students.
- Expanded access to services offered by other state agencies.

Students, families and educators interested in learning more about the free resources available at www.IHaveaPlanIowa.gov can contact Iowa College Aid's Information Service Center at 877-272-4456. More information about financial aid and products and services that help Iowa families plan, prepare and pay for college is available on Iowa College Aid's website at www.IowaCollegeAid.gov.

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About the Iowa College Student Aid Commission

Iowa College Aid provides college access, financial literacy, and outreach services to Iowa's students and families as they prepare, plan and pay for college. Iowa College Aid also administers state scholarship, grant, work study, and loan forgiveness programs totaling over \$68.5 million annually, administers the Federal Family Education Loan Program (FFELP) program, provides borrowers with assistance to avoid the serious consequences of default, conducts research and distributes higher education data, and offers Iowans assistance in obtaining student financial aid and college-related information. Through its role, Iowa College Aid also serves as the state-designated administrator of the U.S. Department of Education's College Access Challenge Grant, which is designed to increase the college-going culture in Iowa. Additionally, Iowa College Aid is the administrator of the Federal GEAR-UP Grant, a multi-year state-wide grant which is being utilized to provide early awareness programming and outreach initiatives to thousands of Iowa's students and families. More information is available at www.IowaCollegeAid.gov.