



IowaCollegeAid.gov
Your Financial Aid Connection

NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: Heather Doe
515-725-3417
515-975-6769 cell
heather.doe@iowa.gov

Iowa College Aid, GEAR UP Iowa and Local Colleges to Participate in Waterloo East's "Back to School Block Party" on August 21

GEAR UP Iowa, University of Northern Iowa, Wartburg College and Hawkeye Community College to provide college readiness information

Des Moines, IA., August 16, 2013 – The Iowa College Student Aid Commission (Iowa College Aid) announced today its participation in the “Back to School Block Party” being held at East High School in Waterloo on Wednesday, August 21, 2013 from 5:30 p.m. to 7:30 p.m. High school juniors and seniors of East High School and their families are invited to attend the free back to school event.

As part of the event, GEAR UP Iowa (a program administered by Iowa College Aid), as well as representatives from the University of Northern Iowa (UNI), Wartburg College and Hawkeye Community College will be on hand to answer college planning questions. Students can also gather college readiness materials, complete college interest cards and receive assistance completing college admissions applications. Grill out favorites – hamburgers, hot dogs, baked beans, chips and refreshments - are being provided by the University of Northern Iowa.

“UNI is excited to be part of the “Back to School Block Party” in Waterloo,” stated Jonathon Cox, coordinator of minority and student diversity programs at UNI. “Our main objective is to share college readiness materials with students and parents from East High School by answering questions about the college process. Each of the Colleges (College of Business Administration, College of Education, College of Humanities and Fine Arts and College of Social and Behavioral Sciences) at UNI is committed to helping students achieve their educational goals,” Cox said.

“Our vision at Iowa College Aid is that all Iowans can achieve an education beyond high school,” said Karen Misjak, executive director of Iowa College Aid. “Iowa’s increased demand for skilled workers means a college education needs to be attainable and affordable for our residents. This includes 4-year colleges and universities, community colleges as well as trade schools,” explained Misjak. “We are very pleased to be part of the “Back to School Block Party” in order to talk to students about furthering their education and how that will better prepare them for sustainable careers in our state.”

-more-

For more information on the Back to School Block Party please contact Iowa College Aid at 877-272-4456 or email Cara Graziano with GEAR UP Iowa at Cara.Graziano@iowa.gov. In addition, information to help Iowa families plan, prepare and pay for college is available on Iowa College Aid's website, www.IowaCollegeAid.gov.

###

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 plan, prepare and pay for college. Iowa College Aid also administers state scholarship, grant, work study, and loan forgiveness programs totaling over \$68.0 million annually; provides I Have A Plan Iowa™, the state-designated career information system, free to all Iowans; partners with financial institutions in the state to offer an online financial literacy platform free to all Iowa high schools; conducts research and distributes higher education data; and offers Iowans assistance in obtaining student financial aid and college-related information. Additionally, Iowa College Aid is the administrator of the Federal GEAR UP Grant, a multi-year state-wide grant which is being used to provide early awareness programming and outreach initiatives to thousands of Iowa's students and families. 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. Iowa College Aid is also responsible for registering postsecondary institutions and other instructional schools under Iowa Code Chapter 261B and sections of Chapter 714. More information is available at www.IowaCollegeAid.gov.

About GEAR UP Iowa

GEAR UP Iowa, administered by the Iowa College Student Aid Commission and funded by a \$16.8 million federal Gaining Early Awareness and Readiness for Undergraduate Programs (GEAR UP) grant, to increase the number of academically at-risk and economically disadvantaged students who are prepared to enter and succeed in postsecondary education. GEAR UP Iowa works to create and sustain a college-going culture through statewide and school-based services provided to a cohort of approximately 7,000 high school students from the class of 2014 in more than 200 Iowa high schools. All students in the GEAR UP Iowa cohort will be eligible to receive a GEAR UP Iowa scholarship upon high school graduation to help pay higher education costs. More information is available at www.GEARUPIowa.gov.