



IowaCollegeAid.gov
Your Financial Aid Connection

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NEWS RELEASE

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Iowa College Aid Announces Career Exploration Tool for Elementary Students *Paws in Jobland available to Iowa elementary schools through I Have A Plan Iowa™*

Des Moines, IA, March 29, 2011 –The Iowa College Student Aid Commission (Iowa College Aid) announced today the launch of Paws in Jobland, a new online career awareness program to help elementary students build self-awareness, identify personal interests and explore the world of work. Free access to the program is available through the statewide community web portal, www.IHaveAPlanIowa.gov.

As the state-designated career information system, Iowa middle and high schools currently use I Have A Plan Iowa™ to meet the Iowa Code requirements which state that students must create a four-year career plan in the eighth grade and continue to update the plan throughout high school. With the addition of Paws in Jobland, Iowa's elementary students have a resource to help them see the connection between school and work and the possibilities for their future. "Elementary school is a time when children start to explore who they want to be when they grow up," explained Karen Misjak, executive director of Iowa College Aid. "Paws in Jobland allows students to visualize their future in an array of careers while they have fun exploring Jobland."

Through this program, kindergarten through fifth grade students can explore over 100 different career possibilities with the help of the program's canine tour guide, Paws. Students discover the world of work through an adaptable system which addresses multiple learning styles and encourages them to learn more about themselves and the people that make up their neighborhood. Educators can easily integrate Paws in Jobland into their classroom with free worksheets and lesson plans. Online access for parents extends the program beyond the classroom.

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Paws in Jobland is the newest enhancement to the statewide community web portal, www.IHaveAPlanIowa.gov. This portal is a free resource for individuals to investigate career opportunities, explore education options, prepare for college admissions exams, learn how to use education to meet career goals, and find employment opportunities in Iowa. “Planning for life after high school is vital for ensuring future success and financial security of Iowa families,” states Misjak. “By adding Paws in Jobland to I Have A Plan Iowa™, we are giving Iowa’s youngest students access to tools for a successful future.”

For more information about Paws in Jobland and other resources available through www.IHaveAPlanIowa.gov, contact Iowa College Aid’s Information Service Center at 877-272-4456. In addition, more information to 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 nearly \$60.0 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.