

College Connection

Start *for Tips to Get Ready for College*
HERE!

A Newsletter for High School Juniors

mystudentloanonline.nd.gov

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Volunteering Creates Opportunities for Students

Volunteering for a cause that you are interested in provides the satisfaction of knowing you've done your part in making a difference in the lives of people, an organization or the community you live in.

Volunteering can open many doors for you. It can help you develop skills, gain work experience, develop knowledge about different career choices and establish a network of friends and colleagues who might assist you in finding employment. It is also a unique way to discover your strengths and talents, gain self-confidence and build a sense of independence. Also, volunteering is a great way to meet people with the same interests and values that you have.

Here are things to consider when volunteering:

- 1** Do your research. Explore the goals of each organization you are considering. Check out their Web site and talk to people who work there. Would it be a good fit for you?
- 2** Match your skills to opportunities. What are your skills and talents? If you know how to do things better, faster or more efficiently, volunteer where you can use and teach these skills.
- 3** Learn something new. Volunteering can be a learning experience. If you'd like to learn new things, find opportunities that will assist you in developing new skills and capabilities.
- 4** Budget your time wisely. Start slowly when making volunteer commitments. You don't want to burn yourself out, frustrate others and end up with a negative experience.
- 5** Create your own opportunity. Most organizations are always looking for new ideas to accomplish their goals. Do you have any ideas about how to do things better? Tell someone your thoughts – and then go do it!

College Information Service (CIS)

College Information Service (CIS) provides a centralized source of free information about various colleges, the admissions process, and understanding financial aid.

You can call CIS toll-free at 1-800-554-2717 or e-mail to bndsl@nd.gov.

Our College Planning Made Easy Web Site (www.mystudentloanonline.nd.gov/collegeplanning.jsp) allows you to research individual college costs and information, learn about scholarships and other opportunities, and get answers to some of your financial aid questions.

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Getting Ready for the Financial Aid

As a senior, you are approaching an exciting milestone in your life, high school graduation! Your years of hitting the books and hours of study are about to pay off. Most jobs however, require additional skills and knowledge. You will soon have a solid educational foundation in which to pursue an occupation.

For many students, continuing their education at a college, university or trade school will be the next stage in advancing their career and goals. While moving from high school to college may sometimes seem a bit overwhelming, knowing what to expect and being prepared will take most of the mystery and confusion out of the process.

Do the following steps and your transition from high school to college should be an easy one!

1 Complete the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) as soon after January 1st as possible. The FAFSA is required when applying for state and federal grants, work-study and student loans. Both you and your parents need to complete the form to determine your financial requirements and eligibility. Simply apply online at www.fafsa.ed.gov. It takes approximately 7 to 14 days to be processed. Don't forget to apply to for a Personal Identification Number (PIN) number at www.pin.ed.gov. A PIN serves as your electronic signature when you submit the FAFSA online. Your parents will need a separate PIN as well.

2 Wait for your Student Aid Report. After the FAFSA is processed, you will receive a

Student Aid Report (SAR). The SAR summarizes information provided on the FAFSA. The school(s) you are interested in attending will also receive a copy of your SAR.

3 The financial aid office at your selected college(s) will then send you an Award Letter. The award letter explains the financial aid assistance you can expect while attending that college. In addition, if you don't need all of the aid provided, you are not required to accept it.

Remembering these few items should help bridge your high school to college experience. With a little persistence and preparation, you are well on your way to obtaining a higher education. Enjoy the rest of your senior year. Good luck!

College Goal Sunday Events Planned for February 22



College Goal Sunday will be held on Feb. 22, 2009 at 11 locations across the state. It provides free assistance to families who are filling out the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA). These are open house events and participants should plan to stay for about an hour. For more information about times, documentation needed and locations visit www.collegegoalnd.org or call 866-454-3308.

Please consider attending this event at one of these locations:

Belcourt	Bismarck	Dickinson	Fargo	Fort Totten
Fort Yates	Grafton	Grand Forks	Minot	New Town
Williston				