

December 2010

News To Know

Florida Department of Education

2011-12 National Training for Counselors & Mentors (NT4CM)

We are half way through the NT4CM workshops. Do not miss out on your chance to attend.

NT4CM provides **free** training and support for counselors, advisors, and mentors who assist students and their families in preparing financially for college. Professional trainers provide comprehensive up-to-date information regarding federal and state student aid programs, scholarship searches, and financial aid fraud. Participants learn how to access **free** resources such as fact sheets, brochures, and PowerPoint presentations to help them educate their students about the financial challenges associated with pursuing a postsecondary education. After the initial training, participants will continue to receive ongoing information and support.

Registration is still open for the following locations:

Fort Pierce, Ocala, Orlando, and Tampa; Please visit our training [website](#) to register.

Navigating Your Financial Future (NyFF)

Hot Spots

Whether you are sitting at the coffee shop waiting for a friend or sitting in the airport waiting for a plane, nothing beats the convenience of connecting your laptop to a free Internet hot spot! But where there is convenience, there is also security risk.

Many public wireless access points, commonly referred to as “hot spots,” are not configured to protect information sent between your computer and the Internet;

therefore, it can be very easy for people sitting nearby to gain access to the data in transit. This means they may be able to read everything sent and received by your computer, including credit card numbers and passwords. Here are ways that you can reduce your risk and protect your information when you are in public:

Turn off wireless when not needed. This simple step can significantly reduce the risk of identity theft.

Disable File Sharing. It can be dangerous when you are connected to public networks. Always disable file sharing when connecting to a public network.

Do not look now, but is that guy behind you watching over your shoulder? Using your computer in public makes it very easy for others to “shoulder surf” and see what you are doing. Attackers don’t need sophisticated cracking programs if they can simply read your screen and watch you type.

Do not allow automatic connections. The danger of enabling this setting is that your computer may automatically (without even notifying you) connect to any available network.

Most users are unaware of the threats they are exposed to when they use open Wi-Fi connections. It is up to you to protect your information.

State Scholarship & Grant Programs

December

- Term 1 refund/reconciliation due to OSFA within 60 days after the last day of drop/add.
- Program funds sent to eligible postsecondary institutions for Term 2.
- December 1 – The *2011-12 Initial Student Florida Financial Aid Application* for next award year funding is available on the website via:
 - www.FloridaStudentFinancialAid.org
 - Select **State Grants, Scholarships & Applications**

- Select **Apply Here**, then
- **Initial State Student Application**
- Program applicants should continually check their application and certification statuses on this website before the program deadlines.
- Students check the status of their financial aid application and notifications received from OSFA on the website via:
 - www.FloridaStudentFinancialAid.org
 - Select **State Grants, Scholarships & Applications**

Select **Application Status & Award History**

Important Announcements

Direct Loan Processing Information - Making Disbursement Adjustments and Reducing Direct Loan Awards to Zero

In this announcement, guidance is provided on the following two processes: making disbursement adjustments to William D. Ford Federal Direct Loan (Direct Loan) awards and reducing Direct Loan awards to zero (which effectively means that the Direct Loan is cancelled/inactivated). Disbursement adjustments are made or loans are reduced because –

- The borrower returned the money and requested all or a portion of the loan be cancelled within the regulatory timeframes.
- The school cancelled all or a portion of the loan to comply with statutory or regulatory requirements.
- The school is correcting reporting errors.
- In an attachment to the announcement, more detailed information and several

examples of making disbursement adjustments is provided. For the full announcement please refer to the IFAP [website](#).

Final rules on Program Integrity Issues published by ED

The Department of Education (ED) issued [final rules](#) in the Federal Register on a group of topics identified as "Program Integrity Issues" on October 29, 2010. All of the rules are effective July 1, 2011, except for changes in the verification requirements. Verification requirement rules will be effective July 1, 2012. These final rules impact public, private nonprofit and for-profit schools. It is imperative that all schools carefully review the updated rules to determine if changes need to be made to current institutional policies, procedures, and systems.

Become a Volunteer, "College Goal Sunday"

Through College Goal Sunday, we can help limited-income and first generation college students fulfill their dreams of having access to and completing their college education by providing on-site expert assistance with completing the *Free Application for Federal Student Aid* (FAFSA). To aid in its success, College Goal Sunday needs qualified financial aid administrators to volunteer. Volunteers are also needed to staff registration tables, supervise seating, answer financial aid questions, and organize the day's events. Please [volunteer](#) to assist students and their families complete the FAFSA.

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The OSFA Philosophy

The Office of Student Financial Assistance (OSFA) has the ability to offer its partners and customers something few public agencies can, the ability to shape OSFA programs and services based on their specific needs and concerns. OSFA provides financial aid workshops, publications, better services for participants, and helps fund scholarship and grant programs. If a participant has a problem or suggestion, the OSFA management team listens and makes every effort to implement a solution that meets their needs. Public dollars deserve the kind of accountability OSFA provides in financing education.