TG, THECB sponsor College Access and Affordability Telehons to promote college financial aid opportunities

Round Rock, TX—Throughout February, TG and the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (THECB) will host a series of College Access and Affordability Telehons, an annual event that provides television viewers with information about student financial aid, including help with understanding and applying for federal and state financial aid.

During the telehons, representatives from TG, THECB, colleges and universities, and other nonprofit organizations answer calls from students and families who have questions about completing the Free Application for Federal Student Aid, or FAFSA, and the Texas Application for State Financial Aid, or TASFA. Students must complete the FAFSA to apply for federal, most state, and some college financial aid. The TASFA is required for undocumented students who have lived in Texas for three years prior to graduating from high school and who are seeking aid. These students are not eligible for federal financial aid, but may qualify for certain types of state aid.

“Completing the FAFSA is the first step in the financial aid process, and the telehons provide us an opportunity to communicate its importance, as well as the various financial aid opportunities available, to college-bound students and their families,” explained Richard Sapp, director of pre-college success at TG. “The telehons are truly representative of a shared purpose of TG and the THECB – to help students, especially those in underrepresented and first-generation families, understand the value of a postsecondary education and how to achieve their college dreams.”

Last year, approximately 50 percent or more of the seniors in the Texas high school class of 2012-2013 completed the FAFSA. Completion rates vary by region, with the highest percentage of the 2013 fall season occurring in the Rio Grande Valley (58 percent), and the lowest completion rate occurring in the Gulf Coast region (48 percent).

"The Coordinating Board staff is pleased to collaborate with TG again this year on the Financial Aid Telehon in February,” said Judy Loredo, assistant commissioner for the THECB P-16 Initiatives. “We believe that every student should be provided the necessary information on how to access funding to pursue the dream of higher education. The Financial Aid Telehon has been an effective way to reach parents and students across the state, especially our first-generation college goers, to explain what can be a very complicated process.”

(more)
FAFSA Completion Search Tool, continued…

The College Access and Affordability Telethons will be broadcast on the following dates and times:

- Wednesday, February 5 on KXLN-TV, Houston Univision at the 5 p.m. and 10 p.m. newscasts
- Wednesday, February 12 on KLTV-TV/KTRE-TV (Tyler/Longview/Nacogdoches) at the 4 p.m., 5 p.m., and 10 p.m. newscasts
- Tuesday, February 18 on KUVN-TV, Dallas/Fort Worth Univision at the 5 p.m. and 10 p.m. newscasts
- Wednesday, February 19 on KSAT-TV (San Antonio) at the 6 a.m., 11 a.m., 4 p.m., 5 p.m., 6 p.m., and 10 p.m. newscasts
- Wednesday, February 26 on KCBD-TV (Lubbock) at that 5 p.m., 6 p.m., and 10 p.m. newscasts

For those families or school professionals with more questions about the college admissions or financial aid processes, TG also administers the Texas Financial Aid Information Center (1-800-311-8881), a free call center available Monday through Friday. Representatives can help answer questions in English and Spanish.

In addition to the telethons that will help educate students and families, TG, the THECB and TASFAA are also providing regional training to assist Texas financial aid professionals in having the most up-to-date information available.

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TG is a public, nonprofit corporation that promotes educational success to help millions of students and families realize their college and career dreams. TG provides critical support to schools, students, and borrowers at every stage of the federal student aid process — from providing information on how to pay for a higher education including financial aid options, to facilitating successful loan repayment after graduation.

THECB Mission: The Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board’s mission is to work with the legislature, governor, governing boards, higher education institutions, and other entities to help Texas meet the goals of the state’s higher education plan, Closing the Gaps by 2015, and thereby provide the people of Texas the widest access to higher education of the highest quality in the most efficient manner.