



brought to you by the California Community Colleges

## April 2014 Marked the 10th Annual Financial Aid Awareness Month

In April, we celebrated the 10th Annual California Community Colleges Financial Aid Awareness Month. Throughout the month, there were numerous events and activities that took place to get the word out about the variety of financial aid opportunities available year-round to help make higher education goals a reality. Throughout the state, California Community Colleges hosted more than 200 free financial aid workshops. At these workshops students learned about the different types of aid available, asked questions and received one-on-one assistance with completing the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA). Additionally, the “I Can Afford College” team took part in four community outreach events throughout the state to help raise awareness about the availability of financial aid.

Governor Jerry Brown, a former Los Angeles Community College District trustee, declared his support for community colleges and awareness activities by recognizing the important role the system and its students play in our state. Through his commemorative message, he also encouraged current and prospective community college students to visit [icanaffordcollege.com](http://icanaffordcollege.com).

Visit [bit.ly/1nhnuz4](http://bit.ly/1nhnuz4) to view Governor Brown’s commemorative message.

## It’s Here! “I Can Afford College” Has Launched a New Website!

The California Community Colleges system is excited to announce that the new and improved “I Can Afford College” financial aid awareness website has launched. The completely redesigned site is now better than ever, with new tools and resources to help provide current and prospective students with information about the various financial aid opportunities available, as well as information about the California Community Colleges system. Below are some of the features you can use when you visit [icanaffordcollege.com](http://icanaffordcollege.com):



- **Step-by-Step Financial Aid Navigator**

With this new navigator tool, you have a road map to obtaining financial aid at your fingertips. You will go from learning about your eligibility to applying for financial aid, and learning about what to expect after applying.

- **Application Prep**

The new step-by-step application prep makes completing the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) easy! Filling out financial aid applications might seem overwhelming at first, but the new site will give you the tools you need to get organized and be prepared before you start applying for financial aid.

- **Inspirational Stories**

Check out new videos that feature real students who have received financial aid to attend a California community

college, and find out how it has helped keep them on the path to fulfilling their higher education dreams.

- **Financial Aid Information for Veterans**

For veterans returning from active duty, it’s important to understand what opportunities you have at the California Community Colleges to jump start a new career in a variety of different fields. It’s also important to learn about the various financial aid opportunities that are available to you to help pay for college.

These are just a few of the enhancements. The website also features updated financial aid information, and still includes a financial aid workshop locator and zip code search to find the community college financial aid office closest to you. Check out the new site today at [icanaffordcollege.com](http://icanaffordcollege.com).

## Great Deals Are Available to Community College Students at CollegeBuys.org!



As a student at a California community college, you are eligible for discounts on products and software that can help you in your studies. Since its creation in 1999, CollegeBuys has been offering discounts for community college students, faculty and administrators on a variety of software, technology, furniture and office supplies.

Some of the deals that are currently available are:

- CLEAR Mobile Hot Spot device for \$15.00/month (plus \$39.99 for purchase of hardware)
- Adobe Acrobat Professional XI for \$119.95
- Rosetta Stone (variety of languages available) for \$109.95

For information about how to take advantage of these exclusive deals and more visit the CollegeBuys site today, at [www.CollegeBuys.org](http://www.CollegeBuys.org). CollegeBuys is powered by the Foundation for California Community Colleges.



## Foster Youth: Are You Planning on Attending a California Community College in 2014?

Foster Youth: Did you know you can get priority enrollment and access to special programs at the California Community Colleges? The foster youth programs provided at California's community colleges are intended to assist students both financially and academically. Here is some information that may help you as you plan for your higher education:

- Current and former foster youth who have not reached the age of 22 as of July 1 may qualify for up to \$5,000.00 per year under the **Chafee Education and Training Voucher (ETV) grant program**. In order to be eligible for the Chafee ETV grant, youth must have been a ward/dependent of the court anytime on or after your 16th birthday. In addition to the Chafee ETV grant, most foster youth are eligible to have their California community college course enrollment fees waived through the **Board of Governor's (BOG) fee waiver program**.
- **Foster Youth Success Initiative (FYSI) Liaisons** are available at every community college throughout California to assist current and former foster youth in navigating all academic and student support services and programs. In addition, the FYSI liaisons can answer your questions about financial aid in general, and the BOG Fee Waiver and Chafee ETV grant programs specifically. Contact

information for the designated FYSI liaisons at all California community colleges can be found at <http://extranet.cccco.edu/Divisions/StudentServices/FosterYouthSuccessInitiatives.aspx>.

- When completing the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA), pay attention to the dependency questions included in *section three* as these questions **specifically address foster youth** status and will affect what information is required to complete your FAFSA.
- Once you have met with your FYSI liaison and have completed the FAFSA, it is very important to respond to any email or written correspondence you receive regarding the status of your financial aid.
- Financial aid information and forms can also be found on the "I **Can** Afford College" website, and free financial aid workshops are offered on most campuses. Many colleges will, upon request, provide financial aid workshops specifically designed for foster youth.

Don't miss your opportunity for priority enrollment at your community college. Enroll today for a brighter future tomorrow!

## Personal Determination + Financial Aid = Successful Education and Career

There are many California community college students each year that are determined to create a better life for themselves through education and career training. For some of these students, financial aid is key to helping them achieve their goals.

Sonia Moss is one of these students. Sonia is a mother of three and has always had a desire to help provide for her family. After her daughter graduated from high school and enrolled in Shasta College, Sonia reflected on her situation and decided that it was time to go back to school, not only to better her life but the lives of her kids and grandkids. Through the assistance of the admissions and financial aid department staff, Sonia was awarded various forms of financial aid to assist her during her time at Shasta College.



Sonia Moss, student at Shasta College

while I attend school,” Sonia said. “It has given me the funds necessary to keep a roof over our heads, make our monthly ends meet and still be able to purchase my books and supplies, as well as a much needed computer. It also placed me in a position to not only continue my education, but connect and work with individuals who saw my hard work, ethics, determination, contributions, and potential benefit to their establishment, and awarded me with a full-time classified position in the admissions and records department at Shasta College.”

Sonia is currently a full-time student and has a 4.0 grade point average. Her ultimate goal is to obtain an MBA from a university and go on to become a Certified Public Accountant. You can view Sonia’s and other California community college students’ financial aid success stories at [bit.ly/1tRiEbo](http://bit.ly/1tRiEbo).

“Financial aid made it possible for me to help support myself and my youngest son

## You Can Still Apply for Financial Aid!

You may have heard information about applying for financial aid by the Cal Grant deadline in early March.

If you missed the deadline, there’s good news . . . it’s not too late to apply! At California community colleges you can apply for some types of financial aid year-round, including the Board of Governors (BOG) Fee Waiver, Pell Grants, work study jobs, scholarships and assistance from other programs. It’s important to note that other types of financial aid do have strict deadlines, including Cal Grants. And, September 2nd is the deadline for community college students to apply for competitive Cal Grants.

If you need help paying for fees, books, supplies and other college-related expenses, you should apply for financial aid today! Don’t delay, visit [icanaffordcollege.com](http://icanaffordcollege.com) to get started.

## Debunking the Myths about Applying for Financial Aid

Every year there are students who choose not to apply for financial aid because they think they won’t qualify or that financial aid forms are too lengthy and difficult to complete. The “I **Can** Afford College” campaign addresses these and other myths — and provides the facts — below.

**Myth:**  
**My parents make too much money, so I won’t qualify for aid.**

**Fact:**  
There is no income cut-off to qualify for federal student aid. Many factors besides income — from the size of your family to the age of your older parent and more — are taken into account. And remember: when you fill out the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA), you’re also automatically applying for funds from your state, and from your college, too. In fact, some schools won’t even consider you for any of their scholarships (including academic scholarships) until you’ve submitted a FAFSA. Don’t make assumptions about what you’ll get — complete the application and find out. You could have a lot riding on the simple decision to submit a FAFSA.

**Myth:**  
**I’m too old to get financial aid.**

**Fact:**  
Funds from most student aid programs are awarded on the basis of financial need, not age. Adult students can get financial aid too, so be sure to fill out the FAFSA.

**Myth:**  
**Colleges don’t care about how many other siblings I have or will have in college at the same time.**

**Fact:**  
Actually, having two or more people in college (excluding parents) significantly increases a family’s chance of receiving aid. In fact, it could lower the expected family contribution (the estimate of the family’s ability to pay for college) by as much as 50 percent.

To read more financial aid myths and facts, visit [bit.ly/1fmfwBg](http://bit.ly/1fmfwBg).

## Did You Know?

# 10 Interesting Facts About California Community Colleges

1. The U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics projects that occupations that require an associate degree will grow by 18 percent through 2020 – faster than the new job growth for those with a bachelor's degree.
2. More than 60 percent of California community college students are people of diverse backgrounds and more than 55 percent are female.
3. California community colleges first started offering distance education courses in 1979.
4. Fifty-one percent of California's community colleges offer certificates and degrees that can be earned without stepping onto a campus for classes. This typically includes a combination of both online, video and television courses.
5. The passing of Proposition 30 in 2013 had a major impact on California community colleges, adding more than 3,300 new classes throughout the state, making room for an additional 40,000 students and adding \$210 million in budget funds.
6. Nearly 42 percent of all California veterans receiving GI educational benefits attend a California community college for workforce training, to earn an associate degree or to work toward transferring to a four-year university.
7. As part of the California Community College Athletic Association (CCCAA), Butte College and Fullerton College both went undefeated with 10-0 scoring records during the 2013 football season.
8. Transfer students from the California Community Colleges to the University of California system currently account for 48 percent of UC's bachelor's degrees in science, technology, engineering and mathematics.
9. Eighty percent of California's firefighters, law enforcement officers and EMTs are credentialed at California community colleges.
10. California Community Colleges Chancellor Brice W. Harris was one of 100 invited guests of President Barack Obama and First Lady Michelle Obama for a college accessibility summit at the White House to focus on getting more lower income and disadvantaged students into college.



## contact us:

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### About the California Community Colleges

*The California Community Colleges is the largest system of higher education in the nation, composed of 72 districts and 112 colleges serving 2.1 million students per year. Community colleges supply workforce training, basic skills education and prepare students for transfer to four-year colleges and universities. The Chancellor's Office provides leadership, advocacy and support under the direction of the Board of Governors of the California Community Colleges. For more information about the California Community Colleges system, please visit: [californiacommunitycolleges.cccco.edu](http://californiacommunitycolleges.cccco.edu).*



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