

## Education Bi-Weekly Update

March 5, 2010

### FAME News

#### Response to Bangor Daily News Editorial

Last week FAME CEO, Beth Bordowitz, sent a response to a Bangor Daily News editorial regarding student aid reform. The response ran on February 25, a link to the article is below.

[www.bangordailynews.com/detail/137639.html](http://www.bangordailynews.com/detail/137639.html)

#### Governor Baldacci Nominates New Appointments to the FAME Board

Reis Hagerman, Vice President for Enrollment Management at Saint Joseph's College, has been nominated by Governor Baldacci for the FAME Board seat designated for a person with experience in student financial assistance. Reis is no stranger to FAME having served two years as the Director of the Maine Education Assistance Division.

Also nominated for new appointments are Evelyn Silver, Shepard Lee, Michael Mahoney, Rosaire Pelletier and John Sevigny.

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### Ask FAME

**Q:** What prohibitions, if any, exist concerning the awarding of Federal Supplemental Educational Opportunity Grants (FSEOG) to eligible students already receiving Pell Grants?

**A:** Federal regulations prohibit an institution from awarding FSEOG on a first-come first-served basis or on an estimated family contribution (EFC) benchmark or cutoff basis. In addition, institutions may not use professional judgment to ascertain a student's FSEOG awarding eligibility.

Federal regulations define two selection groups to be used when awarding FSEOG funds. The first priority group includes Pell Grant recipients with the lowest EFC. If an institution has FSEOG funds remaining after the first priority group, it may then select a second group of students with the lowest EFC who are not Pell Grant recipients.

The 2009-2010 FSA Handbook, Volume 3, Chapter 7, page 133 provides further clarification concerning selection categories for FSEOG recipients.

### Upcoming Events

- ◆ The **Advisory Committee on Medical Education** is scheduled to meet on **March 11, 2010**.
- ◆ The **Advisory Committee on College Savings** is scheduled to meet on **March 17, 2010**.
- ◆ The **FAME Board of Directors** is scheduled to meet on **March 18, 2010**.
- ◆ The **Higher Education Advisory Council** is scheduled to meet on **March 25, 2010**.

### State Legislative Update

On February 23, the Education Committee held a third and final work session on L.D. 1296, *An Act to Strengthen the Job Creation Through Educational Opportunity Program*, the Opportunity Maine bill. A few days earlier, FAME hosted a stakeholder teleconference (including representatives from MASFAA, Opportunity Maine, FAME, DOE, private and public higher educational institutions, and state agencies) to help resolve differences and develop new amendment language simplifying the program and lessening the burdens on involved parties, particularly Maine schools and their financial aid offices. The revised language was presented by the parties to the committee and eventually adopted in a 12-1 vote.

The latest amendment would, among other things, simplify the program and have Maine Revenue Services and the Maine Department of Education assume greater roles in administering it. The new language amends eligibility for the program and also eliminates the "Opportunity Contract," but still requires schools to provide and document certain information for students. Schools now must, upon a student's graduation, document certain available student loan information for purposes of the tax credit, and retain the document for ten years after the student's graduation. Definitional changes are made to the terms "Maine resident" and "financial aid package" in the law. The University of Maine System and the Maine Community College System shall publish on their respective web sites the average in-state tuition and mandatory fees applicable to their respective programs and disseminate those figures to the State Tax Assessor and all accredited Maine community colleges, colleges and universities by September 1st each year. Further, the Department of Education, FAME, and the other agencies engaging in education-related outreach must integrate promotion of the program into existing efforts and materials to raise awareness of the program. Schools that have questions about the program will now contact the Maine Department of Education, which will provide a link on its web site to program information. Schools will have to report by Feb. 1, 2011 and again by Feb. 1, 2012 on progress in implementing the program. Such progress will include information about efforts to enroll students in the program and to train staff about the program. The Department of Education and Maine Revenue Services also will report to the Legislature about implementation of the program. When final amendment language is approved by the committee, we will be glad to share it with you.

Another bill, LD 352, *An Act to Encourage Veterinary Practice in Maine*, is nearing final passage in the Legislature. As you may recall, the bill as amended incorporates changes to the Health Professions Loan Program and the Access to Medical Education Program, and makes revisions to the proposed veterinary medicine loan program. The changes to the Health Professions Loan Program convert it from a program that provided forgivable loans for medical, veterinary and dental education and loans for optometry education to a program that provides loans for medical, veterinary and dental education to be repaid at varying interest rates depending upon the nature and location of the practice. The amendment further eliminates new access seats for veterinary education beginning in 2011 in anticipation of the creation of the Maine Veterinary Medicine Loan Program. The amendment makes changes to the Advisory Committee on Medical Education to reflect the changing nature of the programs.

The Legislature is planning on concluding its Second Session work by the first week of April. To follow the proceedings of the Legislature and its various joint standing committees, please visit: <http://www.maine.gov/legis/schedules.htm>

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## Washington D.C. Update

### **Dear Colleague Letter Provides Details Concerning Private Loans**

On February 14, 2010, the U.S. Department of Education published Dear Colleague Letter GEN-10-01 which provides the final private loan self-certification instructions and form. Institutions are now required to provide the self-certification information to an admitted or already enrolled student, or to the parent of that student, upon notification of interest concerning private or alternative educational loans. An institution may also post an exact copy of the self-certification form on its website for applicants to download.

Dear Colleague Letter GEN-10-01 is available at:  
<http://www.ifap.ed.gov/dpcletters/GEN1001.html>

**Higher Education Opportunity Act (HEOA) provisions:**

## Higher Education Opportunity Act (HEOA) provisions: Did you know...?

That the HEOA has added a new provision that creates the Off-Campus Community Service Grant Program utilizing the following criteria:

- The U.S. Department of Education may award grants to institutions in order to supplement off-campus and community service employment positions among Federal Work Study recipients;
- Grant funds are to be used to recruit and compensate students performing off-campus community service (including time spent in training and for travel directly related to the community service position); and
- Institutional applications that support postsecondary students assisting with early childhood education activities or activities in preparation for emergencies and natural disasters must be given grant funding priority by the Department.

A full summary of the HEOA provisions are available on IFAP at:

<http://ifap.ed.gov/dpccletters/GEN0812FP0810.html>

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## GOALS

Mila Tappan and Pam Crate worked with 19 students enrolled in the Ellsworth College Transition Program. The afternoon consisted of both presentations and interactive sessions, including topics on applying for financial aid, creating a budget, and responsible borrowing.

Pam also provided information on applying for financial aid to 12 students at the York Adult Education Center and 22 students at the Massabesic Center for Adult Education.

Trisha Malloy and Pam Crate facilitated two *Get A Life* Sessions at Mt. Abram High School (Strong, ME) to 45 freshmen.

April is Financial Literacy Month, so FAME staff is busy updating web site content and creating a financial literacy publication for high school and college students as well as creating a workbook for elementary school-aged students.

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## NextGen College Investing Plan®

### Harold Alfond College Challenge Casting Calls in Waterville & Portland Searching for Future Faces of Maine!

"Future Faces of Maine Casting Calls" will be held at the Holiday Inn in Waterville on March 6 and at the Maine Mall in South Portland on March 13. At the casting calls, Maine babies under the age of one will receive a free professional portrait and may have their picture appear in future Harold Alfond College Challenge advertising. FAME staff will be on hand with information and to provide assistance in completing the NextGen® application form for families interested in the \$500 grant. Casting call events held last fall attracted nearly 700 Maine babies and assisted in the opening of NextGen accounts to receive the \$500 grant.

Casting call events on Saturday, March 6 will be from 11:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. at the Holiday Inn on Main Street in Waterville and on Saturday, March 13 from 11:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. at the Maine Mall in South Portland.

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To remove your name from our mailing list, please [click here](#)

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