



Upcoming Events

- ❖ The **Advisory Committee on Medical Education** will meet on **September 10, 2009** at the FAME Office.
- ❖ The **FAME Board of Directors** will meet on **September 17, 2009** at the FAME Office.
- ❖ The **Higher Education Advisory Council** will meet on **September 24, 2009** at the FAME Office.

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FAME News

September is College Savings Month and NextGen® is 10 Years Old!

(Augusta) - On Wednesday, September 16 at 10:00 a.m., Governor Baldacci will proclaim September as College Savings Month in Maine, while highlighting NextGen's 10 year anniversary. Governor Baldacci will offer brief remarks and present a proclamation to Maine State Treasurer David Lemoine and Finance Authority of Maine CEO Beth Bordowitz.

Call for Nominations

Each year, the Finance Authority of Maine (FAME) recognizes individuals and organizations who have distinguished themselves through their efforts to help make Maine a better place in which to work, learn, and live. The FAME Board of Directors would appreciate your help in identifying individuals or organizations who exemplify a commitment to quality education. Please help us choose recipients for two awards: **Education at Work for Maine and the Dirigo Award**. [Click here](#) for the nominating materials, along with criteria for these awards. The award forms are writeable and can be filled in, printed or saved and returned to FAME.

The deadline for submitting the award nomination form(s) is Wednesday, September 16, 2009. Nominations can be submitted via e-mail to [Cindy Roy](#), FAME's Communications Coordinator, or via U.S. Post to Cindy's attention at Finance Authority of Maine, P.O. Box 949, Augusta, ME 04332-0949. After the selection process, you will be notified whether your nominee was selected to receive an award.

On Tuesday evening, November 10, 2009, FAME will host its Annual Meeting, "Showcase Maine," at the Holiday Inn by the Bay in Portland (invitations will be mailed in October). At that event, we will publicly recognize the winners of the awards and present them with a special plaque and public recognition.

Thank you for your assistance with this request for nominations. Should you have questions or comments about FAME's annual awards, please contact [Cindy Roy](#) through e-mail or directly at (800) 228-3734, extension 3505.

Ask FAME

Q: What is the regulatory requirement concerning coordination of private financial resources (tuition or book scholarships, gift certificates for essays, etc.) within a student's financial aid award package?

A: Regulations require a Federal Student Aid (FSA) participating school to do the following:

- Designate a capable individual, to be known as the coordinating official, who is responsible for administering FSA programs;
- Ensure that there is a system in place which enables the coordinating official to be aware of all aid received by students attending the institution, regardless of the source; and
- Provide a procedure for identifying and resolving discrepancies in all FSA-related information that may be received by any school official.

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To view additional information concerning the above question, please proceed to the 2009-2010 Federal Student Aid Handbook, Volume 2, Chapter 10, page 122 or to the Code of Federal Regulations, Title 34, Part 668, Subpart B, 668.16 Standards of Administrative Capability.

State Education Programs

State of Maine Grant Program

The advance payments for the fall 2009 semester were sent to participating institutions last week. If your institution has not participated in the advance payment option in the past but would like to explore doing so for the fall 2009 disbursement, please contact [Claude Roy](#).

EPIC (Education Portal Information Center)

EPIC, the online Web site portal, will be available for institutions in mid October. At that time schools will be able to download a student file, edit and return that file to FAME to update student information for the following programs:

- State of Maine Grant Program (SMGP)
- GEAR UP
- Robert C. Byrd Honors Scholarship (Byrd)
- Educators for Maine (EFM)

Institutions participating in the Quality Child Care Program will continue to submit rosters through the virtual office process as they did for AY 2008-2009. The Medical Access Program and the Health Profession Loan Program will be processed manually until EPIC is fully rolled out.

FAME is planning EPIC training sessions for school users via webinar during October. We will notify schools of the dates for the training sessions by the end of September. FAME will also be providing a user manual to schools for the new system.

Special Summer Section

The Kim Wallace Adaptive Equipment Loan Program, also known as mPower, is a program which provides assistance to individuals and businesses for the purchase, construction or installation of any product or equipment that allows an individual to become more independent within the community; promotes mobility; or improves independence and quality of life. Businesses may use loan funds to facilitate compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). Loan amounts range from \$250 to \$100,000.

Loans are granted for accessible vehicles, wheelchairs, hearing aids, lift chairs, home modifications including access ramps, stair lifts, wider doorways and accessible bathrooms to name a few.

The consumer application process begins with assistance from Alpha One, and then FAME completes the underwriting process, loan conditions, presentation to the Board and all loan documents and payment servicing. For more information go to: www.mpowerloans.org.

Washington, D.C. Update

Lawmakers are Observing the Congressional August Recess until Labor Day

Notice of Proposed Rulemaking Publication

On August 21, 2009, the U.S. Department of Education released in the Federal Register a Notice of Proposed Rulemaking (NPRM) that proposes changes to the regulations governing the Title IV grant programs as well as changes to other institutional requirements related to the administration of all Title IV student assistance programs.

Interested parties may submit comments concerning this NPRM until September 21, 2009. The procedure to submit and review comments is included within the following attachment:

<http://ifap.ed.gov/eannouncements/attachments/082109TitleIVNPRM.pdf>

Higher Education Opportunity Act (HEOA) Provisions Did you know...?

That the HEOA's provisions amend or add new requirements to an institution's Program Participation Agreement in the following areas:

- An institution is required to electronically transmit a message concerning voter registration to each student who is enrolled at and physically attending the school. The message must contain an acceptable voter registration form or provide an internet address that enables the student to download the form;
- An institution, upon written request, must disclose to the alleged victim of a violent crime the results of any disciplinary hearing conducted by the school against the alleged perpetrator of the crime. If the alleged victim is deceased, the institution must release the above mentioned results to the victim's next of kin; and
- An institution must certify that it has developed plans to effectively prevent the unauthorized distribution of copyrighted material utilizing illegal downloads or peer-to-peer sharing of intellectual property.

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

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

GOALS

Mila Tappan attended the New Student Orientation at Washington County Community College on August 25. She presented information on budgeting, loans and financial success to 73 first-year students.

FAME applied for and received a grant from the YMCA of the USA for College Goal Sunday. College Goal Sunday will be held on Sunday, January 31, 2010 at various locations in Maine. Details will be added to www.collegegoalsundaymaine.com as more information becomes available.

FAME received its grant award notification for year two funding of the College Access Challenge Grant. During year one of the federal grant, one of the many initiatives FAME undertook was to create two new outreach positions. As a result of these additional resources, the overall number of outreach events increased by 35.2 percent from FY08 to FY09; specifically, financial aid nights increased by 24.5 percent and information sessions for adult learners increased by 71.4 percent.

NextGen College Investing Plan[®]

SmartMoney names NextGen Best Performing 529 Plan

In the September 2009 issue of *SmartMoney Magazine*, NextGen was named as the best performing 529 plan in 2008. See the attached article for more information.



COLLEGE SAVINGS

Pick the Right 529... This Time

With many college savings accounts still in disarray, parents need advice. Here's ours.

TO THE ANNALS OF THE OBVIOUS, please add: A recent survey reports that 90 percent of parents are worried about the cost of their kids' college education. Well, duh. Tuition and fees are rising even as the economy sputters, and the average 529 plan, the tax-advantaged programs designed to help parents invest for their children's education, lost 22 percent in 2008. But thanks to changes in the tax code—and, yes, even those market losses—parents now have more flexibility to change course, switching their investment strategy or even choosing another state plan entirely.

Until recently, picking a 529 plan didn't feel so complicated. Most parents opted for their home state's plan, often taking a tax break for their contributions. More often than not, they chose what's called an "age-based" portfolio—a mix of stocks and bonds designed to get more conservative as freshman year approaches. But the market crash revealed a wide variation among those plans; some designed

for high school seniors lost almost 30 percent, while others gained 4 percent. "Some investors had no idea how much risk they were taking on," says Joseph Hurley, the founder of SavingForCollege.com.

At least there's a silver lining for unhappy investors. In response to plan losses, the IRS will now allow parents to adjust their 529 investments twice in 2009, instead of the usual onetime switch. That means parents who bailed on the markets or got burned by their age-based fund now have two chances to get it right, says Greg Brown, who covers the plans for fund tracker Morningstar.

For investors who can't find a comfortable option in their state's plan, experts say there has never been a better time to look at out-of-state options. Historically, it's been hard to leave a plan, because most states reverse the tax break, counting any money that went into the plan as income. But if the account is now worth less than the original contributions, investors may be able to claim the losses as a miscellaneous itemized deduction—small consolation, but consolation nonetheless. Tempted to shop around? Look closely at the age-based options, says Cleveland financial adviser Scott Snow; a fund for a student close to college should have no more than 20 percent in stocks. And, as always, pay attention to fees. A good plan should charge less than 1 percent for actively managed funds, half that for index funds. **—Janet Paskin**

THE GOOD, THE BAD AND THE AVERAGE

Best 529: Maine (NextGen College Inv. Plan)
Worst 529: W. Va. (Hartford SMART)

