



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

NEWS RELEASE

CONTACT: Keith New, 717-720-2509
knew@pheaa.org

Nicole Elbertson, 717-720-2509
nelberts@pheaa.org

PHEAA Reminds Students to Submit FAFSA
Applying for Student Aid Should be Priority

Harrisburg, PA (January 28, 2009) – The Pennsylvania Higher Education Assistance Agency (PHEAA) is reminding students and families today that they should complete and submit the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) as soon as possible to ensure prompt processing of their applications. Estimated federal income tax information can be used if the family's actual tax form hasn't been completed yet.

The FAFSA determines eligibility for federal grants, the Pennsylvania State Grant Program, scholarships, reduced-cost federal student loans, work-study programs, and many school-based student aid programs. It is the first, and most important, step that students and families should take when looking for assistance in paying for higher education.

"This is a critically important time when it pays to be proactive," advised PHEAA Board Chairman William F. Adolph. "Completing the FAFSA for the 2009-2010 academic year is the first and most important step toward receiving state and federal student aid. Applying early ensures that proper submission is made prior to all deadlines."

The FAFSA should be completed as soon as possible after January 1 to qualify for federal student aid. The State Grant deadline is May 1 for all renewal applicants and first-time applicants in degree and transfer programs but each school may have their own earlier deadlines for financial aid.

Completing the FAFSA may seem confusing, but help is available. Frequently asked questions, overviews, as well as links to preparation worksheets and the online application, are located at PHEAA.org/FAFSA. Free FAFSA Completion Workshops are offered by PHEAA, in partnership with the Pennsylvania Association of Student Financial Aid Administrators (PASFAA), statewide through April. At these sessions, a financial aid professional is available to personally assist you with your application and answer any questions that you may have. A complete and current listing of these events can also be found at PHEAA.org/FAFSA.

"Our FAFSA Completion Workshops provide students and parents with the opportunity to obtain individual attention from knowledgeable, experienced student aid professionals," explained Adolph. "It is important that families complete the FAFSA correctly, as it determines what level of aid they are eligible to receive."

The Pennsylvania General Assembly recently designated January 2009 as Financial Aid Awareness Month in House Resolution that also commended PHEAA and PASFAA for their work in promoting the importance of FAFSA completion and student aid planning.

###