

**For Immediate Release
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Governor Strickland Declares February 2010 “Financial Aid Awareness Month” in Support of College Goal Sunday

COLUMBUS---Governor Ted Strickland has declared February 2010 as “Financial Aid Awareness” month in conjunction with the Ohio Board of Regents Chancellor Eric Fingerhut’s endorsement of the annual College Goal Sunday event in Ohio. Coordinated by the Ohio Association of Student Financial Aid Administrators (OASFAA), in collaboration with the Ohio Board of Regents and the Ohio College Access Network’s KnowHow2Go campaign, this event offers Ohio families free assistance with completing the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA).

This is the Governor’s third annual proclamation in an effort to increase the awareness of financial aid options for students seeking a post-secondary education.

“College Goal Sunday is a great opportunity for students and their families to receive free assistance with completing their FAFSA document,” Strickland said. “Volunteers are working hard to educate more and more students on the financial aid process, and help them break down any financial barriers in accessing higher education.”

This year, college financial aid administrators, college access personnel and high school guidance counselors will volunteer their assistance at 41 locations in 34 counties around Ohio on February 14, 2010 at 2 p.m. to families in need of completing the FAFSA form. The FAFSA is the basic form that must be filled out for all students who would like to participate in federal student aid programs, including Pell Grants, which do not need to be repaid, and Perkins or Stafford loans, as well as for some forms of State aid programs, such as the Ohio College Opportunity Grant.

“Families should take advantage of the free assistance offered at College Goal Sunday,” said Chancellor Fingerhut. “As the state continues to move forward our *Strategic Plan of Higher Education*, lowering the cost of higher education is a priority. Financial aid, coupled with the University System of Ohio’s low-cost pathways ensures that all Ohioans have access to a high-quality, affordable education.”

“Filling out the FAFSA is essential in knowing your full eligibility for federal, state and institutional aid,” said Randy J. Ulses, OASFAA President. “An early application can help

students and families understand the financial assistance available to them and prepare for any out-of-pocket college expenses.”

For more information about College Goal Sunday in Ohio, visit <http://www.ohiocollegegoalsunday.org/> or call the Ohio College Access Information Hotline at 1-877-I-ATTAIN (428-8246).

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