



LOSFA LOOP

March 2015

Volume 8-3

From the Desk of the Executive Director



Dr. Sujuan Boutté

“The will to win, the desire to succeed, the urge to reach your full potential... these are the keys that will unlock the door to personal excellence.”

Confucius

It has truly been a privilege these past weeks to witness the manifestation of these words in the actions of the students and families we serve. Nothing is more rewarding in this business than to see the desire to succeed coupled with the willingness to take the steps necessary to achieve in the faces of our youth. Our staff has been heavily rewarded as we continue to ‘take it to the seats’ across the state.

We’ve partnered with Central Louisiana Technical Community College to assist with FAFSA completion at the Alexandria Mall. We saw parents and students brave cold, rainy, nasty weather conditions to be in line an hour before the doors opened at the East Baton Rouge Parish Library. We saw seniors interested in filing the FAFSA, parents interested in opening START Saving accounts, and juniors interested in determining the best programmatic and postsecondary match and fit. Two days after the event, we see students following up with our staff to strengthen connections and continue the dialogue aimed at assisting them with reaching their full potential.

We saw students brave the same type of weather to visit Fletcher Technical Community College to check out 2 year program offerings that can lead to jobs with

starting salaries of \$60,000 and above. Our College Goal Sunday event further demonstrated the desire on the part of parents and students statewide to get information and free assistance regarding maximizing gift aid, minimizing loan debt, and making the connection between programs of study and the jobs they lead to.

We appreciate the assistance of our site coordinators, members of the Louisiana Association of Student Financial Aid Administrators, the Council of Student Body Presidents, Jump\$tart Coalition members, Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) members, our Trailblazers and Youth Congress Members: without your willingness to give of your time and knowledge College Goal Sunday would not be possible.

The responses make us even more excited about the upcoming Explorer’s Club Conference and FLY Tours. This year the ticket to the Explorer’s Club conference is a college acceptance letter! All is not lost though for students still ‘on the fence’ because the FLY tour debuts at this year’s conference and then takes off for the following campuses: Dillard University, Grambling State University, Northwestern State University, Southeastern University, Southern University in Baton Rouge, and SOWELA Technical Community College. Thanks to them for opening their campuses and pulling out all of the stops to show students the opportunities waiting for those who have the will to work and the desire to succeed.

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In this edition. . .

<i>College Goal Sunday Wrap-Up</i>	<i>2 -3</i>	<i>JRJ Loan Repayment Applications</i>	<i>7</i>
<i>College Goal Louisiana Event</i>	<i>3-4</i>	<i>LA GEAR UP Conference</i>	<i>8</i>
<i>College Goal Sunday in Pictures</i>	<i>4-6</i>	<i>Fletcher Field Trip</i>	<i>9</i>
<i>Go Center at EBR Library</i>	<i>7</i>	<i>Hobbs Speaks at MSA</i>	<i>9</i>

Louisiana College Goal Sunday Assists 574 Students with FAFSA Completion

The Louisiana Office of Student Financial Assistance (LOSFA) and the Louisiana Association of Student Financial Aid Administrators (LASFAA) hosted Louisiana's eighth annual College Goal Sunday statewide event on March 1, 2015, at fifteen locations around the state. A total of 574 students/families received free assistance from financial aid professionals in completing the primary student financial aid form, the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA). Total College Goal Sunday attendance was 1,078 students and parents.

LASFAA representatives provided a general financial aid overview and a preview of the FAFSA content. LOSFA representatives explained the TOPS processing cycle and how Louisiana Connect, the state's online college access and career planning portal can be maximized to compare the costs, course offerings and amenities of schools students are interested in attending as well as prospective employment opportunities and salary expectations for fields they are considering as majors.

Louisiana business and industry representatives attended five College Goal Sunday sites to speak about the influx of jobs coming to Louisiana in the near future and the types of education beyond high school that will be necessary in order to qualify for those employment opportunities. Those representatives included:

- Missy Grimmett – Louisiana Workforce Commission (University of Louisiana - Lafayette site)
- Raymond Peters – RoyOMartin Lumber Company (Central Louisiana Technical Community College site)
- Dana Goblowsky – North Oaks Medical Center (Southeastern Louisiana University site)
- Carrie Courville – Sasol North America (SOWELA site)
- Stephanie Simeon and Janika Boutte – Calcasieu Business and Career Solutions Center (SOWELA site)

- Dustin Matthews – Central Louisiana Economic Development (LSU – Alexandria site)
- Dr. Courtney P. Richter, DDS – local business owner, Dentist (LSU – Alexandria site)

As a College Goal Sunday value-added benefit representatives of the Louisiana Jump\$tart Coalition were in attendance at four sites and provided valuable information on financial literacy, school resources, and money management tips for parents and soon-to-be first time college students.

Funding for Louisiana College Goal Sunday was provided by a grant from USA Funds. Volunteers included financial aid professionals from the host postsecondary institutions, LOSFA and LA GEAR UP representatives, Trailblazers, Professional School Counselors and members of the Council of Student Body Presidents (COSBP).

Louisiana's 2015 College Goal Sunday FAFSA completion efforts will continue through the month of



Mr. Raymond Peters with RoyOMartin Lumber Company speaks to College Goal Sunday attendees on March 1, 2015 at Central Louisiana Technical Community College.

continued on page 3

Louisiana College Goal Sunday *continued*

March with an additional 14 events, also on Louisiana postsecondary campuses, offering free hands-on assistance from financial aid professionals at the host site institutions. (See story on below).

Louisiana Jump\$tart Coalition representative Jessica Oliver, Pelican State Credit Union Credit Management and Business Development Manager, at the Lafayette College Goal Sunday event.



LOSFA Public Information Director Gus Wales with Louisiana Workforce Commission representative Missy Grimmitt at the ULL College Goal Sunday event.

Missed College Goal Sunday? Here are more opportunities for you to receive free professional FAFSA completion assistance

This year, we have expanded College Goal Sunday to a full month of College Goal Louisiana events. Listed below are an additional 14 opportunities to receive hands-on, line-by-line, free FAFSA completion assistance from Louisiana postsecondary financial aid professionals. No registration is required. You may check the College Goal Sunday section of the LOSFA Website (www.osfa.la.gov) for a list of items to bring with you. Both the student and parent must attend.

March 9 (Monday)

- South Louisiana Community College – Lafayette
5:30 – 7:30 p.m.
1101 Bertrand
Ardoin Building, Room 114

March 10 (Tuesday)

- Central Louisiana Technical Community College – Leesville Extension
4:30 – 7:00 p.m.
Main Building Learning Resource Center,
Room G102

March 16 (Monday)

- South Louisiana Community College – Lafayette
5:30 – 7:30 p.m.
1101 Bertrand Drive, Room 301

March 17 (Tuesday)

- Central Louisiana Technical Community College – Ferriday Extension Site
4:30 – 7:00 p.m.
Main Building, Room 117

March 19 (Thursday)

- Louisiana Tech University – Ruston
4:00 – 7:00 p.m.
Wyley Tower-Prescott Memorial Library
Room 1014

continued on page 4

FAFSA completion assistance *(continued)*

March 22 (Sunday)

- LSU-Shreveport
2:00 – 5:00 p.m.
One University Place, University Center
Room 109

March 23 (Monday)

- Louisiana Tech University – Ruston
4:00 – 7:00 p.m.
Wyley Tower-Prescott Memorial Library
Room 1014
- South Louisiana Community College – Lafayette
5:30 – 7:30 p.m.
1101 Bertrand
Ardoin Building, Room 114

March 24 (Tuesday)

- River Parishes Community College – Gonzales
6:00 – 8:00 p.m.
925 West Edenborne Parkway
Main Campus, Room 137
- Central Louisiana Technical Community College –
Winnfield Extension Site
4:30 – 7:00 p.m.
5960 Highway 167 North
Main Building
Park at the back of campus in student parking lot

March 25 (Wednesday)

- Southern University New Orleans
11:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.
6400 Press Drive
College of Business, Room 100
- Central Louisiana Technical Community College –
Jena Extension Site
4:30 – 7:00 p.m.
521 East Bradford Street
Main Building

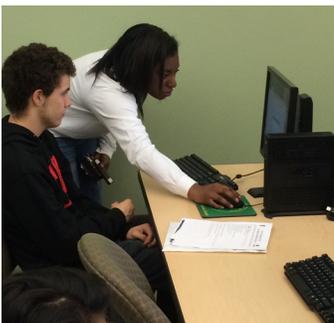
March 30 (Monday)

- South Louisiana Community College – Lafayette
5:30 – 7:30 p.m.
1101 Bertrand
Ardoin Building, Room 114

March 31 (Tuesday)

- Central Louisiana Technical Community College –
Cottonport Extension Site
1:30 – 7:00 p.m.
508 Choupique Street, Highway 107
Main Building

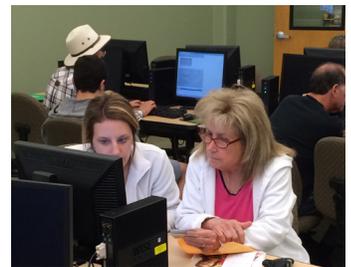
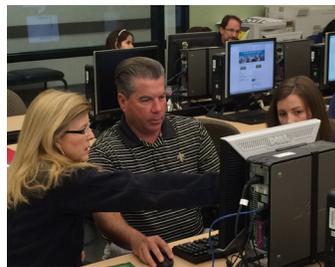
Louisiana College Goal Sunday



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Louisiana College Goal Sunday



LOSFA Hosts Financial Aid and College Access Night at EBR Main Library

On Monday evening, February 23, LOSFA offered its very first Financial Aid Open House based on the Go Center concept introduced at the 2014 SREB GO Alliance Conference. The event, held at the EBR Main Library, provided one-on-one assistance with college access topics such as TOPS, START Saving accounts, FAFSA preparation, and college match and fit via the ACT profile.

Go Centers aspire to help students see pathways to careers and college. At one level, they are physical spaces in schools and other locations equipped with computers and overseen by school staff. In the case of LOSFA, GO Centers can be mobile. Regardless, GO Centers provide opportunities for students to research career opportunities, college options, and financial aid with the assistance of college access professionals, be it mentors from higher education institutions or the community.

The EBR event was a start to what we hope will be more and better Go Center events to come. The library event was attended by approximately 100 students and parents. To schedule a Go Center event in your community e-mail custserv@la.gov.



LOSFA Accepting Applications for John R. Justice Student Loan Repayment Program

The Louisiana Office of Student Financial Assistance is accepting applications for the 2015 John R. Justice Student Loan Repayment Program until Thursday, April 30, 2015. The program provides for the payment of eligible educational loans for state and federal public defenders and state prosecutors who agree to remain employed as public defenders and prosecutors for at least three years. Applicants must be U.S. citizens or eligible non-citizens who have been employed full time (at least 30 hours per week) as prosecutors or public defenders for at least one year as of Dec. 31, 2014. Applicants also must have at least \$20,000.00 in remaining eligible loan debt and must not be in default on any federal student loans.

Two prosecutors and one public defender will be chosen from each of the Louisiana Circuit Courts of Appeal Districts. The annual award amount for an eligible prosecutor is \$1,600.00, and the annual award amount for an eligible public defender is \$3,200.00. Eligible loans under this program include Federal Stafford Loans (both FFELP and William D. Ford Federal Loan Direct Loans), Federal Graduate PLUS Loans, Federal Consolidation Loans and Federal Perkins Loans.

Eligible applicants who are interested in applying for the award or who would like more information are encouraged to visit the LOSFA website, <http://www.osfa.la.gov>. The application can be accessed through the Louisiana Award System link found on the homepage.

LA GEAR UP Annual Explorers' Club Statewide Conference and Leadership Summit Set for March 12 -14

More than 300 participants, including 200 high school seniors and school personnel representing 30 Louisiana high schools, will converge on the Hilton Baton Rouge Capitol Center Hotel March 12-14 for the LA GEAR UP 2015 annual Explorers' Club Conference and Leadership Summit.

The statewide Explorers' Club Conference and Leadership Summit is a capstone event and provides peer leadership opportunities throughout the year. Explorers' Clubs enable members to make wise academic and behavioral decisions leading to success in postsecondary education. As peer leaders, Club members are tasked with helping other students at their school make wise decisions.

The 2015 event is extra special because all seniors—mostly first-generation students— have been accepted to a college, university, community or technical college. The 2015 Conference is designed to help students transition to postsecondary education.

Conference Highlights

Thursday Evening (March 12)

Thursday evening events will be a celebration of college acceptance and begins with a college/university roll call in which students will sit according to the postsecondary institutions to which they've been accepted and concludes with a graduation cake and networking event.

Representatives from the Louisiana Department of Economic Development and the Louisiana Workforce Commission will facilitate a "Rip the Career Runway" in collaboration with Explorers' Club State Officers.

Friday (March 13)

Friday highlights include breakout sessions on navigating college course management systems; the

cost of college choice; financial literacy; and ACT boot camp, focusing on psychometrics and test preparation.

Saturday Morning (March 14)

The Saturday morning schedule features an onsite "Go Center" in which a college and career access space is created to provide students with opportunities to research careers, college options, and financial aid with the assistance of college access professionals, mentors from higher education institutions or the community.

One Saturday morning highlight is the Career Speed Networking Event. The objective is to provide students with career knowledge to promote educated college and career planning. Professionals working in fields related to their degrees—from culinary arts to chemical engineering—have been recruited to interface with students. Volunteers will staff round tables as small groups of students travel from career table to career table at the sound of a bell in a design modeled around speed dating.

LA GEAR UP (Louisiana Gaining Early Awareness and Readiness for Undergraduate Programs) is administered by the Louisiana Office of Student Financial Assistance (LOSFA) and supported by the U.S. Department of Education, which gives grants to states or institutions of higher learning to create partnerships with high-poverty middle or high schools. In partnership with 12 Louisiana parishes, LA GEAR UP aims to increase the number of low-income students that are prepared to enter and succeed in post-secondary education.

Participating High Schools include:

Avoyelles High School
Bastrop High School
Broadmoor High School
Bunkie High School
Converse High School
East Iberville High School

continued on page 9

LA GEAR UP Annual Explorers' Club Statewide Conference and Leadership Summit *(continued)*

East Feliciana High School
 East St. John High School
 Florien High School
 Glen Oaks High School
 Iberville Math Science and Arts East High School
 Iberville Math Science and Arts West High School
 Jeanerette High School
 Landry-Walker High School
 Mangham High School
 Many High School
 Marksville High School
 Negreet High School

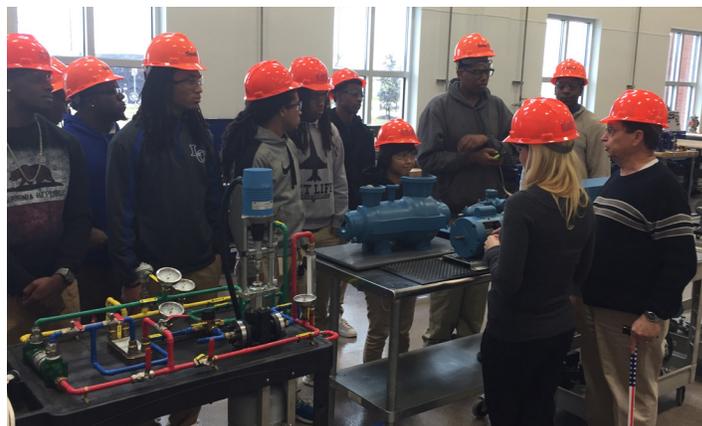
New Orleans Accelerated High School #1 CP
 New Orleans Accelerated High School #2 WB
 Plaquemine High School
 Pleasant Hill High School
 Rayville High School
 Red River High School
 Scotlandville Magnet High School
 Tara High School
 Union Parish High School
 West St. John High School
 White Castle High School

Find Your Match

High school seniors from South Louisiana LA GEAR UP schools enjoyed a field trip to Fletcher Technical Community College on February 24, 2015. The trip emphasized careers in the Petroleum Division, which offers an Associate of Science Degree in Integrated Production Technologies.

The field trip allowed students to identify career opportunities important to a particular region of the state, just one component of the LOSFA emphasis on match and fit.

Kevin Ferguson, Glen Oaks High School senior, said the trip to Fletcher was “amazing,” and he now considers



Fletcher as “a possible college choice.” Andre Horton, Scotlandville High School senior, said that going on the trip opened his mind to “new opportunities.”



Photo and caption courtesy of Shannon J. Domingue, MILS, IMSA East Media Specialist

On February 26, 2015, Khristopher Hobbs, GEAR UP program coordinator, participated in the Iberville Math and Science East High School’s annual Black History Month program, which included theatrical and musical performances, art, social studies projects, and special collection displays from the Media Center. Mr. Hobbs, who holds an M.A. in History, delivered a message of unity and hope to the students of MSA East.

LOSFA's Social Media Sites



<http://www.facebook.com/LOSFA>



<http://www.twitter.com/LOSFA>



<http://www.youtube.com/LOSFA1000>



<http://instagram.com/LOSFA001>



For more information, contact the
Louisiana Office of Student Financial Assistance:

By Phone: 800-259-5626

By E-mail: custserv@la.gov

By Mail: P.O. Box 91202, Baton Rouge, LA 70821-9202

Web Address: www.osfa.la.gov

For submissions, opinions, or comments for the LOSFA LOOP,
please contact Gus Wales at Gus.Wales@la.gov.