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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**COLLEGEINCOLORADO.ORG OFFERS INFORMATION ON
AND ASSITANCE IN APPLYING FOR FINANCIAL AID**

(Denver, Colorado) As students think about continuing their education beyond high school, the cost of doing so can seem daunting for them and their parents.

CollegInColorado.org offers a one-stop resource for navigating the cost of higher education and applying for financial aid, as well as numerous tools to help students and parents plan, apply and pay for college.

Attending one of Colorado's four-year public colleges or universities annually can cost between \$2,500 and \$7,800 per student for tuition alone. Many families apply for financial aid to help with the cost of higher education, and this year, according to U.S. Secretary of Education Margaret Spellings, there is more than \$80 billion in federal financial aid to help pay for higher education.

"College can seem like a huge expense," said Dawn Taylor Owens, executive director of College In Colorado, "but families should be aware that financial aid resources including scholarships, grants, loans and work study programs are available to help with the cost of higher education."

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What is “Financial Aid?”

Money provided for higher education expenses in the form of scholarships, grants, student and parent loans, and work-study programs is considered financial aid. These types of financial aid may be funded with federal, state, institutional or private resources. The first step in applying for financial aid involves completing the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA). Results of the FAFSA are used by colleges and universities to award federal, state and institutional financial aid funds.

“In 2006, more than \$1.4 billion in financial aid was awarded to more than 258,000 students in the State of Colorado,” said Taylor Owens. “Parents and students must be sure to complete the FAFSA, even if they think they may not qualify.”

Financial aid can be used at eligible four-year, two-year and career/trade schools.

Pay for College

CollegelInColorado.org is a free resource for Colorado students and parents to plan, apply and pay for college. Parents and students can use the Website for scholarship searches, financial aid estimates, in-depth information on all types of aid available, and connect to the Federal Student Aid Website to complete the FAFSA. Users begin by creating a free, confidential account on CollegelInColorado.org, completing the FAFSA worksheet, and using the financial

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aid estimator. This information is offered on the CollegelnColorado.org Website in Spanish as well.

“Completing the FAFSA in a timely fashion is critical,” said Taylor Owens. Students should check with their college to determine their priority date for receipt of FAFSA results. Typically, completing the FAFSA by mid-February should meet priority deadlines for a student planning to commence attendance fall semester.

“Knowing the types and amount of financial aid a student may receive is often one determining factor when deciding which school to attend,” said Taylor Owens. “The earlier students submit the FAFSA, the sooner families may receive award information needed to plan effectively for their student’s future.”

College In Colorado

The State of Colorado initiated College In Colorado as a statewide effort to improve college access and change expectations about college for all Colorado students, particularly low-income and minority students. Each year, Colorado outranks the nation with the greatest number of degree holders per capita, yet only one in five Colorado ninth-grade students will earn a college degree, ranking the state in the bottom quartile nationwide. To ensure greater information access for students and parents, the campaign offers www.CollegelnColorado.org as a free Website resource to explore careers, plan curriculum, search scholarships, review financial aid, compare colleges and apply online – all the tools needed to help plan, apply and pay for college.

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