



Oregon

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Oregon Student Assistance Commission

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NEWS RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Awards Administered by the State of Oregon Student Assistance Commission

Student Aid Agency Releases “Top Ten Scholarship Schools” Among Oregon Universities and Colleges

**Deadline to apply for 2009-10 OSAC Scholarships is March 2, 2009 at
www.GetCollegeFunds.org**

Eugene, OR – Spending a few hours to complete an Oregon Student Assistance Commission scholarship application can yield positive returns for Oregon families and colleges. According to the Oregon Student Assistance Commission (OSAC), more Oregon students are applying for and receiving scholarships, due largely to information from high school counselors, college financial aid administrators and Internet sites which allow students to search for specific scholarship criteria.

Today, OSAC released its 2008-09 private awards and scholarships data for Oregon colleges and universities. The list shows all private awards and scholarship programs administered by the state financial aid agency. The information shows the scholarship award trend is up -- 10% more applicants for scholarship awards than last year and 10% more in total dollars awarded (\$11,877,710) than last year. The OSAC information covers public, private and independent postsecondary institutions.

Oregon State University was #1 on the awards list with 451 scholarship students receiving a total of \$1,696,455. The remaining “Top Ten” scholarship schools in the state were:

2. University of Oregon	343 awards	\$1,420,910
3. Portland State University	188 awards	\$913,870
4. Southern Oregon University	114 awards	\$693,687
5. Oregon Health & Science University	59 awards	\$674,042
6. George Fox University	78 awards	\$660,432
7. University of Portland	107 awards	\$555,753
8. Linfield College - Portland Campus	34 awards	\$419,066
9. Oregon Institute of Technology	82 awards	\$384,469
10. Pacific University	60 awards	\$368,625

For many Oregonians, a college education is one of the most expensive investments in their lives, and families often rely on loans to pay for it. Financing for a college education comes from five main sources: family income and savings, student loans, state and federal grants, federal work-study



programs and private awards and scholarships. Nearly 210,000¹ Oregon students are enrolled in degree programs at community colleges, state universities, independent and private colleges and universities. This year, about 25,000² students will graduate from Oregon high schools and go on to postsecondary education. Two thirds of 4-year undergraduate students graduate with some debt and the average student loan debt among graduating seniors is about \$20,000³.

According to the Census Bureau, a college degree is worth about \$19,000 in earnings per year more than a high school diploma. Over a lifetime, that difference can amount to between \$600,000 to \$1 million depending on the length of employment and other factors.

Oregonians planning on attending college for the 2009-10 academic year beginning next fall, can apply for scholarships until March 2. To apply, visit www.GetCollegeFunds.org. Applicants are encouraged to apply online to save time and minimize errors. New this year is the ability to electronically transmit and upload transcripts and other required documents to the online application. Details are on the website.

Students should also complete the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) to be considered for need-based grants including the Oregon Opportunity Grant, Pell Grant, and other federal financial aid programs at www.fafsa.ed.gov.

The Oregon Student Assistance Commission, formerly the Oregon State Scholarship Commission, was created by the Oregon Legislature in 1959 and administers a variety of State of Oregon, Federal, and privately-funded student financial aid programs for the benefit of Oregonians attending institutions of postsecondary education. The agency's largest program, the Oregon Opportunity Grant, will provide over 471 million in assistance to more than 38,500 students in 2008-09 and \$14 million in privately funded scholarships that includes awards to Oregon students attending out-of-state colleges.

The Oregon Student Assistance Commission can be reached at (800) 452-8807.

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¹ Estimate of 210,000 based on IPEDS data at <http://nces.ed.gov/IPEDS.Total.enrollment.fall.2007>.

² Oregon Dept of Educ. Estimate based on high school completion rate of 75% and college enrollment rate of 73%.

³ Average student loan debt of a college graduating senior is about \$19,237 according to the National Postsecondary Student Aid Study (NPSAS); excludes PLUS Loans but includes Stafford, Perkins, state, college, and private loans)