



Foundation for Ensuring Access and Equity

P.O. Box 70457 • Marietta, GA 30007

Planning • Preparation • Support

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The Importance of Scholarly Achievement

College Planning News

Vol VI, January 2010

Mychal Wynn (January, 2010)

On Monday, January 18, 2010 we will celebrate the life and legacy of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. (1/15/29 - 4/4/68). Dr. King, a product of segregated public schools earned his B.A. degree from Morehouse College following in the footsteps of both his father and grandfather. He went on to earn his B.D. from Crozer Theological Seminary in Pennsylvania and his Ph.D. from Boston University. Among his many awards, Dr. King received five honorary doctorate degrees and, at thirty-five, was the youngest person to ever be awarded the Nobel Peace Prize.

One year ago, then President-elect, Barack Obama (8/4/61-), was sworn into office as the 44th President of the United States. President Obama, also a recipient of the Nobel Peace Prize, received his B.A. degree from Columbia University and graduated magna cum laude from Harvard Law School.

Both Dr. King and President Obama have distinguished themselves as scholars, leaders, fathers, husbands, men of faith, authors, and in their passionate service to their country and community. Their extraordinary oratorical abilities may be rooted in talent, however, the clarity and content of their convictions are rooted in the scholarly intellectualism developed over long hours of study in their educational pursuits.



Sunday, January 24, 2010 marks the first semester academic celebration at Turner Chapel AME Church in Marietta, Georgia. All students in grades K through 12, earning a 3.0 GPA or higher, will be recognized during second service for their outstanding academic achievement. Students will receive a certificate of recognition and a Torch of Excellence "God Tag." As we encourage, inspire, and recognize our students' academic achievement in grades K through 11 we believe that we are paving the way to making them well prepared candidates for admission in America's top colleges and universities.

Not only will students in grades K through 12, earning a 3.0 GPA or higher, be recognized in the fall for their second semester grades, one male and one female student at each grade level in grades 6 through 11, will receive the **Kenneth Edward Marcus and Cassandra Young Marcus** awards of academic excellence for having the highest overall GPA at each grade level during the 2009/10 school year. These very special academic awards, named after our pastors, recognizes the highest level of scholarly achievement by our youth. The Kenneth and Cassandra Marcus award recipients for the 2008/09 school year were:

6th Grade: Aaron Hall and Breyona White

7th Grade: No Male Recipient and Alexis Ezell

8th Grade: Jonathan M. Tatem and Imani Sanders

9th Grade: Jalani Malik Wynn/Spenser E. Clark and No Female Recipient

10th Grade: Randall Morris, III and Brianna L. Moses

11th Grade: Gordon W. Patterson and Brittany Aisha Tatem

We hope that our partnership with Turner Chapel AME church will provide an example of what other faith-based, community, professional, and fraternal organizations can do to support student achievement and recognize the scholarly pursuits of our children.

If you would like more information about how your organization can create such academic recognition programs please contact Mychal and Nina Wynn, co-chairpersons of the Turner Chapel AME Education Ministry (770) 518-0369 or email info@accessandequity.org.

This month's newsletter and college planning workshop are devoted to assisting the next generation of scholarly students, who, one day may walk in the footsteps of Dr. King and President Obama. Volunteers will assist high school seniors with completing FAFSA ([Free Application for Federal Student Aid](#)) and I will be presenting a workshop for parents and students in identifying summer programs for students in grades K through 11.

If you are planning to attend the FAFSA workshop hosted at [Turner Chapel AME Church](#) (Marietta, Georgia) then you should apply for your PIN immediately so that you are ready to fully complete the necessary information and get your FAFSA submitted. If you are unable to attend the workshop then you should visit the NASFAA ([National Association of Student Financial Aid Administrators](#)) web site. NASFAA sponsors "[College Goal Sunday](#)," College Goal Sunday is a free program that helps students and parents complete FAFSA application forms. One day each year, traditionally a week or two after Super Bowl Sunday, qualified volunteers (including college financial aid administrators) fan out to selected community sites across a state to help families fill out the FAFSA.

The image shows a portion of the FAFSA form for the 2009-2010 school year. It includes the FAFSA logo and the title 'FREE APPLICATION FOR FEDERAL STUDENT AID'. The form is divided into sections for personal information, marital status, and financial information. Questions 1-30 are visible, with some fields already filled in, such as the date of birth (1/9) and the state of residence (GA). The form also includes instructions for completing the application and a warning not to leave it blank.

Why Complete FAFSA?

Completing the FAFSA is a requirement for any student seeking financial aid for college. It must be completed for incoming freshmen and for returning college students as well. The first day for completing FAFSA is January 1. The information submitted will be considered for computing the amount of financial aid to be awarded to students in the fall.

Unfortunately, the most needy students oftentimes delay completing their FAFSA until May or June. By that time, many colleges have already distributed much of their financial aid resources.

Subsequently, very deserving students are forced to apply for loans rather than receiving the "free" aid that they would have been entitled to. In the worse cases, students fail to complete their FAFSA altogether and find themselves without any financial aid whatsoever.

As the economic downturn continues, as more homes are foreclosed, as more families experience higher prices and lost wages, as the cost of college tuition increases, and as colleges cut back on the amount of financial aid being offered to incoming students, it is critical that students and parents maximize their opportunities for scholarships and grants. Students will also be faced with difficult choices that will require that they carefully review the financial aid packages that colleges offer them. More students than ever will be forced to stay in state and attend more affordable public, state, or community colleges.

After you have correctly submitted all of the necessary information to complete your FAFSA you will receive an estimated EFC (Expected Family Contribution) and a SAR (Student Aid Report). The colleges that you apply to will use this information to compute the amount, and type, of financial aid that you may be awarded. The lower the EFC, the more financial aid you will be entitled to. However, the combination of free money (i.e., grants and scholarships) and money that you will have to pay back (i.e., student loans) will depend on how quickly you get your FAFSA paperwork submitted to your college and the type of college that you will be attending. Ultimately, each college to which you submit your FAFSA (and where you have been accepted) will prepare a financial aid package that will outline the amount and type of financial aid that you will be awarded.

College Planning Seminar Series

The 2010 Seminar Series:

Saturday, January 30, 2010
10:00 a.m. - Noon
"Seniors: Completing FAFSA and Financial Aid Grades K-11: Identifying Summer Programs"

Co-sponsored by the
Education Ministry of Turner
Chapel AME Church

Saturday, January 30, 2009
10:00 a.m. - Noon
492 N. Marietta Parkway -
Marietta, GA (770) 422-6791
Further Event Information
and to RSVP, contact:
(678) 395-5825
seminar@accessandequity.org

What You Will Need

- Create a folder or notebook that you will keep all of your FAFSA paperwork in
- Identify an email address and physical address that you intend to use throughout college
- Go online and apply for your [FAFSA PIN](#)
- Write the number down in a safe place as soon as you receive it
- If you are a male (ages 18-25) you must register with the [Selective Service System](#) to be eligible to receive federal student aid
- Decide what you will study in college
- Print a copy of the [FASA Worksheet](#)
- Names of colleges that will receive our FAFSA

Student Documents

- Student's Social Security Number
- Student's Driver's License Number
- Student's W2 Forms (if you worked in 2008)
- Student's 2008 Tax Returns (if you plan to file)
- Student's Bank Statements

Parent Documents

- Parent's Social Security Number(s)
- Parent's Driver's License Number(s)
- Parent's W2 Forms
- Parent's 2008 Tax Returns (or estimated information)
- Parent's untaxed records (e.g., child support, veterans benefits, worker's compensation)
- Parent's Bank Statements
- Parent's Business Information (if self employed)
- Parent's alien registration or permanent resident card (if not U.S. citizens)
- Parent's Investment Records

Important Resources

- [Funding Education Beyond High School: The Guide to Federal Student Aid](#)
- Federal Student Aid Information Center: For assistance with a question. Federal Student Aid Information Center (FSAIC) at 1-800-4-FED-AID (1-800-433-3243) or 319-337-5665 between 8:00 a.m. and midnight EST, Monday through Friday, and 9:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. Saturday. You may also e-mail general questions about financial aid by clicking on the "Contact Us" link at (www.FederalStudentAid.ed.gov).
- [Calculate your EFC](#)

Excuses That You Cannot Make

- "I do not have my W2 Forms." Then guess. You can always go back and update your information later.
- "My parents have not completed their taxes." Use their 2007 tax returns and guess.
- "I do not know where I will be going to college." Send your FAFSA to all of the schools that you think that you may be considering.
- "I am going to get an athletic scholarship." Good! Complete FAFSA AND the NCAA Clearinghouse application.
- "I am not sure if I am going to college." Fine! Complete the FAFSA anyway in case you change your mind.
- "I qualify for my state scholarship (e.g., Hope, etc.)." Congratulations. However, you still need to complete FAFSA.
- "I will be attending a private college." Great! You need FAFSA AND the CSS Profile.
- "I have until the June deadline." Every day that you wait, money is being given to students who submitted their FAFSA!



[for Students with College-Bound Dreams](#), pp. 162-175]

Career Interests and Aspirations

Your passionate areas of interest contribute to your uniqueness and may enhance the diversity of a college community. Do you teach martial arts? Do you coach little league baseball? Do you run a soccer clinic for inner-city kids

during the summer? Do you volunteer for political campaigns? Are you a tutor in a literacy program at the Boys & Girls Club? Such programs, involvement, and areas of interest help to shape your uniqueness. Many students will apply to colleges because of the college's rank or status. Such students are more concerned with getting admitted into a prestigious college than they are at pursuing some particular area of interest, dream, or aspiration. Your passionate interests and continued pursuit of your dreams and aspirations will separate your application from that of the masses.

Align your areas of interest with a college major. Use your research to assess the college's commitment to your field of study and its student diversity needs. For example, female students interested in pursuing such majors as engineering, mathematics, or science, which typically have fewer female applicants, may find themselves more aggressively recruited than female students interested in pursuing nursing, which has a large number of female applicants.

Students who have demonstrated a passion for art or music stretching back to elementary school may have an advantage over students who say that they are interested in pursuing art, but took their first art class as a high school senior.

Summer Planning

The summer months between 8th grade and your senior year of high school should not be squandered. Take advantage of the many opportunities to explore your talents, interests, and abilities. Some of the many opportunities that you may explore, experience, or become involved in are:

- Traveling
- Working in a meaningful job related to an area of interest or through an internship
- Participating in a summer learning opportunity in an academic, artistic, or community service
- Participating in pre-college summer camps/programs
- Participating in an AAU, USATF, or club sport
- Participating in summer practice for a high school sport such as football, cross country, lacrosse, soccer, swimming, etc.
- Volunteering as a counselor, life guard, coach, or art instructor at a parks and recreation, Boys & Girls Club, or community program
- Taking some of your non-academic classes or electives in summer school to open your schedule for more honors or advanced classes during the regular school year
- Starting a business or working on a special project

Unlike the summer months during elementary and middle school, this is not the time to relax at grandma's house sitting back and watching television or playing video games. The summer months provide opportunities to attend camps or summer school, compete in [AAU](#) or [USATF](#) sports competitions, pursue internships, or otherwise engage in programs or opportunities that will enhance your college application package.

Camps, Internships, & Enrichment Programs

There are many summer enrichment, internship, and college program opportunities. The first two stops are your high school counselor's office and the web. Research programs related to your areas of interest and utilize the opportunity to increase your academic or athletic skills. Try to concentrate first and foremost on those areas that relate directly to your college interests, whether in your major field of study or in sports that you intend to pursue on the college level.

Ask your guidance or career counselor for information regarding camps, enrichment programs, internships, work study, and before- and after-school programs. These types of programs are usually offered through local colleges, community organizations, and clubs. Identify the camps, internships, enrichment programs, and extracurricular activities available at your high school related to your areas of interest. Identify the qualifying criteria for student participation, which may include participation in certain clubs, enrollment in certain classes, minimum grade point average, or recommendation by teachers or counselors.

Begin identifying summer programs in your area by googling summer camps in your city, e.g., "Atlanta Summer Camps." Google programs hosted by or on the colleges on your list, and continue searching for programs at nearby colleges and cities, moving on to programs throughout your state, and as far away as you have the ability to travel.

[Visit the Foundation web site for more Summer Camps and Programs](#)



Special Grant Programs

Special grant programs are available for students planning to pursue certain college majors, who live in certain states, or meet other requirements for state and federal grant programs.

Teach Grant Program: Grants of up to \$4,000.00 per year for students who intend to teach in a public or private elementary school or secondary school that serves students from low-income families.

Pell Grant: A maximum grant of \$4,731 (for 2009) determined by the college that you will be attending.

FEOG: Grants of between \$100 and \$4,000 a year to be determined by the college that you will be attending.

ACG: Grants of \$750 for the first year and \$1300 for the second year for qualified students completing a rigorous high school curriculum.

National Smart Grant: Available to third and fourth year college students majoring in areas considered critical to national

security (e.g., computer science, math, technology, or engineering).

FSEOG: Grants between \$100 and \$4,000 per year to be determined by the college that you will be attending.

Federal Work-Study: Part-time jobs to be determined by the college that you will be attending.

Federal Perkins Loan: Low-interest loan of up to \$5,500 per year (maximum of \$27,500). Loan repayment begins nine months after leaving or graduating from college.

Stafford Loans: Federally backed loans for students or parents. The financial aid office of the college that you will be attending will determine which program you qualify for.

[For a complete listing of financial aid resources](#)

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Make a Donation or Volunteer

The Foundation for Ensuring Access and Equity is committed to increasing K-12 student achievement and increasing the number of students who are prepared to enter and succeed in college.

Donations and volunteers are needed! Donations and contributions are currently being accepted in the following areas:

- Office furnishings and equipment
- Internet and telephone wiring
- Landscaping
- Computer equipment, telephones, photocopiers, and general office supplies

We are a 501 (c)(3) nonprofit foundation. Your donations are tax deductible and your volunteer efforts are invaluable.

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