Feb. 25 South Texas Financial Aid Fair Providing Easier Access to Application Process for Coastal Bend Residents Planning to Pursue Higher Education

Local station KIII partnering with area institutions to host event at studio; Coastal Bend universities’ mobile Go Centers and other resources making online application process quicker

Today’s economy, tight budgets and employment challenges may make many South Texas residents feel they’re in a pinch when planning financing either their own college education or that of their high school-age children. Financial aid for higher education is one way to cover expenses. But, applying for that aid can be confusing, especially when filling out the paperwork that is required.

On Friday, Feb. 25, local television station KIII will partner with Del Mar College, Coastal Bend College, Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi and Texas A&M University-Kingsville to host the Second Annual South Texas Financial Aid Fair from 10 a.m. to 6:30 p.m. at the Channel 3 studio located at 5002 South Padre Island Drive. The event is part of the annual statewide and national initiative called “College Goal Sunday.”

During this year’s South Texas Financial Aid Fair, experts from the Financial Aid Offices at all four institutions will be on-hand on the second floor of the studio to provide more information about financial aid available to individuals planning to attend any college or university in the Coastal Bend. They will also provide free help filling out the necessary forms electronically. Families and individuals can complete online the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA), which is the form required to apply for federal financial assistance for higher education opportunities.

Participants need to bring their 2010 tax return and/or their parents’ tax return and any other household income information for either the student and/or parents.

The event will also feature services provided by the Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi and Texas A&M University-Kingsville mobile Go Centers, including access to computer stations. Individuals can also visit with other university and college representatives about other institutional information on the second floor of KIII’s facility.
Higher education is within reach in the Coastal Bend. Currently through federal and other forms of financial assistance, such as scholarships, loans, grants and work-study, Del Mar College awards over $30.1 million in financial aid while Coastal Bend College awards $9.2 million, Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi awards $84.4 million and Texas A&M University-Kingsville awards $50 million to students who need help in paying for their education.

Individuals who live in households earning less than $30,000 should consider applying for the Federal Pell Grant, which is offered through the U.S. Department of Education. The program provides up to $5,550 per year to cover the cost of higher education for those who qualify. Most students eligible for Pell Grants receive funds for tuition and fees and still have funds to cover books, supplies and transportation.

According to the U. S. Department of Education, a Pell Grant, unlike a loan, does not have to be repaid. The maximum Pell Grant for the 2010-11 award year is $5,550. The amount each individual receives depends on their financial needs, cost to attend school and status as a full-time or part-time student.

For additional information about the College Goal Sunday initiative, go online at https://finaid.tamu.edu/CGS/.

For more information about the Feb. 25 South Texas Financial Aid Fair at KIII, go online at www.kiiitv.com or call the Del Mar College Financial Aid Services Office at 361-698-1293.