

## FINANCIAL AID IN BRIEF

What about paying for college?

**Financial Aid**-is a general term encompassing all different sources of money to help you pay for your college education. It includes grants, scholarships, loans, and work study. You have to ask for financial aid by filling out applications on time in order to get it.

**Grant**-is free money that you get from the federal government (PellGrant), state government (Cal Grant) or your college. You get grants because your family is needy financially and you qualify academically and/or residentially; you do not have to pay the grant money back.

**Scholarship**-is free money that you get from your college or an outside agency because you have done something special--you have great grades, you have volunteered, you are talented in some way, you are an athlete, you are a member of a certain group, you want to pursue a certain career, etc. You can get scholarships directly from your college, or apply for them on your own. There will be scholarships available in the College Center through direct applications, books, and the internet. Lists of scholarships will be published every few weeks so that you will be aware of opportunities to apply. **You never need to pay any person or company to find scholarships for you!** There are many scam operators who prey on needy students. If you are unsure about a scholarship you have heard about, bring it to Mrs. Warman in the College Center to check if it is legitimate.

**College Work Study**-programs are jobs that are given to you by the college so that you may earn money while you are attending their campus. You may also choose to find your own jobs or keep jobs that you may already have.

**Loan**-is money that is loaned to you by the federal government or the college that you have to pay back. If taking out a student loan is the only way that you can go to college, take out a loan! **Your education is the best investment you can make for your future.** Most people do not hesitate to take out a loan for a car or a house, but may balk at taking out a loan for their future success.

Most of the money you will get for college you will get by filling out a FAFSA form between January 1 and March 2 of your senior year. Some private colleges may require you to fill out an additional form called the CSS Profile. You will also need to send in a Cal Grant GPA Verification Form which Mrs. Warman will give you before March 2. You will not be able to get grants, work study, or loans unless you fill out these forms on time.

In order to fill out the FAFSA, you need to have a social security number and be either a

US citizen or have an alien registration number. Mrs. Warman will visit your senior English, Government, or Economics classes and show you exactly how to fill out these forms. There will also be financial aid workshops to help you and your parents with the financial aid process. As you apply to each college, be aware of financial aid deadlines for each school. Some require that your FAFSA's be turned in before the March 2 deadline. If you need money, you have to ask for it on time!