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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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FAFSA opens Oct. 1 for students going to college in 2019-2020
Free application provides access to grants, loans and work-study funds for college

North Charleston, SC – The [Free Application for Federal Student Aid](#) (FAFSA) opened today for students who are planning to attend college in the 2019-2020 school year.

Filling out the FAFSA is the first step for students to access federal grants and loans as well as both state and institutional grants and scholarships. These funds can be used to pay for tuition and fees, room and board, books and supplies. The funding students access by completing the FAFSA is a pivotal part in many students' decision to attend college.

The deadline to submit the FAFSA is June 30, 2019; however, the FAFSA should be filled out as soon as possible on or after today at the official government site www.FAFSA.gov. Some funds are provided on a first come, first served basis, and many colleges and universities have their own deadlines prior to the federal deadline.

“The FAFSA is the only way to qualify for free federal cash for college that does not have to be paid back,” said Sarah Piwinski, Tri-County Cradle to Career Collaborative’s Director of Data Management and Analysis. “Unfortunately, many students in our region who hope to go to college miss out on their dreams because they don’t submit the FAFSA and are unable to pay for college.”

TCCC’s High School Graduation Network launched the College Cash Campaign to provide supports for tri-county high schools during the 2018-2019 school year. The goal of the campaign is to increase FAFSA completion and college enrollment rates in regional high schools. TCCC staff support will work alongside school guidance counselors, administrators and teachers to build a college-going culture, host financial aid literacy workshops and outreach events, and provide FAFSA completion and college application assistance.

“This project is working to ensure that all students who want to go to college take advantage of the financial resources available to them,” said Cathy Almquist, who serves as the co-convenor of TCCC’s High School Graduation Network and vice president for academic affairs at Trident Technical College. “Completing the FAFSA is an important first step in discovering what financial assistance is available. There are many financial aid resources to help pay for college – and many of these are not based on need – but nearly all require completion of the FAFSA. The sooner students and their families complete this important step the sooner they can begin planning for their college experience.”

~ more ~

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Students and parents with FAFSA-related questions should contact their school's guidance department, call the federal student aid toll-free hotline at 1-800-433-3243, visit TCCC's College Cash Campaign webpage at <http://tricountycradletocareer.org/college-cash-campaign/> or email TCCC's College Cash Campaign at CollegeCash@TriCountyCradleToCareer.org.

About Tri-County Cradle to Career Collaborative

Tri-County Cradle to Career Collaborative (TCCC) is a community-wide movement in Berkeley, Charleston and Dorchester counties, South Carolina, focused on improving the quality of life of its citizens and its workforce through education. Using data and focused community collaboration across a continuum from "cradle-to-career," TCCC serves as a catalyst for widespread, systemic change, with the ultimate goal of increased success and economic prosperity for all.

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