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Source: Massachusetts College Goal Sunday

Information on Financial Aid Still Lacking for Those Aspiring to Higher Education in Massachusetts, According to Massachusetts College Goal Sunday Survey

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2007 Massachusetts College Goal Sunday Bridges Information Gap on January 28, 2007 at 17 Locations Statewide

BOSTON, Nov. 27 /PRNewswire/ -- The organizers of Massachusetts College Goal Sunday, a free-to-the-public, charitable effort to bring families of college-bound students together with financial aid professionals from colleges and universities across Massachusetts, today released statistics based on more than 500 responses from the 2006 program attendees. The responses indicate there is still a significant gap to close in creating accessibility to financial aid information for those with college aspirations, especially among minority and lower income families, as well as adult students.

According to the results of the 2006 Massachusetts College Goal Sunday Student-Family Survey, the financial aid process remains a daunting one to navigate, and those who most need assistance do not have access to a network of experts in the process of obtaining financial support for higher education.

Additional survey data reveals that:

- * More than 95 percent of respondents acknowledged they need help completing the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA).
- * More than a third needed one-on-one assistance completing the FAFSA.
- * One in ten attendees was a non-traditional student, typically either an adult learner or GED-program student.
- * 78 percent of attendees were applying to four-year higher education programs.
- * Only 22 percent of attendees' parents had received a four-year college education, and 55 percent of attendees' parents have no college degree.
- * 67 percent of attendees' families earn \$60,000 or less in annual income.

"Nearly one million students who do not fill out the FAFSA would, in fact, be eligible for financial grants. Attracting these prospective students to organizations such as Massachusetts College Goal Sunday, and educating them to the process of obtaining financial support for higher education, is a critical mission for the Commonwealth to ensure that the best and brightest from all walks of life make a college education a priority," said Gail Holt, tri-chair, Massachusetts College Goal Sunday.

The third annual Massachusetts College Goal Sunday takes place on January 28, 2007, at 17 locations in Massachusetts. The Massachusetts College Goal Sunday mission is to:

- * Provide free on-site help to complete the FAFSA, the federally required form for seeking financial aid
- * Educate low-income and first-generation students that college is a viable option after high school
- * Increase the number and quality of FAFSAs filed in Massachusetts, and ultimately the amount of financial aid provided to the state's students

For more information about Massachusetts College Goal Sunday, please visit <http://www.masscollegegoalsunday.org/>. College Goal Sunday(TM) was founded in 1989 by the Indiana Student Financial Aid Association with funding from Lilly Endowment, Inc., and with supplemental support from Lumina Foundation for Education.

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Source: Massachusetts College Goal Sunday

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