



P. O. Box 419026

Rancho Cordova, CA 95741-9026

(916) 464-8271

[www.csac.ca.gov](http://www.csac.ca.gov)

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**CONTACT: PATTI COLSTON 916-208-3844**

**OCTOBER 1<sup>ST</sup> OPENS FINANCIAL AID APPLICATION SEASON IN CALIFORNIA**

*Join Stockton Mayor Michael Tubbs as we encourage high school seniors to complete a Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) or California Dream Act Application (CADAA)*

SACRAMENTO, CA (2019) - The City of Stockton is joining with the California Student Aid Commission to help build a cradle-to-career atmosphere that places focus on expanding equitable educational opportunity for students in the region.

On October 1, 2019 from 11:00am to 12:00pm at Stagg High School, 1621 Brookside Road, in Stockton, Principal Gary Phillips will welcome Stockton Mayor Michael Tubbs; Stockton Unified School District Board President Lange Luntao; Stockton Unified School District Superintendent John Deasy; Stockton Scholars Director Janae Aptaker; Stockton Scholar students; Executive Director Marlene Garcia, California Student Aid Commission; Executive Director Dr. Elisha Smith Arrillaga, Ed Trust West; and others, to mark the opening of financial aid application season in California.

“Last year we saw our college application rates go up, this year, we want to see these rates go even higher, along with more students applying for financial aid,” said mayor Michael Tubbs. “There should be no excuse for our students to not apply for free money for college. As Mayor, we are doing our part by making it a requirement for students to complete their FAFSA or CADAA before receiving any funding from our Stockton Scholars Initiative.”

“Access to financial aid is critical for low-income students who wish to pursue education beyond high school,” said Marlene Garcia, executive director of the California Student Aid Commission that administers all state financial aid. “in 2017-18, California invested more than \$82 million in Cal Grant financial aid awards to students in the San Joaquin Valley. Yet, fewer than half of eligible students applied; and, we also want all of our California Dream Act students to know that their personal information is protected; we encourage you to submit your Dream Act application.”

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"Just 54 percent of California's high school seniors completed a financial aid application in 2018, ranking the state 30<sup>th</sup> in the nation." According to Dr. Elisha Arrillaga, executive director of Ed Trust West. "A disproportionate number of those who do not complete a financial aid application are either low-income students or students of color due to a lack of knowledge about resources available to them."

The 2020-21 financial aid application season in California is from October 1, 2019 until March 2, 2020. For more information, please contact the Student Aid Commission at 1.888.224.7268 or visit [www.csac.ca.gov](http://www.csac.ca.gov) or [www.cash4college.org](http://www.cash4college.org) to locate a free financial aid application workshop near you.

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