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KENTUCKY HIGHER EDUCATION ASSISTANCE AUTHORITY

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**KHEAA awarded \$977,000 to increase 2024-2025 FAFSA applications this summer**

**FRANKFORT, Ky. (June 17, 2024)** — The Kentucky Higher Education Assistance Authority (KHEAA) has received a \$977,000 award to boost efforts for college-bound students planning to apply for federal financial aid this summer. The funds were awarded by the U.S. Department of Education, in partnership with Educational Credit Management Corporation (ECMC).

KHEAA will use the funds to expand its summer outreach services including a Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) training bootcamp for school counselors and college access providers and a stipend for college access partners hosting FAFSA tailgate events for recent high school graduates on their school campuses. Other initiatives will include , advertising and additional hours dedicated to one-on-one FAFSA support from its Outreach counselors.

“Our statewide outreach counselors can guide students and parents on how to submit the simplified FAFSA this summer,” said KHEAA Executive Director Jo Carole Ellis. “We appreciate the opportunity to expand our reach to Kentucky students who need additional support in this year of change,” she said.

The FAFSA is the form used by the federal government as well as some states and colleges to determine eligibility for grants, scholarships and loans. Last year, the U.S. Department of Education did a complete overhaul of the FAFSA application, streamlining the form to make the process much easier. Unfortunately, the new FAFSA also encountered some delays, impacting completion rates of college-bound students. To help address lagging completion rates, the Department, in partnership with ECMC, is deploying up to \$50 million in federal grant funding as part of their FAFSA Student Support Strategy.

“We are honored to partner with ECMC, a national nonprofit agency focused on student success much like KHEAA, to better serve our fellow Kentuckians,” Ellis said.

KHEAA urges students to file their FAFSA as soon as possible, as state financial aid is distributed on a first-come, first-served basis. You can begin applying at <https://studentaid.gov/>.

KHEAA Outreach will host summer FAFSA office hours each Wednesday in June statewide for students and parents. For a location and time near you, visit <https://kygoestocollege.com>. Anyone can text OUTREACH to 1-800-928-8926 for reminders and updates. Subscribers can text in with questions and receive a personalized response from a KHEAA outreach counselor.

KHEAA is the state agency that administers the merit-based Kentucky Educational Excellence Scholarship (KEES) program, as well as need-based grants and other programs to help students pay their higher education expenses. Kentucky Lottery funds pay for many of those programs. For more information about Kentucky scholarships and grants, visit <https://www.kheaa.com/web/scholarships-grants.faces>; write KHEAA at PO Box 798, Frankfort, KY 40602; or call 800-928-8926.

In addition, KHEAA administers the KY Saves 529 program, which allows families to save for college. For more information, visit <https://www.kysaves.com/home.html>.

KHEAA's sister agency, the Kentucky Higher Education Student Loan Corporation (KHESLC), is the Kentucky not-for-profit agency committed to offering students/borrowers with the lowest possible cost assistance in achieving their higher education dreams by offering the Advantage Education Loan program. For more information, visit <https://www.advantageeducationloan.com/>.

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