

Oregon Students to Benefit from Increased Student Aid

By Nihit Aurora

Students in Oregon will now be eligible for increased financial aid following the passage of new legislation by the Oregon State Legislature. The Oregon State Assistance Commission (OSAC) is responsible for disbursing student aid in the state of Oregon. Created by the Oregon legislature in 1959, the commission administers a range of state-funded and privately funded aid programs for the benefit of Oregon students interested in postsecondary education.

The commission emphasizes improving the standard of education in Oregon to enhance the value, integrity, and diversity of college programs throughout the state. The commission's main role is to develop and administer a variety of federal and state-based scholarships as well as a state-funded need-based program. OSAC also runs the ASPIRE program, which consists of volunteers who advise high school students on postsecondary education. It also provides assistance to unaccredited colleges and educational institutions in other states.

Recently, the Oregon legislature approved a \$109 million college financial aid plan for OSAC. This move may increase the amount of available student aid to more than twice the current amount. The bill has gone on to the state senate, where it is expected to be passed soon.

The increase, which is slated to be implemented in the fall of 2008, will increase the number of students who benefit from state-funded financial aid in Oregon. The funding will also cover provisions such as daycare costs for low-income parents who need to attend college.

Currently, more than 25,000 Oregon students are eligible for financial aid each year. The passage of this new legislation will mean that more than 32,000 students will be eligible for financial assistance from OSAC next year.