

Fall 2009

Sophomore Issue

www.leaf-ohio.org

LEAFLETS

The Lake/Geauga Educational Assistance Foundation



The Lake/Geauga Educational Assistance Foundation (LEAF) is a non-profit college access organization that helps parents/guardians and students in Lake and Geauga counties plan for postsecondary education. A LEAF advisor is at your student's high school to answer any questions you and your student may have about 2-year, 4-year, vocational or technical colleges. Please see our website at www.leaf-ohio.org for contact information and your LEAF Advisor's schedule.

Choosing a College That's Right for Your Student

- Make sure your student is challenged academically and involved in extracurricular and community activities.
- Start thinking about career choices. What does your student like to do? What is he/she good at? Check out the **Bureau of Labor and Statistics Career Information for Kids** at <http://www.bls.gov/k12/index.htm>.
- Once your student has identified an interest in a potential career (s), find out what type of education and training is required. Investigate trade and technical schools, two-year colleges, and four-year colleges. A good place to start is: www.ocis.org
(Username: LEAF; Password: ohiois03)
- Visit the Cleveland National College Fair at Cleveland State's Wolstein Center (5/2/2010); you and your student can pick up information and talk to college admission representatives.
- Whenever your family has the opportunity (family vacation, local visit), check out different college campuses. For in-depth information call the Admissions Office for an appointment. Consider: size (big or small), location (near or far from home), and setting (urban, rural, or suburban).

Financial Aid 101: What the Parent of a Sophomore Should Know

1. Financial aid may be **gift aid** (free money) in the form of scholarships or grants, OR **self-help aid**, like loans (which must be repaid) or employment opportunities (like work-study programs).
2. Financial aid comes from the federal government, the state government, colleges, and private organizations.
3. Some financial aid is **need-based**, meaning it is based on parents' income.
4. The **Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA)** is the application that most colleges use, along with the cost of the college, to determine a student's **financial need**. The FAFSA cannot be filled out until January of your student's senior year in high school.
5. Some financial aid is not based on need at all . . . it may be based on **merit** (grades, athletic ability, or special talent).
6. Not all **scholarships** are based on grades. Some are awarded for extracurricular activities, community service, college major, ethnic background, or other criteria.
7. Your LEAF advisor is available to answer all of your (and your student's) questions about financial aid.

Ways to Get Ahead of the Game

Sophomore year is an important time for making decisions about your student's educational future . . . choices your student needs to think about now for next year. Your student may choose vocational education, Post-Secondary Education Option (PSEO), or AP classes. Some of these options allow your student to start earning college credit, or the potential for college credit, while he/she is still in high school. Here are a few things to consider:

1. **Vocational Education/Tech Prep Programs:** If your student chooses to pursue vocational education at Auburn Career Center, Willoughby-Eastlake Tech Center, Ashtabula County JVS, Mayfield High School, or Mentor High School, he/she may opt for a tech prep program. Tech prep is a four-year program that begins in the junior year of high school and continues on to a two-year associate's degree at a partner college. Students can earn college credit for some of the work they do in high school if they attend a partner college and complete a predetermined number of college credits.
2. **Post-Secondary Education Option (PSEO):** PSEO students are high school juniors and seniors who take college courses at college campuses, fulfilling high school requirements at the same time as earning college credit. Students must meet certain GPA requirements and may have to take a placement test. See your high school guidance counselor for additional requirements. It's possible, through the PSEO program, to graduate with a high school di-

ploma and earn an associate's degree at the same time. The PSEO credits earned *may* transfer to another college, but the college makes the decision. You can find out about credit transfer at the Ohio Board of Regents website: <http://regents.ohio.gov/transfer/index.php>. And check out the Transfer Assurance Guide (TAG) at <http://www.transfer.org> to see what courses transfer to which colleges.

3. **AP (Advanced Placement) Courses:** AP courses are college-level classes that high school students take at their high schools. Check with your student's high school to see which AP courses are offered. In order to earn college credit, you must take an AP exam at the end of the course and score at a certain level. Each college (and sometimes college department) determines what score you need to earn in order to receive college credit.

COLLEGE TECH PREP IS IDEAL!

- If you appreciate real life educational experiences.
- If you have a clear interest in a specific technology.
- If you value learning by doing.



See Your Counselor

www.lakelandcc.edu/tech_prep

Current resident or:



Look forward into a student's junior year to see what should be done to prepare for a post-secondary education.

October 24, 2009 10:00 a.m.

Sophomore Session:

LEAF's Resource Center hosts a variety of informational presentations during the year. All presentations are free, but reservations are required. Contact the Resource Center at (440) 358-8045 to reserve a seat. See LEAF's website, www.leaf-ohio.org, for a complete listing of presentations.

Resource Center Sessions: Learn More!

If you have questions about college searches, admission requirements and procedures, or the financial aid process, your LEAF advisor can help. Check in your student's high school guidance office to make an appointment. LEAF also takes appointments throughout the year at our Resource Center, located in the Auburn Career Center Technology Learning Center in Concord. Please call the LEAF office for an appointment: (440) 358-8045.

See Your LEAF Advisor or Visit our Resource Center

- Explain the college admission process and help you find a school that's right for you
- Provide fee waivers for the ACT and SAT to students who qualify
- Give students and parents/guardians information about college savings plans
- Help you understand the financial aid process

LEAF Can . . .