

**PRESS
RELEASE**



MOBILE AREA EDUCATION FOUNDATION
www.maef.net | 251.476.0002

*"Bringing
the Public
Into
Public
Schools"*

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CONTACT: Chandra Scott | cscott@maef.net | O 251.476.0002 | C 251.508.7729

October 1st is First U Haf-ta FAFSA Day

Mobile County Commission declares October 1st as First U Haf-ta FAFSA Day

MOBILE, AL (September 28, 2018) – The Mobile Area Education Foundation (MAEF) is excited to announce that Mobile County Commissioners have declared **October 1st as First U Haf-ta FAFSA Day**. We encourage everyone to wear green on October 1st in recognition of Mobile County's First U Haf-ta FAFSA Day.

October 1, 2018 is an important date for any student dreaming of continuing their education beyond high school. Many students don't begin the college enrollment process because of financial barriers they're faced with. On October 1, 2018, students can begin to complete the Free Application for Federal Student Aid or what is known as the FAFSA. The FAFSA is required for any student seeking federal and state financial aid, including grants and loans in all colleges. Most Alabama students qualify for Pell Grants of up to \$6,095 per year; furthermore, Pell Grants do not have to be repaid.

According to Cash for College, Alabama students left **\$60 million** in grants on the table in 2017. As one of 25 cities (only city in Alabama) to receive funding for the FAFSA Completion Challenge grant from the National College Access Network, MAEF launched the Haf-ta FAFSA campaign as a strategy to increase FAFSA completion rates in Mobile County from 38.3 to 46.5 percent for the class of 2019 (ACCEL Day and Evening Academy, Mobile County Public School System and Chickasaw City School System).

"The launching of the Haf-ta FAFSA campaign across three K-12 districts is a significant act that's essential to increasing the number of students who enter a post-secondary pathway. The Mobile County Commission's support is not only vital to helping us achieve the overall goal of the 75,000 Degrees Initiative but is a catalyst to increasing awareness and bridging resources and talents that are essential to the success of our students", states Chandra Scott the Director of Strategic Outcomes for the Mobile Area Education Foundation. For Mobile to realize 75,000 degrees/credentials within our community by 2030, we must raise awareness on the importance of completing the FAFSA and implement strategies that support students and their families through the process.

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Mobile Area Education Foundation

The Mobile Area Education Foundation is a county-wide partnership of citizens, businesses, local public school systems, colleges and public agencies working together to ensure that all the children of Mobile County are given the opportunity to succeed. Its mission is to build community responsibility for improving public education outcomes in Mobile County. Visit, www.maef.net

75,000 Degrees Initiative

The Mobile Area Education Foundation was selected as one of 75 communities in the U.S. to receive a Lumina Foundation grant to design and support local efforts in improving college attainment rates. MAEF has facilitated the work of the Education Commission, Mobile's PreK-20 council to create a sense of urgency to double the number of post-secondary credentials and degrees by the year 2030 to our region's growing workforce needs. Through the use of data, commitment of shared resources and responsibility, and transparently reporting progress, the 75,000 Degrees Blueprint was developed.

This Blueprint is a post-secondary attainment agenda success plan which will guide the collective goal of doubling the number of Mobile citizens with degrees and credentials by 2030. The 75,000 Degrees Blueprint outlines Mobile's challenges, recommendations and measurable outcomes to students Getting READY, Getting IN and Getting THROUGH post-secondary pathways. The Blueprint also provides a Call to Action for all stakeholders to ensure the sustainability and success of this community reaching 75,000 Degrees. Visit, www.maef.net, for more information.

FAFSA Completion Challenge

NCAN has selected 25 U.S. cities to for the 2018-19 FAFSA Completion Challenge Grant. Through this project, generously funded by The Kresge Foundation and Great Lakes Higher Education Corporation & Affiliates, NCAN challenges each of the grant recipients to increase their FAFSA completion rates by at least 5 percentage points for the graduating high school class of 2019. In an effort to address equity gaps, this Challenge specifically focuses on cities with current FAFSA completion rates below the national average. Visit www.collegeaccess.org for more information. #haftaFAFSA