

# New Web site helps students seek aid

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INDIANAPOLIS (WISH) - If you are in college or on your way, March 10 is a date you'd better circle on your calendar. It's the deadline for applying for state financial aid.

Every year, thousands of Hoosiers miss out on free money because they miss the date. This year, the state is doing more to help families fill out the important form.

"There were 233 million of these that could have been used by students this past year, but they weren't," said Marilyn Moran-Townsend, Indiana Commission for Higher Education.

The Indiana Commission for Higher Education said at least 150,000 Indiana college students missed out on free money last year because they failed to apply for FAFSA which stands for free application for federal student aid.

"First of all, many do qualify who don't realize that they could," said Moran-Townsend.

Even students who don't qualify for free money still can get lower interest loans if they file FAFSA. To help, the state has put a how-to video on line. [Click here](#) to be taken directly to the site. The education commission is also starting what it calls FAFSA Friday on February 27. Experts will answer Hoosiers questions during a live chat.

At IUPUI, students seem grateful for help.

"Sometimes you just don't know the process," said Gloria Kwizera, IUPUI freshman.

"It gave me access to extra grants which I was able to apply towards school, so it lowered my overall costs for my education," said Pete Rust, IUPUI Sophomore.

IUPUI said it has been working very hard to get current students and incoming freshmen filed on time. Financial Aid Director Kathy Purvis said since 2004, the number of on-time filers has increased by 47%. But still, thousands miss out.

"It's the parents that we're trying to also reach to say "look, if you've not gotten assistance, we want to help both you and your student," said Purvis.

State schools expect enrollment to go up as the economy worsens. More students will be competing for the aid, but universities hope the stimulus package will make more money available.

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