



*USA Funds® is a nonprofit corporation that works to enhance postsecondary-education preparedness, access and success by providing and supporting financial and other valued services.*

# Education Partnerships

## **USA Funds' grants support Helpline, Hotline** *Indiana and Kansas families get immediate help with college and career questions*

**S**tudents and parents in Indiana and Kansas have access to enhanced education and career information through the Learn More Resource Center and Helpline in Indiana and the USA Funds Career and Education Hotline in Kansas.

USA Funds provides grants totaling approximately \$300,000 to the Learn More Resource Center to run both the Helpline and the Hotline.

"The Helpline and Hotline are invaluable tools for answering the special questions that students and parents have about careers and education," says Henry Fernandez, USA Funds executive director of scholarships, outreach and philanthropy.

Ten people — most of them Indiana University graduate students — staff the Helpline and Hotline phones from 8 a.m. to 7 p.m. Monday through Friday. Two people are answering calls at all times, and three to four answer calls during busy times. Two staff members are bilingual and can take calls in Spanish. During off hours, or if all lines are busy, callers can leave a voice-mail message and receive a return call within 24 hours or the next business day.

The staff handles more than 30,000 inquiries a year — 75 percent of them coming from phone calls and the rest from mail and e-mail. The

majority of callers are from Indiana, where the Helpline — (800) 992-2076 — has been in existence for 15 years. The Kansas hotline — (866) 897-8111 — started in September 2003 and logged about 150 calls in 2004. Additional promotional efforts are expected to increase calls to the Kansas hotline in 2005.

"Callers receive hands-on, personalized care," says Gail McDaniel, program director for the Learn More Resource Center at the Indiana University Bloomington campus. "We can help parents with anything that has to do with getting their children into college."

Questions range from the cost of specific colleges to requests for career profiles to education opportunities for specific careers, says Steve Meek, director of the Helpline.

"Some people know exactly what they want to do, and we can pull together a career profile for them showing the job outlook, starting salaries, education requirements

and more. We can refer people to publications that help them narrow their career interests, and we can create a list of schools in the state that offer specific degrees such as nursing," Meek says.

"We're a one-stop resource center. Even if we don't have the information, we'll research it and get back to the person," Meek says.



*Courtesy Learn More Resource Center*

**Learn More Resource Center staff each year answers 30,000 inquiries about college- and career-planning issues.**

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# Grants Awarded by USA Funds Oct. 1, 2004 – Dec. 31, 2004

## Hispanic Scholarship Fund *San Francisco*

**Project** Scholarships  
**Geographic Scope** National  
**Grant Amount** \$100,000

In support of its mission to double the rate of Hispanics earning college degrees, HSF provides college scholarships and educational-outreach support to the Latino community. USA Funds provides an annual donation to the HSF scholarship fund to provide financial assistance to college students.

## American Indian College Fund *Denver*

**Project** Scholarships  
**Geographic Scope** National  
**Grant Amount** \$100,000

The mission of AICF is to raise scholarship funds for American-Indian students at qualified tribal colleges and universities and to generate broad awareness of those institutions. USA Funds supports this effort through this annual donation to the AICF scholarship fund.

## United Negro College Fund *Fairfax, Va.*

**Project** Scholarships  
**Geographic Scope** National  
**Grant Amount** \$100,000

USA Funds' annual grant to UNCF's general scholarship fund provides financial aid to deserving students. UNCF provides operating funds and technology-enhancement services for 38 member Historically Black Colleges and Universities, and scholarships and internships for students at almost 1,000 institutions.

## Scholarship America *St. Peter, Minn.*

**Project** Dollars for Scholars Challenge Grants  
**Geographic Scope** National  
**Grant Amount** \$100,000

Scholarship America, the nation's largest private-sector scholarship and educational-support organization, received \$100,000 to provide matching funds to select Dollars for Scholars chapters. Dollars for Scholars is a national network of more than 1,210 grassroots community-based, volunteer-driven scholarship foundations in cities, towns and neighborhoods throughout the United States.

## DE-DC-MD Association of Student Financial Aid Administrators Inc. *Rosedale, Md.*

**Project** 2005 College Goal Sunday  
**Geographic Scope** Maryland  
**Grant Amount** \$70,000

USA Funds' grant covers expenses associated with College Goal Sunday 2005 in Maryland, Delaware and the District of Columbia. College Goal Sunday provides parents and students with volunteer assistance in completing the financial-aid form required for federal financial aid, as well as for many state and institutional student-aid programs.

## College Summit *Washington, D.C.*

**Project** College Summit in Arizona  
**Geographic Scope** Arizona  
**Grant Amount** \$50,000

Since 1993, College Summit has been nearly doubling the college-enrollment rates of low-income students. By strengthening high-school-advising systems, college-admission systems and the college-going culture, 79 percent of participants in College Summit enroll in college and earn more than \$28 million in scholarships. USA Funds' grant will establish College Summit in Arizona.

## Central Wyoming College *Riverton, Wyo.*

**Project** 2005 College Goal Sunday  
**Geographic Scope** Wyoming  
**Grant Amount** \$44,000

USA Funds sponsors College Goal Sunday 2005 in Wyoming. College Goal Sunday provides parents and students with assistance in completing the financial-aid form required for federal financial aid, as well as for many state and institutional student-aid programs.

## Kansas Association of Student Financial Aid Administrators *Kansas City, Kan.*

**Project** College Goal Sunday 2005  
**Geographic Scope** Kansas  
**Grant Amount** \$29,550

USA Funds sponsors College Goal Sunday 2005 in Kansas. College Goal Sunday provides parents and students with assistance in completing the financial-aid form required for federal financial aid, as well as for many state and institutional student-aid programs.

## Arizona Commission for Postsecondary Education *Phoenix*

**Project** 2005 College Goal Sunday  
**Geographic Scope** Arizona  
**Grant Amount** \$22,000

USA Funds sponsors College Goal Sunday 2005 in Arizona. College Goal Sunday provides parents and students with assistance in completing the financial-aid form required for federal financial aid, as well as for many state and institutional student-aid programs.

## Indiana Student Financial Aid Association *Indianapolis*

**Project** 2005 College Goal Sunday  
**Geographic Scope** Indiana  
**Grant Amount** \$20,000

USA Funds sponsors College Goal Sunday 2005 in Indiana. College Goal Sunday provides parents and students with assistance in completing the financial-aid form required for federal financial aid, as well as for many state and institutional student-aid programs.

## McDonald's Restaurants of Central Indiana *Indianapolis*

**Project** McDonald's Black History Makers of Tomorrow Scholarship Program  
**Geographic Scope** Indiana  
**Grant Amount** \$10,000

USA Funds' grant supports 10 scholarships of \$1,000 each to junior- and senior-high-school students who plan to pursue additional education after high school.

## American Indian College Fund *Denver*

**Project** 2004 Flame of Hope Gala  
**Geographic Scope** National  
**Grant Amount** \$5,000

USA Funds co-sponsored the 2004 Flame of Hope Gala in New York City to raise funds to support student scholarships at AICF's 34 member colleges.

## Indiana Dollars for Scholars *Carmel, Ind.*

**Project** Hoosier Heroes  
**Geographic Scope** Indiana  
**Grant Amount** \$3,500

This Indiana Dollars for Scholars initiative provides Indiana students an opportunity to identify Indiana citizens who have made significant contributions to society. Indiana junior- and senior-high-school students were invited to nominate their own Hoosier Heroes. From the nominations, 20 students will be selected to receive \$1,000 scholarships. USA Funds co-sponsors this program.

## Junior Achievement of Central Indiana Inc. *Indianapolis*

**Project** 2005 Junior Achievement Central Indiana Business Hall of Fame Dinner  
**Geographic Scope** Indiana  
**Grant Amount** \$2,500

USA Funds provided financial support for this event, which recognizes local business leaders from the past and present and supports the programs of Junior Achievement of Central Indiana to educate and inspire young people to value free enterprise, business and economics.

## Center for Leadership Development *Indianapolis*

**Project** 25th Annual Minority Businesses and Professional Achievers Recognition Awards Dinner  
**Geographic Scope** Indiana  
**Grant Amount** \$2,500

CLD fosters the educational advancement and personal development of African-American youth in Central Indiana. USA Funds co-sponsored this dinner, which honors individuals who have made significant contributions at their places of employment and who have performed outstanding service for the betterment of the community.

## United Negro College Fund *Indianapolis*

**Project** Evening of Stars Gala  
**Geographic Scope** National  
**Grant Amount** \$1,250

In addition to serving as corporate sponsor for the UNCF 2004 "An Evening of Stars" Gala in Indianapolis, USA Funds provided additional support above the sponsorship level for the annual fundraiser, which raised \$294,000 for UNCF.

## Wyoming Association of Student Financial Aid Administrators *Rock Springs, Wyo.*

**Project** WyASFAA Support-Staff Workshop  
**Geographic Scope** Wyoming  
**Grant Amount** \$1,155

USA Funds provided support for this WyASFAA workshop for financial-aid support staff from Wyoming postsecondary institutions.

## YMCA of Greater Indianapolis *Indianapolis*

**Project** 150th Anniversary Celebration Dinner  
**Geographic Scope** Indiana  
**Grant Amount** \$1,000

USA Funds supports the YMCA of Greater Indianapolis in celebration of 150 years of service to the Indianapolis community and its commitment to build strong kids, strong families and strong communities.

## Stacey Toran Foundation *Indianapolis*

**Project** Sixth Annual Stacey Toran Foundation Dinner and Reception  
**Geographic Scope** Indiana  
**Grant Amount** \$550

USA Funds' co-sponsorship of this event raised funds to provide seven scholarships for Indianapolis Public School students.

## Indianapolis Public Schools/Marion County Jail School *Indianapolis*

**Project** Paperback-Dictionary Purchase  
**Geographic Scope** Indiana  
**Grant Amount** \$500

USA Funds provided encouragement for students — ages 14-18 — at the IPS Marion County Jail School with the purchase of paperback dictionaries and books for student use.

## National Coalition of 100 Black Women Inc., Indianapolis *Indianapolis*

**Project** Gourmet Gents  
**Geographic Scope** Indiana  
**Grant Amount** \$400

USA Funds supported this event, which raised funds to support the Academy for Girls, a program that provides study sessions, college-readiness training, etiquette training, financial-management training and one-on-one mentoring for 20-25 Indianapolis Public School students each year.

# USA Funds' support helps Indiana Dollars for Scholars grow

Indiana students stand to gain more dollars for college as the state's Dollars for Scholars organization continues to grow.

The organization, which is supported in part by USA Funds, participated in its first-ever Easy Spirit Freedom Walk for Scholarship America in October and raised more than \$56,000 — more than half of it coming from USA Funds and its employees.

Dollars for Scholars is a program of Scholarship America, the nation's largest nonprofit, private-sector scholarship and educational-support organization. The organization has more than 1,200 Dollars for Scholars chapters nationwide, 105 of them in Indiana.

About 300 people participated in the 5K walk Oct. 9 in Indianapolis. In September and October, organizers conducted nine Easy Spirit Freedom Walks across the country, and Nancy Frick, executive director of Indiana Dollars for Scholars, says the turnout in Indianapolis was one of the largest. Twenty of the state's chapters and three of its collegiate partners participated in the walk.

More than 30 USA Funds employees and family members laced up their walking shoes and raised about \$10,500 in pledges and donations. The company contributed an additional \$25,000, including \$8,000 in scholarships awarded at the event, and matched employees' donations 3-to-1.

"USA Funds' incredibly generous support allowed us to go far beyond an ordinary walk," Frick says. "The students and participating chapters were able to benefit by raising large amounts — more than they bring in from their typical fund-raising efforts.

Plus, with USA Funds' sponsorship of the walk eliminating any expenses, every bit of the money they raised went back to their chapters for scholarships."

Frick says the state's Dollars for Scholars organization accomplishes its mission of expanding access to postsecondary education for Indiana students in two primary ways: by establishing and supporting new chapters, training volunteers and providing resource materials and fund-raising software, and by offering a curriculum called ScholarShop for students and parents to explore

careers and postsecondary-education opportunities.

Individual chapters sponsor fund-raising drives in their local communities and award scholarships to local students.

"Indiana is fortunate to have so many active Dollars for Scholars chapters to help raise funds and provide financial and academic support to students in their local communities. USA Funds is proud to support these

efforts," says Carl Dalstrom, USA Funds president and

CEO, chairman of the Indiana Dollars for Scholars board, and a member of Scholarship America's national advisory board.

Beyond scholarships, a growing number of Dollars for Scholars chapters offer a variety of academic-support programs connecting students and parents with resources in the community, such as mentoring and tutoring programs, and helping them to secure financial aid.

For more information about Indiana Dollars for Scholars, visit [www.indianadollarsforscholars.org](http://www.indianadollarsforscholars.org). ■



**USA Funds employees joined other walkers in the Easy Spirit Freedom Walk in Indianapolis to benefit Indiana Dollars for Scholars and Dollars for Scholars chapters throughout Indiana.**

*Courtesy Indiana Dollars for Scholars*



## Helpline, Hotline

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The Learn More Resource Center evolved last fall from the Indiana Career and Postsecondary Advancement Center and is funded by the Indiana Commission for Higher Education and through partnerships such as the one with USA Funds. The center has expanded its focus to include students from pre-kindergarten all the way through college, McDaniel says.

The Helpline is just one component of the Learn More Resource Center, which includes a new, comprehensive Web site, at [www.learnmoreindiana.org](http://www.learnmoreindiana.org), and expanded outreach materials

for parents, students and school counselors. *Aprenda Más en español* (Learn More in Spanish) also provides translations, materials and resources in Spanish.

Fernandez says the biggest benefit of the Learn More Resource Center for students and parents is the ability to get an immediate answer to questions. "If the information is not readily available, the student and family can get frustrated with the process of applying for college or financial aid, and they may not apply at all. Having immediate counseling available facilitates the whole process." ■

# Getting families into the 'starting gate' for higher education



By Henry Fernandez, USA Funds executive director, scholarships, outreach and philanthropy

Comedian and filmmaker Woody Allen once said that 80 percent of success comes from just showing up. When it comes to students' pursuit of higher education, many simply aren't "showing up" to qualify for financial aid to pay college expenses.

A recent report from the American Council on Education discloses that, during the 1999-2000 academic year, half of undergraduate students who were enrolled in postsecondary institutions that participate in federal student-aid programs failed to complete the Free Application for Federal Student Aid. The FAFSA is required to qualify for federal financial aid and many state and institutional sources of aid for higher education.

Approximately 1.7 million low- and moderate-income students were among those failing to file the FAFSA. The ACE report estimates that 850,000 of these students who failed to submit a FAFSA likely would have been eligible to receive Federal Pell grants.

These data make clear that there still is plenty of work to do to better inform lower-income families of the basics of financial-aid programs and the nuts and bolts of applying for student aid. Fortunately, there are successful programs that help these families navigate the financial-aid process.

Sixteen years ago, the Indiana Student Financial Aid Association and State Student Assistance Commission of Indiana, with funding from Indianapolis-based Lilly Endowment Inc., had the foresight to launch a program called College Goal Sunday. Simple in concept, the program sets aside two to three

hours on a Sunday — traditionally a week or two after Super Bowl Sunday — for volunteer financial-aid professionals to sit down with students and families and lead them through the completion of the FAFSA. In advance of College Goal Sunday, organizers undertake promotional efforts that target families in economically disadvantaged communities to encourage parents and their high-school seniors to attend College Goal Sunday.

Since its inception in Indiana, College Goal Sunday has been extended to other states, including Arizona, Hawaii, Kansas, Maryland and Wyoming. Nevada will conduct its first College Goal Sunday on Feb. 13. In each of these states, USA Funds is pleased to serve as a major funder of College Goal Sunday.

To date, a total of more than 100,000 low-income and first-generation college students have been assisted in qualifying for financial aid for higher education through College Goal Sunday. We applaud the financial-aid communities in the states that have adopted the program, and encourage other states to consider College Goal Sunday. In addition, we are encouraged that the National Association of Student Financial Aid Administrators has joined the College Goal Sunday partnership.

We concur with the ACE report that "no student should miss the opportunity for vital assistance because he or she lacks necessary information, is misinformed about the nature of student aid programs, or is unable to navigate the financial aid application process." College Goal Sunday helps students get into the starting gate so they can run the race toward opportunity and success. ■

## More information on the Web

### FAFSA on the Web

[www.fafsa.ed.gov](http://www.fafsa.ed.gov)

The U.S. Department of Education Web site for filing the FAFSA online.

### College Answer, Presented by USA Funds

[www.usafunds.collegeanswer.com/paying/content/pay\\_aid\\_fafsa.jsp](http://www.usafunds.collegeanswer.com/paying/content/pay_aid_fafsa.jsp)

Advice for completing the FAFSA, from a college-planning Web site.

### NASFAA's College Goal Sunday Site

[www.collegegoalsundayusa.org](http://www.collegegoalsundayusa.org)

Links to all state College Goal Sunday programs and resources for establishing a College Goal Sunday program in your state.

### American Council on Education Report

[www.acenet.edu/resources/HigherEdFacts/issue-briefs/2004FAFSA.pdf](http://www.acenet.edu/resources/HigherEdFacts/issue-briefs/2004FAFSA.pdf)

PDF version of the report "Missed Opportunities: Students Who Do Not Apply for Financial Aid."