

INNOVATIVE COLLEGE-PLANNING HELPS FPA MEMBERS PRESERVE CLIENTS' RETIREMENT SAVINGS

StudentAid.com finds the best college deals for families

SACRAMENTO, CA – OCT. 7, 2009 – To help its financial planners guide families toward smart college choices, the Financial Planning Association® (FPA®) today as part of its Financial Planning Week endorsed a breakthrough service by StudentAid.com that for the first time compares out-of-pocket costs and aid eligibility years before applying to colleges.

“FPA members can transform their college-planning practice by offering clients a way to gain early insight into their true out-of-pocket college costs and find colleges that fit the students’ needs while protecting the parents’ retirement savings,” said Craig V. Carroll, StudentAid.com founder and chief executive officer.

StudentAid.com’s personalized **College Cost & Planning Report™** is customized for the FPA and available to its members’ clients at special discount. The service is for families with students in any high school grade, adults seeking an undergraduate degree, and undergraduate college students transferring to another institution.

“FPA’s collaboration with StudentAid.com provides our members a way to enhance their service portfolio using a unique tool that helps them map out a family’s college-savings plan with greater accuracy during these difficult economic times of rising college costs and shrinking market values,” said Marv Tuttle, FPA executive director and chief executive officer. “We believe families will embrace StudentAid.com’s innovation because it lets them easily find affordable colleges and make the right choice for their future.”

Vice President Joe Biden’s *White House Task Force on Middle Income Families* shows that a public four-year college cost a middle-income family 16% of its after-tax income after receiving the typical aid award. Government-backed student loans have

skyrocketed this year 21% to a record \$95 billion, according to the U.S. Department of Education – the largest increase in history.

To help students find colleges that fit their career goals *and* the family financial plan, StudentAid.com created the **College Cost & Planning Report™** personalized for each student's academic and financial circumstances and the specific colleges they are interested in attending. Each report:

- Assesses an individual student's eligibility for in excess of \$100 billion of student aid
- Evaluates their out-of-pocket costs at more than 6,500 colleges
- Provides detailed comparative data on college choices

Clients of FPA members may use StudentAid.com's easy online, self-serve method for \$44 and receive a six-college comparison, or an advisor-assisted telephone service for \$89 for a 10-college comparison. FPA members' clients receive personalized reports with a letter from the FPA. FPA provides members with a co-branded Web site for clients to access the service www.fpa.studentaid.com.

FPA members may also offer clients the **College Cost & Planning Report™** as a gift certificate for the college-bound individuals in their lives as the **Gift of Smart College Planning™** for the same discounted prices.

StudentAid.com's college-planning service is also available to any college-bound students and families interested in evaluating colleges' cost, academic standards, and other important decision factors before they apply to colleges at the special discount price at www.fpa.studentaid.com.

To help students research colleges, StudentAid.com's Web site also offers a free peer-to-peer college suggestion service, the first of its kind. **College Suggestor™** uses the *actual* college choices and collective wisdom of more than 600,000 students to suggest colleges that may be of interest. A student simply enters the name of a college and can learn about additional colleges most commonly considered by other students who were also interested in the same college. Students can view profiles of the suggested colleges, access contact information, email college ideas to others, and select colleges to be compared by their **College Cost & Planning Report™**.

About StudentAid.com

StudentAid.com, Inc. provides the first personalized, side-by-side comparison of the net costs of college and student aid eligibility to help students and their families choose colleges that fit their career goals and bank account, years before applying.

StudentAid.com is a private company headquartered in Sacramento, CA.

www.studentaid.com

About the Financial Planning Association®

Based in Denver, Colo., the Financial Planning Association has 96 chapters throughout the country representing more than 25,000 members involved in all facets of providing financial planning services. FPA is the community that fosters the value of financial planning and advances the financial planning profession. For more information about FPA, visit <http://www.FPAnet.org> or call 800.322.4237.

##

Media Contacts:

Samantha Chernak

pr@fpanet.org

303-867-7190

800-322-4237, ext. 7190

Mary A. C. Fallon

mfallon@studentaid.com

916-629-7050 – work

916-832-7627 – mobile

www.studentaid.com