

IMMIGRANT STUDENTS CAN GO TO COLLEGE!

If you are an immigrant student, or know someone who is, you can go to college regardless of your immigration status. Effective since Fall 2001, Texas law HB 1403 enables immigrant students, including undocumented, to qualify as Texas residents and pay in-state tuition. This tuition is much lower than the tuition paid by international students. In August 2005, the state Congress approved a new law **SB 1528** that expands the benefits of HB 1403.

To qualify under **SB 1528**, a student must meet the following four provisions:

- (1) Graduate from a public or private high school, or receive a GED, in Texas;
- (2) Reside in Texas for at least the 3 years leading up to high school graduation or receiving a GED;
- (3) Reside in Texas for the 12 consecutive months right before the semester you are enrolling in college; and
- (4) Provide the institution an affidavit stating that you will file an application to become a U.S. permanent resident as soon as you are eligible to do so.

- Immigrant students who do not meet the requirements above but who have filed an **I-130** (family petition) or **I-140** (work petition) with immigration services (USCIS), and have received a **Notice of Action** as a response from the USCIS, are also eligible to receive in-state tuition if they have been here for at least 12 months.
- People holding work visas (H1-B) and their dependents (H-4) can now also receive in-state tuition at state universities. The same rule applies for NACARA and TPS applicants, among others.

§ Students who are classified as Texas residents under this law, also qualify for state financial aid!

If you have completed the recommended high school program, you can receive the *TEXAS Grant* and the *Texas Public Education Grant* (TPEG) at public universities. There are several other financial aid programs you may receive at a community college, technical college or at a private university: the *Texas Educational Opportunity Grant* (TEOG), *Texas Equalization Grant* (TEG), or the *College Access Loan* (CAL). To apply you will need to fill out the **TAFSA or FAFSA** (depending on the institution), even if you do not have a social security number, and submit it directly to the university/college that you are planning to attend. You can find the FAFSA in your high school counselor's office or in the financial aid offices of colleges or universities. The TASFA can be downloaded electronically in English or Spanish from the following web address: www.collegefortexans.com.

Lastly, did you know?

- ☛ Most universities in Texas offer academic scholarships to which any student, regardless of his/her immigration status, can apply. If an immigrant student is awarded one these scholarships, and the amount is at least \$1000 per year, he/she becomes eligible to pay in-state tuition.
- ☛ If you are in the top 10% of your graduating class, you will be offered automatic admission and, in some universities, you may automatically qualify for extra funds. Several universities also offer automatic admission if you are in the top 25% of your graduating class.
- ☛ Community and state technical colleges, such as the *Austin Community College* and the *Texas State Technical College (TSTC)* in Waco, offer admission to anybody that completes the application process and financial aid to enroll in short-term, technical and university transfer programs.

THERE IS NO EXCUSE! TAKE ADVANTAGE OF THESE OPPORTUNITIES TO CONTINUE YOUR EDUCATION!

For more information call Evangelina Orozco, Immigrant College Coordinator,
Office of Bilingual Ed/ESL, Austin ISD, 512-414-6427, or send an email to: eorozco@austinisd.org.