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## Paying for College Financial Aid, Admission Workshop Slated for IWU, Feb. 20

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## **Paying for College Financial Aid, Admission Workshop Slated for IWU, Feb. 20**

BLOOMINGTON, Ill.—Illinois Wesleyan University will be among 53 sites statewide next month, where parents and their children who are high school seniors can receive free assistance in making college plans, focusing on admission and financial aid.

IWU will host a workshop on how to complete the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) on Feb. 20 (Sunday) from 1 p.m.-4 p.m. in the Center for Natural Sciences, 201 E. Beecher St., Bloomington.

General questions will be answered at the workshop from 1-3 p.m. FAFSA forms will be filed electronically from 1-4 p.m.

Completing a FAFSA form is the first step in applying for student financial aid by college and university students.

By completing the FAFSA in February, students will meet financial aid deadlines at the colleges they are considering. Information from FAFSA is critical for colleges to package financial aid awards for students.

For the 11th consecutive year in Illinois, February has been earmarked as Financial Aid/Admission Awareness Month (FAAM). Students and their families statewide will take advantage of services through numerous free, public service FAAM activities.

Although many February activities are geared toward high school and college students, FAAM officials point out that it's also a great time to begin early college planning and awareness for younger students.

"For the first time," according to a FAAM news release, "FAFSA Completion workshops will be held statewide throughout the entire month of February. Financial aid professionals will be on hand at designated locations to assist families with completing the FAFSA and to answer related questions."

Families attending FAFSA workshops should bring:

- o 1999 tax information (parents' and students' 1040, 1040A and/or 1040 EZ Federal Tax Applications and W-2 forms).
- o Students' drivers' license and Social Security card.
- o Records of untaxed income (welfare, Social Security, AFDC or ADC, or veteran benefits).
- o Current bank statements.

- o Current mortgage information for properties other than the family's principal residence.
- o Records of business, farm (if not the family's principal place of residence), and assets (stocks, bonds, and other investments).

It's recommended that workshop attendees bring a calculator.

"February is often when families begin completing the financial aid forms for college and start narrowing down their college choices," said Larry Matejka, executive director of the Illinois Student Assistance Commission.

"FAAM," Matejka added, "provides invaluable resources and access to the best information to help get students and families focused."

The FAAM web site--[www.faam.org](http://www.faam.org)—already has received more than 10,000 "hits" since its launch last year. For 2000, the site has been designated to provide up-to-the-minute detailed information on each of the 53 FAFSA Completion Workshops, other FAAM activities, and information about topics related to college planning.

FAAM is a collaborative effort by the Illinois Association for College Admission Counseling (IACAC), the Illinois Association of Student Financial Aid Administrators (ILASFAA), Inc., the Illinois Student Assistance Commission (ISAC), and 20 lending institutions.

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