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## NEWS RELEASE

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

*Contact:* Heather Doe  
877-272-4456  
515-725-3417 direct  
515-975-6769 cell  
[heather.doe@iowa.gov](mailto:heather.doe@iowa.gov)

### **Iowa College Application Campaign Sees Record Year**

*Over 3,500 seniors at 78 Iowa high schools took advantage of in-school application program*

**Des Moines, IA, January 13, 2016** – The number of students participating in Iowa College Aid’s College Application Campaign, increased by 36 percent in 2015, continuing the growth of the agency’s four-year-old program designed to increase the number of first-generation students and students from low-income families pursuing college degrees or other higher education credentials. The first step in a statewide three-step process to keep students in the higher education pipeline, the Iowa College Application Campaign enables students who might not otherwise apply to college to explore all of their options and take advantage of help provided during the school day.

Iowa College Application Campaign events were held at 78 Iowa high schools throughout October 2015. Launched by a proclamation signed by Governor Terry Branstad declaring October as “College Application Month,” the program reached nearly 3,500 Iowa high school seniors and led to the completion of over 2,700 additional college applications.

“It is projected that by 2025, 68 percent of Iowa jobs will require education or training after high school,” explained Karen Misjak, Iowa College Aid Executive Director. “Reaching out to schools and providing support to encourage students to complete college applications is crucial to helping meet this need for an educated workforce.”

The results of a student survey given during college application events support the benefits of school participation. Of the 1,300 students who responded to the survey, 23 percent said that they would not have applied to college without the College Application Campaign events. Further, 72 percent of the students surveyed said that the events encouraged them to seek out more information about college.

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“One of the benefits of holding these events at schools is that they help to create college-going cultures,” said Misjak. “Not only do these events benefit the seniors who are applying to college, but it gets underclassmen thinking about college at an earlier stage, as well.”

The number of Iowa high schools participating in the Iowa College Application Campaign has steadily increased in the four years since Iowa College Aid started the program. The 78 Iowa high schools that participated in 2015 is an increase from 58 in 2014 and 33 in 2013. The Iowa College Application Campaign began as a pilot program in 2012 at 12 participating high schools.

For more information on the Iowa College Application Campaign, as well as the other programs that make up Iowa College Aid’s “3-Step Process,” please visit Iowa College Aid’s website at [www.iowacollegeaid.gov](http://www.iowacollegeaid.gov).

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***About the Iowa College Student Aid Commission***

*Iowa College Aid provides college access, financial literacy, and outreach services to Iowa’s students and families as they prepare, plan and pay for college. Iowa College Aid also administers state scholarship, grant, work study, and loan forgiveness programs totaling over \$70.0 million annually, conducts research and distributes higher education data, and offers Iowans assistance in obtaining student financial aid and college-related information. Through its role, Iowa College Aid also serves as the state-designated administrator of the U.S. Department of Education’s College Access Challenge Grant, which is designed to increase the college-going culture in Iowa. Additionally, Iowa College Aid is the administrator of the Federal GEAR-UP Grant, a multi-year state-wide grant which is being utilized to provide early awareness programming and outreach initiatives to thousands of Iowa’s students and families. More information is available at [www.IowaCollegeAid.gov](http://www.IowaCollegeAid.gov).*