

# STATE OF ILLINOIS

EXECUTIVE DEPARTMENT

## Proclamation

**WHEREAS**, Illinois has a goal of increasing the proportion of Illinois adults with a high-quality postsecondary credential to 60 percent by 2025; and,

**WHEREAS**, students and their families, particularly first-generation students, may not be aware of the financial aid available to them and can feel overwhelmed by the process of applying to college and for financial aid; and,

**WHEREAS**, providing students with college planning and financial aid counseling can help ensure all high school seniors have the opportunity to take critical steps toward continuing their education at a school that fits their needs and goals, minimizing student debt, and maximizing the chance for completing a degree or certificate program; and,

**WHEREAS**, the mission of the Illinois Student Assistance Commission (ISAC) is to help make college accessible and affordable for Illinois students, by providing free assistance with college planning and financial aid so Illinois students can better access financial aid and make more informed choices when choosing a postsecondary path; and,

**WHEREAS**, beginning this year, the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA®) will be available on October 1, 2016, (rather than January 1, 2017) to apply for aid for the 2017-18 academic year; ISAC is combining the activities of College Application Month (October) with Financial Aid Awareness Month (previously held in February) to create the first annual College Changes Everything® (CCE) Month during the month of October; and,

**WHEREAS**, ISAC and members of the agency's Illinois Student Assistance Corps (ISACorps) of near-peer mentors will partner with high schools, community organizations, and other agencies and associations to support and host free college application and financial aid workshops and events during CCE Month and will also provide one-on-one assistance to students and families; and,

**WHEREAS**, these free workshops and events will be presented in public venues across the State during CCE Month to assist Illinoisans in college and financial aid planning that will help them meet their educational and career goals;

**THEREFORE**, I, Bruce Rauner, Governor of the State of Illinois, do hereby proclaim October 2016 as **COLLEGE CHANGES EVERYTHING MONTH** in Illinois and encourage students and families to take full advantage of the financial aid and college planning resources available in their communities.

*In Witness Whereof, I have hereunto set my hand and caused the Great Seal of the State of Illinois to be affixed.*

*Done at the Capitol in the City of Springfield,*  
*this* TWENTY-SIXTH *day of* SEPTEMBER, *in*  
*the Year of Our Lord, two thousand and*  
SIXTEEN, *and of the State of Illinois,*  
*one hundred and* NINETY-EIGHTH.



*Deese White*

SECRETARY OF STATE

*Bruce Rauner*

GOVERNOR