ILLINOIS STUDENT ASSISTANCE COMMISSION STUDENT PORTAL TO RECEIVE

2016 DIGITAL GOVERNMENT ACHIEVEMENT AWARD

Free Online College Planning Tool Honored with National Award

CHICAGO – The **Illinois Student Assistance Commission** (ISAC), the state's college access and financial aid agency, will receive the **Center for Digital Government's** 2016 Digital Government Achievement Award (DGAA) for the **ISAC Student Portal**, a free online resource designed to help Illinois students with college and financial aid planning.

The DGAA awards honor city, county, and state innovative and citizen-centric websites and applications from all levels of government. The ISAC Student Portal won in the Government-to-Citizen State and Federal Government category, with four other winners in the category from Florida, New York, California, and the U.S. Department of Commerce. Winners were announced earlier this month and awards will be presented in New Orleans on September 30, 2016.

"It is a tremendous honor to receive this award," said Eric Zarnikow, executive director of ISAC. "Our vision was to create a solution that would offer free best in class external resources as well as agency-developed tools to give students and families across the state access to the tools they need to make more informed choices about college, financial aid, and careers. It is an ongoing collaborative effort with the agency and with our external partners, and we are thrilled to be recognized for it."

The web and mobile-optimized ISAC Student Portal has a host of tools to help students and families with college planning, financial aid, student loans and money management, and even careers and job search—all free and just a click away. Through the Portal, students can access ISAC's partner College Greenlight™, which offers robust college and scholarship search, and ISAC partner SALT Money™, which provides online money lessons, budgeting tools, and resources to help students manage student loan repayment. With Illinois workNet®, also available through the Portal, students can do career research, search for jobs, and build a resume.

The Portal also provides financial aid calculators, an internship/summer job board, and ISAC-developed tools such as an online game to learn about financial aid, a financial aid award letter comparison tool, a handy online college checklist, and a monthly blog for quick tips and important information on college planning and financial aid. Students can use the Portal to find in-person assistance from one of the local ISACorps college mentors in their area, or to find a college planning or financial aid workshop in their area. Illinois students who receive Monetary Award Program Grants can also use the Portal to check their MAP paid credit hours. Check out the ISAC Student Portal at isac.org/studentportal

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"The ISAC team created a big win for Illinois students with the ISAC Student Portal, and are a shining example of the new wave of innovation and collaboration at the state," said Hardik Bhatt, CIO of the State of Illinois and Secretary Designate of the Illinois Department of Innovation and Technology. "ISAC brought business and IT, as well as internal and external partners, together to increase access to some of the best available tools and resources for our citizens."

About ISAC
The mission of the Illinois Student Assistance Commission (ISAC) is to help make college accessible and affordable for students throughout Illinois. ISAC provides comprehensive, objective, and timely information on education and financial aid for students and their families--giving them access to the tools they need to make the educational choices that are right for them. Then, through the state scholarship and grant programs ISAC administers, ISAC can help students make those choices a reality.
www.isac.org

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