Collegebound Nebraska Makes College
More Affordable for More Nebraskans

Nov. 24, 2008 – Collegebound Nebraska – a newly expanded financial aid program at the University of Nebraska – is making a college education more affordable for thousands of Nebraska students, NU President James B. Milliken said today. Milliken and Gov. Dave Heineman spoke at assemblies at Lincoln Northstar, Omaha South and Grand Island Senior High Schools to encourage students to attend college and to talk about Collegebound Nebraska.

“Affordable access to a quality education is the university’s highest priority,” Milliken said. “The Collegebound Nebraska program makes a promise to Nebraska young people: If you are a Nebraska resident who meets admission requirements for the University of Nebraska, and if you are eligible for a Pell Grant, you can attend the University of Nebraska and pay NO TUITION.”

He added, “This fall, we have expanded Collegebound Nebraska, to make financial aid available to even more Nebraska families. Many families are caught in a situation of having too high an income to receive a Pell Grant but too low to consider college affordable. We have expanded the program to help meet that gap.” Eligibility for Collegebound Nebraska depends on a number of factors including family size and total assets, but as a general rule, Milliken said, a family of four with one student in college and an income of $45,000 or less will qualify for full tuition assistance.

“I applaud President J.B. Milliken and the University of Nebraska on expanding the financial assistance available to help more high school graduates attend college,” Gov. Heineman said. “Increasing Nebraska’s college enrollment is critical to the future success of today’s students and our continued economic growth as a state. This is a great way to provide meaningful assistance. The Collegebound program will ensure more Nebraska students have access to the tools they need to make higher education a reality, and that’s great news for our state.”

Collegebound Nebraska, formerly called the Tuition Assistance Program, was approved by the Board of Regents in 2004 and was first funded for the 2004-05 school year. Since then, more than $13.6 million has been provided to Nebraska students to help them pay their tuition on
one of the university’s four campuses. This year, almost 4,300 students are receiving Collegebound funds, including more than 220 who didn’t meet Pell eligibility but did qualify under the expanded program.

The university believes many more students could qualify. “Unfortunately, many Nebraskans who could benefit from the program have not been aware of it,” Milliken said. That’s why the university is launching a statewide information campaign over the next several months to tell students and their parents about ways to overcome barriers to attending college and to tell them that assistance – both from Collegebound and from other publicly and privately funded aid programs – is available. Among those is the Thompson Scholars Program, a program of the Susan Thompson Buffett Foundation that provides financial aid to students attending any Nebraska public college or university. Information can be found at http://www.buffettscholarships.org/scholarships.shtml.

To be eligible for Collegebound Nebraska, students must complete the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) by April 1 of the year in which they plan to enroll in college. It’s important to apply early as funds are allocated on a first-come, first-served basis. In Nebraska, the EducationQuest Foundation’s college planning offices will help students complete the FAFSA; help is also available online at www.fafsa.ed.gov. No additional application is necessary to be considered for Collegebound Nebraska assistance. Financial aid officers review the “Student Aid Report” sent to students who complete the FAFSA to determine their eligibility for Collegebound funding.

Materials on the program have been sent to all high schools in the state and are also available through campus admissions offices. A new website, www.collegeboundnebraska.com, offers additional information including:

- NU admission requirements: required courses, test scores and class rank
- Economic and social benefits of attending college
- Choosing a college
- Paying for college

The Collegebound Nebraska program supplements another NU initiative directed to 8th grade students and their families, encouraging students to take the right classes beginning in the 9th grade so that they will be academically prepared for college. It also supports Know How to Go Nebraska, a national initiative to help young people prepare and save for college.
Collegebound Nebraska Q&A

Q. What is Collegebound Nebraska?

A. Collegebound Nebraska is a University of Nebraska tuition assistance program that promises that any Nebraska resident who is eligible for a Federal Pell Grant and meets NU admission requirements can attend the University of Nebraska and pay no tuition as an undergraduate. This fall, the university expanded the program to include more Nebraska families – those whose income is just above Pell guidelines. There are a number of considerations for eligibility, but generally speaking, a student from a family of four with one student in college and a family income of $45,000 or less will qualify for full tuition coverage under Collegebound Nebraska.

Q. What if my family income is too high for Collegebound Nebraska? Is there assistance for me?

A. Yes. The University of Nebraska has many resources available to help students pay for college: other publicly and privately funded scholarships, work-study programs, grants and loans. Talk to an admissions counselor at any University of Nebraska campus for assistance. Since 2004, total University-funded need-based aid has increased 73% (excluding remissions) from $5.2 million in 2003-04 to $9 million in 2008-09.

Q. What is a Pell Grant?

A. The Pell Grant is a federal need-based financial aid program administered by the U.S. Department of Education. It provides financial support (which does not have to be repaid) to students who have not yet earned a bachelor’s degree. The maximum amount of the award for 2008-09 was $4,731; this amount changes from one year to the next depending on available funding. Individual awards are based on the recipient’s income and assets, status as a part-time or full-time student, and costs of attending college. Many state and private financial aid awards depend on the applicant having been awarded a Pell Grant.

Q. Can students receive aid all through college?

A. Yes. Students must reconfirm their Pell Grant eligibility every year, maintain a 2.5 grade point average and remain a full-time student (12 hours or more). If they meet these requirements, their tuition will be covered until they earn their first bachelor’s degree.
Q. How many students currently receive Collegebound Nebraska funding?

A. For the 2008-09 school year, about 4,300 students across the university’s four campuses are receiving assistance through Collegebound Nebraska (see attached chart). We hope to extend the program to more students next year by increasing awareness of the program among high school and community college students.

Q. How much aid are they receiving?

A. In addition to their Pell Grant and other scholarship funding, these students are receiving more than $3.5 million in assistance from the Collegebound Nebraska program. Since the tuition assistance program began in 2004-05, more than $13.6 million has been provided through the program.

Q. Is the program paid for with public funds or private funds?

A. To date, the program has been paid for with public funds. The university and the University of Nebraska Foundation are working to increase the amount of need-based aid available to Nebraska residents, from both public and private sources, with the objective of increasing Nebraska’s college-going rate, keeping more young people in the state, and building the state’s workforce to keep Nebraska competitive. We expect that as we expand the program it will have both public and private funding.

Q. How do you apply?

A. There is no separate application for Collegebound Nebraska, but students **must** complete the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) form by April 1 of the year in which they plan to enroll. The earlier students complete the FAFSA the better, as applications are treated on a first-come, first-served basis. Eligibility will be automatically determined through the campus offices of financial aid.

Q. What other initiatives are designed to help students prepare for college?

A. In Nebraska, several major initiatives include the EducationQuest Foundation, the Nebraska P-16 Initiative, the Thompson Scholars Program, KnowHow2GoNebraska, and the Building Bright Futures program.
## 2008-09 Collegebound Nebraska Funding (estimate)

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Cost of Attendance: Typical Undergraduate Costs without Financial Aid (2007-08)

Source: AASCU & NASULGC Voluntary System of Accountability www.collegeportraits.org

University of Nebraska-Lincoln

In-state tuition: $5,805  
Room & board (on-campus): $6,523  
Required fees: $1,131  
Books, transportation, other costs: $2,009  
TOTAL: $14,748

- 47% of FY2007 undergraduates at UNL received financial aid of some kind, including need-based loans, work study and non-need-based scholarships; 56% of first-time students received institutional aid/scholarships.
- 33% of all 2006 full-time undergraduates received need-based grants or scholarships; average award was $5,689

University of Nebraska at Omaha

In-state tuition: $4,643  
Room & board (on-campus): $6,810  
Required fees: $888  
Books, transportation, other costs: $3,190  
TOTAL: $15,531

- 81% of all 2006 undergraduates at UNO received financial aid of some kind, including need-based loans, work study and non-need-based scholarships; 29% of first-time students received institutional aid/scholarships.
- 30% of all 2006 full-time undergraduates received need-based grants or scholarships; average award was $2,236

University of Nebraska at Kearney

In-state tuition: $4,118  
Room & board (on-campus): $6,000  
Required fees: $903  
Books, transportation, other costs: $3,916  
TOTAL: $14,936

- 87% of all 2006 undergraduates at UNK received financial aid of some kind, including need-based loans, work study and non-need-based scholarships; 65% of first-time students received institutional aid/scholarships.
- 35% of all 2006 full-time undergraduates received need-based grants or scholarships; average award was $3,250
The red school desk is the graphic symbol of Collegebound Nebraska. It represents the basic message that there is a seat for you at the University of Nebraska, and we will help you find a way to get there.

JPG and EPS files of the chair and the logotype are available at [www.nebraska.edu](http://www.nebraska.edu) in the news release section (Collegebound Nebraska media kit)
Thompson Scholars at the University of Nebraska

Nebraska residents who are planning to attend a public college or university in Nebraska, or who are already enrolled and working toward a bachelor’s degree, are eligible to apply for a scholarship from the Susan Thompson Buffett Foundation. Scholarships are awarded on the basis of need and can be renewed for up to five years for students attending the University of Nebraska or a Nebraska state college, and for up to three years for students attending a Nebraska community college. Scholarships cover up to $3,200 per semester and provide a textbook allowance of $400 per semester.

Students who are selected for a Susan Thompson Buffett scholarship and who attend the University of Nebraska are called “Thompson Scholars.” They have the opportunity to live in learning communities and take a number of courses together. They are offered a range of workshops to enhance academic and social skills and can receive tutoring throughout their undergraduate education.

To receive a Thompson scholarship, students apply directly to the Susan Thompson Buffett Foundation. Before submitting an application, students must have already completed a federal financial aid application and received notice of their expected family contribution to their education.

Thompson Scholarships

- Application deadline: March 1
- Apply to: www.buffettscholarships.org
- Must have a 2.5 GPA throughout high school
- Must have applied for federal financial aid (FAFSA) and received notice of expected family contribution prior to March 1
- Must submit a transcript, two letters of reference and a personal letter with application
- Must register for at least 12 hours (if not working) or 9 hours (if working)
- Must remain in college and maintain a 2.0 GPA or higher to keep scholarship; grades must be submitted to the foundation
- May transfer from one public college or university to another, with advance notice to the foundation

Current Thompson Scholars on campus

UNK has 47 Thompson Scholars and 88 total students who have received funding from the Foundation. The 47 students are not all freshmen but are all new to UNK in 2008.

UNO has 78 Thompson Scholars, of whom 68 are freshmen. All are part of the TLC (Thompson Learning Community) program.

UNL has 113 Thompson Scholars who are freshmen; an additional 177 students who are sophomores or above are Buffett Scholars.