

The SallieMae Fund

MEDIA ADVISORY

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The Sallie Mae Fund’s Paying for College Bus Tour Visits Charlotte to Educate Families About Planning and Paying for College

*Tour to Increase Access to Higher Education for all Students
College Scholarships Awarded to Local Students, Charlotte Stop Part of 65-City Tour*

WHAT:

The likelihood that a 9th grader in the United States will enroll in college four years later is less than 40 percent, with students from low-income families and African-American and Hispanic students even less likely to do so. The Sallie Mae Fund’s Paying for College Bus Tour is working to reverse this trend as it visits Charlotte on Monday, November 5, to help educate students and parents about planning for and paying for higher education. This stop is part of a 65-city coast-to-coast tour and features workshops and counseling sessions offering hands-on access to information on scholarships, grants and federal aid. At two workshops at E.E. Waddell High School, students will have the opportunity to win a college scholarship ranging from \$250 to \$1,000.

Also featured will be national tour spokesperson Arnold Hernandez, who grew up in a migrant farm worker family picking apples and onions in the fields of Texas and Idaho. Determined to pursue a higher education, Arnold graduated from St. Edward’s University in Texas, and went on to work as a TV journalist in Austin before joining The Sallie Mae Fund as the bus tour’s national spokesperson. In addition to leading workshops, Arnold is available to speak to media about the Tour, the special issues and challenges faced by students in planning and paying for college, and about his experiences and education growing up in Texas.

National education partners in the tour include the Congressional Hispanic Caucus Institute, National Association for College Admission Counseling, National Council for Community and Education Partnerships, and Project GRAD USA.

WHY:

- The Sallie Mae Fund’s goal is to increase access to higher education for all of America’s students – in particular lower-income and minorities.
- During the early 2000s, underrepresented racial/ethnic groups accounted for approximately 32 percent of all public high school graduates in North Carolina. That proportion is projected to grow dramatically, reaching approximately 52 percent by 2013-14.

- Sallie Mae Fund research found that more than 90 percent of Latino and African-American parents believe college education is an important part of success in life, but 51 percent of Latino parents and 45 percent of African-American parents could not name a single source of financial aid.
- According to the U.S. Department of Education, of every 100 kindergarteners who are African-American, 87 will graduate from high school, but only 18 will achieve a bachelor's degree by age 29. College graduation rates for Hispanics are even lower. For every 100 Hispanic children entering kindergarten, 63 will graduate from high school and only 11 will obtain a bachelor's degree by the age of 29.
- The vast majority of high school students expect to earn at least a bachelor's degree. But less than a third of those students achieve their initial aspirations. The gap between expectations and attainment grew more than fourfold between 1980 and 2002, according to Education Week.
- According to the U.S. Department of Labor, jobs for those with bachelor's degrees grew by 1.8 million during the past 10 years compared to a loss of nearly 700,000 jobs for those with only a high school diploma.
- According to the U.S. Census Bureau, graduating from college pays lifelong dividends: college graduates earn over \$1 million more during their lifetimes than high school dropouts.

WHEN/
WHERE:

Monday, November 5

E.E Waddell High School

7030 Nations Ford Road

Charlotte, NC 28217

IN-SCHOOL WORKSHOPS (OPEN TO THE MEDIA / CLOSED TO THE PUBLIC)

A free 40-minute planning and paying for college workshop will be held for high school students.

A \$250 college scholarship will be awarded.

TIME: TBD 7:45 – 8:30 a.m. – Juniors and Seniors

9:15 – 10:45 a.m. – Freshman

1:15 – 2:00 p.m. - Sophomores

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PUBLIC WORKSHOP - AREA PARENTS AND STUDENTS ARE INVITED

(OPEN TO MEDIA)

6:00 - 7:00 p.m., dinner served

7:00 - 8:30 p.m., workshop

A free 90-minute planning and paying for college workshop will be held. This event is open to parents and students from the region. No reservation is required. More information is available at www.salliemaefund.org.

A \$1,000 college scholarship will be awarded.

WHO:

- Area students and families
- Arnold Hernandez, national spokesperson, The Sallie Mae Fund's Paying for College Bus Tour
- Communities in Schools
- Hispanic Scholarship Fund
- E.E. Waddell High School
- Local financial aid counselors

VISUALS/PHOTO OPPS:

- At each workshop, a local student winning a college scholarship
- Vibrant tour vehicle with colorful artwork on outside and interactive college counseling center inside
- National spokesperson Arnold Hernandez delivering interactive workshops and distributing financial aid resources
- Students working with financial aid counselors

Editor's Note: Tour spokesperson Arnold Hernandez is available in advance for media interviews. The Sallie Mae Fund Paying for College Bus Tour media kit, available at www.salliemaefund.org, offers photos of the tour bus, statistics on education, and video clips of past tours.

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The Sallie Mae Fund, a charitable organization sponsored by Sallie Mae, achieves its mission—to increase access to a postsecondary education for America's students—by supporting programs and initiatives that help open doors to higher education, prepare families for their investment, and bridge the gap when no one else can. For more information visit www.salliemaefund.org.