

The Sallie Mae Fund

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The Sallie Mae Fund Unveils New Interactive Tool to Help 15,000 African-American Families Prepare for College

Free CD-ROM Debuts at 2006 Congressional Black Caucus Annual Legislative Conference

WASHINGTON, D.C., Sept. 7, 2006 — A new, interactive resource created by The Sallie Mae Fund will help many more African-American students navigate the path to college this year. Officially unveiled today to coincide with the 2006 Congressional Black Caucus (CBC) Annual Legislative Conference, “The Key: An Interactive Guide to Planning and Paying for College” provides free guidance for African-American students in the format of a CD-ROM. The Sallie Mae Fund is making 15,000 free copies of the CD-ROM available to African-American students.

“The African-American community has all the promise in the world and for many a college education is within reach,” said Leslie Meek, chair of the CBC Spouses. “This new interactive tool created by The Sallie Mae Fund will really go a long way in helping African-American families successfully prepare for college.” The CD-ROM was presented to Mrs. Meek and members of the CBC and their spouses at the CBC Spouses Essay Contest and Issue Forum, exclusively sponsored by The Sallie Mae Fund.

The CD-ROM contains a wealth of information on college preparation, including a section on test preparation, a research tool to learn about Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs), tutorials on essay writing and college applications, free access to SAT and ACT online preparation, as well as financial aid options and tips. In addition, it features celebrities including actress and talk-show host Ananda Lewis, *Grey’s Anatomy* actor Isaiah Washington and Olympic gymnast Dominique Dawes.

The Sallie Mae Fund, a charitable organization sponsored by Sallie Mae, developed the CD-ROM after hearing from HBCU administrators that African-American students and their parents needed a resource to help with their college preparation. The CD-ROM is a part of The Sallie Mae Fund’s multi-faceted African-American College Access Initiative, launched in October 2005 to improve access to higher education among African-American students. The Sallie Mae Fund found that more than 90 percent of African-American families believe that a college education is an important part of success in life, but 25 percent of African-American students could not name a single source of financial aid.

“A core mission of The Sallie Mae Fund is helping minorities realize their dreams of a college education,” said Kathleen deLaski, president, The Sallie Mae Fund. “We hope this new interactive resource will help parents and students feel more confident about the application process.”

More information about The Sallie Mae Fund’s African-American programs can be found at www.salliemae.org.

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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.

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