

New College Navigator Now Online

Since its creation in 2001, the Department of Education College Opportunities Online (COOL) Web site has helped hundreds of thousands of students and families learn about colleges and universities. Now, COOL's successor, called College Navigator and located at <http://collegenavigator.ed.gov>, offers consumers even more information in an easy-to-use format.

College Navigator is a free consumer information tool designed to help students, parents, high school counselors and others get information about nearly 7,000 post-secondary institutions in the United States. It offers a wide range of information previously found on COOL – such as programs offered, retention and graduation rates, prices, aid available, degrees awarded, campus safety and accreditation.

College Navigator, however, offers users valuable new information about colleges and universities, and it does so in a way that is vastly more user-friendly. Users can now:

- Search by programs offered, degrees offered, institution type, price, selectivity, distance from home, school size, institutional mission (historically black colleges and universities, single-sex), extended

learning opportunities for adults (weekend and evening degree programs) and intercollegiate athletics programs offered

- Modify or change their search from anywhere within the Web site
- Use a simple and intuitive way of selecting keywords to search among programs at a general level (communications, journalism, and related programs), drill down through a menu to a moderate level of detail, and identify highly specific courses of study (health communication)
- Make comparisons of up to four institutions in one view and maintain a list of favorite institutions from different searches
- Save their sessions and receive an e-mail with a link taking them back to where they left off
- Export search results to easily used formats, such as Excel

The College Navigator was developed by the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) within the Institute of Education Sciences. NCES plans continuing improvements in the content and function of the site, and there are plans for a Spanish version in coming months.

Visit College Navigator at <http://collegenavigator.ed.gov>.

Library of Congress Will Sponsor National Reading and Writing Contest

State and National Winners Will Be Selected
National Winners Will Earn a \$10,000 Reading Promotion Grant for Their Library

Have you ever read a book that changed your life? Has some author's words touched you in such a personal way, altering how you view your world or yourself? If so, the Library of Congress wants to hear all about it!

Letters About Literature is a national reading and writing promotion program for readers in grades 4 through 12, sponsored by the Center for the Book in the Library of Congress in partnership with Target. To enter, readers write a personal letter to an author explaining how his or her work changed their view of the world or themselves.

To obtain the guidelines and required entry form, ask your teacher or librarian, or download it from the Letters About Literature Web site at www.oregon.gov/OSL/LD/youthsvcs/aboutlit.shtml. **The deadline for entries is Dec. 14, 2007.**

Judges representing the Oregon Center for the Book will select one winner, one runner-up, and honorable mentions at each competition level – Level I for readers in grades 4 through 6, Level II for grades 7 and 8, and Level III for grades 9 through 12.

Entries in each state will be assessed on three criteria: content, use of language skills (exposition), and style and originality of expression (voice).

The three Oregon winners will receive a \$50 Target GiftCard and \$100 in cash. They then will advance to the national competition.

A panel of judges for the Center for the Book in the Library of Congress will then select six national winners (two per competition level) and 12 national runners-up (four per competition level).

Each national winner will receive a \$500 Target GiftCard. In addition, they will win a Reading Promotion Grant of \$10,000 for their school or community library. National winners will be instrumental in deciding how the library funds will be spent.

The 12 national runners-up will win a \$100 Target GiftCard, plus they will win a Reading Promotion Grant of \$1,000 for their school or community library.

The Oregon Center for the Book, Oregon Reading Association, Oregon Association of School Librarians and the Oregon Library Association's Children's Services Division and Young Adult Network cosponsor Letters About Literature at the state level.

These organizations strive to provide experiences that encourage youth to develop lifelong reading habits. Through their support, more Oregon students know about and participate in Letters About Literature, and these groups provide the winners, runners-up, honorable mentions and semi-finalists with recognition for their reading and writing achievements.

Target sponsors Letters About Literature as part of its commitment to supporting education and early childhood reading. Target recognizes the integral role reading plays in shaping a child's future because reading is the foundation for lifelong learning and success.

Since opening its doors, Target has given 5 percent of its income to organizations that support education, the arts and safe families and communities. Today that translates to \$3 million every week.

The Center for the Book was established in 1977 as a public-private partnership to use the resources of the Library of Congress to stimulate public interest in books and reading. For information about its activities and national reading promotion networks, visit www.loc.gov/cfbook.

OSAC Scholarships

OSAC is again offering the "Early Bird Scholarship." Applicants who submit their completed applications by Feb. 15, 2008, are entered into drawings for multiple \$500 awards. These awards are grouped by a variety of college populations and GPA ranges to ensure all students have a chance at being selected.

OSAC partners with numerous private donors, foundations and banks to administer more than 370 private scholarship programs for Oregon students. It also manages the Oregon Opportunity Grant and other financial aid programs for specific student populations.

For more information, OSAC can be reached at 1-800-452-8807, ext. 7395, or www.GetCollegeFunds.org.

NMAI Internship – Spring Program

Nov. 20 is the deadline for the NMAI Internship – Spring Program, a learning opportunity for undergraduate or graduate students in museum practice, program development,

guided work and research using Smithsonian/NMAI resources. 3.0 GPA required.

For more information, contact Intern Coordinator at 301-238-1541 or NMAI interns@si.edu; www.nmai.si.edu.

State's Problem Gambling Program Introduces Electronic Messaging

For growing numbers of people, picking up the telephone is so yesterday.

Responding to that fact, the state of Oregon's Problem Gambling Services program has introduced e-mail, instant messaging and live chat to its popular telephone helpline.

"We see this as a way to reach people who aren't comfortable seeking help by phone and we expect it to be especially popular with younger, Internet-savvy people who don't often come into treatment for gambling issues," said Bob Nikkel, Oregon Department of Human Services assistant director for addictions and mental health. "This is an excellent addition to a problem gambling program already recognized as among the nation's best."

Oregon is one of a handful of jurisdictions worldwide that can invite

people to communicate electronically with treatment counselors, Nikkel said.

Like people who call the toll-free phone line, those who contact the program electronically will communicate with qualified counselors trained in helping people with gambling addictions. People can send e-mail and instant messages or call the helpline at any time or, for live chat with a counselor, can call weekdays from 9 a.m. to 9 p.m.

As with calling the helpline, using electronic communication is confidential. Encrypted software protects personal information that is shared electronically.

To connect, people can go to the Web site www.1877mylimit.org. From there, they can send an e-mail message or click on an icon to initiate live chat. People also can send an instant message using AOL, ICQ, Google, MSN or Yahoo services.

Services are available in both English and Spanish.

Nikkel said the program expects inquiries such as what level of gambling constitutes a problem, where and when local Gamblers Anonymous meetings are held, what happens in treatment, and how and where to enroll.

The state's problem-gambling program, operated by DHS as part of its addiction prevention and treatment services, is paid for by 1 percent of Oregon Lottery revenues. Problem-gambling treatment is free, confidential and has been shown to be effective.

For traditionalists who still prefer to use the 24-hour telephone helpline, the toll-free phone number is 1-877-695-4648 (MY LIMIT). More than 4,000 people call the helpline annually.