



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Media Contact:

Tara Deering-Hansen
Corporate Communications Manager
(515) 273-7375
tdeering-hansen@studentloan.org

Education Leaders Partner to Promote Financial Literacy in Iowa
*Cash Prizes Encourage High School Participation in
National Financial Capability Challenge*

WEST DES MOINES, IOWA (Feb. 8, 2012) — A partnership of educational organizations is providing new incentive for Iowa high school educators to teach financial know-how and for students to demonstrate their ability to make informed financial decisions.

Iowa Student Loan®, in partnership with the Iowa Department of Education, Iowa Jump\$tart, Junior Achievement of Central Iowa and the Iowa College Access Network, is offering a cash drawing for Iowa high schools whose students score well in the National Financial Capability Challenge.

About the Challenge

The National Financial Capability Challenge is sponsored by the U.S. Department of the Treasury in partnership with the U.S. Department of Education to encourage educators to teach high school students about the basics of personal finance.

The Challenge aims to help high school students take control of their financial futures by recognizing educators who teach financial knowledge and skills to their students. Teachers may download ready-to-use lesson plans or use their own curriculum to prepare students for a 30-minute online exam. Participating educators may administer the test any time between March 12 and April 13.

Betsy Ratashak, family and consumer sciences instructor at Gilbert High School, said last year's Challenge provided a great opportunity for her students to demonstrate their

knowledge of consumer economic principles. “We have participated in the Challenge twice, and students were proud of their ability to perform well on a standards-based national exam,” she said. “It provided evidence of educational effectiveness to students, parents and administrators alike.”

Bob Mantell, financial literacy director at Treynor High School, agreed. “The Challenge has proven to be a very effective tool that fits well within our financial literacy program at Treynor Community Schools,” he said. “Last year, 102 of our students participated with 27 scoring in the top 20%.”

About the Drawing

Iowa high schools with at least one student scoring in the top 20% nationally will be entered in a drawing for a chance to win one of 30 cash prizes of \$1,000 each: \$500 for the school’s financial literacy programs and \$500 for its scholarship fund.

The cash drawing is intended to promote participation in the National Financial Capability Challenge, according to Steve McCullough, Iowa Student Loan president and CEO. “Financial literacy is integral to Iowa Student Loan’s mission to help students succeed,” he said. “We support the Challenge because it’s a simple way for schools to improve their financial literacy efforts or to gain recognition for the effectiveness of existing programs.”

Students must authorize the release of their scores when taking the online test for their school to be eligible for the drawing, which will occur on or before June 30.

Other Efforts

In addition to the \$30,000 in cash awards, Iowa Student Loan and its partners are providing information about the Challenge to Iowa high schools through fliers, emails and social media.

Learn More

The U.S. Department of the Treasury offers information about the National Financial Capability Challenge on its website at www.challenge.treas.gov. For more information on the cash drawing, contact Matt Brown at Iowa Student Loan at (800) 243-7552, ext. 7656, or mbrown@studentloan.org.

###

About Iowa Student Loan

Since 1981, Iowa Student Loan, a private, nonprofit organization, has helped Iowa students and families obtain the resources necessary to succeed in postsecondary education. Iowa Student Loan has helped more than 375,000 students pay for college. The organization, based in West Des Moines, Iowa, also provides an array of borrower benefits, financial literacy tools and community reinvestment programs, including support for free college planning services for students and their families. For more information about Iowa Student Loan, visit www.studentloan.org.