



Chabot – Las Positas Community College District partners with Higher One to speed distribution of financial aid payments

Five institutions of higher education in California currently distributing financial aid payments through Higher One

New Haven, CT – September 18, 2008 - Higher One, a financial services and payment company focused exclusively on higher education, announced today the Chabot – Las Positas Community College District has selected Higher One’s OneDisburse® Refund Management® to issue financial aid payments electronically to the district’s 12,000 financial aid applicants.

The District, comprised of Chabot College and Las Positas College, was looking for a way to streamline financial aid payments to students. Until now, the District simply distributed paper checks. However this process was laborious for the front line staff and expensive for the two Colleges. To make matters worse students had to endure a lengthy wait for their checks to arrive.

“We wanted to cut down the amount of time we spent on this process,” explained Andi Schreibman, Financial Aid Officer, Las Positas College. “By allowing Higher One to handle this function for us, the business office staff is no longer tied up with printing checks, stuffing envelopes and distributing them to students.”

Electronic disbursement of these funds, an emerging trend in higher education, seemed to be the next logical step. It offered a way to streamline the process and decrease the amount of wait time students experienced with each disbursement.

Earlier this year, the Department of Education made changes to the regulations pertaining to the disbursement of Title IV funds. The new regulations support electronic refund delivery as an excellent way to cut costs and improve student services.

“We considered offering students the option to have their financial aid payments sent via Automated Clearing House (ACH) to their current bank accounts,” said Kathryn Linzmeyer, Director of Financial Aid at Chabot College. “However we did not want to offer it in-house or have to constantly monitor student banking information. Another concern was devoting our limited resources towards keeping track of closed bank accounts and bounced ACH payments. Finally, many of our students do not have checking or savings accounts, so it would have been only a partial solution.”

The decision to partner with Higher One originated from the desire to improve student services. With Higher One’s OneDisburse Refund Management, students have multiple ways to receive their refunds including two electronic methods; direct deposit to the OneAccount, a no minimum balance, no monthly fee, FDIC-Insured checking account provided by Higher One, or via ACH transfer to a bank account of the student’s choice. Students also have the ability to have a paper check mailed to an address on file.

“We wanted to facilitate faster delivery of financial aid payments to our students and provide them with the ability to choose the method that works best for them,” said Linzmeyer.

The Chabot – Las Positas Community College District will begin issuing financial aid payments through Higher One this fall.

“We are providing students with an opportunity to receive their financial aid payments in a much shorter period of time,” stated Schreiber. “In addition, we are empowering students by providing an opportunity for self service. They can go online and check the status of their financial aid payment 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Students can also receive updates via text message regarding their refund status or their account balance.”

The initiative to improve student services comes at a difficult time for institutions of higher education in California amid significant budget cuts in the state and record enrollment due to the struggling economy.

“At Las Positas, we have observed a 16% increase in enrollment this summer and a nearly 40% increase in financial aid applicants,” said Schreiber. “With Higher One’s service, we do not need to worry about scrambling to add staff to handle the distribution of financial aid payments to students. We think this program will have a positive impact on both the Chabot – Las Positas Community College District and the students.”

About The Chabot-Las Positas Community College District:

The Chabot-Las Positas Community College District includes Chabot College in Hayward and Las Positas College in Livermore. The district offers higher education opportunities to the residents of Union City, Hayward, San Leandro, San Lorenzo, Castro Valley, Pleasanton, Dublin, Sunol and Livermore.

About Higher One:

Founded in 2000, Higher One provides higher education institutions and their students with efficient, convenient and easy-to-use solutions to handle financial disbursements. These include: student refunds, on-campus and community purchases, payroll and employee expenses, as well as the collection of payments from students, parents, and sponsors. Higher One offers a suite of online banking services including the OneAccount, an FDIC-Insured checking account, OneCard, a Debit MasterCard® and OnePay, a service that allows electronic collection of tuition and fee payments. Higher One was recently ranked # 12 on Entrepreneur Magazine’s 2008 Hot 100 List. Higher One is based in New Haven, CT.

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