

Financial Aid, an Important Part of Student Life

Gabriella Barber, staff writer

Across the PVCC campus, students can see flyers that read “FAFSA” across them. The school has put effort into catching the eyes of students, but why? For one, this month is financial aid awareness month. Secondly, in order for a student to get financial aid, it is imperative that a student fill out the FAFSA first.

According to PVCC assistant director of financial aid Nathaniel Riddle, it is very common for students not to fill out the FAFSA for various reasons. One reason that Riddle mentioned was parents. Many students have trouble with getting their parents to fill out their part of the FAFSA. However, this can be helped through students meeting with advisers. Riddle mentioned that there may be a way to override the system for certain situations having to do with parents not being able or willing to help with filling out the FAFSA. It is important to meet with financial aid if you are having these problems because the youngest that a student can be considered independent without being married is 24, so finding solutions without a parent's help can be difficult and has to be managed by advisers with experience.

The process of filling out the FAFSA “typically takes 30 minutes,” according to Riddle. This can vary depending on how much information a student is able to initially fill out.

The FAFSA can be saved and returned to later, but it is important to fill it out as soon as possible. This means not to wait until the week before the semester you are hoping to use financial aid on. For directions on filling out the FAFSA, the PVCC website offers step-by-step directions. On top of that, the FAFSA itself contains a helpful function called the “Data Retrieval Tool” which allows the FAFSA to pull tax information from the IRS on a student, or parents. The financial aid office at PVCC typically will receive a finished FAFSA application within 1-2 business days after it is finished and sent in, after that they then begin the process of helping the student find grants,

scholarships, and loans that are available to them.

For those who would like to fill out the FAFSA, PVCC’s financial aid office can be found in room M132 from the hours of 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. (Wednesdays 9:30 a.m. to 7 p.m.). The financial aid office is also doing FAFSA workshops at the end of the month on Feb. 22 from 8-10 a.m., Feb. 23 from 5-7 p.m., and Feb. 24 from 12-2 p.m. in room 155. These workshops are in honor of Financial Aid awareness month, and with 4,738 FAFSA already submitted as of Jan. 31, the Financial aid department is excited to help more students fill out their FAFSA and receive financial aid.

ENTER A RAFFLE
**AND WIN
PRIZES!**

PVCC
PIEDMONT VIRGINIA
COMMUNITY COLLEGE

**LAPTOPS ARE
AVAILABLE
FOR STUDENTS**

**GET
HELP
WITH THE
FAFSA**

**FEBRUARY
WORKSHOP
DATES** **22 23 24** **ROOM 155**
8-10AM 5-7PM 12-2PM