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More students eligible for “HOPE” as entering freshman *GSFC completes final GPA calculations*

ATLANTA – Over one month ahead of last year’s schedule, the Georgia Student Finance Commission (GSFC) has completed the final grade point average calculations to determine HOPE eligibility for thousands of Georgia students. Out of 655 high schools and an estimated 90,346 graduating seniors, 36,502 are HOPE eligible, a 5.3% increase over last year.

“We are excited that more students will receive the HOPE Scholarship this year,” said Tim Connell, President of the Georgia Student Finance Commission. “It is a great benefit to those pursuing post-secondary education. In addition, much credit goes to the Georgia high schools for submitting and verifying the transcript data in a timely manner on behalf of their students for the purpose of determining grade eligibility for HOPE.”

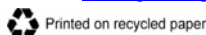
The HOPE Scholarship is available to Georgia residents who have demonstrated academic achievement throughout high school and/or while in college. The scholarship provides funds to address many of the costs associated with tuition, fees, and books for students who are pursuing an associate or bachelor's degree in Georgia's colleges and universities. Recipients must demonstrate academic achievement by earning and maintaining a 3.0 grade point average. The award at public institutions covers tuition, HOPE-approved mandatory fees, and a book allowance. If enrolling in a Georgia private college, the student may be eligible for a \$3,500 per academic year scholarship for full-time study or \$1,750 for half-time study (6-11 hours).

To receive HOPE Scholarship funding, students must: graduate from an eligible high school with a "B" average, or have earned at least a 3.0 grade point average at the college level at specific credit-hour checkpoints; be enrolled as a degree-seeking student at an eligible public or private college or university or technical college in Georgia; meet HOPE's Georgia residency requirements; meet

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HOPE's U.S. citizenship or eligible non-citizen requirements; be in compliance with Selective Service registration requirements; be in compliance with the Georgia Drug-Free Postsecondary Education Act of 1990; not be in default or owe a refund on a student financial aid program; and maintain satisfactory academic progress as defined by the college.

Since the HOPE Program began in 1993, over \$4.1 billion in HOPE funds have been awarded to more than 1.3 million students attending Georgia's colleges, universities, and technical colleges. For more information on the HOPE Program and other State funded scholarships and grants, visit www.GAcollge411.org.

About Georgia Student Finance Commission

Since 1965 the Georgia Student Finance Commission (GSFC) has provided more than \$9 billion in financial aid to help nearly two million Georgians achieve their dreams of higher education. GSFC funds and services 15 different low-interest education loan programs including Stafford and PLUS loans, consolidation loans, and state service-cancelable loans. GSFC also administers multiple scholarship and grant programs, including the nationally acclaimed HOPE Scholarship and Grant Program. Additional information about GSFC products and services is available at www.gsfc.org or (800) 505-GSFC (4732).

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