

Texas Tuition Promises College Funds

Texas families trying to save enough money for their children's college education no longer have to worry about how high tuition will rise.

Texas Comptroller Susan Combs says Texas' all new pre-paid college tuition plan, the Texas Tuition Promise Fund, lets families lock in tuition and required fees at current prices of public colleges in Texas and offers many flexible options to prepay those expenses before a child is ready for college.

"The Texas Tuition Promise Fund gives families an exciting, flexible way to save for college that makes sense for their financial situation and higher education goals," Combs said.

"You can prepay for a four-year degree, or you can prepay in small bites, for just a few classes or semesters.

And, best of all, you don't have to worry about future tuition increases, because you lock in current prices."

The Texas Tuition Promise Fund offers three levels of pricing to prepay undergraduate tuition at schools ranging from public community colleges to four-year state universities.

The money may also be used at out-of-state or private universities, with students and their families making up for the difference in cost.

Texas Tuition Promise Fund prices will change as state colleges and universities adopt new tuition rates.

Families have several payment options, including lump sum or installments with an annual interest.

For the current enrollment period running from now until Feb. 28, 2009, parents of a newborn can pay as little as \$15.16 in a monthly installment plan until high school graduation to prepay a year of tuition at a community college.

Parents of a 7-year-old who want to prepay the average cost of one year's tuition at a four-year Texas public university could spread the payments over 10 years for \$81.53 a month.

A more detailed explanation of Texas Tuition Promise Fund pricing is attached.

Prepaid tuition accounts must be paid in full and open for at least three years before tuition benefits can be paid, a feature that encourages parents to begin saving early.

Once enrolled with an account in the plan, a payment as low as \$15 could be made at any time.

"Starting early makes saving for college more affordable, and it also has another very important benefit," Combs said.

"Studies show that regardless of a family's income level, the children of parents who start saving early are more likely to have higher academic achievement throughout their school years.

It increases the children's expectations of going to college and achieving their dreams."

Today, the well-paying, high value jobs boosting the economic engine of Texas require more than a high school diploma.

Texas' top 25 occupations adding the most jobs requiring an associate/postsecondary education offer an average salary of nearly \$42,000 per year.

As Texas grows, nurses and other health-related professionals will be in demand.

There will also be a great need for pre-school teachers, mechanics, computer support specialists, legal assistants, real estate agents and more.

"It is critical for the state to offer encouragement to help put higher education within reach for all families," Combs said.

"The Texas Tuition Promise Fund can allow any Texas family from any economic background to achieve the education and skills necessary for the work force of

Texas' future economy."

The Texas Tuition Promise Fund may only be used to pay college undergraduate tuition and required fees.

The program does not cover room and board, books and other college expenses.

"The good news is, Texas offers two college savings plans, the Texas College Savings Plan and the LoneStar 529 Plan, to help families save for expenses not covered by the Texas Tuition Promise Fund," Combs said.

"These plans let college savers invest in a variety of funds geared toward families' different financial situations and savings timelines."

To help families sort out the many options to pay for college, Combs today debuted a new Web site: Every Chance, Every Texan.

The Web site is a portal to everything parents need to know about paying for college, including the Texas Tuition Promise Fund, Texas' state-sponsored college savings plans and other sources of funding such as scholarships and student loans.

The site is a one-stop resource for Texas College and technical

school admissions requirements and financial aid contacts.

It also includes tools to help families calculate college costs and determine whether they are saving enough money to meet their goals.

A section on tomorrow's careers shows the careers that will be in demand in the future and the education requirements for various fields.

"Being ready for college when your children are takes time and careful planning," Combs said.

"Every Chance, Every Texan offers clear, easy-to-understand information to help families stop feeling overwhelmed and get moving toward their goals."

Visit Every Chance, Every Texan at www.EveryChanceEveryTexan.org or go directly to the Texas Tuition Promise Fund Web site at www.TexasTuitionPromiseFund.com for detailed information about the new prepaid tuition program.

The 80th Texas Legislature created the Texas Tuition Promise Fund by approving House Bill 3900, authored by Rep. Geanie Morrison and others and sponsored by Sen. Florence Shapiro.

Hurricane Ike

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for a shelter, Rogers said one was opened in Columbus for local residents.

He said about 30 to 40 people utilized the shelter.

He said that a refueling station for government vehicles and evacuation buses was set up at the fair grounds in Columbus.

He said the Brookshire Brothers gas station and the Alleyton Shell station both had closed for a time because of depleted gasoline supplies, but were able to get

more fuel. Despite the relative smoothness of handling the evacuees, Rogers said things would have been much different if the storm had passed over the county as was forecast at one time.

"Everybody in the county worked together, the law enforcement, governments, hospitals and nursing homes," he said.

He also said he had made some notes on several things that would be improved on for the future.

Sales Tax Payments Down In City

Sales tax payments to the City of Eagle Lake in August were \$15,130, a decrease of 7.36 percent from last August, figures from the state comptroller show.

For the year, payments total \$146,285, a decrease of 0.96 percent.

For August in Colorado County, payments totaled \$74,380, a decrease of 6.48 percent.

For the year, payments totaled \$704,728, an increase of 2.09 percent.

For August in Fayette County, payments totaled \$94,437.60, an increase of 8.64 percent.

For the year in Fayette County, payments totaled \$886,976, an increase of 6.46 percent.

Checks sent to area cities for August, with changes from last year, are as follows:

—Columbus - \$84,647, down 2.18 percent; for the year, \$800,023, up 1.20 percent;

—Weimar - \$25,348, up 0.95 percent; for the year, \$243,160, up 3.85 percent;

—Schulenburg - \$44,105, up 2.95 percent; for the year, \$431,768, up 3.18 percent;

—La Grange - \$114,040, down 2.05 percent; for the year, \$1,137,159, up 14.48 percent;

—Flatonina - \$18,143, up 25.00 percent; for the year, \$135,635, up 5.31 percent;

—Hallettsville - \$71,790, down 3.69 percent; for the year, \$671,854.

Texas Comptroller Susan Combs said the state collected \$2 billion in sales tax in August, up 7.7 percent compared to a year ago.

The distributions in September represent taxes collected by retailers in July and reported to the state in August.

"When the state's 2008 fiscal year ended Aug. 31, sales tax collections totaled \$21.5 billion, 6.6 percent higher than in fiscal 2007," Combs said.

"Although this was not the double-digit increases seen in 2006 and 2007, growth in state sales tax collections during fiscal 2008 continued at a steady pace."

Combs distributed \$491.9 million in September sales tax payments to local governments, a 10 percent increase compared to September 2007.

So far this calendar year, local sales tax allocations are up 6.7 percent compared to the same period in 2007.

Combs sent September sales tax allocations of \$330.4 million to Texas cities, up 9.1 percent compared to September 2007.

Calendar year-to-date, city sales tax revenues are running 5.8 percent higher than last year.

Texas counties received September sales tax allocations of \$30.9 million, up 13.3 percent compared to a year ago.

Calendar year-to-date, county sales tax allocations are 8 percent higher than last year.

The 138 special purpose taxing districts around the state received \$18.5 million in sales tax revenue, an increase of 23 percent compared to a year ago.

So far this calendar year, sales tax allocations to special purpose districts are up 18.2 percent compared to 2007.

Ten Texas transit systems received \$112 million in September sales tax payments, up 9.9 percent compared to a year ago.

Year-to-date, transit sales tax revenues are up 7.4 percent.

29th Annual Eagle Lake Study Club



AUCTION

Saturday, September 20th at 7:00 p.m.

Eagle Lake Community Center

Proceeds to benefit the Eula & David Wintermann Library

Main Auction Items:

DRAWING #1 & 2

- Polish glass decanter
- Large basket of rice goodies
- Pie plate with carrier & rhubarb pie
- 4 Astros tickets
- Girl's bicycle
- 4 Houston Livestock Show & Rodeo Tickets
- Yuletide Tour of Bayou Bend for 12 and lunch afterwards
- Bridge luncheon for 12
- Wishing well planted w/ fall flowers
- 6 dozen tamales

Helen & Ken Craig
E.L. Rice Dryer
Phyllis & John Psencik
Becky & Mark Anderson
Shoppa's Farm Supply
Judi & Jack Johnson

Dina Kohleffel Livermore

Joan Matthews
Class Concrete
Tanchi Cordova & Rose Martinez

DRAWING #3 & 4

- Cheesecake
- Antique lemonade set (Pitcher and 4 glasses)
- 4 Astros tickets
- Cake-a-month for 1 year
- Gourmet dinner for 8

Top Shelf Catering, Greg Glueck
Lynne & Orville Powers Estate, Lynda Adams, Sue Seals and Jerry Powers
Mary Lou & Arthur Anderson
Vicki & Clark Powers
Memorial for Dr. Ray Thomas by Mrs. Elfe Thomas, Dr. & Mrs. Russell Thomas and Mr. & Mrs. Bret Pardue
Evelyn Thomas, Bob & Betty Wilcox, Barbara & Sidney Struss, Hope & Ed Causey
Christine Herman Owen
Dianne & Eliot Tucker
Glueck Tree Farm
Sue Briscoe, E.L. Insurance, Susan & Gayle Gertson, Lois Quinneville, Julie Gannon and Dolores Grammer

- Alaskan cruise for 2 Sept. 25 - Oct. 27, 2009
- Cookies-a-month for 1 year
- Opera tickets
- Certificate for 30 gallon tree
- Wii console and games

DRAWING #5 & 6

- Barbecued ham
- Large decorative plate w/ easel
- Gold glass urns
- Variety of baked goods
- Franciscan salad/ dessert set
- 16 inch pottery plate
- Fish fry for 8 at the Grigar's
- Wooden stand-up patio cooler
- Set of Texans tickets
- Antique serpent plant stand
- Quail & pheasant hunt for 2

Austin's BBQ & Catering
Christine Herman Owen
T & Betty Lang
Martin Herman
Patty Holloway
Bobbe & Art Guerra
Michael & Melody Grigar and Jim & Shelia Mathis
Trafcio, Inc.
Christine Herman Owen
Baumgart Insurance Agency
Top Flight Hunting, Leon Randermann

DRAWING #7 & 8

- 4 Texans vs. Miami tickets w/ parking
- Pie-a-month for 1 year
- Cedar bench
- Painted mailbox
- Antique chocolate set
- Large stand-up mirror
- 2 antique water bird plates
- Certificate for 14 lb. rib eye roll
- Set of 7 antique wine goblets
- Large garden rock to be delivered
- Stained glass lamp
- Bakery goods
- Jim Shore Santa on a goose

Eunice & Fred Frnka
Anna Lee Higgins
Penny, Mike & Ryan Henske
Becky Marsalia
Betty & Bob Wilcox
Furniture Shoppe, Darrell Stancik
Helyn & Wm. Farris
Janik's Meat Market
Grace & Michael Cooper
Dr. & Mrs. John Myers
Brenda & Wayne Corman
Dr. & Mrs. Ray Cantu, Mickey & Erin Glueck
Bobbe & Art Guerra

DRAWING #9

- Mammogram
- Lipid blood profile (Cholesterol, Triglycerides, HDL & LDL)
- Amber & turquoise necklace, bracelet and earrings
- Freshwater pearl necklace
- Cinnamon rolls
- Cinnamon rolls
- One month membership
- Decorative platter
- Texas A & M Mirror w/3 hooks
- Blue stone pendant
- Gold fluted Blenko dish
- Silver earrings
- Brighton silver ring, size 8
- \$20 gift certificate
- \$25 gift card
- \$25 gift card
- Hair products
- Pie carrier and pie plate
- Certificate for Christmas poinsettia and Easter lily
- Gift certificate for car wash and wax
- 4 piece cannister set
- Basket of John Deere goodies
- Texas Christmas 2008 ornament
- Necklace
- Beaded Christmas tree
- Silver plated jewelry box
- Squirrel feeder
- Tool bag and tools
- Lenox chip and dip tray
- Silver champagne bucket
- Biscotti jar
- Ceramic bird house
- Large coffee cup planter with coffee and cookies
- Ipod Shuffle
- Fritz & Floyd Santa music box
- Scottie picture frame
- Basket of cookies
- CD micro music system

Rice Medical Center
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Esta Kerr
Esta Kerr
Eddie & Ann Pavliska
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Eagle Lake Rehab Services
Prairie Edge Thrift Shop
Creative Expressions
Grace & Michael Cooper
Fair Wells
Esta Kerr
Esta Kerr
Casadores Restaurant, Sealy
WalMart, Sealy
Maribelli's Italian Restaurant, Sealy
Marcy's Beauty Shop
Elaine Hickey
For All Occasions
Lake Oil Co.
Cherry & Vic Corman
Wallis State Bank
Mary Kay & Robby Cook
Golden Goose
Xi Pi Psi
Connie & Willard Lang
Eagle Lake General Store
Lake Lumber
Grace & Michael Cooper
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Phyllis & John Psencik
Christine Herman Owen
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Eagle Lake Drugstore and Radio Shack
Gaye Lynn Thomas
T & Betty Lang
Clark & Vicki Powers
Betty & Bob Wilcox
Helyn & Wm. Farris
Charmaine Laughlin
Ida Causey
Marshall Holloway
Marshall Holloway
Marshall Holloway
Donna Gertson
Alpha Delta Phi
Colorado County Rice Mill
Colorado County Rice Mill
Colorado County Rice Mill
Jean Thornton

Silent Auction Items:

- Basket with 4 candles
- Glass pumpkin
- Purple martin birdhouse
- Hummel figurine
- Girls jeans, size 8
- Oval tablecloth (102" X 60")
- Wall sconce
- Wooden tongs
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- Woodwick candle
- Thanksgiving figurines
- 20 lb. bag of rice
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- Cheesecake on a plate figurine

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NEWSBRIEFS

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Harvest Ball is set for Saturday, Oct. 11, at the Eagle Lake Community Center. This year's honoree is Mrs. Elfe Thomas, wife of the late Dr. Raymond Thomas and mother of Dr. Raymond Russell Thomas who currently practices at RMC. The RMC Employee Volunteers proudly honor Mrs. Thomas for her vision, leadership, and commitment to the health and well being of the population Rice Medical Center serves and to her community of Eagle Lake. The event begins at 6 p.m. for social hour, followed by a rib eye dinner at 7 p.m. Salute to Honoree at 7:30, and dancing from 8:30 p.m. to 12:30 a.m. Tickets are \$35 per person which includes open bar, meal and dance. Sponsorships are also available from \$250 to \$1,000 and above. A silent auction, live auction and drawing will be held during the evening. All proceeds will go towards new hospital equipment and renovations.

Community outreach set for Oct. 11

Ashes To Beauty presents, Eagle Lake Community Outreach on Saturday, Oct. 11 from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. at the Eagle Lake Community Park. All ages welcome. Free food, music, entertainment, games and prizes. "Changing families, one person at a time." For more information call 234-3002. See you there!

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