



Coalition for Higher Education Act Reform

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NEWS ADVISORY: Nov. 1, 2005

Event on Nov. 7, 2005

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Harmful Federal Law Denies Financial Aid to 175,000 Students

Fund Provides Scholarships to Students Denied Aid Due to Drug Convictions

LOS ANGELES – In an effort to help students who have lost their financial aid due to a past drug conviction, the John W. Perry Fund and the Coalition for Higher Education Act Reform (CHEAR) will be holding an event to raise money for scholarships and raise awareness about a little-known federal financial aid law that denies aid to anyone convicted of a drug offense, no matter how minor, since the law took effect in July of 2000, more than 175,000 students have already been affected.

The John W. Perry Fund was created in 2002 to provide educational opportunities to students denied educational opportunities because of the drug provision. The Fund was named after the heroic New York City police officer John William Perry, a devout advocate for civil liberties and ending the War on Drugs, who perished in the 9/11 attack on the World Trade Center. Monday's event is the second West Coast stop in a national tour to raise funds for scholarships and increase awareness about the harmful federal policy. Organizations supporting repeal of the ban and students affected by the law will be on hand for interviews.

WHO: Rick Overton (celebrity keynote speaker); Dean Cameron (celebrity emcee); Marisa Garcia (student activist and student affected by the HEA drug provision); Pat Hurley (California Association of Student Financial Aid Administrators); Alberto Mendoza (Drug Policy Alliance); and David Borden (StoptheDrugWar.org: the Drug Reform Coordination Network)

Legislative Update: Both chambers of Congress have introduced different bills to address the problematic federal financial aid ban. Passage of either bill would represent significant progress in the effort to repeal the law, however, both bills would still leave thousands of students in need of financial aid.

WHAT: Reception for the John W. Perry Fund, which provides scholarships to students losing financial aid because of drug convictions.

WHERE: The home of Richard Wolfe, 7171 Chelan Way, Los Angeles, CA

WHEN: 6:00 to 8:00 PM on Monday, November 7

For more information, please contact Chris Mulligan of the John W. Perry Fund at 202-232-7111 (office) or 202-491-1544 (cell).

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