

**President's Conference Call Remarks
on the President's America's College Promise Proposal
January 9, 2015**

The president's remarks and conference call introduction are very well summarized by the Fact Sheet ([attached](#)), which hit all their talking points. Following Roberto Rodriguez's remarks, there were some questions and answers that provided a little more detail, however, they emphasized this is just the start of a national conversation, so details are to be determined over time.

Here additional points they made from Q&As that do not appear in the Fact Sheet:

- They want all the community groups and advocates to help push for this proposal
- The proposal will be the centerpiece of the State of Union address on Jan. 20.
- Details are not available on whether this is discretionary funding or mandatory funding. More details may be available with the President's budget proposal in February.
- The funding will sit apart from and on top of Pell grants. It is not a need-based, last dollar grant.
- The administration does not envision that this proposal will have restrictions like Pell grants, such as funding to support felons.
- When they note that this proposal is for responsible students who maintain good grades, this does not mean that the students must have good grades BEFORE entering the program. They do not have to have academic qualifications to take part, but they need to stay on track to graduate or earn their certificate.
- For colleges that provide Associate Degrees AND Bachelor's Degrees, Rodriguez said the program is meant to eliminate tuition at the community college level. It is meant to build upon what some states have already made strides toward eliminating costs for community college students as well as aligning 2-year programs with 4-year programs.
- They said more information is available online. What is currently available doesn't add much, but it's here if you want to see it:
 - [Why Access to Free Community College Matters](#)
 - [President Obama Announces Free Community College plan](#) (1:49 video)
 - [Fact Sheet: White House Unveils America's College Promise Proposal](#) (the fact sheet you have below)

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As an aside, Telemundo is reporting on this story and made us their reporting backdrop. The story will run on the 6 p.m. broadcast. Elmer Rodriguez did a great job stepping in with little notice to speak in Spanish to the station on his perspective about the proposal. He and Audrey also hustled and found some data you might be interested in as well:

- # of BOGW: 20,075 or 73% of students
- Waiver of \$46 per unit equals full time \$552 (12 units)
- % of students getting Pell: 48% or 12,750 students
- Close to 98% of Pell students get BOGW
- Fall enrollment: 27,511

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