



# Walker River Paiute Tribe Education Department Monthly Newsletter



*During the 2025 Walkabout on Paiute Lands, participants learning about the Northern Paiute traditional handgames including rules, songs, and social enjoyment that still takes place today.*

## Contact Education Department

**REGULAR HOURS OF OPERATION:**

**M-F 8:00 AM - 5:00 PM**

**TECHNOLOGY CENTER (OPEN TO PUBLIC):**

**M-F 8:30 AM - 2:00 PM**

***(Please enter through Education Entrance Door)***

**Phone Number:**

**775-773-2306**

**Sara Twiss, Education Director Ext. 2160**

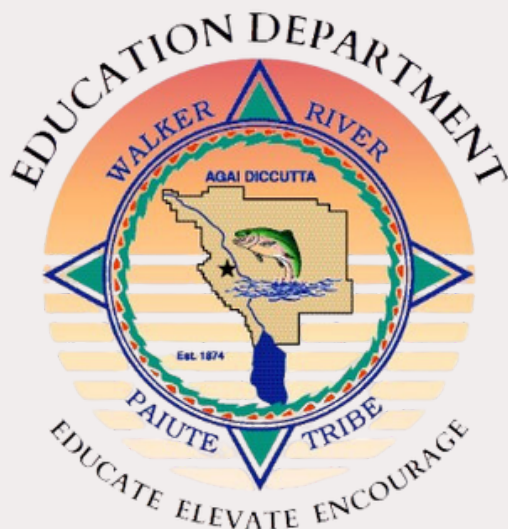
**Aimee Johnson, Education Specialist Ext. 2162**

**Belinda Hooper, NYCP College & Career Coach Ext. 2161**

**Dawna Jackson, NYCP College & Career Coach Ext. 2163**

**Ysela Brown, Communal Library Specialist Ext. 2164**

**Carissa Lockwood-Brown, Academic Tutor Ext. 2164**



***Check out our website for any updated information!***

***<https://www.wrpt.org/education/>***

# Important Dates



## Application Deadlines

**Higher Education Grant Program  
(Including Agai Dicutta Scholarship)**  
Aug. 1st for FALL, Dec. 1st for SPRING



**Adult Vocational Training Program  
(Including Agai Dicutta Scholarship)**  
Dec. 1st, Mar. 15th, Jun. 15th, and Sept. 15th.



**Enrichment Program**  
Dec. 1st, Mar. 15th, Jun. 15th, and Sept. 15th.



For more information about Higher Education Grant, Agai Dicutta Scholarship, the Adult Vocational Training and Enrichment program, please contact our office at 775-773-2306 ext. 2160, or email [educationdirector@wrpt.org](mailto:educationdirector@wrpt.org).





## STUDENT HIGHLIGHTS

*Congratulations!*



THE UNIVERSITY OF  
NEW MEXICO

Dana Quintero, Walker River Paiute Tribe, is majoring in Elementary Education at the University of New Mexico, and has made the Dean's list for the Fall 2024 semester.



*Remarks from Dr. Kristopher Goodrich, Dean, College of Education and Human Sciences:*

*"Each semester, I take great pleasure in congratulating those students in the College of Education and Human Sciences who attain high academic performance. Through your personal desire to pursue excellence, you have met the high standards established by the College. For this honor, you are being placed on the College of Education and Human Sciences Dean's List. Those outstanding students with whom you share this honor have a credit count of 12 or more and have a 3.75 GPA or higher for the Fall 2024 semester. This is an accomplishment of which you can be proud."*

*The College of Education and Human Sciences is committed to recognizing and supporting excellence in education. I wish to extend my sincere congratulations on your accomplishment as a truly outstanding student. My best wishes as you continue your academic endeavors."*

# STUDENT HIGHLIGHTS

*Congratulations!*



Dr. Crystal Miller, Walker River Paiute Tribe, earned her PhD in American Indian Studies from the University of Arizona with a perfect 4.0 GPA. Her doctoral research, "The Sovereignty is Ours: Restructuring Tribal Constitutions and A Roadmap to Reclaiming Traditional Governance", represents a groundbreaking contribution to the field of Federal Indian Law and Tribal constitutional reform. Her work has served as a tool for Tribal Nations to dismantle imposed colonial frameworks and reclaim traditional governance systems.

Dr. Miller's remarkable academic achievement was completed while simultaneously serving full-time in key policy and governance roles, including her current position as Deputy Senior Advisor of Policy, Tax, and Federal Government Relations for a national non-profit. In this role and throughout her career, she has worked tirelessly to remove systemic barriers to Tribal self-determination and has consistently pushed back against federal paternalism through federal and state policy reform.

In addition to her full-time professional duties, Dr. Miller also managed two part-time jobs, raised three children, and led her own consulting firm, Sovereignty First Native Consulting. Her work has supported dozens of Tribes in strengthening governing documents, asserting sovereignty, and securing transformative federal funding.

In 2025, Dr. Miller was appointed by Secretary Deb Haaland to the U.S. Department of the Interior's Public Lands Rule Federal Advisory Committee, where she was tasked to serve as a critical voice for Tribal Nations, providing direct policy guidance to the Bureau of Land Management. This prestigious appointment reflects her growing national influence and recognition in public lands policy and Treaty/Tribal rights.

Most recently, she was also named the Tribal Leader of Tomorrow by the Tribal Leadership Council, in recognition of her extraordinary leadership in rebuilding Tribal governance frameworks and empowering Tribal communities across the country.

In addition, her teaching roles at California State University, San Marcos and Cal Poly Humboldt reflect her dedication to cultivating future leaders in American Indian Studies. Dr. Miller has testified before multiple State Legislatures on Tribal sovereignty and sacred site protection and continues to mentor Native youth in advocacy, governance, and cultural education.

Through perseverance, vision, and a fierce commitment to her people, Dr. Miller exemplifies the strength of Native scholarship and leadership. Nevada celebrates her as a model of academic excellence, cultural resilience, and national advocacy.





# NYCP News

## 2025 Walkabout on Paiute Lands

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### April 4, 2025

Day 1 - Very grateful for the storytellers and facilitators who contributed this year! These stories are timeless, tracking back to our Creation stories of the existing surrounding environment, generational impacts, and even predicting future events. This day began with stories at the foothills of White Mountain, then we moved over to the community park area for lunch, handgame learning and singing, and tule duck/boat making. Our knowledge holders were Victor Williams Sr., James "Jimmy" Nez, Steven "Snake" Frank, Vernon Rogers, and Joe Allen.







# NYCP News

## 2025 Walkabout on Paiute Lands

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### April 5, 2025

Day 2 - We spent all day at Agai Panunadu or Agai Pa'a (Trout Lake/Walker Lake). Again, we began with storytelling of the lands, water, mountains, and trails. We went into a quick yoga session on the beach, and practiced mindful breathing exercises. After lunch, we were able to do a string-making activity using Indian hemp, and then ended with learning about Paiute circle dance songs. Our facilitators were Steven "Snake" Frank, James "Jimmy" Nez, Cheri Clendenning, Delmar and Misty Stevens, and E'Sha Hoferer.







# NYCP News

## 2025 Walkabout on Paiute Lands

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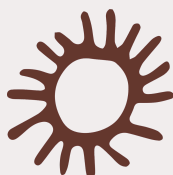
### April 6, 2025

Day 3 - Trail Day! We ventured off to Hidden Cave, located outside of Fallon, NV, and explored the trails, hillside, and into the caves themselves. Hidden Cave is an archaeological site within the Grimes Point Archaeological Area, formed around 21,000 years ago by the waves of rising Pleistocene Lake Lahontan. Of course, lasting since time immemorial, our guide told stories about the People using the cave as a place to store hunting and cultural materials, not as a place for living or staying long-term. We then headed out to Lovelock Caves outside of Lovelock, NV. Remnants of this cave dates back to 2000 BC. and also includes oral stories being used as a shelter for the red-haired giants, an enemy to the Paiute people who practiced forms of cannibalism. During westerners excavation, over 10,000 items were taken including:

- Winnowing trays -- used to gather and roast pine nuts
- Woven basket fragment
- Ancient stone smoke pipe
- Tule duck decoys (World's oldest identified)
- Fishing net, material made of natural weave
- Stone "sinkers"
- Shells
- Large black stone whale effigy
- Small white carved fish effigy
- Antique duck call



Our facilitator for this day was Dean Tonenna, Mono Lake Paiute (Kootzatukadu).





# NYCP News

## 2025 Walkabout on Paiute Lands

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***Follow our Facebook page for short videos for recap of each day:***

***Education Department-Walker River Paiute Tribe***

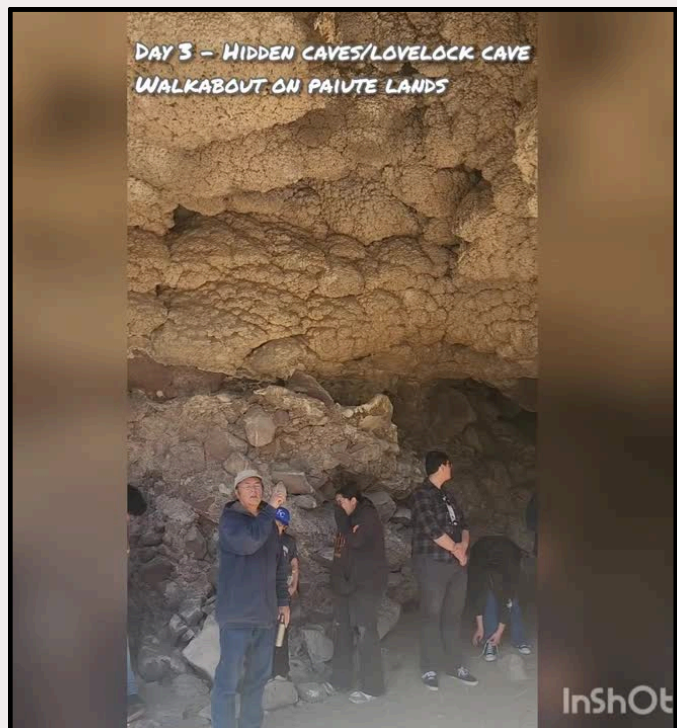
**April 4, 2025 - Day 1  
White Mountain**



**April 5, 2025 - Day 2  
Agai Pa'a (Trout Lake or Walker Lake)**



**April 6, 2025 - Day 3  
Hidden Caves/Lovelock Cave**







# NYCP News

## Western Nevada College Tour

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The NYCP Coaches organized a college tour of Western Nevada College (RN Program) and campus in Carson City, on April 24, 2025. Five (5) students from 7<sup>th</sup> - 11<sup>th</sup> grade attended to learn about basic nursing skills, labs clinical classes, and resources such as the Native American Fee waiver.





# Education Team in the Field!



On April 18, Dawna Jackson, NYCP College & Career Coach, tabled at the Yerington High School Career Fair for 9th-12<sup>th</sup> grade students. She shared information regarding the NYCP program, graduation information for students, and presented sign-up opportunities for upcoming college and career events!





# Education Team in the Field!

On April 11, our Academic Tutor transported youth to the Creating a Path to Generational Wellness event, where they heard from motivational speakers, Derek Hinkey, Mylo Smith, and Cheyna Burton. We want to thank Toni Burton for organizing the event, and the Fallon Business Council & Toi Ticutta Wellness Center for sponsoring the event!





# NDEP Recycling Grant Progress

## EARTH DAY RECAP



*Carissa Lockwood-Brown is providing a hands-on beginner's planting activity for community members.*



*Aimee Johnson, Education Specialist, provided a rock painting activity for elementary level students to paint and take rocks home as a pet!*



On April 22, 2025, we held the annual Earth Day event entitled Numme Bea Teepu, Numme Nobe (*Our Mother Earth, Our Home*) at the Schurz Pinenut Park area for the community. Over 70 attendees were accounted for who visited the tables and enjoyed the ongoing activities, music, and free BBQ feed.

Table activities included DIY beginner planters, rock painting, DIY bird feeders from recyclable materials, bird taxidermy and habitat learning, floral and plant giveaways, recyclable seed bombs, gem and stone learning, and Earth Day-themed reading material provided through the Walker River Tribal Library program.



*The Walker River Housing Department provided several plants and flowers to give away to local community members. Over 70 items were given out for attendees to take home.*



# NDEP Recycling Grant Progress

## EARTH DAY RECAP



The Senior Center program provided a hands-on activity where community members built bird feeders from recycled cardboard, and plastic bottles. They made a total of 32 feeders for youth and elders to take home.



The Walker River Tribal Court provides hands-on seed bomb making activity for community members from soil and recyclable shredded paper.



Ysela Brown, Communal Library Specialist, provides reading material examples centering Earth Day and environmental protection, which are available to the public at the Walker River Tribal Library program.



The local Rock Chuck business joined the Earth Day events to showcase the surrounding minerals, gems, and stones which are found in our high desert area. Community members were able to learn about and select a few stones to take home.





# NDEP Recycling Grant Progress *EARTH DAY RECAP*



*Community members selecting their floral and plant giveaways provided by the Walker River Housing Department.*



*Community members enjoyed a free BBQ feed during the Earth Day events. Special thanks to Lance West for cooking the meat and to the Schurz Elementary School for their collaboration with their grant through Running Strong for American Indian Youth.*

*Ysela Brown, Communal Library Specialist, provided a story about northern Paiute traditional prayers to the Sun, as told by the late Harold Miller.*

HAPPY  
*Earth*  
DAY



# NDEP Recycling Grant Progress

## Schurz Elementary School - Pre-K - 6<sup>th</sup> Grade

The Education Department is pleased to present the student winners of the Recycling Art competitions including a coloring contest, written essay contest, and the recycled art material class competitions.

### Coloring Page Winners:



Pre-k: Carlos Juarez



Kindergarten: Numi Williams



1st Grade: Kwena McMasters



2nd Grade: Jaxon Summerfield



# NDEP Recycling Grant Progress



## Written Essay Contest Winners:

3rd Grade: Daxton Hicks

Write 5 things that make the world beautiful and why you think so. *Daxton*

5 things that would make the world beautiful is first is a rainbow because it is pretty and a lot of people like rainbows. And people like colorful colors. And I like bright colors.





My second thing that would make the world is... family because of my grandma and my grandpa and my friends because they feel like my family and my sisters even though they are mean sometimes but we get over it.

My third one is animals because how would we get food and a dog could be a service animal if they need someone to help them.

My fourth one is trees because they give us fresh air besides when people are burning weeds. The trees could help by cleaning the air so we have fresh air to breathe. And without it we would not be able to live.

My fifth one that would make the world beautiful is god because he created every thing in the entire world. And he made us and brought us into this world. And he helps anybody like people that are blind. And he loves anybody even if sometimes they are being bad he still loves them no matter what.

Conclusion: I hope you liked my paragraphs have a good day!

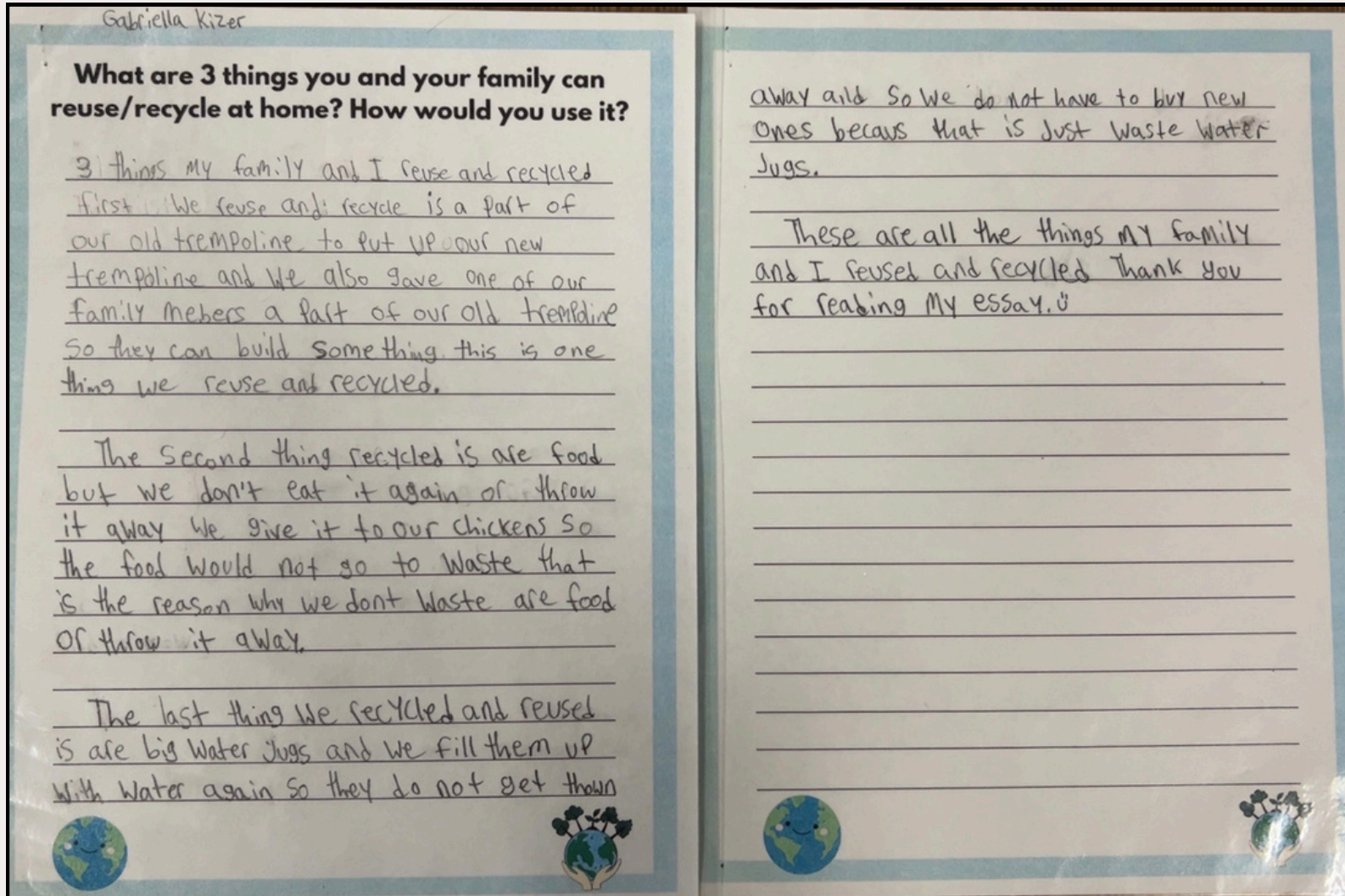
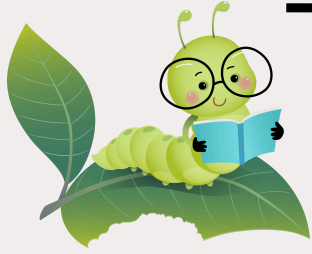




# NDEP Recycling Grant Progress

## Written Essay Contest Winners:

*4th Grade: Gabriella Kizer*





# NDEP Recycling Grant Progress

## Written Essay Contest Winners:

### 5th Grade: Serenity Phoenix



Imagine your favorite outdoor area, such as the reservoir or park. Now, picture it covered in trash. How does that make you feel about recycling and waste?

Recycling at a lake or park is crucial for environmental protection and should be strongly encouraged.

Firstly, recycling for kids is about taking things that would usually be thrown away, like paper, plastic, and glass and turning them into new things. And that's why we recycle at our reservoir. Recycling programs at our reservoir demonstrate the environmental and resources conservation benefits of recycling. These programs reduce landfill waste, conserve natural resources like water and energy, and minimize pollution from discharge materials.

Secondly, Recycling at our reservoir conserves natural resources and landfill waste, ultimately benefiting the environment and local wildlife. Recycling requires less energy than manufacturing new products from raw materials. Recycling plastic saves twice as much energy as burning it.

Thirdly, Recycling can contribute to a more sustainable and responsible approach to managing natural resources, ensuring their availability for future generations. Reducing the need to extract new raw materials from Earth.

In conclusion, implementing and promoting recycling programs at lakes and parks is crucial for environment conservation. Recycling water reduces the need to divert it from sensitive ecosystems like lakes and rivers and also helps prevent wastewater discharges, according to the EPA.







# NDEP Recycling Grant Progress



## Written Essay Contest Winners:

**6th Grade: Sa'mya Campos**

### Why is it important to protect nature? What are some ways you could protect nature, besides recycling?

Nature takes care of us it's only fair that we take care of it too. When we protect nature, we make sure the earth stays clean, safe, and beautiful for everyone. There are many ways we can help, even as kids. Three simple but powerful ways are to Reduce, Reuse, and Conserve energy and water.

First, we can reduce the amount of waste we create. This means using fewer plastic bags, not wasting food, and avoiding things we don't really need. For example, instead of buying new school supplies every year, we can use what we already have. Reducing helps keep the earth cleaner and uses fewer natural resources.

Second, it is smart to reuse things instead of throwing them away. We can reuse water bottles, shopping bags, containers, and even paper for notes or art projects. By reusing, we make less trash and don't need to buy as many new things, which also helps reduce pollution from factories. If you want a better tomorrow you need to donate old clothes for charity.



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Finally, we should work on conserving water and energy. This means turning off lights when you leave a room, unplugging chargers when we're not using them, and taking shorter showers. Water and electricity is important, but they are not unlimited. Saving them helps protect the planet and saves money too.

In conclusion, protecting nature doesn't have to be hard. By reducing, reusing, and conserving energy and water, we are helping the earth to stay healthy for a better tomorrow. If we all do small things every day, we can make a big difference for our planet and for our planet.





# NDEP Recycling Grant Progress

## Recycled Art Contest - Class Winners:



*Pre-K - Kindergarten*



*1st-2nd Grade*



*3<sup>rd</sup> - 4<sup>th</sup> Grade*



*5<sup>th</sup> - 6<sup>th</sup> Grade*



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## ***2025 Paiute Language Bowl***

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***Congratulations to the 2025 Paiute Language Bowl Champions-  
Yerington Lions!***

***It was a tough competition with four other schools, including Reed High School, Wooster High School, McDermitt High School & Spanish Springs High School. All teams did an outstanding job and showcased what they are learning to sustain the Paiute language.***



# FAFSA Updates



## Federal Student Aid Information Center **Extended Hours of Operation** (2025-26 FAFSA® Form):

**Monday: 8 a.m.–9 p.m. Eastern time (ET)**  
FAFSA support **available until 10 p.m. ET**

**Tuesday–Wednesday: 8 a.m.–8 p.m. ET**  
FAFSA support **available until 10 p.m. ET**

**Thursday–Friday: 8 a.m.–6 p.m. ET**  
FAFSA support **available until 10 p.m. ET**  
(except on Friday, Nov. 29)

**Saturday–Sunday: Closed**  
FAFSA support **available noon–5 p.m. ET**  
**on Saturdays**

**Closed on all federal holidays.**

