

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**



**ACTRESS JANE LYNCH LAUNCHES THE NATIONAL COLLEGE FINANCE CENTER  
WEBSITE**

**AND THE "DON'T MAJOR IN DEBT" PSA CAMPAIGN**

*New Innovative Website Offers Free Advice to Help Educate Students and Parents*

**NEW YORK, NY – July 17, 2012** — *Glee* actress **Jane Lynch** today unveiled the **National College Finance Center website (collegefinancecenter.org)** at a news conference in New York City. The National College Finance Center is a free, first-stop, unbiased resource to help educate students, prospective students and families all across the country on how to evaluate their options for financing a college education.

When asked about her involvement in this project Ms. Lynch explained: "I have several people in my own family, graduating nieces and nephews, both in school or just out of school, and they all have a mountain of debt. In fact, one of them is now dealing with the collection calls because they are unable to pay off their student loan. They didn't read the fine print. I'm doing this because I don't want other kids to be saddled with that kind of debt."

"As a professional working with college students for the last two decades, not to mention a former student borrower myself, it could not be clearer to me: students, parents, prospective students, graduates — anyone dealing with cost of a college education — all need a trustworthy place to receive free, clear, unbiased information about their options. If you're going to college or even thinking about it, make [collegefinancecenter.org](http://collegefinancecenter.org) your first stop. No one there is trying to sell you anything, the site will simply help you to seek free money first, borrow wisely and only if essential, and cope with repaying your student loans" adds Rebecca J. Weber, Executive Director, New York Public Interest Research Group (NYPIRG).

The main principles of the National College Finance Center website are:

- To provide the best resources and ideas for a higher education finance plan
- To take maximum advantage of available grant and scholarship options
- To minimize debt accrued in acquiring a college education
- To understand that all student loans are not created equal
- To understand important repayment strategies that will save money and stress

The interactive, not-for-profit website provides comprehensive, state-specific information about obtaining scholarships and grants and provides guidance on the daunting variety of student loan options available today. Additionally, those who have already accrued student loan debt will receive customized information about the most effective options to pay that debt down.

To help further exemplify the goals of the new National College Finance Center website, Lynch led students, parents, visitors and media through a fully realized and interactive telling of the Don't Major in Debt campaign story with the **Don't Major in Debt Student House** — inspired by the new trend in immersive theatre and to a large degree by the theatre phenomenon ***Sleep No More***. In fact, the installation was produced by members of the creative and production team involved in that very show.

The drama of student life and college debt unfolded as visitors were led from room to room by following clues, watching videos, and witnessing and participating in true-to-life scenes. The arc of this immersive experience led participants from the clutter and confusion of paying for college to the knowledge and clarity offered by the website. Every moment of the experience was crafted to excite, entertain and educate. After a heightened theatrical experience, transitioning from confusion to clarity, disorder to order, daunting debt to a healthy financial future, students and their parents emerged equipped with an understanding of the website and its mission.

This launch event was the culmination of the New York Public Interest Research Group's (NYPIRG) ongoing grassroots awareness campaign entitled Don't Major in Debt that has, over the past several months, established a presence on Facebook, Twitter and college campuses, with users sharing their personal college finance stories.

- [www.nypirg.org/DontMajorInDebt](http://www.nypirg.org/DontMajorInDebt)
- [www.facebook.com/DontMajorInDebt](http://www.facebook.com/DontMajorInDebt)
- [www.twitter.com/DontMajorInDebt](http://www.twitter.com/DontMajorInDebt)

The new website was developed and implemented by the New York State Higher Education Services Corporation (HESC). The New York Public Interest Research Group (NYPIRG), in collaboration with boutique media agency The Field (Social), directed a dynamic national public service announcement campaign to promote this valuable new resource.

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#### **About Jane Lynch:**

Jane Lynch cut her theatrical teeth at The Second City, Steppenwolf Theatre and in many church basements all over the greater Chicago-land area helping her become the comedic talent she is today. Jane can currently be seen in the Golden Globe and SAG Award winning Ryan Murphy television series *Glee* on FOX as the one-liner powerhouse coach Sue Sylvester. With her magnificent comedic timing, Jane has earned herself an Emmy Award for Outstanding Supporting Actress, a Golden Globe Award for Best Performance by an Actress in a Supporting Role, and a SAG award nomination for her role as Sue Sylvester on *Glee*. With her wit and luminous stage presence, Jane served as the host for the 63<sup>rd</sup> Annual Primetime Emmy Awards. Some of her other recent television credits include the STARZ series *Party Down*, *Lovespring*, a Lifetime original series, *Desperate Housewives* and *Weeds* as well as the last season of *The L Word* opposite Cybill Shepherd. She has recurring roles on *Two and a Half Men*, where she was nominated for an Emmy for Outstanding Guest Actress, *Criminal Minds* and *The New Adventures of Old Christine*. Jane recently added author to her repertoire. Her memoir, *Happy Accidents*, was released in September 2011 and includes a foreword written by the legendary Carol Burnett. Jane Lynch, with her comedic timing, fantastic look, and remarkable wit makes her an actress to watch.

#### **About NYPIRG:**

NYPIRG is New York State's largest student-directed research and advocacy organization, a nonpartisan, not-for-profit group established to empower, train and educate students and community members through organizing and advocacy efforts in order to solve significant problems affecting residents in New York State and across the country. As a vigilant government watchdog, NYPIRG's principal areas of concern include, among others, consumer rights, accessible, affordable and quality higher education, and voter registration with a particular emphasis on typically under-represented communities. NYPIRG's 20 college campus chapters provide much of our energy, resources and activism. Students at NYPIRG

chapters work on projects based upon NYPIRG's community-based, statewide and national agendas.

**About HESC:**

HESC is New York State's student financial aid agency that helps people pay for college and a national leader in providing need-based grant and scholarship award money to college-going students. At HESC's core are programs like the Tuition Assistance Program (TAP), numerous state scholarships, federal college access grants and a highly successful College Savings program. HESC puts college within the reach of hundreds of thousands of New Yorkers each year through programs like these and through the guidance it provides to students, families and counselors. In 2010-11, HESC helped more than 413,000 students achieve their college dreams by providing \$991 million in grants, scholarships and federal student loan guarantees, including \$855 million awarded through the Tuition Assistance Program (TAP).

**About The Field (Social):**

A multi-disciplinary, boutique advertising agency, The Field (Social) knows it's all about the story. It's always been about the story, and in today's complex network of digital, broadcast and social media landscapes, The Field (Social) is able to tell strategic and engaging stories for longer, in more detail, to more people and using several voices at once. Founded by Michael Porte, this team of creatives, producers, animators and editors together with talented online, social media, interactive, experimental and PR specialists offers creative solutions to our clients' marketing challenges through exhaustive planning and by executing smart, cross-platform strategies.