



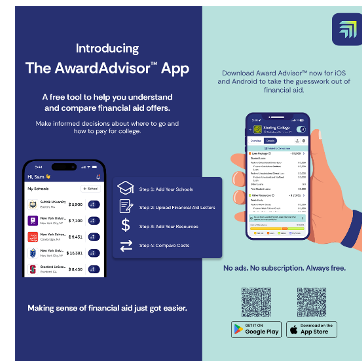
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Louisiana Education Loan Authority Makes Free College Financing Tool Available to Louisiana Students and Families

The Award Advisor™ app brings clarity to college financial aid decisions

BATON ROUGE, May 1, 2026 - Navigating complex college financial aid decisions with confidence just got easier with a new free tool the Louisiana Education Loan Authority (Lela) is making available to Louisiana students, out-of-state students attending Louisiana universities and their families.

Award Advisor™, a free app for iPhone and Android, helps students and families make sense of often confusing financial aid letters by enabling them to compare college offers side-by-side and helping them understand the true cost of higher education—so they can make confident, informed decisions. Award Advisor™ was developed by the Vermont Student Assistance Corp., and Lela, Louisiana's nonprofit resource for FAFSA completion and college access, is an Award Advisor Network Partner.



Learn more
about Award
Advisor™.

Award Advisor translates each letter into clear, comparable terms, showing what's free money, what needs to be repaid, and the true cost of each school. Families can view detailed breakdowns or simple side-by-side comparisons, export PDFs for discussions, and even model their own funds into the equation to see the full picture.

Award Advisor is especially helpful for first-generation students and modest-income families, fostering informed "kitchen table" conversations about costs, obligations, and tradeoffs. High school counselors also benefit, saving time on calculations and explanations—so they can focus on advising students.

The app is ad-free. It's a trusted resource at a critical moment, helping students make smarter, stress-free decisions about college.

Lela's work with students, families, high school guidance counselors and financial aid officers underscores the need for tools like Award Advisor. Lela is a division of the Louisiana Public Facilities Authority (LPFA).

"Making college more affordable and accessible for Louisiana students is Lela's mission, and that's why we wanted to bring Award Advisor™ to Louisiana," said LPFA Vice President of Marketing and Program Development. "Award Advisor™ bridges the gap between complex award letters and practical information, so families can focus on making the best decisions for their future."

The Challenge

Students and families often struggle to answer simple questions from their award letters:

- What is free money versus loans?

- What needs to be paid back?
- What is the actual cost after aid?

Each college presents aid information differently, making comparisons difficult. Award Advisor tackles this longstanding challenge, providing consistent, understandable, and comparable data.

How Award Advisor Helps

Award Advisor is particularly powerful for first-generation students and modest-income families, fostering meaningful “kitchen table” conversations about financial obligations and tradeoffs.

For high school counselors and advisors, the platform eliminates much of the manual work involved in interpreting aid letters, allowing them to focus on guidance and decision-making rather than repetitive calculations and explanations. Colleges benefit as well: students who understand their costs upfront are more likely to enroll with confidence, reducing financial misunderstandings and lowering the risk of stop-outs.

Simple, Transparent, and Free

Using Award Advisor is easy:

1. Download the app onto your iPhone or Android device.
2. Register with basic information.
3. Add schools and scan financial aid letters.

Award Advisor’s engine translates each award letter into consistent, common terms. Students can view information at a high level or dive into detailed breakdowns, with transparency back to the original award letter language. They can also include their own personal funds to see a complete picture of their unique college financing situation.

The app offers two clear comparison views:

- **Detailed breakdown:** Gift aid, loans, other aid, and remaining gap.
- **Simplified view:** Free money versus student obligation.

Students can export translated award letters into standardized award letter PDFs for family or counselor discussions, or export comparison data to Excel or Google Sheets for deeper analysis. Award Advisor transforms a confusing collection of letters into clear, actionable information.

A Trusted Resource

Award Advisor is designed as a trusted resource at a critical moment. The app allows students and families to explore nonprofit-only student loan providers if needed to fill gaps, but it contains no traditional advertising. Its goal is singular: helping students and families make better, more informed financial decisions about college.

Availability

Award Advisor™ is available now for free on iPhone and Android devices. Families and counselors are encouraged to explore the app and see how clarity can change the college decision process.

Students, families, and navigators can **download Award Advisor™ today and turn confusing award letters into clear, actionable insight.** Award Advisor is available now on the [App Store](#) and [Google Play](#), or at awardadvisor.org. Read more on Lela’s website at <https://lela.org/award-advisor/>

About Louisiana Education Loan Authority (Lela)

The Louisiana Education Loan Authority (Lela) is Louisiana's nonprofit resource for free FAFSA completion assistance, college access and affordable financing and is a division of the Louisiana Public Facilities Authority (LPFA), a nonprofit public trust established to bring financing assistance and advantages to the people of Louisiana. Since its inception, Lela has provided financing and outreach assistance to more than 465,000 Louisiana students and their families.

About Award Advisor™

Award Advisor™ empowers students and families to navigate the financial aid process with confidence. By providing clarity, transparency, and actionable information, it transforms complex financial aid letters into understandable data, supporting smarter college choices and reducing financial stress.

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