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Dear Unemployment Insurance Claimant:

We are writing to urge you to consider taking advantage of new opportunities for education and training available now to unemployed workers. President Obama announced that workers like you who are getting unemployment insurance (UI) benefits will receive special consideration for financial aid to help pay for job training or education. You may also be able to continue receiving UI benefits while enrolled. Studies have shown that workers with more education and training have more secure jobs and higher wages.

You may be eligible for financial aid assistance through the Federal Pell Grant program. Federal Pell Grants can be used to cover some education and training expenses and are accepted at nearly all universities and community colleges as well as many trade and technical schools. Even if you do not qualify for a Pell Grant, you may be eligible for other types of financial aid.

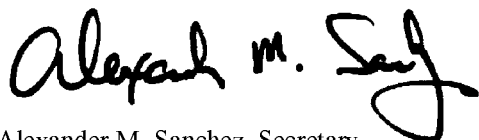
If you are interested in pursuing these opportunities, here are the steps you should take:

1. Decide what type of training best meets your needs. Please visit <http://www.mhec.state.md.us/career/WIA/searchfor.asp> or a local community college for help in identifying potential education and training opportunities.
2. Contact the institution for enrollment information and to complete the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA). You may also apply online at www.fafsa.ed.gov or call 1-800-4FEDAID for Pell Grant and other Federal financial aid opportunities. **PRESENT** this letter to the training program/school you have selected. For the next 90 days, this letter will verify that you are receiving unemployment insurance benefits. While this letter does not guarantee you a Pell Grant, your training program/school may use it to adjust your financial aid eligibility. After 90 days (or if this letter is misplaced), you may provide alternate documentation (such as your UI check stub or copy of your debit card on-line statement) confirming that you are receiving UI.
3. If you are notified of a Pell Grant award you must contact your nearest Maryland One-Stop Career Center to schedule an appointment to apply for a UI work search waiver. To be considered for a work search waiver, you must provide the following items at the time of your appointment: copies of your Pell Grant award letter; this unemployment insurance letter; and a description of the training program printed from the WIA approved training provider list (available at the web address above.) If your waiver is approved, the One-Stop Career Center will forward electronic approval to the Division of Unemployment Insurance to prevent the interruption of your UI benefits.

A list of the One-Stop Career Centers in Maryland is on the reverse side of this letter.

While our economy is struggling, you have a chance to improve your skills and lay the foundation for a stronger economic future. We encourage you to consider this opportunity.

Sincerely,



Alexander M. Sanchez, Secretary
Department of Labor, Licensing and Regulation



James E. Lyons, Sr., Secretary
Maryland Higher Education Commission