



# Illinois Student Assistance Commission and Knack partner for student success

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CHICAGO – [The Illinois Student Assistance Commission](#) (ISAC), the state’s college access and financial aid agency, has partnered with [Knack](#), a unique mobile app that allows students to play video games to discover skill sets that will assist them in achieving academic success, and then matches those skills to education and career paths. Used by employers around the world for talent acquisition and development, Knack’s mobile games are also used by education and skill development providers. The app is supported by leading charitable foundations in connecting economically and socially disadvantaged youth to workforce skill development and career opportunities in the United States and abroad.

“Much of ISAC’s statewide college access and outreach work focuses on lower income high school students from homes where there might not be any college-going experience—students who may not have the support and services that help them identify and build the skill sets that will improve their success in college and the workforce,” said Eric Zarnikow, executive director of ISAC. “ISAC is pleased to be the first state agency to lead the way in utilizing this innovative mobile technology to assist high

school students to discover their strongest talents, uncover areas that need work, and help them and their counselors design a successful educational path to future employment.”

Unlike traditional multiple choice personality and standardized tests, Knack offers a fun and interactive mobile way to evaluate [cognitive and non-cognitive skill sets](#) that impact student success—including foundational skills needed for thriving in the digital economy, such as logical reasoning, critical thinking, numerical reasoning, open mindedness, grit, drive, conscientiousness, growth mindset, intellectual curiosity, learning agility, creativity, teamwork, social intelligence, and leadership—and then aligns those skills to potential career paths.

“Knack leverages the power of games, machine intelligence, predictive data analytics, and state of the art behavioral science to deliver rigorous insights so people can discover their strongest talents and most promising education and career paths,” said Guy Halfteck, founder and CEO of Knack. “Having seen its transformative impact on employer talent acquisition and talent pipelines into the workforce, we are especially excited that ISAC is seeking to bring the power of the app to help level the playing field and improve the high school to college transition for all Illinois students.”

In addition to using the technology with students, ISAC will also use the application to help identify future [ISACorps](#) members—the recent college graduates ISAC trains as near peer mentors to assist high school students in navigating the college-going and financial aid process. ISAC looks to hire ISACorps members who have similar backgrounds to and are from the communities they will serve.

“We couldn’t be more pleased to support ISAC’s partnership with Knack,” said Hardik Bhatt, chief digital officer of the State of Illinois and secretary designate for Innovation and Technology. “This is another important advance in our Going Mobile in Illinois initiative to deliver best in class innovation and technology that enable and empower Illinois residents and business collaboration across the state.”

### About ISAC

The mission of the Illinois Student Assistance Commission (ISAC) is to help make college accessible and affordable for students throughout Illinois. ISAC provides comprehensive, objective, and timely information on education and financial aid for students and their families--giving them access to the tools they need to make the educational choices that are right for them. Then, through the state scholarship and grant programs ISAC administers, ISAC can help students make those choices a reality. [www.isac.org](http://www.isac.org)

## About Knack

Knack is a mission-driven technology startup company that combines the universal power of video games, state of the art behavioral science, and artificial intelligence to give people of all walks of life the power to discover their potential and connect with education and economic opportunity. Knack uses its predictive data analytics platform to create inclusive access to education and employment opportunities, alleviate poverty, reduce inequality, and make the world more equitable and fair. Knack users include individuals, employers of all size, education providers, and local, state and national governments. [www.knack.it](http://www.knack.it)