

College Connection

Start **HERE!** for Tips to Get Ready for College

A Newsletter for High School Juniors
mystudentloanonline.nd.gov

Winter 2006 Vol. 3: Issue 1



A Students Guide to Setting Goals

It probably comes as no surprise to you that students are more active than ever before. Trying to find the right balance between school, extra-curricular activities, jobs and everything else takes planning. The same concept applies to your finances. Without a clear understanding of budgeting and goal setting, many people find themselves frustrated that their hard work and effort show so few results.

Learning the fundamentals of budgeting is not difficult. With a little thoughtful planning and a commitment to achieving your goals, the road to financial success is within your reach! Here are a few tips to help begin your savings plan:

- Decide what goals are important to you.
- Set priorities, do some research, and establish a budget.
- List your income and expenses.
- Think of savings as a regular expense.
- Pay yourself first!

Why is saving a portion of your income important? By starting early, you begin to establish good financial habits that will follow you for the rest of your life. Saving a portion of your money is like having insurance; it provides you with freedom and flexibility.

When something unexpected happens or you reach a financial goal, you won't have to borrow money and pay additional interest.

An easy way to start is by opening a savings account. Some of the benefits include:

- Your money will be safe.
- Your money will make money, and,
- Your money is out of sight and can be used at anytime.

SLND offers another important resource, the Debt Management Guide. Learn tips about budgeting, controlling credit card debt and much more! It can be requested at mystudentloanonline.nd.gov/things_to_know.jsp or by calling 1-800-554-2717. Best of luck as you begin the journey of achieving financial freedom!

Resources Provided to Students

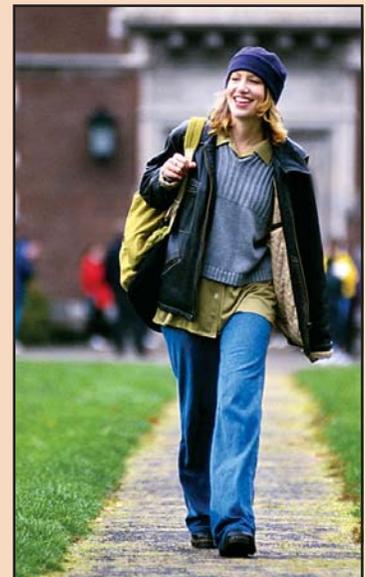
Are you thinking about life after high school? Many students want to pursue higher education after they graduate but are unsure of where to begin. Student Loans of North Dakota (SLND) provides several educational resources to help make the transition from high school to college an easy one. Some of our most requested items include:

Life 101, a newspaper publication, provides readers with information about financial aid, credit card tips and how to start a budget. It also profiles famous college graduates and the impact higher education had in their lives.

College Connection Center is an interactive CD-Rom that highlights colleges in North Dakota, types of financial aid, money matters and other important information.

The College Bound Family Calendar is a step-by-step guide for students and their parents with helpful tips and advice about going to college, important test deadlines, financial aid and scholarship information.

Most students have already received these important materials. If for some reason you did not, please contact College Information Service at 1-800-554-2717.



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Creative Ways to Cut College Costs

With graduation drawing near, it's natural for students to start thinking about life after high school. For many seniors, continuing their education at a college or trade school is the next step in securing the skills and knowledge required to find a good job. While higher education is a great investment in your future, it does require hard work, dedication and of course, money.

For most students, loans are the primary means by which to attend school. As with any loan, it does eventually have to be repaid. There are ways, however, to reduce the amount of debt you accumulate during college. With these ideas, you can find ways to cut college costs!

Get college credit in high school

One of the easiest ways to reduce

higher education costs is to cut down on the time you spend in college. Motivated high school students can earn college credits by taking upper level courses that offer both high school and college credit.

Students can earn college credit in one of three ways: through Advanced Placement, International Baccalaureate or through dual enrollment courses. These courses usually cost significantly less than traditional classes. Be careful not to overload on college courses. Earning poor grades can lower your GPA and potentially make you ineligible for merit-based financial aid.

Get rewarded for your service

Don't let your good deeds go unrewarded. Americorps, the Peace Corps and Teach for America all offer

educational service awards to students seeking cash and a way to make a difference in the world. The best part? Unlike other scholarships and grants, these service awards won't affect your federal financial aid.

SLND offers another important resource, the Debt Management Guide. Learn tips about planning, budgeting and setting realistic financial goals. It can be requested at mystudentloanonline.nd.gov/things_to_know.jsp or by calling 1-800-554-2717.

By utilizing these and other opportunities, you might find ways to receive your education at a reduced rate. Now that's a good deal!

Information provided by Bankrate.com

College Planning Made Easy!

Student Loans of North Dakota (SLND) has been helping students reach their dream of going to college for many years. Our Web site, mystudentloanonline.nd.gov, is a great resource to learn more about your college options.

Simply check out the links under "Start Here" on the home page to research individual college costs and information, learn about scholarships and other opportunities, and get answers to some of your financial aid questions.

For more assistance, call College Information Service (CIS) at 1-800-554-2717 or e-mail bnDSL@nd.gov. It doesn't matter if you plan to attend college in North Dakota or somewhere else, CIS can help answer your most challenging college-related questions.

By getting started early, you will find numerous ways to make your college experience a positive one!



Get Started!

- Select a college or technical school
- Check out scholarship opportunities
- Apply for admission
- Apply for financial aid early
- Apply for housing
- Keep a financial aid file