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## Tip<sup>of</sup> the Week

Compile a calendar of important dates for students to remember regarding their financial aid. Then submit it to your campus newspaper editor to be included in the publication's calendar of events.

## Federal updates

### Reauthorization watch

Last week, TG updated its Higher Education Act reauthorization page on *TG Online* with information on and links for several recent developments:

#### New bills

- Legislation concerning consolidating student loans

The House Education and the Workforce Committee introduced H.R. 1617. The bill, sponsored by Rep. Thomas Petri, proposes to allow borrowers seeking a consolidation loan the choice between consolidating under a fixed or variable interest rate. To view the bill text, visit

[www.tgslc.org/reauth/reauth\\_bills\\_109.cfm#HR1617](http://www.tgslc.org/reauth/reauth_bills_109.cfm#HR1617).

- Student Aid Reward Act of 2005 (STAR Act)

The Senate Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions Committee introduced S. 754, the Senate version of the Student Aid Reward Act of 2005. The bill, sponsored by Sen. Edward Kennedy, proposes to create a program that encourages schools to participate in a more cost efficient delivery of federal student loans, and to use the savings to taxpayers to increase grant aid. To view the bill text, visit [www.tgslc.org/reauth/reauth\\_bills\\_109.cfm#S754](http://www.tgslc.org/reauth/reauth_bills_109.cfm#S754).

- September 11 Surviving Spouse Student Relief Act of 2005

The House Education and the Workforce Committee introduced H.R. 1523, the September 11 Surviving Spouse Student Relief Act of 2005. The bill, sponsored by Rep. Carolyn McCarthy, proposes to provide student loan forgiveness to the surviving spouses of the September 11, 2001, victims. To view the bill text, visit [www.tgslc.org/reauth/reauth\\_bills\\_109.cfm#HR1523](http://www.tgslc.org/reauth/reauth_bills_109.cfm#HR1523).

- Teacher and Nurse Support Act of 2005

The House Education and the Workforce Committee introduced H.R. 1522, the Teacher and Nurse Support Act of 2005. The bill, sponsored by Rep. Carolyn McCarthy, proposes to expand student loan forgiveness programs to teachers and nurses. To view the bill text, visit [www.tgslc.org/reauth/reauth\\_bills\\_109.cfm#HR1522](http://www.tgslc.org/reauth/reauth_bills_109.cfm#HR1522).

- Higher Education Opportunity Through Pell Grant Expansion Act of 2005 (HOPE Act).

The Senate Health, Education, Labor and Pensions Committee introduced S. 697, the Higher Education Opportunity Through Pell Grant Expansion Act of 2005 (HOPE Act). The bill, sponsored by Sen. Barack Obama, proposes to increase the Pell grant maximum award to \$5,100 and ensure that the Pell grant maximum is increased annually to keep pace with inflation. To view the bill text, visit [www.tgslc.org/reauth/reauth\\_bills\\_109.cfm#S697](http://www.tgslc.org/reauth/reauth_bills_109.cfm#S697).

### **More information**

To stay current with the latest updates to developments in the reauthorization process, visit TG's HEA Reauthorization Web page on *TG Online* at [www.tgslc.org/reauth/index.cfm](http://www.tgslc.org/reauth/index.cfm).

### **Latest volume of the 2005-2006 FSA Handbook now online**

ED has released Volume 1 of the new 2005-2006 *Federal Student Aid Handbook* (FSA Handbook). This is one of only two volumes that have been released so far for the upcoming award year:

- The Application and Verification Guide
- Volume 1, Student Eligibility

The current volumes are available on *TG Online* at [www.tgslc.org/resources/fsa\\_handbook.cfm](http://www.tgslc.org/resources/fsa_handbook.cfm). Other volumes will be posted as they are released. Once all the volumes of the 2005-2006 FSA Handbook have been released, TG will provide a single downloadable file encompassing all of the volumes. Watch future editions of *Shoptalk Online* for details.

## **TG updates**

### **Debt management and default aversion training now available through TG's POSITIVE+BALANCE™ Program**

Financial aid professionals can now take advantage of the latest tools to help their students successfully manage student loan repayment and learn responsible money management practices.

POSITIVE+BALANCE is a financial literacy and life success training program that helps to foster students' skills and knowledge in money management, academic success, and career development. POSITIVE+BALANCE consists of two programs — one for students and one for professionals who interact with students. Each program has multiple modules that focus on a student's financial life from entering college through exit counseling, graduation, and student loan repayment.

The program is fully customizable for both students and campus professionals and can be integrated with existing campus default aversion activities.

#### **How it works**

To begin taking advantage of the program, interested financial aid administrators should visit the program's Web page at [www.tgslc.org/balance](http://www.tgslc.org/balance) to learn more about the offering.

Interested individuals should then download the request form available on the right side of the page, and fill out the short assessment. Completed forms are then faxed to TG for evaluation and follow up.

TG's default aversion team will then meet with campus financial aid professionals to help assess and determine individual needs. A customized program then is created, which may incorporate some of TG's other default aversion tools and resources.

The final customized program is then delivered by TG default aversion professionals, who will follow up with the school and monitor its results.

#### **Learn more**

To learn more about POSITIVE+BALANCE or TG's other default prevention solutions, tools, and services, you may contact your school consultant or national account representative.

You may also contact Joe Braxton or Clarissa Peereboom, TG's default aversion consultants directly. Joe Braxton may be reached at (800) 252-9743, ext. 4696, or by sending an e-mail message to [joe.braxton@tgslc.org](mailto:joe.braxton@tgslc.org). Clarissa Peereboom may be reached at (800) 252-9743, ext. 4765, or by sending an e-mail message to [clarissa.peereboom@tgslc.org](mailto:clarissa.peereboom@tgslc.org).

## **Have your students sign up now for TG's scholarship drawing**

TG and our public-service Web site, *Adventures In Education*, are providing a \$500 scholarship for the fall 2005 semester to one college student through a random drawing.

Any student who will be enrolled full time at a college or university during the fall 2005 semester may be eligible to win the \$500 Milton G. Wright Scholarship to help pay for college expenses. TG will select one winner of the scholarship, which honors TG's former president and CEO. The scholarship will be sent to the financial aid office at the accredited college or university that the winner attends to be applied to his or her account.

### **Registration**

To register for the \$500 scholarship drawing, students will need to complete the online entry form available at [www.AIE.org](http://www.AIE.org). The winner of the scholarship will be drawn on May 2, 2005, and will be notified shortly thereafter. Only one entry is permitted per person.

## **Trends and issues**

### **TG co-sponsors online chat event on consolidation, forgiveness**

Student loan consolidation and forgiveness will be the topics of an upcoming *Mapping Your Future*<sup>™</sup> online chat event scheduled for Tuesday, May 10, 2005 at 6 p.m. (CDT) on the *Mapping Your Future* Web site, [www.mapping-your-future.org](http://www.mapping-your-future.org).

*Mapping Your Future*, a public-service, nonprofit organization providing college, career, financial aid, and financial literacy information and services, will offer this special chat event. Experts from across the country will answer questions during the chat, which is designed to help students and their families who are considering consolidation lock in low interest rates and to answer questions about federal loan forgiveness, discharge, and cancellation programs. Anyone with Internet access can join the chat by visiting the *Mapping Your Future* Web site. At the time of the event, visitors should go to [mapping-your-future.org](http://mapping-your-future.org) and select the chat session at the top of the home page.

Other special chat events are scheduled during the year:

- August 9, 2005: College admissions and standardized tests
- September 13, 2005: Debt management strategies

*Mapping Your Future* is a national, collaborative, public-service project of financial aid industry partners that provides free college, career, financial aid, and financial literacy services to students, families, and schools.

## Legislative update

The April 21 issue of TG's *Legislative Report* includes a Congressional update with an update on the FY 2006 Budget Resolutions in conference, along with an update on the 79<sup>th</sup> Texas Legislative Session and how the student aid provisions of the Texas House and Senate appropriations bills differ dramatically. Keep up with the latest developments by reading the full report on *TG Online* at [www.tgslc.org/lege\\_report/index.cfm](http://www.tgslc.org/lege_report/index.cfm).

## This, that, and the other

According to a *Washington Post* article, students at Garrett College, a two-year school in Maryland, can raft, hike, and snowboard their way through a college education to receive a degree in adventure sports. It's a sign not only of how popular extreme outdoor sports have become, but also of just how much higher education has changed, the article reports. As college has become an increasingly essential means to a better income and more opportunities, some say college has gotten much less philosophical and much more keenly focused on getting a job. At the Center for Adventure and Outdoor Studies, students learn to repair a mountain bike, make a splint for a broken leg in the middle of the woods, and teach troubled kids about the outdoors. To read the article on [azcentral.com](http://azcentral.com/families/education/articles/0415sportsmajor-ON.html), visit [www.azcentral.com/families/education/articles/0415sportsmajor-ON.html](http://www.azcentral.com/families/education/articles/0415sportsmajor-ON.html).



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*Shoptalk Online* is published by TG. Unless specifically noted, the policies and procedures outlined in *Shoptalk Online* apply only to loans made under the TG guarantee and not to loans underwritten by other guarantors.

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