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Tip^{of} the Week

With spring graduation approaching, your office is probably considering its default aversion materials for graduates. TG provides schools a variety of products for managing default including information on cohort default rates, an online assessment tool for your default aversion program, consulting and training services, and various other offerings. You'll find a complete listing on *TG Online* at www.tgslc.org/default/index.cfm.

Federal updates

New information on Loan Purchase Programs

ED has released two new Electronic Announcements (E-ANN) about the Ensuring Continued Access to Student Loans Act (ECASLA):

- E-ANN 56, issued on April 13, describes the Notice of Intent to Participate submission process for the 2009-10 Loan Purchase Programs. Since the 2009-10 Loan Purchase Programs are new programs — and not extensions of earlier ECASLA Loan Purchase programs — each FFELP originating lender or subsequent

holder that wishes to participate (or have a subsequent holder of loans it originated participate) in the 2009-10 Loan Purchase Programs must execute a 2009 Notice of Intent to Participate, regardless of any earlier submissions.

Loans first disbursed on or after May 1, 2009 for the 2009-10 award year are eligible for the 2009-10 Loan Purchase Programs. However, a lender may not sell eligible loans or participation interests to ED on which the first disbursement was made prior to the date that ED receives the 2009 Notice of Intent to Participate. Therefore, only a 2009 Notice of Intent to Participate received on or before May 1, 2009, will qualify eligible loans on which the first disbursement was made on May 1, 2009. A 2009 Notice of Intent to Participate received after May 1, 2009, limits eligible loans to only those where the first disbursement was made on or after the date ED receives the 2009 Notice of Intent to Participate.

Instructions on the submission process for the 2009 Notice of Intent to Participate are attached to the E-ANN. ED will provide submission information for the 2009-10 MPA and MLSA in a subsequent announcement.

- E-ANN 57, issued on April 16, 2009, announces a 1.24 percent participant yield rate for the quarter ending June 30, 2009. This rate should be used when calculating Participant (i.e., ED's) Yield on Participation Principal balances that have been funded by ED during the quarter of April 1, 2009 through June 30, 2009.

For more information

The full announcements, and all previous ECASLA guidance issued by ED, are available at www.federalstudentaid.ed.gov/ffelp.

Current special allowance rates: quarter ending March 31, 2009

The following rates apply for the quarter ending March 31, 2009:

- The average of the bond equivalent rates of the 91-day Treasury bills auctioned during the quarter ending March 31, 2009, is 0.23 percent.
- The average of the bond equivalent rates of the quotes of the three-month commercial paper (financial) rates in effect for each of the days in the quarter ending March 31, 2009, is 0.74 percent.

The FFELP special allowance rates for the most recent quarter are available on *TG Online* at www.tgslc.org/policy/index.cfm.

Questions

For questions about special allowance rates, contact TG customer assistance at (800) 845-6267 or send an e-mail message to cust.assist@tgslc.org.

TG updates

Conference spotlight: The TG Annual Training Conference begins tomorrow

The 2009 TG Annual Training Conference kicks off tomorrow, April 22, at the Renaissance Hotel in Austin, Texas. This year's event features more than 50 specialized sessions and workshops covering seven different industry subject areas, or tracks. Given the comprehensive variety of seminars and trainings, conference attendees will be able to explore financial aid issues that matter to them, including Income-Based Repayment, the new cohort default rate calculation, financial literacy, default prevention strategies, and much more.



Opening session

This year's conference features a new session for first-time attendees and other interested participants. Offered on Wednesday, April 22 at 9:30 a.m., this session will provide an overview of the conference agenda and provide participants tips for making the most of their conference experience.

The conference officially starts at 11 a.m. on Wednesday, when Sue McMillin, TG president and CEO, and Dora Ann Verde, TG Board chair, will welcome attendees. Lunch at 11:30 a.m. will be followed by keynote speaker, Bill Stainton, who will focus on how the Beatles' formula for success can invigorate your financial aid office.

Conference logistics

If attending this year's conference, here are a few logistical details to keep in mind.

- **Registration:** Conference registration is located in the atrium of the lobby level of the hotel. Registration will open Wednesday, April 22, and Thursday, April 23, at 8 a.m. Attendees can pay for registration with credit card, check, or cash. General conference information will be available as well as directions, entertainment information, conference agendas, and more. Remember to keep your registration badge with you throughout the conference. The badge offers you entry to TG activities.
- **Transportation help:** Airport shuttle support and directions from the airport can be found at www.tgslc.org/tgconference/directions.cfm.
- **Conference attire:** Austin's April weather is typically mild. For sessions during the day as well as evening events, business casual dress is appropriate. Keep in mind that meeting room temperatures vary.

- **Room rates for government employees:** For attendees who qualify for the government room rate, be sure to bring proper identification for hotel check-in.
- **Staying active:** For early morning risers, the Arboretum area around the hotel has a short hiking trail leading to a duck pond.

Agenda online

The conference agenda is available online and offers a day-by-day rundown of sessions according to subject and time. The agenda provides a tool for choosing sessions, learning more about keynote speakers, and planning for evening events.

Find out more about this year's varied agenda by visiting *TG Online* at www.tgslc.org/tgconference/index.cfm.

Shoptalk Online celebrates 500th edition

This week, *Shoptalk Online* marks its 500th, or quincentenary, edition. For almost two decades, TG's newsletter has offered information on regulatory issues vital to financial aid administrators. Its features explain industry developments and provide a window onto a field of growing importance and complexity. In these days of almost constant change in the economy and in the regulations that govern financial aid, policy guidance like that offered in *Shoptalk Online* can be invaluable.



TG launched *Shoptalk* in August 1990 as a monthly print publication. The first article of the issue articulated the newsletter's mission this way: "We want *Shoptalk* to be a proactive publication — to anticipate the issues and trends and to answer your questions." *Shoptalk* helped 'deformalize' the regulatory guidance that TG offered to schools and lenders in Executive Director Memorandums and the *TGSLC Newsletter*. It also provided a regular channel of communication on a growing array of topics, including financial aid training, tips on navigating the intricacies of regulatory requirements, profiles of customer-facing team members, and news about TG's services and products.

Despite its expanded coverage, *Shoptalk*, and its electronic successor, *Shoptalk Online*, have remained firmly fixed on legislative and regulatory issues important to schools and lenders. "We stay focused on what our customers need to know about the changes that affect them," said Nina Hold, assistant vice president of TG's policy and regulatory affairs team and one of the original architects of *Shoptalk*. "*Shoptalk*, and then *Shoptalk Online*, have always reflected our customers' priorities whether that meant articles on reauthorization of the Higher Education Act or modifications to the *Common Manual*."

A growing archive of knowledge

Early this decade, *Shoptalk* underwent various changes to take advantage of the speed and ease of e-mail delivery. TG inaugurated an electronic newsletter called

TG NetWorks in 2000, which supplemented the monthly coverage of *Shoptalk*. The two publications — *Shoptalk* and *TG NetWorks* — merged in early 2001 to become *Shoptalk Online*, delivered weekly to customer e-mail boxes. With *Shoptalk Online*, TG could provide schools and lenders a more current picture of regulatory and legislative shifts. It could also offer a database of regulatory information through its archive.



Electronic newsletters offer value in other ways. *Shoptalk Online's* [growing archive](#) provides historical perspective on changes in student aid. The archive also represents a tradition of support with issue after issue focused on topics like the Ensuring Continued Access to Student Loans Act, financial literacy training for students and schools, and updates on TG's industry trainings.

A short review of past issues produces a list of features that schools and lenders can continue to read for helpful guidance and insight, including:

- **[Sticky situations](#)**: In 2006, *Shoptalk Online* inaugurated a series on complicated regulatory issues. The first article in Sticky Situations epitomized the friendly but incisive tone of the series: "As a highly skilled financial aid professional, you know that you've got a handle on almost all of the Title IV rules that you have to put into practice on a day-to-day basis. But you also know that just about every week brings one of those head-scratching, brain-tickling, sticky situations that require you to sit back and say, 'Now, how do I handle this one?'"
- **Higher Education Act (HEA) reauthorization**: *Shoptalk Online*, along with the rest of the financial aid community, followed the seemingly never-ending saga of Congress' reauthorization of the HEA through more than a dozen temporary extensions. When reauthorization was completed with the Higher Education Opportunity Act (HEOA), *Shoptalk Online* announced the event in the article "[In Washington this week: Pigs fly](#)" and then launched a comprehensive series of articles to help our customers implement the many new provisions as quickly as possible.
- **[Policy potpourri](#)**: TG's Policy Potpourri section offers an ever popular forum for exploring regulatory issues and the more difficult questions that administrators tackle.
- **Profiles of TG team members**: Putting a face to a name or function has been the purpose behind a series of profiles of TG team members who meet customers on a daily basis, whether over the phone or in person. In the electronic pages of *Shoptalk Online*, readers got to know [Teresa Bobadilla](#), one of TG's product managers; [Bonita Peebles](#), a member of TG's customer assistance team, now assistant director of pre-college success; and [Kathy Palmer](#), a TG account executive working in California.

500 issues — 500 ways to support you

Each week, TG's newsletter offers readers a close-up view of issues affecting higher education. This information helps schools and lenders organize and prioritize their resources. It also provides a variety of suggestions and tips for improving financial aid administration, offering financial literacy training, and more. We at *Shoptalk Online* would like to thank our readers and commend them for their efforts on behalf of students. We look forward to serving our customers with important information on federal student aid for years to come.

New Positive+Balance™ presentation helps students prepare for car ownership

For most students, a car is the most expensive purchase they will make until they buy a house. There are many different factors first-time car buyers should consider to find the right car that matches their personal needs and financial situation. A new Positive+Balance™ financial literacy presentation can help make a student's first car-buying experience a good one.

Learning the cost factors

"Buying a Car: Putting Yourself in the Driver's Seat" provides useful information and tips to help students prepare for the dealership and the financial implications of car ownership.

Students learn about different costs in determining how much they can afford to spend on a car. They're also encouraged to create a budget that factors in all car ownership costs, for example, fuel costs, repairs, and regular maintenance costs. Because a car isn't always essential for a student, the presentation encourages students to consider reasonable alternatives to vehicle ownership.

The presentation also describes the advantages and disadvantages of financing the purchase of a car versus buying one with cash. Additionally, students learn about the differences between taking out a loan for a car and leasing a car. The presentation provides a breakdown of the short-term and long-term cost implications associated with car loans and leases.

TG trainers are available to present "Buying a Car: Putting Yourself in the Driver's Seat." Presentation slides and an accompanying handout can also be downloaded free of charge from the [Positive+Balance CommunitySM](#), TG's online resource for educators and financial aid professionals seeking financial literacy solutions and support.

To learn more

For more information about Positive+Balance, visit *TG Online* at www.tgslc.org/PositiveBalance. If you would like TG's assistance in developing, implementing, or improving your financial literacy efforts, contact your account

executive at (800) 252-9743, or send an e-mail message to positivebalance@tgslc.org.

You'll also find a wealth of information and resources on financial literacy through the Positive+Balance Community. To sign up for a membership, visit www.PositiveBalance.org.

Mark your calendar for TG's industry webinar series

Since its debut in February, TG's new industry webinar series has garnered enthusiastic responses from customers across the country. Many have asked for a complete schedule for the remainder of the year, so that they can be certain not to miss future webinar training opportunities.

Please plan to join us for the upcoming training events:

- Satisfactory Academic Progress: Thursday, May 21, 2009, 2 p.m. – 3 p.m., CDT
- R2T4: Thursday, June 18, 2009, 2 p.m. – 3 p.m., CDT
- Federal Update: Thursday, July 16, 2009, 2 p.m. – 3 p.m., CDT
- Entrance and Exit Counseling: Thursday, August 20, 2009, 2 p.m. – 3 p.m., CDT
- Cash Management: Thursday, September 17, 2009, 2 p.m. – 3 p.m., CDT
- Getting Familiar with Electronic Resources: Thursday, October 15, 2009, 2 p.m. – 3 p.m., CDT
- FFELP Loan Discharge and Forgiveness: Thursday, November 19, 2009, 2 p.m. – 3 p.m., CST
- Verification: Thursday, December 17, 2009, 2 p.m. – 3 p.m., CST

More information

Registration for the webinars will be available on a quarterly basis at www.tgslc.org/training/webinars/industry.cfm. *Shoptalk Online* will publish registration reminders in advance of each scheduled event.

TG product enhancement presentations now available

Over the last three weeks, TG has offered various webinars for recent product enhancements implemented in AdvanTG Web™ and TG Loans By Web™. TG has placed presentations for the webinars online for those customers who were not able to join in the webinars or for those who just did not get a chance to download the presentation during the webinars. The presentations are available to download from *TG Online* at www.tgslc.org/training/webinars/webinars0904.cfm.

Enhancement information

To learn more about the enhancements that the webinar featured, review previous *Shoptalk Online* articles, including edition [495](#), edition [496](#), and edition [497](#).

For help

For questions about AdvanTG Web or TG Loans by Web, please contact TG's product support team at (800) 332-1455, or send an e-mail message to product.support@tgslc.org.

TG offers resources for National Financial Literacy Month

Both Houses of Congress officially recognize April as Financial Literacy Month, a time to promote the value of strong money management skills, especially to young adults. TG joins with colleges and universities across the country as they offer their students valuable information on financial literacy.

Creating an effective financial foundation

TG offers a variety of financial literacy tools designed to help you teach students the basics of money management, including a set of online interactive resources; training that can be customized for your campus; and various collateral pieces that are easy to order and supply to students.

- **Interactive tools:** Credit card statements are filled with terms, numbers, and percentages that play a role in the calculation of a credit card balance. TG offers an interactive tool for understanding these terms and calculations — available through the *Adventures In Education* (AIE™) Web site at www.aie.org/College/Paying/Earning/Credit/interactivecreditstatement.cfm — which displays an example credit card statement. Users can just move their mouse over each part of the statement to read pop-up text that concisely defines a term or explains a calculation. TG's Credit Card Skills Builder, also available through AIE at www.aie.org/College/Paying/Earning/Credit/index.cfm, demonstrates the cost of credit cards after finance and interest charges are added. The tool guides users through a simulated credit card spending spree and then calculates a virtual credit card bill summarizing purchases, available credit, and amount owed. These are just a few of the many financial literacy tools accessible through AIE.
- **An online community:** The Positive+Balance Community, available at www.PositiveBalance.org, is a Web site for educators and financial aid professionals seeking financial literacy information. The community features an online library of financial literacy resources, all of which are free and easy to download. TG's Positive+Balance presentations and training materials are available in the file library, in addition to educational resources from other sources such as the Federal Trade Commission (FTC) and the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation's (FDIC) Money Smart program. Members can contribute their own training materials to the online file library, blog about their

experiences working in financial literacy, or post comments to articles on financial literacy issues.

- **Customizable training:** Positive+Balance is TG's comprehensive financial literacy and default prevention training available to students and to the administrators that help them. TG's default prevention consultants work with schools to educate students on basic money management skills. They also offer "train the trainer" type courses to financial aid administrators working with students. TG's workshops can be tailored to the needs of a particular campus.
- **Collateral:** TG provides several brochures and envelope stuffers, available at no cost for current or graduated students. These materials focus on repayment options but also educate students on debt and empower them to make smart decisions when it comes to repayment. For example, TG's brochures answer common questions many students have about deferment, forbearance, and consolidation. And they help to keep debt management on the minds of recent graduates with loans entering repayment. To order TG's printed materials, many of which are available in English or Spanish, visit *TG Online* at www.tgslc.org/order/index.cfm.

To learn more

If you have questions about how you can use TG's default prevention team's service in your financial literacy efforts, contact Rett Anderton or Joe Braxton, TG's default aversion consultants. Rett Anderton may be reached at (800) 252-9743, ext. 4765, or by sending an e-mail message to rett.anderton@tgslc.org. Joe Braxton may be reached at (800) 252-9743, ext. 4696, or by sending an e-mail message to joe.braxton@tgslc.org.

Trends and issues

Income-Based Repayment: Webinar on lender and servicer issues

The National Council of Higher Education Loan Programs (NCHelp) has announced the next training opportunity in its series of webinars focusing on the new Income-Based Repayment (IBR) plan that will be available to borrowers beginning July 1, 2009. The upcoming webinar, scheduled for April 28, 1:30 p.m.– 3 p.m., CDT, will focus on lender and servicer processes for tracking the 36 months of paid interest, and billing for interest and special allowance.

Registration

Register for this free webinar at <http://w.on24.com/r.htm?e=140227&s=1&k=16B1C41DB73E53FDD0A99AF4CB8B44DB>. Please note that NCHelp webinars deliver both the audio and presentation slides via your PC; there is no dial-in "audio only" option.

This, that, and the other

A recent study presented at the "Rethinking Admissions" conference at Wake Forest University considered the effectiveness of various forms of test preparation for college admissions. The study found that all kinds of test preparation, including books, computer software, high school courses, and private courses, tend to increase students' SAT scores. However, private instruction, the most expensive option, was generally also the most effective. On average, students who took private SAT-preparation classes scored 60 points higher on the exam than did those without such classes.

Read the complete article in the *Chronicle of Higher Education* at http://chronicle.com/news/index.php?id=6323&utm_source=pm&utm_medium=en. Note that some articles in the *Chronicle* are available only to subscribers.



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To ask questions about *Shoptalk Online*, please contact Communications at (800) 252-9743, ext. 4732, or send an e-mail message to communications@tgscl.org.

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