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Smart Solutions

TG recommends that borrowers pursue all their federal loan options before considering taking out a private loan for educational expenses. However, if your students have exhausted their federal student loan options and would like more information about a private, educational loan, offer them an overview of the subject through [TG Online](#).

TG Report

TG's September financial literacy symposium to focus on UT Austin's financial literacy program, Bevonomics

TG concludes this year's financial literacy symposia with a free, one-day financial literacy symposium to be held at the TG Campus in Round Rock, Texas, on Tuesday, September 14. Designed to provide ideas to schools devising or

enhancing a financial literacy program, the symposium will feature an overview of Bevonomics, the financial literacy program of the University of Texas at Austin (UT Austin).

TG will be hosting participants at the event location, but also offer a portion of the event as a live broadcast over the Internet. Remote participants will be able to view the Bevonomics case study from their computers at home or office and participate in virtual activity after the presentation.

During the simulcast, remote participants will also be able to:

- Learn of resources to help build or enhance an existing financial literacy program;
- Share their perspectives on the Bevonomics case study; and
- Hear from other participants as they describe their financial literacy efforts.

More information

The simulcast will be broadcast from the TG Campus from 9 a.m.–11 a.m., Central Time.

Review a [detailed symposium agenda online](#).

Case studies from [previous financial literacy symposia](#) are available for download. Video archives of the events are also available through TG's [Positive+Balance CommunitySM](#). Note that registration with the site is required.

To register

Join TG for the simulcast of the [Texas financial literacy symposium](#).

If you are unable to log in during the scheduled live broadcast, a recording will be available for viewing shortly after the event in TG's [webinar archive](#).

Looking to do more with less? TG's session at the 2010 MASFAA Conference may help

Colleges and universities continue to be affected by the stalled economy and shrinking state budgets. At the same time, financial aid offices must contend with an array of new regulatory requirements, which can place a bind on time and resources. Putting in place new or better customer service practices may help, streamlining office management and improving the relationship with students at the same time.

On October 18, TG presenters will be offering "Best Practices in Customer Service" at the Midwest Association of Student Financial Aid Administrators (MASFAA) Fall

Conference held in Chicago at the Hyatt Regency. During this session, participants will share specific steps and procedures that have proven successful in serving students. They will also learn how best to implement many of these customer service tips.

Find out more

To learn more about TG's industry training, contact your account executive at (800) 252-9743, or send an e-mail message to relationship.management@tgsic.org.

Four things your borrowers should know as they begin the semester

By Cindy Marrs, TG default aversion consultant

The first weeks of the fall semester can be tough on students, especially freshmen adjusting to new routines, places, and the responsibility of handling their finances, perhaps for the first time. As a former financial aid counselor, I remember the broad variety of financial aid questions our office handled from sometimes anxious students and parents. Given the difficult economy, your office is probably fielding even more questions as well as helping students manage stress born out of the gloomy job forecast.

Fortunately, there are things you can do now to help allay the worry of students and parents, including making sure borrowers know their payment options and have resources to better manage loans. The benefit is that such support may translate into a more successful repayment experience down the line. It may also have a positive impact on your school's cohort default rate. Here are four suggestions on loan management to offer borrowers.

Use federal loans first

While many students will be receiving financial aid disbursements in the coming weeks, others are still in the process of applying for financial aid. A student who anticipates borrowing a student loan may view applying for a private student loan as preferable to completing the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA), so it is important to remind students of the benefits of the federal loan programs. Consider adding a link from your school's website to the Department of Education's "[Federal Aid First](#)" page, which explains the differences between federal and private education loans and provides tips for completing the FAFSA. TG's corporate website, [TG Online](#), provides borrowers a handy comparison of private and federal loans, stressing the importance of being well aware of the differences before using private loans.

Know your options for loan forgiveness and repayment

Educating borrowers about loan repayment need not be confined to entrance and exit loan counseling. An understanding of the various forgiveness and repayment options such as teacher loan forgiveness, Public Service Loan Forgiveness, and Income-Based Repayment, can affect a student's plans, from course registration and declaring a major to deciding upon a career. Making information readily available about the programs through the financial aid office, career services, and academic advising centers can assist students in making the choices right for them. Visit TG's [online request system](#) to order brochures about teacher loan forgiveness, Income-Based Repayment, and additional repayment assistance options.

Track your loans through the National Student Loan Data System

Borrowers are often unaware of their outstanding student loan balance. They may also have multiple loans with multiple lenders, which means they're not likely to have a complete picture of what they owe and to whom — unless they do some math and a bit of information gathering. The [National Student Loan Data System](#) (NSLDS) can produce that picture of a borrower's outstanding balances and loan statuses. Encourage your students to access NSLDS in order to stay on top of their loans. Doing so may also help borrowers who are approaching aggregate loan limits to plan for future education-related financial needs. TG offers borrowers an online tool for tracking their TG-guaranteed loans — [myTGSM](#). The myTG tool helps borrowers manage their loan accounts with TG, including resuming payment in cases where a borrower's loans are in default.

Use loan repayment calculators to help estimate costs

A loan repayment calculator is a great tool that can benefit students who are making decisions about whether to borrow a student loan and how much to borrow. Borrowers who have decided upon or are considering a particular career can better assess their repayment situation by reviewing their estimated monthly payment amount in conjunction with the earnings data in the Department of Labor's [Occupational Outlook Handbook](#).

About Cindy Marrs

Cindy Marrs brings a broad range of financial aid experience to her work as one of TG's default aversion consultants. For nine years, she served as a financial aid counselor at The University of Texas at Austin (UT Austin) where she managed the Community Service Work-Study Program and led the development of the AmericaReads/AmericaCounts tutoring initiative. At TG, she worked on the policy and regulatory affairs team before transitioning to the default prevention department. As a default aversion consultant, Marrs helps schools develop effective default prevention strategies and provides borrowers with entrance and exit



counseling and training on managing student loan repayment. You can reach Marrs at (800) 252-9743, ext. 4874, or by e-mail at cynthia.marrs@tgslc.org.

How TG's *Counselors Network* can serve your outreach efforts

Along with a financial deficit, the U.S. is running up a substantial "education deficit," according to a recent College Board report on college completion rates by state. The "College Competition Agenda 2010 Progress Report" notes that the U.S. ranks 12th in terms of graduation rates among industrialized nations, a fact which, like the financial deficit, could negatively affect the country's long-term prospects. The report states that high school counselors, an important link in the chain of educating and preparing students for college, are hamstrung in mitigating this deficit. Nationally, the ratio of students to high school counselors is high — almost 400 to 1 — which reduces the amount of time many counselors have to advise students on college admissions processes and potential careers.

If your college works with local high schools encouraging students to explore the college option, you'll find a great resource to offer high school counselors in TG's *Counselors Network*. A free, monthly newsletter, the *Counselors Network* provides multiple forms of support to counselors. It serves as a conduit of college information to students, offers a calendar of activities that counselors can use to promote college interest, and proposes a variety of resources, including websites, which could benefit college-bound seniors.

Offer the newsletter to your counselor colleagues, or consider subscribing yourself for the suggested tips, ideas, and resources. Here are three ways by which the newsletter could benefit high school counselors.

- **Timely resources:** Each month, *Counselors Network* spotlights one or more tools that can supplement counselor efforts. As an example, the recent September edition details the "financial aid night in a can" presentation materials that the Department of Education provides free. The newsletter also describes the latest version of the "Funding Education Beyond High School: The Guide to Federal Student Aid," the comprehensive reference for students interested in financial aid.
- **Activity checklist:** The newsletter regularly suggests a roster of timely counselor activities, such as contacting students with insufficient course credits to graduate; communicating with parents of upcoming seniors who are lacking course credits for graduation; and helping with summer school registration.
- **Tips for students:** As soon as the fall semester begins for high school students, the clock starts ticking on applying for and preparing for college. The *Counselors Network* offers counselors reminders on what steps students must complete

each month. It also recommends ways by which students can better select colleges, including campus visit tips.

To subscribe

Visit TG's *Adventures In Education* to [subscribe to the Counselors Network](#), or direct colleagues and high school counselors to the subscription page.

Industry Update

Reminder: Official FY 2008 CDRs to be issued September 13

On August 31, ED issued an [electronic announcement](#) indicating that official FY2008 cohort default rates (CDR) would be published on September 13, 2010. As part of the notice, ED indicates it will send CDRs and documentation to the individual school's Student Aid Internet Gateway (SAIG) mailbox provided the school is participating in the electronic CDR (eCDR) process. For a school not enrolled in the eCDR process, it may download its CDR and the documentation from the National Student Loan Data System (NSLDS) via the [NSLDS Professional Access website](#).

To learn more

For more information about the release of the FY 2008 official rates, schools may contact ED's Portfolio Performance Division by phone at (202) 377-4259, or send an e-mail message to fsa.schools.default.management@ed.gov. Watch future editions of *Shoptalk* for more information about CDRs.

Policy Resources

Latest IFAP postings

For the convenience of the entire financial aid community, ED assembles Title IV federal student aid guidance, resources, and information on its [Information for Financial Aid Professionals](#) (IFAP) website. Recent postings, listed by topic, include the following, presented alphabetically by category.

Award Year Processing

- [2010-09-02](#) — ACG, National SMART Grant, and Pell Grant 2009-2010 Award Year Processing Deadline
- [2010-09-02](#) — Additional TEACH Grant Closeout Information for the 2009-2010 Award Year

Cohort Default Rates

- [2010-08-31](#) — FY 2008 Official Cohort Default Rates Release Scheduled for September 13, 2010

Common origination and disbursement system

- [2010-09-02](#) — End of Federal Fiscal Year 2010 – Impact on Funds Availability for Campus-Based, ACG, National SMART Grant, Pell Grant, TEACH Grant, and Direct Loan Programs (G5 and COD System)
- [2010-09-03](#) — COD processing update

ED Loan Servicing Information

- [2010-09-03](#) — Quarterly Customer Satisfaction Surveys Begin September 7, 2010

Federal Register

- [2010-09-02](#) — Targeted Teacher Shortage Areas
- [2010-09-07](#) — Notice of an altered system of records

For more information

For questions about these notices, contact TG customer assistance at (800) 845-6267, or send an e-mail message to cust.assist@tgsllc.org.

News Briefs

Last February, a new bank law went into effect that provided better consumer protection to credit card users, including college students. As the fall semester begins, Bankrate.com offers a profile of the law — and a helpful reminder to both schools and students about its advantages. The Credit Card Accountability, Responsibility and Disclosure, or Credit CARD, Act of 2009 instituted a broad range of protections, including prohibitions against issuing cards to adults younger than 21 — unless a parent co-signs for the card or the individual can show an independent source of income. Among other things, the law prevents banks or card issuers from offering free gifts in exchange for applying for a card, and requires campus organizations to disclose any business relationships they may have with credit card companies.



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

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