

Nefe Digest

September/October 2013

Focusing in on Emerging Households

NEFE Launches New Blog and Research; Enhances Programs for Young Adults

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“I’ve often heard the saying, ‘Do what you love and the money will come,’” says Chasity Colomb, 27, of Grand Prairie, Texas “But they don’t teach a college course on finding your purpose.”

Money lessons have always been essential for teens and young adults, like Colomb, as they head out on their own. But the need has intensified in the face of a challenging job market, rising college debt loads, and changes in employee benefits. Colomb graduated five years ago with a degree in broadcast journalism. When her degree didn’t land her a job, she started work at a rental car agency and is now working toward a degree in engineering.

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Given the current climate, financial independence can be daunting, especially for those who have graduated from high school but not college. These individuals are working or searching for work, taking classes while managing a job or a household, and serving in the military—all while supporting themselves for the first time.

“Young adults today face huge financial challenges,” says Ted Beck, president and CEO of the National Endowment for Financial Education (NEFE). “Traditional modes of financial education, such as getting guidance through their employer’s benefits department, are not reaching them. We need to engage these young people early, with relevant messaging that shows that making informed financial decisions is key to their future, regardless of their lifestyle or goals.”

NEFE is stepping up efforts to support this group, known as emerging households, starting early in high school and continuing through college and beyond. Not only has NEFE launched new resources and research, but also it is making important updates and enhancements to its longstanding educational programs for young adults.



On Your Own Offers Real-Life Lessons

NEFE conceived On Your Own (www.onyourown.org) as an educational tool as well as a source of community for young adults who have left home—often with a mixture of exhilaration and uncertainty about the realities of independence. As with other NEFE programs and tools, the blog veers from the scripted, traditional mode of financial education (which assumes every adult plans on getting married, having children, and buying a home). Instead, On Your Own provides practical guidance from experts as well as stories from peers—including their money mistakes—to an audience of varying lifestyles, education and income levels, financial goals, and employment situations.

The key message of On Your Own is that there is no formula for financial success—everyone has to find their own way—but On Your Own can help guide young people as they make decisions such as:

- Is a college degree worth the time and money for me? On Your Own presents the facts.
- What savings strategies should I consider? On Your Own offers guidance from a planner.
- How and when should I talk about money with my significant other? Guest bloggers Joanna and Johnny dress down some serious suggestions with humor.

NEFE built On Your Own on Smart About Money (www.smartaboutmoney.org) so that young adults could access additional helpful resources including financial tools, calculators, and the popular LifeValues Quiz. Teachers and students can sign up to receive email updates from On Your Own every two weeks. **Visit www.onyourown.org to learn more.**

Research Examines Influence of Debt on Decision Making

Future content for On Your Own, as well as for other NEFE programs, no doubt will be influenced by NEFE-funded research underway at Ohio State University (OSU). The study examines how debt affects young adults’ decisions and behaviors as they make crucial transitions, such as from high school to college and from their parents’ home to their own.

OSU researchers are analyzing data from the Bureau of Labor Statistics’ National Longitudinal Survey of Youth, which includes data on 9,000 people turning 31 this year, who have been interviewed every year since 1997. Next, they will ask survey participants how debt influenced their decisions with respect to attending and completing college, moving back in with their parents or living on their own, seeking employment, getting married, and starting a family. The study also examines the role debt plays in causing anxiety and depression.

“The research should help us understand if the current generation of young adults is more or less skeptical of credit than Generation X or late Baby Boomers,” says Billy Hensley, Ph.D., director of education for NEFE. “And it will help inform ways that we can improve the educational materials we provide for this age group.”

NEFE and OSU plan to share the research findings in summer 2014. **To learn more about NEFE’s behavioral research, visit www.nefe.org/research.**

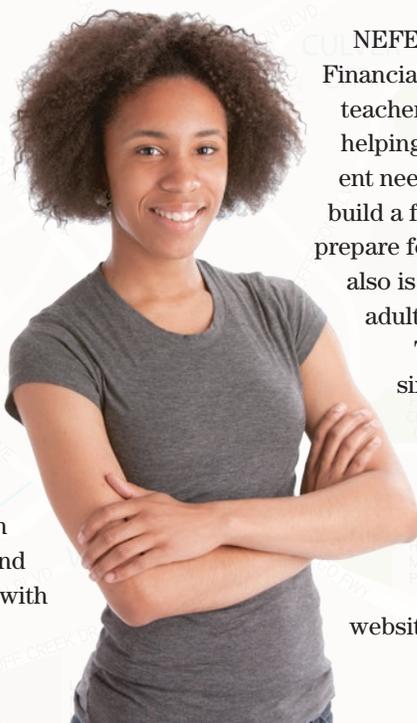
High School Program Increases Flexibility

HIGH SCHOOL FINANCIAL PLANNING PROGRAM

NEFE recently updated its flagship High School Financial Planning Program® (HSFPP®) to provide teachers with more resources and flexibility for helping students in grades eight to 12 with different needs. The HSFPP is designed to help teens build a foundation in personal finance as they prepare for financial independence, but the program also is used with military professionals and other adult learners.

The curriculum has been packaged into six modules, allowing teachers to tailor lessons to student needs and class time.

Teachers can choose from an assortment of 45-minute lessons about money management, borrowing, earning power, investing, financial services, and insurance. The program also has a new website with a variety of instructor resources,



including lesson plans, activity ideas, lesson packs, training videos and tools that allow teachers to assess and evaluate the impacts of the lessons via the NEFE Financial Education Evaluation Toolkit® (<http://toolkit.nefe.org>).

Visit www.hsfpp.org to learn more.



Teacher Training Model Opens for Business

The Jump\$Tart Teacher Training Alliance (J\$TTA) has opened its teacher training program to other organizations that want to lead and implement the J\$TTA workshop model. Originally piloted by the alliance—which is led by the Jump\$Tart Coalition for Personal Financial Literacy and comprised of organizations such as NEFE and the Council for Economic Education (CEE)—the program has shown positive results and is ready for more on-the-ground implementation.

The J\$TTA model approaches financial literacy from a personal angle—by teaching K-12 teachers the basics of financial management and how to practically apply those concepts in their own lives, so they feel equipped to impart similar knowledge to their students. Postworkshop assessments in five pilot locations not only have shown increases in workshop attendees' competency for managing finances but also in their confidence teaching money-related subjects to their students.

“Hosting a Jump\$Tart workshop requires thoughtful planning and a significant time commitment, but the results we've seen make it absolutely worthwhile,” says Hensley.

Organizations interested in implementing a J\$TTA program must meet certain conditions to qualify. Learn more and apply at www.jumpstart.org/teacher-training-alliance.html.

For more of Hensley's research findings on teacher training effectiveness, please visit www.nefe.org/what-we-provide/primary-research/pre-service-teacher-training-salon.aspx.



CashCourse Redesign Drives Engagement

CashCourse (www.cashcourse.org), NEFE's financial literacy program for college students, is nearly finished redesigning its website, making the resource easier to use and bringing more value to the student learning experience. The program, now available on 790 college campuses, provides students with insights about managing student loans and paying for college. CashCourse also addresses a range of other money management issues that affect students' lives, from saving and using credit cards responsibly to searching for a job and living independently.

With the CashCourse Web updates:

- Students can create their own login and bookmark their favorite resources.
- Instructors can make assignments through the website and track individual students' completion.

- Administrators can more easily customize the site design. “Every update we make on the website represents our overall goal of helping students get through college and everything that comes after,” says Amy Hartenstine, director of CashCourse.

Learn more at www.cashcourse.org.



College Connect Fosters Peer Learning

College Connect, a student blogging project created by NEFE and the Society of American Business Editors and Writers (SABEW), will continue this fall at the University of Missouri. The project allows journalism students to share their personal experiences and thoughts about money. Through the process of blogging, the student writers educate themselves and their peers about financial issues. For instance, one blogger wrote about financial hurdles involved with planning a wedding, which spurred conversations with her fiancé about money. Another wrote about her experience living in New York City as an unpaid intern for a fashion magazine.

NEFE and SABEW launched College Connect in 2010 at the University of Arizona and later introduced the program at the University of Missouri and Ball State University. **To read new and archived College Connect blog posts, visit www.sabew.org/about/college-connect-2.**

FINANCIAL WORKSHOP KITS

Financial Workshop Kits Launches College Series

For planners, educators, and volunteers looking to lead seminars for college students in their communities, NEFE recently introduced its Financial Workshop Kits: College Series. From budgeting for life after graduation to identifying money potholes and dealing with debt, these kits help educators address financial challenges that college students will encounter while in school and after graduation. As with all Financial Workshop Kits, each entry in the series provides PowerPoint slides, scripts, and frequently asked questions to help facilitators successfully administer their presentations. **Learn more at www.financialworkshopkits.org/workshops/college-series.**

Get Involved

Want to help NEFE with its educational efforts for young people?

1. Volunteer with our High School Program (www.hsfpp.org/get-involved).
2. Advocate for CashCourse at a college or university that is important to you (www.cashcourse.org/home/cashcourse-on-your-campus).
3. Volunteer to present a financial workshop to college students (www.financialworkshopkits.org/workshops/college-series).
4. Share stories from On Your Own (www.onyourown.org) and College Connect (www.sabew.org/about/college-connect-2) with young people in your life.

Interview with our Interns

What the Fresh Faces In Our Hallways Have to Say About Money Lessons, Their Generation, and Career Aspirations

NEFE's longstanding fellow and intern program is designed to give students a picture of what it's like to work in the nonprofit and financial literacy communities. At the same time, they

give NEFE a helpful perspective on what their generation is thinking. Before the 2013 interns and fellows headed back for the busy fall semester, *Digest* caught up with them for a quick Q&A. Here's what they told us.

Zeke Gilbert Perez, Jr.

Government Affairs Fellow
Graduate student at University of Denver
Majors: Public Policy and Political Science



What's one money lesson you've learned from your parents?

When I was 7 or 8, I started to try and make money as a neighborhood entrepreneur. I opened up a lemonade stand during the summer, raked leaves during the fall, and shoveled snow in the winter. I put most of the money that I made into this little metal toy safe that my parents gave me. That was when I first learned about saving.

What do you think our readers should know about your generation?

My generation is ready to change the world. Starting my freshman year of college—and even before that in high school—I've met one talented, driven, smart, ambitious person my age after another. There's no doubt in my mind that individuals from my generation will go on to do some pretty amazing things.

What's your Spendster* story?

It seems like every month when I check my debit card spending report, the vast majority of my spending is on eating out. Each purchase isn't that much, but it all adds up.

What do you hope to do after college?

My big dream is to be the mayor of Denver. Ultimately, I'd be happy doing anything related to making Denver a better place.

Alyssa Keil

CashCourse Program Outreach Intern
Graduate student at University of Denver
Major: Marketing



What's one money lesson you've learned while at NEFE?

I've learned a great deal about investing for retirement. I've always known it was a good idea to start saving early, but I had no idea there were so many different options, regulations, and restrictions for retirement accounts.

What do you see as the most important thing your friends can learn about money?

Create and stick to a monthly budget. So many of my friends are recent college graduates who haven't had to support themselves yet, and I know it will be a tough transition if they don't know how to budget their money wisely.

What do you think our readers should know about your generation?

There is more pressure on this generation to get a college education. At

the same time, our generation has heard horror stories about student loans. This leaves a lot of people in a tough spot—they believe they must go to college but they mustn't take out loans. Instead of telling students they should avoid loans at all costs, I think we should teach them how to make responsible borrowing decisions if they've exhausted all nonloan options.

What do you hope to do after college?

I hope to continue to work in a capacity that helps young people in some way. Perhaps continue working in higher education, or with an organization like NEFE.

Rebecca Bird

Social Media Intern
Senior at University of Denver
Major: Marketing



What's one money lesson you've learned while at NEFE?

Start saving money early for retirement! Although it seems crazy to be thinking about my retirement at age 21, I now understand that there is a huge difference between starting to save at 25 and starting to save at 35.

What do you think our readers should know about your generation?

We are the generation of #YOLO (you only live once), so we are all about following our impulses and living in the moment. Although this sounds like a recipe for disaster, I do think that we have seen the negative effects of the economic downturn and will therefore be smarter with our money.

What's your Spendster story?

Starbucks has been my kryptonite this summer. I knew it was bad when the baristas at my local Starbucks knew me by name—that was definitely a wake-up call for me to start spending my money more wisely!

What do you hope to do after college?

I would love to find a fun, engaging, and rewarding job; travel the world; and simply enjoy life. That's the dream!

Hayley Crombleholme

Media Relations Intern
Senior at University of Connecticut
Majors: Journalism and Communications



What's one money lesson you've learned while at NEFE?

I have learned how to manage my finances after college, including ways to save money while living on my own, what to look for in a health insurance plan, and what to start saving for.

What do you see as the most important thing your friends can learn about money?

I think the most important thing my friends can learn about money is how important it is to start saving it. Although we may be at an age where things like weddings, buying a home, and retirement seem far off, it's never too early to start saving.

What do you think our readers should know about your generation?

Going online is the best way to reach us. Online banking and applications on our phones are some of the most popular ways for people from my generation to manage our finances. Putting tools and stories that are geared toward my generation online is the best way to get them seen and heard.

What do you hope to do after college?

After college, I hope to work in broadcast journalism.

*"Why did I buy that?" NEFE's YouTube™-like community website encourages users of all ages and financial backgrounds to share stories and videos of impulse buying, overspending or just plain wasting money. See more at www.spendster.org.



Help Others Prepare for the Unexpected

Share the Red Cross Disaster and Financial Planning Guide



As a summer of wildfires, flooding, and tornados comes to a close, the fall hurricane season is just getting started. Disasters can strike quickly and with little warning. Whether or not you live in a disaster-prone area, it's important to help yourself and others be as prepared as possible in order to keep a natural disaster from becoming a financial disaster.

NEFE has partnered with the American Red Cross (ARC) and the American Institute of Certified Public Accountants (AICPA) to create the new *Red Cross Disaster and Financial Planning Guide*. Available fall 2013 on the NEFE, ARC, and AICPA websites, the guide aims to help Americans financially cope with disaster before and after it strikes.

Disaster preparedness and recovery starts with a plan that meets one's family mission, values, and goals. This handbook guides readers to first decide what is important to their family and then how to create a financial plan around their particular circumstances. From mitigation checklists that indicate which items to keep in an emergency supply kit to a quick start guide full of steps for those who already have experienced a disaster, this guide meets a range of needs.

Download and share the guide at nefe.org, redcross.org, or aicpa.org.





HOLIDAY CLOSINGS

NEFE will be closed on September 2 for Labor Day.



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Stop by our booth or look for us at the following conferences:



Council for Opportunity in Education (COE) Annual Conference	Sept. 8-11	Chicago
National Community Tax Coalition (NCTC) National Conference	Sept. 10-13	New Orleans
Joint Council of Extension Professionals (JCEP) Galaxy IV Conference	Sept. 16-20	Pittsburgh
Federal Reserve Bank of Chicago Money Smart Leadership Conference	Sept. 19-20	Chicago
Employee Benefit News Benefits Forum and Expo	Sept. 22-24	New Orleans
Independent Sector National Conference	Sept. 29-Oct. 1	New York
NEFE and Society of American Business Editors and Writers (SABEW) Personal Finance Workshop	Oct. 3	New York
SABEW Annual Fall Conference	Oct. 3-4	New York
Council for Economic Education (CEE) Annual Financial Literacy and Economic Education Conference	Oct. 3-5	Baltimore
Association of Special Programs in Region Eight (ASPIRE) Regional Conference	Oct. 5-9	Fort Collins, Colo.
Midwest Association of Student Financial Aid Administrators (MASFAA)	Oct. 6-9	Indianapolis, Ind.
Society for Features Journalism (SFJ) National Conference	Oct. 9-12	St. Petersburg, Fla.
Radio Television Digital News Association (RTDNA) National Edward R. Murrow Awards	Oct. 14	New York
Online News Association (ONA) Annual Conference	Oct. 17-19	Atlanta
Financial Bloggers Conference	Oct. 17-20	St. Louis
Financial Planning Association (FPA) Annual Conference	Oct. 19-21	Orlando, Fla.
Northwest Association of Educational Opportunity Programs (NAEOP) Conference	Oct. 20-23	Portland, Ore.
Rocky Mountain Association of Student Financial Aid Administrators (RMASFAA) Conference	Oct. 20-23	Cheyenne, Wyo.
Society for Financial Education and Professional Development (SFEPPD) Annual Financial Literacy Leadership Conference	Oct. 21-22	Washington, D.C.
Women's Institute for a Secure Retirement (WISER) 2013 Symposium	Oct. 24-25	Washington, D.C.

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