Financial Literacy Month continues! In case you missed Accounting Professor Nausser Jamali’s outstanding hands-on presentation last week, there are still two financial literacy workshops remaining.

It is important to remember TRiO participants are required to attend **ONE** of the financial literacy workshops. And in order to be eligible for the TRiO Grant Aid scholarship, attendance is mandatory.

However, these workshops are much more than TRiO requirements—they offer real life money management skills that will not only help you to understand debt and borrowing better, but also how to get started planning your financial future. The sooner you begin planning, the better shape you will be in once your college career is over and you begin paying back student loans.

**Financial Literacy Workshops: Two Left!**

1) **March 22nd (Thursday):** 4:00 p.m. in the Library Technology room—*presented by Farmer's State Bank representative Kristan Becker Hoffman*

2) **March 27th (Tuesday):** 7:00 p.m. in the Library Technology room—*presented by Jacksonville Savings Bank representative Laura Marks*
The first step in financial stability is to borrow as little as possible in your early adult life—starting with college loans, credit cards, retail stores 0% financing, and especially 0% financing on a new car. All 0% financing tricks carry an interest charge as part of the price of the product. You are better off getting a discount on the initial price and paying cash for what you can afford and what you need, rather than what you want. Every financial institution—along with the U.S. government—encourages people to borrow and spend, so the economy will continue to expand. Unfortunately, that expansion is at the expense of a high amount of personal debt.

The second step in financial stability is to save as much as possible during your career. If you save $300 a month from the age of 22 to 62 at the rate of 8%, you will accumulate over a $1,000,000 (you will be a millionaire!). You may be able to retire at the age of 62, so you can enjoy the rest of your life without working. You must learn to discipline yourself on a specific budgeted amount of monthly expenditures. Check your outstanding balances as you spend and be sure that you can pay the total amount when the statement balance is due, so you will not incur interest charges. Never use more than half of your credit limit, because the grace period (the time that you have between the spending and paying it) allows you to postpone the payment for almost 50 days. Financial institutes will despise your discipline!

Essential College Borrowing Tips

- Never borrow more than you need.
- Don't forget about student employment as an alternative to borrowing.
- Follow the instructions of the financial aid officer carefully.
- Start to keep track of the amount your monthly repayment will be.
- If you feel your family needs to borrow more than the amount that's been offered in your award letter, talk with a financial aid officer before taking on an additional loan.

Information adapted from “Ten Essential Borrowing Tips.” Collegeboard.org
TRiO “Hairspray” Night: March 29th!

Free Dinner, Workshop, and Convo Credit!

Join us as we support all our TRiO students involved in the upcoming Illinois College performance of the musical “Hairspray”!

To celebrate the event, all current Illinois College TRiO students are invited to join us on a TRiO group outing to attend the musical on Thursday, March 29th. The outing will include free dinner and will count as both Convo and TRiO Workshop credit.

If you would like to take advantage of this fun opportunity, please RSVP by Monday, March 26th. Contact Tammy Hayes at 217-245-3575, or email us at trio@ic.edu, for more information.

We look forward to seeing you there!

TRiO Grant Aid Scholarship: Application Deadline: April 2nd!

Don’t miss out on an opportunity to help with your college expenses! We are now accepting applications for our TRiO Grant Aid scholarship. The application deadline is April 2nd, and we will be awarding the grants toward the end of the semester.

In order to be eligible for grant aid, students must meet the following requirements (if you are unsure, apply anyway—we will confirm your eligibility):

- Be a Pell Grant recipient.
- Have unmet financial need.
- Be an active TRiO program participant for at least one semester.
- Attend one program or workshop each semester.
- Attend at least 2 appointments with TRiO program Staff.
- Attend a Financial Literacy program—there are two financial literacy workshop remaining this semester!

The application is available at the following link: http://tinyurl.com/ICTRIO-GrantAid-Application

Congratulations to our TRiO Musicians!

A big round of applause for TRiO students Claire Barclay, flute, and Leah Fortner, soprano. Both performed at the Music Department’s student recital, “Music @ 4,” on Wednesday, March 14, at 4:00 p.m. in Rammelkamp!

Contribute to the Tribune!

Tell us your stories!! We welcome student guest columns! Contact Jason Stalides—jason.stalides@ic.edu, 217-291-1621—for more information!