

for school administrators on issues affecting the financial aid community

access update

October 2006

Our Mission . . .

to provide education financing to the broadest range of eligible students, positively influence education financing practices, and provide services valued by students and schools.

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Federal Stafford Loan
and Federal PLUS Loan
Lender Code: 808851

If you have questions regarding this or any other publication provided by Access Group, call 800-227-2151, Monday through Friday, 9 a.m. to 8 p.m. ET.

To subscribe to an electronic version of this newsletter, send your name and your school's name to accessupdate@accessgroup.org.

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Help Your Students Have a Successful Financial Future With Access Group's WiseBorrower® Materials

As part of our Borrower Education Services, Access Group is pleased to offer schools our WiseBorrower® Handout Series. These flyers on debt management and personal finance topics are posted in the Financial Aid Administrator section of AccessGroup.Org, and we invite you to download all of these publications to use as handouts for your students. Each publication is saved as an Adobe Acrobat file (PDF), which can be viewed and printed using Adobe Acrobat Reader, available free from Adobe's Web site.

Budget Planning

- **Budget Planning:** Managing Costs During Graduate School
- **Make the Money Last:** Create a Holding Account
- **Be Thrifty:** Save on Spending
- **The Big Chill:** Sticking to Your Budget

Loan Repayment

- **Loan Repayment:** Estimating Your Monthly Student Loan Payments
- **Planning for Loan Repayment After Dental School**
- **Planning for Loan Repayment After Graduate Business School**
- **Planning for Loan Repayment After Law School**
- **Planning for Loan Repayment After Medical School**
- **Deferment and Forbearance on Federal Loans**
- **Lender's Language:** Terms Every Borrower Should Know

Credit

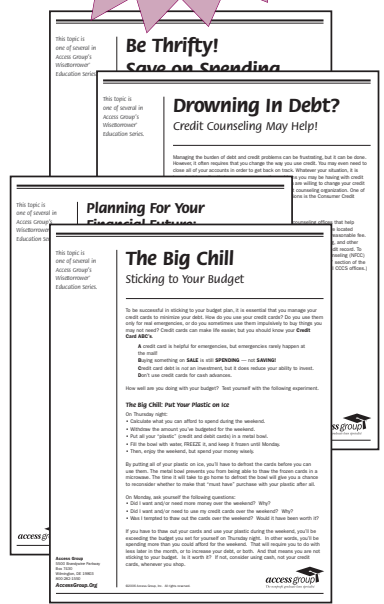
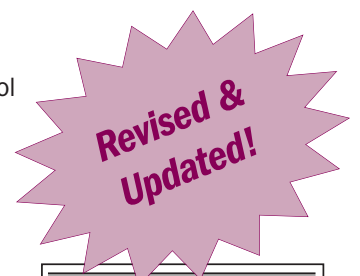
- **Good Credit:** Its Impact on Borrowing Student Loans and on Your Financial Future
- **Drowning in Debt?** Credit Counseling May Help

Financing Your Education

- **Questions to Ask Before You Borrow**

General Personal Finance

- **Planning for Your Financial Future:** A Bibliography
- **Good Financial Habits:** A Guide to Achieving Your Dreams



Also in this issue:

- Looking Ahead to Conference 2006
- Access Group Streamlines Process for Optional Interest Payments
- School Services Welcomes New Staff
- School Services Spotlight



Looking Ahead to Conference 2006

Access Group's 2006 Graduate and Professional Financial Aid Conference is right around the corner. We've received such an overwhelming response that we are at capacity, and registration is now closed. If you already registered, you still have a few things to take care of to make sure you're ready for the conference.

Have you:

- Made your travel arrangements?
- Arranged for ground transportation to and from the airport through Beaches Transportation? Deadline: November 13. Download a reservation form at www.accessgroup.org/conf2006.
- Ordered any guest meal tickets you may need?
- Considered donating time to the Amelia Island Habitat for Humanity project?
 - Three work periods on Thursday, November 16:
 - 8:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.
 - 10:30 a.m. – 2:30 p.m.
 - 1:00 p.m. – 5:00 p.m.
 - A work period from 2:45 p.m. – 5:45 p.m. on Friday, November 17
 - Monetary contributions also accepted at the registration desk
- Chosen your favorite castaway costume for the Gilligan's Island party on Saturday night?



Jonathan Dela Cruz

School Services Spotlight

Here are two of the three things Jonathan Dela Cruz, a Chicago native, promised himself he'd never do but did anyway: first, he met his future wife in a bar; second, he married a "sorority girl." Thank goodness he never vowed not to work for a graduate student loan organization!

As Access Group's External Account Executive for the MASFAA region, Jonathan admires the core values of the organization. In fact, they are what initially attracted him to the organization. "The LIST values of the company — Leadership, Integrity, Service and Teamwork — are not just talk," says Jonathan. "Access Group lives and breathes these values."

Before joining the company, Jonathan worked for Chase Education Finance for three and a half years in the sales and marketing department. When he left that position, he brought his experience and desire to learn more about graduate student lending to Access Group.

Jonathan's favorite part of his job with Access Group is interacting with people. Building friendships with his customers and continuously improving those relationships is one of the reasons he continues to find his career at Access Group so fulfilling.

"Jonathan reminds me of when I was younger," says Tom Ramaeker, Senior External Account Executive at Access Group. "He is driven to be the very best salesperson for Access Group. He's competitive, yet understanding and reserved when he needs to be. He's also dedicated first and foremost to his family."

Oh, that third thing? Jonathan, a self-professed city boy, vowed never to move to the suburbs. Today, he and his wife Suzanne live in Chicago's suburbia — but not too far from Jonathan's original stomping grounds in the windy city.

Borrower Education

Access Group's Budget Calculators Offer Another Resource to Students

Developing in-school and out-of-school budgets are two important steps in managing debt and repaying loans. Although worksheets or spreadsheets can be helpful in developing a personal budget, Access Group's interactive online budgeting calculators can make it even easier for students to create budgets.

- **Simple In-School Budget Calculator** helps students decide how much to borrow by identifying potential expenses and allowing them to provide figures for education expenses, living expenses, and financial resources (other than education loans).

The calculator then provides a budget summary of the student's total expenses and total resources to help determine how much the student may have to borrow. It can also create a summary of the student's living expenses by category for each month and for the entire academic year.

- **Simple Out-of-School Budget Calculator** helps students understand the implications of repaying their debt in the future so they can determine how much they can *afford* to borrow. After students enter their household income, fixed and living expenses, the calculator summarizes their total budget and projects their income-to-debt ratio.

Direct your students to www.accessgroup.org/calculators for these simple calculators, which do not require a login.

School Services Welcomes New Staff

Access Group is pleased to welcome these new staff members to our Sales and School Services team:

- **Connie Sou** joined the team in August and has completed her training as internal Account Executive for the SWASFAA region. She brings to Access Group a wealth of experience in sales, marketing, and health care management.
- **Charles Stappenbeck** also joined us in August and has completed his training as internal Account Executive for the WASFAA region. He previously spent six years in admissions and enrollment services at Seton Hall University.

Both Connie and Charles are eager to get to know the school staff in their regions and look forward to serving them with Access Group's high standard of customer service.

Welcome, Connie and Charles!

"Student Lawyer" Magazine Features Article by Staff Member

The October issue of *Student Lawyer* features an article by Jeff Hanson, Access Group's Director of Borrower Education. In the article, "Lower Your School Debt," Jeff proposes five strategies to help students minimize the amount of money they need to borrow for their legal education.

In addition to the published article, Jeff is also working on a podcast on the same topic, which will be available to students in the near future.

Access Group Streamlines Process for Optional Interest Payments

Access Group has streamlined the process for in-school students who choose to make interest payments on their loans. These students have always had the option of making these payments, but to make it easier for them, Access Group now includes a payment coupon with their quarterly interest letters. Because the coupon shows their name and account number, all students have to do is enter the amount of the payment on the coupon and send it with their check to the address shown. Of course, they can also make their payments online at AccessGroup.Org.

Use this coupon to make your optional interest payment

<p>Although you are not required to make interest payments now, if you choose to, use the coupon to mail your payment to the address on the coupon or pay online (see reverse).</p> <p>If you want to apply your payment to a specific loan, be sure to check the box and write your instructions where indicated.</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">Quarterly Interest Letter Coupon (02)</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Account Number: 99999999 GEORGE WASHINGTON</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Amount Due: No payment is required</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Interest payment enclosed \$ _____</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Access Group, Inc. P.O. Box 822349 Philadelphia, PA 19182-2349</p> <p style="text-align: center;">33023309 7 120305 9 15 999999999 3 00000326 5 1231131332 4 9</p>
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IMPORTANT!
If you have special payment instructions or an address change, you must check this box.

Address Change: _____

Special Payment Instructions - Do not write outside of box:

Annual Meetings in October

Look for Access Group staff at these upcoming events:

October 15 – 18	Midwest Association of Student Financial Aid Administrators Annual Conference	Des Moines, IA
October 17 – 18	Student Loan Servicing Association Members Meeting	Asheville, NC
October 21 – 24	Tennessee Association of Student Financial Aid Administrators Annual Conference	Franklin, TN
October 23	Drexel University Law School Fair	Philadelphia, PA
October 24 –27	West Virginia Association of Student Financial Aid Administrators Fall Conference	Chester, WV
October 27 – 28	Southwest Association of Pre-Law Advisors Annual Conference	San Antonio, TX
October 29 – November 1	Pennsylvania Association of Student Financial Aid Administrators Annual Conference	Hershey, PA
October 30 – November 2	2006 Federal Student Aid Conference	Orlando, FL
October 31	North Carolina State University Law Fair	Raleigh, NC

3-Month LIBOR for Fourth Quarter 2006

The current index for October, November, and December 2006 is 5.3975%.

The interest rate charged on a borrower's private loan from Access Group will equal this index rate plus the per annum percentage margin applicable to the loan.

Reminder: The effective 3-month LIBOR rate is always available by clicking on "Interest Rates" from the home page of AccessGroup.Org. Also on our Web site is information about LIBOR, which includes a 10-year comparative history of LIBOR, Prime, and T-bill rates. And our Interest Rate Comparison Calculator also helps students determine the lowest interest rate when comparing rates based on different indexes. Try it for yourself using the "Calculators" link from our home page.

Federal Loan Interest Rates

First disbursed on or after July 1, 2006:

- Federal Stafford Loans = 6.8%
- Federal PLUS Loans = 8.5%

First disbursed on or after July 1, 1998 and through June 30, 2006:

Federal Stafford Loans:

- In school, grace, deferment:
91-day T-bill (4.84%)
+ 1.7% = 6.54%
- In repayment, forbearance:
91-day T-bill (4.84%)
+ 2.3% = 7.14%

Federal PLUS Loans:

- 91-day T-bill (4.84%)
+ 3.1% = 7.94%