Word from our Financial Literacy Advisor

Our economy presents us with a set of new challenges daily. From increased taxes to raising gas prices, these conditions have most people reworking their budget plans just to make ends meet. We are living in an increasingly complex financial world. Understanding what financial literacy is and how important budgeting can be will help to alleviate some of the pressures that our economy is placing on us. Improved financial literacy is a key ingredient to restoring your financial health.

What is financial literacy? It’s the ability to understand finance. More specifically, it is the ability to make informed judgments and effective decisions about the use and management of money. In TRiO, we use an online Financial Literacy course as a tool to help heighten our students’ awareness of financial literacy and its’ components, such as how to budget effectively, manage funds, and avoid credit card debt, just to name a few. TRiO students who have participated in taking the course have enjoyed it, primarily because they come away with vital information that can potentially help them restore their financial health. TRiO student Julie Horvath, a sophomore pre-nursing major, commented, “The number of first-year college students maxing out their credit cards by the end of the first year is mind-blowing! Interest rates on credit cards are ridiculous! Overall, I was satisfied with the course. Most of the information I knew, but I learned a few new insights.” As the Financial Literacy Advisor for TRiO, I am pleased with the results we have had with the course so far.

Financial health is possible and it takes work to acquire. A good monthly budget can help you pay your bills on time, have funds to cover unexpected emergencies, and reach your financial goals. Understanding the importance and function of financial literacy can help you build the kind of life you want to live.

Murray L. Hooten III
Catalina Hurtado

Describe yourself in three words.

Simple. Truthful. Motivated.

What is one of the most valuable/favorite classes you have taken at Stark State?

Alternative Energy Resources/ Fuel Cells because after we have determined that unequal access to resources such as the technology required to provide energy for clean drinking water and food will drive our bodies and minds into a situation of need, we have to have a solution. I believe that the work being pioneered on the alternative energy front is the solution and I am very excited about my future classes in fuel cell technology.

What do you do for fun? Hobbies?

Traveling and eating would have to be my top two hobbies. I will go anywhere, I just love to go. Food: I love to talk about food, shop for food, cook, eat, think about the next meal, read cook books, whatever. When I travel, I love to experience the local culture through their food, music, art and people.

If you could trade places with any other person for a week (living or not, real/fictional), whom would it be?

Since the age of six, I have been a musician. I wanted to be a rock star when I grew up. Seriously. Not just the way all kids want to be a rock star or a movie star. I seriously wanted music to be my LIFE. I admire the musician, Prince, more than any on earth. I absolutely love his dedication, perfectionism and professionalism regarding music. I met him in 2001 and spoke to him for hours and (the 1980's wildness aside), he is a good person. I would love to be trapped in his body for a week with all of that music running through my head and my body and spilling out into the world bringing people happiness, love and great memories. In every instance of my life, there is a soundtrack that accompanies the memory (good or bad). Music is the universal language that we all speak. It unifies us. I have seen him perform more than 50 times in the last 25 years and most recently in February, 2011. I still want to be a rock star, and if I could choose any, I would be him!

If you won 20 million dollars in the lottery, what would you do with the money?

I would finish school (for fun, because I probably wouldn't need a job) and make sure that any member of my family that had a desire to go to college went and finished with a degree. I would set up a foundation to award the person/group with the best ideas for implementing a sustainable world energy plan and then use my resources to make it an attractive option politically, then make it a reality.

What is one thing people would not expect about you?

I think people that don't yet know me would not expect the versatility that I embody in my lifestyle. I really am all over the map, I am originally from one of the most racially, culturally and socially diverse places in the world, the Bay Area (Oakland) California, and my family background encompasses the entire world map, so I see my world through that kaleidoscope lens in everything that I do. I bring a lot of life experiences and openness to my life situations and am learning to let the universe guide me. I am adventurous and excited about life. I don't know if a person would expect that about me as we stand in line together at the financial aid office, but I am so interested in other people and their experiences of life.

What are your career goals? Goals outside of career?

My career goals are to have a job that I believe is making a difference in the quality of my life and others' lives. I plan to work in the engineering field focusing on alternative energy and making the "alternatives" the new standard for this country as we lead the world by example into a cleaner and healthier world existence. My goals outside of career are to travel and eat well while dancing to the soundtrack of my life.

What has been your experience in the TRiO Program?

From the beginning my experience with the TRiO program has been a partnership that Ben Tobias and I entered into with the goal of making me into the best me that I am able to be while at Stark State College. We sat down and mapped out what I wanted to do (graduate); discussed a major that I have an interest in and would be successful in; discussed challenges that might get in my way (studying, time management, money); and we tackled each one systematically throughout the semesters. I have found the support that I needed at TRiO. Just having a designated space to study is HUGE. The opportunities for scholarship money, the extra classes/seminars offered to make me into a great student, the college workshops and representatives that come in and speak to us, and the knowledge and expertise of the TRiO staff has had a positive influence on my time at Stark State College.

Any advice for TRiO students?

My advice to TRiO students and to anybody is to think about what you want out of your time at Stark State College and set your goals to get it. Don't waste your time, if you are not serious, get a friend or a mentor that can help you stay focused. Take care of yourself physically and mentally so that you can do what you set out to do. Talk to or read about other people that have done what you are trying to do, and take a page out of their book, and follow their advice/procedure until you get one of your own. Be your own star player and help somebody else along the way.
Fall 2010 Dean’s List

Valerie Baity
Amy Bracken
Erin Chambers
Michelle Conrad
Gregory Hill
Shane Hines
Catalina Hurtado
Jacqueline Jeffers
Darlene Knepper
Crystal LaBar

Yulia Landis
Yvonne Long
Mary Ellen Mayle
Fatima Milnese
Ksenia Mirosnichenko
Janesa Novelli
Timothy Seward
Linda Smith
Patricia Sungy
Ashley Takacs

2011 Spring Scholarships

In order to be eligible for the TRiO scholarship, students had to be a member in good standing, have a 2.0 GPA, two letters of recommendation from current instructors, and write a 500 word essay answering the question, “What is the importance of your major in today’s society?” The following students were selected by the scholarship committee:

Amy Bracken
Sharon Brock
Karyn Curry
Patricia Durham
Kimmey Justice

Tiffany Lane
Sarah Looman
Jacqueline Parks
Timothy Seward
Robert Watterson

Student Success

Kimmey Justice and Valerie Baity are transferring to Kent State Stark. Congratulations!

Ashley Takacs is transferring to Walsh University to pursue her Bachelor’s Degree in Education. Congratulations!

Congratulations to Catalina Hurtado for receiving first place in the All USA Scholarship Competition for Ohio.

Kimmey Justice had several pieces of art in the Kent Stark Art Festival. Way to go!
Welcome New TRiO Students

Terry Beauford II - Physical Therapy Assisting Technology
Katherine Betts - Human and Social Services Technology
April Cephas - Emergency Fire Services
Cherralle Cephas - Cyber Security and Computer Forensics Technology
Veronica Edwards - Human and Social Services Technology
Alexandria Hooten - Computer Graphic Arts Technology
Mychocole Johnson - Medical Assisting
Scott Medley - Wind Turbine Maintenance Technology Certificate
Taylor Nicholas - Nursing
Jasmine Smith - Nursing
Deborah Spaulding - Business Management Technology
Deon Strickland - Business Management Technology
Mirna Vergara - Human and Social Services Technology
Artreea Wesley - Medical Lab Technology
Jennifer Wenzel - Medical Lab Technology

Available One on One Workshops

College Success and Time Management
How to Study
Test Taking Strategies
Reading Strategies
How to Communicate
Overcoming Procrastination

Call and make an appointment with your Retention Specialist.

Always bear in mind that your own resolution to succeed is more important than any other.

A. Lincoln