



COLLEGE FINANCIAL AID ADVISORS

Dear Family,

Welcome to my newsletter!

As a subscriber, you will get the chance to preview upcoming specials before they are posted to our website. If there is anything that interests you, please let me know. If you are not yet a subscriber and would like to join our mailing list, please select the "join our mailing list" button on the left.

What Can CFAA Do For You?

College Financial Aid Advisors (CFAA) helps families with professional preparation, support and navigation of the college financial aid process. CFAA promotes programs that remove financial barriers in order to ensure student access to post-secondary education.

According to the United States Department of Education "the majority of people fill out the FAFSA (Free Application Financial Student Aid) form in such a way that they do not receive all the aid they are eligible for." As the founder of CFAA I am dedicated to guiding you through the process of applying for and establishing financial aid in a manner that is both effortless and precise. I will help you steer through the maze of countless and sometimes confusing financial aid forms. I will ensure your forms are completed properly and submitted in a timely manner.

I have a passion for working with parents to open up educational possibilities for their children. Many parents never dream these opportunities are possible because they think the cost of college is out of reach. By helping parents use and manage college financial aid strategies - from scholarships to work study jobs to student loans - I make it feasible for children to receive the best education regardless of cost.

Who Is Jodi Okun?

As a financial aid expert who helps make college more affordable, I work closely with parents and families of students to successfully navigate the financial aid process. My exclusive confidential and personal service not only helps identify grants, loans and scholarships available to students, but also helps submit the multitude of forms associated with obtaining them.

As a parent myself, I know that next to buying a house, planning for college expenses can be one of the biggest financial obligations that families undertake. Four years of college can cost tens of

thousands of dollars, and it is increasingly easy to break into the hundreds of thousands range, especially for advanced degrees. I can help students go to the college or university he or she has dreamed about and earned the right to attend.

I attended University of Redlands intensive UCLA classes on financial aid and completed several statewide financial aid professional courses. I was hired and continue to work as a Financial Aid Consultant by Occidental College in the Financial Aid office. This experience provided hands-on knowledge about the complex and dynamic field of financial aid. I am active in a variety of professional academic and financial aid organization including CASFAA (California Association of Student Financial Aid Administrators) and WASFAA (Western Association of Student Financial Aid Administrators). My strong network of college and financial aid professionals provides support when difficult and complicated scenarios arise requiring specialized expertise.

I am an active volunteer in my community and a past president of National Charity League South Coast Chapter. I served on the Scholarship Committee for NCL and held leadership positions in the Parent Teacher Association as Treasurer, Auditor and President. Due to my tireless work on the behalf of children and my community and my ability to develop successful relationships with colleagues, coworkers, administrators, parents and students, I have been awarded Heroes' of the Heart, PTSA Honorary Service Award, PTSA Life time Honorary Service Award, and Woman of the Year.

Here are some of helpful tips in guiding your student's use of credit cards:

Your Student and the Credit Card

On-campus marketing by credit card companies has long been standard, and good for reason. College students are good credit risks for banks. Research shows that students stay loyal to their first credit card and continue to make purchases with it long after leaving school. A recent study by the U.S. Public Interest Research Group shows that 76 percent of students have credit cards and most of them received them through on-campus marketing efforts by credit card companies.

The rise in credit card use has prompted more schools to develop financial literacy programs to educate students on the responsible use of credit cards. Budget counselors say college students need to understand what is at stake when applying for credit cards. Specifically students need to know that credit cards come with certain conditions and obligations.

Helpful Credit Card Tips Students Should Know

- **Limit yourself to one credit card:** Credit Cards can be all too tempting - easy to apply for and easy to use. To set a firm limit on spending, take only one card. that will make it easier to set a regular pattern of purchases and repayment - and establish a good credit history.
- **Understand all credit card terms:** Before you take out a credit card educate yourself. What is the interest percentage rate? Are there annual fees? is there a different interest rate for cash advances? Get the answers before you decide.
- **Set a time limit on big purchases:** If you want a big dollar item, put off buying it immediately. Consider the necessity and feasibility of repayment on such a purchase.
- **Charge only the amount you can afford:** Everyone lives on a budget. Work your monthly credit card expenses into your monthly budget and make sure you can afford it.
- **Pay more than the minimum:** If you are not able to pay off the balance in full, pay at least twice the minimum monthly payment. Paying more eliminates the debt faster and

- gives you more room to spend on other items, like household expenses.
- **Verify your statements:** Check receipts against the monthly statement. That way, you can see patterns in your purchases, consider the amount you spend, and keep tabs on what you're being charged for interest.
 - **Shop around for the best interest rates:** Watch out for "low introductory" rates. These can sometimes turn into higher rates if a payment is missed or is late.

What's Happening in Our State?

When California college students return to campus this Fall, they'll find crowded classrooms, less access to faculty and counselors, fewer campus services and more difficulty getting classes they need to graduate - all while paying higher fees. Here's a review of the budget damage to post secondary education caused by California's financial crisis.

[Read More](#)

It is never too early to get support and expertise to fund your student's education. Call me your personal college financial aid advisor, at **562.598.1162** or email me at jodiokun@gmail.com for your complimentary one on one consultation.

All the best,
Jodi Okun
Financial Aid Consultant
College Financial Aid Advisors