Iowa College Aid **INSIDER**

Tips from real-life students

Olivia (University of Northern Iowa): "The transition to college can be scary, but don't be afraid to ask for help. There will be people around you who want to help you succeed."

Tayler (Iowa Lakes Community College): "You're going to get frustrated; buckle up and commit!"

Zoey (Iowa State University): "Don't limit yourself to what you've always done and are comfortable with. … You are all going through something new together, and there is a lot to be learned!"

Amanda (St. Ambrose University): "Don't be afraid to step outside your comfort zone. Attend campus activities and events and join the clubs that interest you."

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Succeeding in College and Career

Don't fall victim to "Meltdown Month"

Some college advisors call October "Meltdown Month." For new students, the honeymoon is over: Orientation is long past, high school friends start losing touch and midterm grades might be a wake-up call. All those things can add up to major stress, the Number 1 reason freshmen drop out of college. Stay mentally healthy with these tips for avoiding meltdown:

Ask for help: Most colleges offer mental health services and peer counseling. Be willing to lean on others who are there to support you.

Stick to deadlines: It's easier to stay ahead than to catch up. From class papers and financial aid filings to scholarship or grant renewals, keep a calendar. P.S.: Put it where you can see it.

Go to class: Yes, mornings are getting darker and colder, and bed is cozy, but it's time to get up. Instructors won't check in on you or help you catch up.

Stay healthy: Pushing too hard can hurt your health. Know when to lie low and recover. Most schools offer student medical services, so take advantage of them.

Get to know professors: Introduce yourself during office hours, and you'll feel more comfortable asking questions if you run into problems later

Find out what's 'Up Next'

Up Next is a texting campaign that gives college students and their families free support through the process of applying for federal student aid and repaying student loans. When you sign up, you'll answer simple questions that tailor the campaign to your specific needs. Sign up by texting "COLLEGE" to 44044. Find more information here.

Time to file another FAFSA!

If you'll be in college next year, be sure to file the FAFSA. You must file this application for any year in which you hope to receive financial aid for college. Remember that the window opened early this year—you can file NOW! Visit our FAFSA page for tips and a link to the federal application.