



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

April 19, 2017

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**TAKE CONTROL OF YOUR FINANCES! PARTICIPATE IN MONEY SMART WEEK®  
Illinois Student Assistance Commission Encourages Students to Get Money Smart**

CHICAGO— With the lengthy budget delay in Illinois, funding for many state grant and scholarship programs is still in limbo, and financial uncertainty has become a daily obstacle for many students in Illinois. With so much uncertainty, there's perhaps no more important time to get money-smart. That's why the [Illinois Student Assistance Commission](#) (ISAC), is pleased to offer free workshops during the Federal Reserve Bank of Chicago's annual [Money Smart Week](#)®, April 22-29. In addition to in-person workshops, ISAC also offers online tools and resources to help students and families manage student loans, learn how to budget, and make smarter financial choices.

"Particularly with the delay in funding for the Monetary Award Program (MAP) and the other state grant programs ISAC administers, we are hearing from more and more students who are running up credit card debt, taking on more student loans, and finding that they have to choose between paying rent and eating or paying for college tuition," said Eric Zarnikow, executive director of ISAC.

"In this environment, students unfortunately have to make increasingly difficult financial choices, so being more informed—both about options and about the consequences of their decisions—is more important than ever," Zarnikow continued. "Becoming more financially literate won't solve the problem of lack of funding, but it can help students better limit long term debt and better manage their money to address expenses that may have temporarily increased during the budget delay."

The [ISACorps](#), a group of recent college graduates who act as near-peer mentors to help high school students and returning adults with the college-going and financial aid process, will hold several Money Smart Week events, in addition to other ongoing free financial aid and college planning events across the state. Visit ISAC's [Outreach Calendar](#) to learn more about these events.

For Money Smart Week, ISAC has created a special [Financial Literacy](#) page on its [Student Portal](#) where students can find easy-to-use online tools to help them better manage their money and limit student loan debt:

- Learn about everything from credit cards to budgeting to making smart choices about student loans with the tools available through ISAC's partner, *SALT™ Money*. SALT also offers a Repayment Navigator tool to track student loans and compare repayment plans.
- As financial aid award letters arrive from colleges this month, use ISAC's online *Financial Aid Comparison Worksheet* to compare them.
- Play the online *FinAid game* to see how much you know about financial aid.

- Sign up for *ISAC College Q&A*, a free text messaging service that allows you to text questions about the college-going and/or financial aid process, and get answers from ISAC counselors sent directly to your phone.
- Need to find work or an internship over the summer? Visit *ISAC's Internship/Summer Job Board* where you will find over 3000 Illinois job listings, updated daily.
- Get in-person assistance with financial aid and college questions by contacting the *ISACorps member* in your area.

For more information on Money Smart Week events and resources on just about every aspect of personal finances, visit [www.moneysmartweek.org](http://www.moneysmartweek.org). To find one of ISAC's free college or financial aid workshops in your area, or to contact a local ISACorps member, visit [www.isac.org/isacorps](http://www.isac.org/isacorps).

#### About ISAC

The mission of the Illinois Student Assistance Commission (ISAC) is to help make college accessible and affordable for students throughout Illinois. ISAC provides comprehensive, objective, and timely information on education and financial aid for students and their families--giving them access to the tools they need to make the educational choices that are right for them. Then, through the state scholarship and grant programs ISAC administers, ISAC can help students make those choices a reality. [www.isac.org](http://www.isac.org)

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