



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**Get Smarter About Your Money by Participating in Money Smart Week®  
March 30 – April 6, 2019**

Illinois Student Assistance Commission provides additional resources to help families get financially fit

CHICAGO – From learning about options to pay for college, to avoiding student loan debt and managing money during college, Money Smart Week® events and resources can help students and families who are navigating the often challenging financial road to and through postsecondary education. The Illinois Student Assistance Commission (ISAC) is participating in the Federal Reserve Bank of Chicago’s annual Money Smart Week® by highlighting opportunities for financial education, and providing free resources and tools to help students and families better manage finances before, during and after college.

“Knowledge is power, and families who learn more about money management can better compare options, benefits and risks, when it comes to financial aid and student loans, consumer financial products, and more,” said Eric Zarnikow, executive director of ISAC. “We want every family to have the information they need to make informed choices. The free Money Smart Week® events and resources, along with the tools and assistance offered by ISAC, can be particularly helpful for those families who might not otherwise have access to financial literacy programs—and can help students better prepare for life after high school.”

Check out ISAC’s Money Smart Week® tips for students and families:

- **Learn about Money Management:**
  - **Attend a Money Smart Week® event!** More than 500 free educational classes, seminars and activities will take place in the Chicagoland area and across the state, including two ISAC-sponsored [events](#) in DeKalb and Roscoe Illinois. For information on Money Smart Week® events visit [moneysmartweek.org](http://moneysmartweek.org), and if you don’t see an event in your area, you’ll find videos and other resources on the Money Smart Week® website.
  - **Play the [Claim Your Future®](https://isac.claimyourfuture.com/) game,** <https://isac.claimyourfuture.com/>, available through the ISAC Student Portal. An interactive experience for middle school and up, the game encourages exploration of education and training after high school, future careers, and money management.
- **Make informed choices about life after high school:**
  - **Education after high school can boost your lifetime earning potential.** Four years of college is not for everyone, but studies show that those who have at least *some*

education after high school, whether a certificate, two-year or four-year degree, earn more than those with only a high school education, and have more career options.

- **Get free help with the college-going and financial aid process!** The ISACorps can assist you in making more informed choices about education after high school that will fit your interests, skills, financial circumstances and needs. A group of recent college graduates trained in college access and financial aid who act as near-peer mentors to high school students, the ISACorps can help you identify the schools that are right for you, assist you with your college applications, and help you access the financial aid for which you may be eligible. Visit [studentportal.isac.org/isacorps](http://studentportal.isac.org/isacorps) to find the ISACorps member in your area and check out our free events, [studentportal.isac.org/Events](http://studentportal.isac.org/Events), during Money Smart Week and throughout the year!
- **Find scholarships, compare financial aid award letters, calculate financial aid, and more** by checking out the tools and resources on the [ISAC Student Portal, studentportal.isac.org](http://ISAC Student Portal, studentportal.isac.org).
- **If you are able to attend college full-time, take 15 to Finish.** Taking 15 credits each semester (30 credits a year), will help keep you on track to graduate on-time. That can help you save money, reduce student debt, and start earning money faster. Learn more at <https://bit.ly/2rYLahR> and talk to your academic advisor about how to complete your program on-time!

Many Illinois college students still struggle to find enough money to pay for tuition, fees, and all the other expenses related to college—such as rent and food. Indeed, as many as 35% of Illinois college students [may not have enough to eat](#). No student should have to forego food in order to pay for tuition, fees, books and housing. There is help available, and ISAC has compiled a list of [Food Pantries for College Students in Illinois](#). In addition, some students are eligible to participate in the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP). You can learn more about SNAP and other resources by calling the [Illinois Hunger Hotline](#) at 1-800-359-2163.

#### 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. Find us at [isac.org](http://isac.org) and follow us on [Facebook](#) (@ILStudentAssistance), [Twitter](#) and on Instagram @ISACfindaid.