

Nefe Digest

March/April 2013

Teacher Training Pilot Hits Mark Inspires Confidence and Changing Behaviors in Teachers

**Alliance Prepares for
Widespread Launch
of Workshop Model**

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NATIONAL ENDOWMENT FOR
FINANCIAL EDUCATION

Carol Rachels knows how to educate students about money. She has been teaching personal finance for 20 years and holds a master's degree in business education. Even still, the way experts presented lessons at a recent personal finance workshop for teachers hit home with the South Carolina high school teacher.

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Lessons such as the “mocha-latte effect,” in which participants calculated the opportunity cost of stopping for daily coffee drinks, “made me more aware of what I’m spending,” Rachels says. “Now I think before I buy something, ‘is this an item that I really need?’”

Today, she uses that example in class, substituting the school soda machine for the coffee shop.

“As we use that information in our own lives, I think we as teachers are more comfortable in the classroom,” says Rachels. “We’re applying what we’re teaching.”

Rachels was among more than 550 K-12 teachers who attended one of seven personal finance workshop pilots held between 2010 and 2012 in five states by the Jump\$tart Teacher Training Alliance (J\$TTA).

The J\$TTA is led by the Jump\$tart Coalition for Personal Financial Literacy and comprised of several organizations including the National Endowment for Financial Education (NEFE), which has been deeply involved with the J\$TTA since its inception. The J\$TTA formed to address a key problem: Most states now have standards for teaching personal finance in K-12 schools, but less than 20 percent of teachers feel qualified to teach the basics, according to a 2009 NEFE-sponsored survey of 1,200 K-12 teachers by researchers at the University of Wisconsin–Madison.

Giving Teachers an Education

To combat the issue of low teacher preparedness, the J\$TTA set out to take a unique approach to professional development—making teachers the learners.

“Effective financial education begins with the teacher who is well-qualified enough to teach it and confident in his or her ability to teach it,” says Laura Levine, president and chief executive officer of the Jump\$tart Coalition.



Carol Rachels uses what she learned at the workshop to enhance lessons in the classroom.



Students in Carol Rachels' personal finance class at Lewisville High School work on a lesson.

“When teachers realize how real and necessary personal finance is in their own lives, they are able to connect with students on a personal level,” explains Billy Hensley, Ph.D., director of education for NEFE. “And their students engage because they see the connection between what they are learning and their future career success.”

Providing Value to All Educators

Participants in the pilots varied by gender, education level, experience teaching personal finance, and location—from rural and suburban districts to urban districts. But results of surveys conducted before and after the workshops showed that the programming consistently improved teachers’ money management behaviors and increased their understanding of and confidence teaching personal finance—regardless of their background.

Perhaps most compelling, Hensley notes, was that the training

led to similar increases in confidence and positive behavior changes among teachers who were new to the topic of finance and those who had many years of experience teaching money management.

“We were pleased to see positive results for all demographics in the pilots,” says Hensley. “It supports our belief that this content-focused training can help teachers across the country.”

Sparking Confidence Personally and Professionally

The J\$TTA workshop was teacher Eric Park’s first exposure to personal finance training—and the timing could not have been better. In June, he and his wife learned she was



Eric Park has incorporated what he learned through the workshop at home and at school.

pregnant, adding urgency to lessons he learned at the workshop. The couple since has doubled up on monthly student loan payments, knowing they may need to scale back once their baby arrives.

Park also has incorporated talking about money matters into his unofficial advisory role at Chester High School in Chester, S.C.

“I absolutely feel more confident in those discussions,” Park says. “The

J\$TTA Workshop Pilot By the Numbers

From 2010-2012, the J\$TTA piloted its teacher training workshop model among a diverse pool of K-12 teachers across the country:



Eric Park works with a student at Chester High School.

principle we talk about most is the importance of staying debt-free, which means avoiding the credit card trap.”

Rachels recalls how she and her husband reviewed their insurance coverage and discussed other personal financial matters following the workshop. She replicates these discussions in the classroom, using workshop exercises on calculating one’s insurance risk, protecting against identity theft, and the significance of one’s credit score.

“At the workshop, we learned how important your credit report is in getting a job,” Rachels says. “I don’t think I’d emphasized that enough previously. Now I do.”

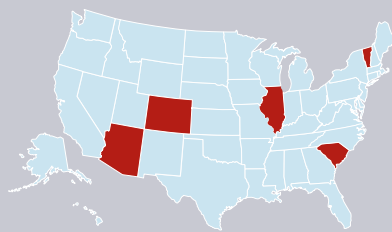
Assessing Next Steps

After each of the pilots, the J\$TTA has refined the model and now that the pilots are done, it will create a dissemination plan to start offering the program materials at no cost to qualified Jump\$start Coalition members. This will provide interested parties the guidance and background to organize and fund a teacher training event for audiences in their specific areas. Already, local groups in both Colorado and Vermont are planning their third teacher training workshops for 2013.

“The goal is to disseminate the model widely to partners, universities, and other state organizations so that they can execute this training on their own, with the same levels of quality and results,” Levine says.

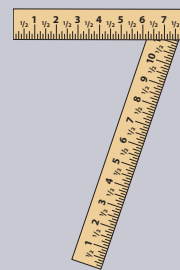
Learn more at www.jumpstart.org/teacher-training-alliance.

Pilot Locations

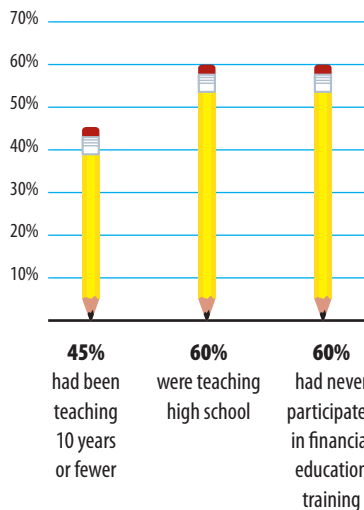


Arizona, Colorado, Illinois, South Carolina, and Vermont

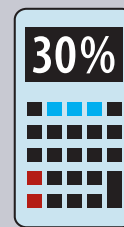
Number of Pilots



Pilot Attendee Teaching Experience



Subjects Taught by Pilot Attendees



Math



Social Studies



Family and Consumer Science

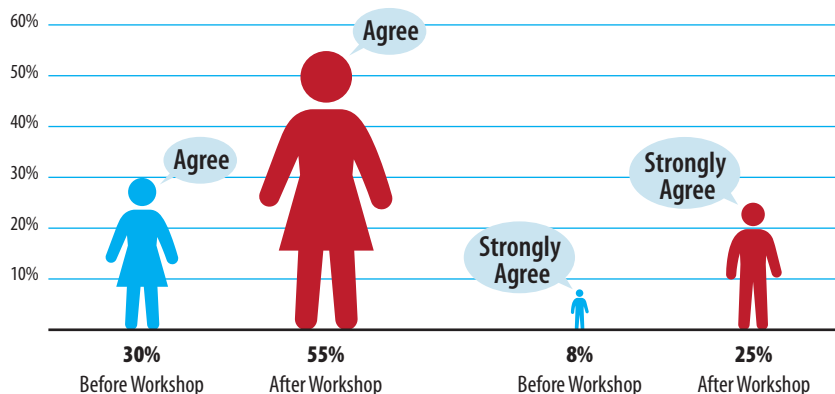


35%
Various courses such as business, geography, accounting, economics, and all courses (K-4)

Increases in Pilot Attendee Confidence

The J\$TTA conducted surveys after each pilot and found positive results across all workshops:

“I have the knowledge necessary to effectively teach my students about personal finance.”





Financial Four

As March Madness Approaches, Consumers Pick Financial Priorities

It's that time again when families, friends, and co-workers tip off in the annual March Madness ritual—choosing favorites among the top 64 NCAA men's basketball teams and hoping their winners face off in the Final Four.

Tapping into the Madness vibe, NEFE and the Financial Planning Association® (FPA®) are activating the second annual Financial Four (www.financialfour.org), an interactive online bracket where instead of choosing teams, users rank priorities among 32 financial concepts selected by experts within the FPA membership.

Why Financial Four

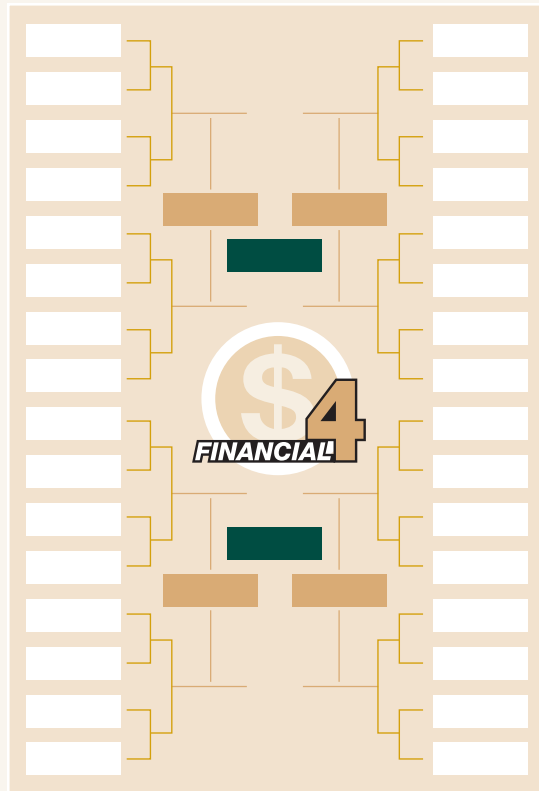
Managing money can be overwhelming for many Americans. They might know they should cut spending, save more money, pay down debt, and plan for retirement, but which steps are most important?

It depends. Many choices come down to lifestyle, assets, values, and goals. The Financial Four helps individuals and couples sort out competing priorities while having fun in the process.

"Entertainment aside, this bracket is enlightening and useful. Some people may find that their top priorities are out of line with their habits," says Paul Golden, media relations manager at NEFE. "The Financial Four also is a handy reference when reviewing goals, which many Americans start to do at tax time."

Who Should Participate

Educators and practitioners can use the Financial Four tool to help guide learners of all ages and backgrounds in prioritizing their money-related actions and goals. This is especially true for young audiences such as high school and college students, some of whom may view financial planning as a serious, if not tedious, exercise. Credit unions also may want to use



the Financial Four as a tool that ties in with other March Madness promotions.

How to Get in on the Action

Users visit www.financialfour.org, where they will find 32 financial priorities listed on the bracket. Starting at the outside and working inward, users must choose among the listed financial match-ups, narrowing down their priorities until they select a champion—their top financial focus.

"The runners-up also reveal important priorities, which helps people decide which financial tasks they should tackle first," says Golden.

Consumers can learn more about each concept by hovering over that particular item on the bracket. Users who want to save their picks must print them off before clicking Submit.

The Pros' Picks

After NEFE and the FPA developed the financial playoffs concept in early 2012, they asked more than 300 FPA practitioners to rank their top picks for what Americans should be thinking about as their top financial priorities for that year. Their collective Financial Four was:

1. Live within your means
2. Protect yourself with adequate insurance
3. Build an emergency savings account
4. Establish life insurance for your household or family's wage earner(s)

Check back to see planners' recommendations for 2013 at www.nefe.org/press-room.

About the Series: Tools from NEFE shares the vast collection of resources available from NEFE to help our readers in the financial literacy community educate and inspire positive change among the populations they serve, from

high school students and employees to adult learners and retirees. See previous entries in the Digest archive at www.nefe.org/press-room/nefe-digest. For additional educational tools, visit www.financialworkshopkits.org.

Ask an Expert

CashCourse Column Helps Answer Students' Most Common Questions

"If I transfer schools, will my financial aid follow me?"

"As a single mother, how can I take a break from work to focus on school, save for a home, and handle my debt?"

"How do I build good credit?"

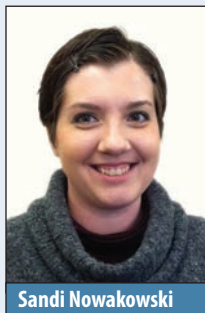
These are a few of the questions college students have posed to the new Ask an Expert feature on CashCourse®, NEFE's free financial literacy website for college students. Launched in October, the FAQ-style column enables website users to directly tap the knowledge of two NEFE partners with many years of combined experience in the financial world.

Taking a Personal Approach

NEFE created CashCourse in 2007 to respond to college students' need for unbiased, reliable financial information. The website provides a wide range of information and tools in the form of articles, quizzes, calculators, and videos. Since the program launched, more than 700 colleges and universities have adopted the resource, customized for each school with its own logo and colors.

Initially, information flowed mostly in one direction—to the students. But as the program has advanced, Amy Hartenstine, director of CashCourse, has started looking for new ways for students to interact with the website. She found an answer in Ask an Expert.

"I wanted to provide personalization," says Hartenstine. "Ask an Expert does that and also lets me know what students have questions about."



Sandi Nowakowski

On average, Ask an Expert receives one to two questions per day. The queries come from both traditional and nontraditional students and run the gamut of personal finance issues from budgeting basics to the complexities of juggling multiple fiscal priorities.

Questions that CashCourse thinks will resonate most with the askers' fellow college students are answered

publicly on the site by either Ron Smith, a 35-year veteran of the financial industry and director of a personal finance program at the University of Wisconsin–Madison, or Sandi Nowakowski, a university student loan coordinator.

Among incoming questions, Smith says debt and investing rank as top student concerns.

"There is such a great need out there, and we know what the answers are," says Smith. "I think we're doing a great service for the students, for society, and for the universities."

Addressing a Diverse Audience

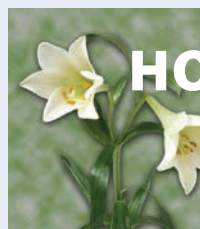


Ron Smith

Ask an Expert not only provides valuable information to students, but also gives CashCourse insight into the lives of its student users. Hartenstine says the questions users have submitted are helping her retool CashCourse to address a more diverse base than she first envisioned, which primarily consisted of traditional college students.

"I'm seeing more working adults and community colleges use CashCourse," says Hartenstine. "We're serving a broader audience, and tools such as Ask an Expert are helping us with that expansion."

To view the Ask an Expert column, visit www.cashcourse.org/lite/faqs.



HOLIDAY CLOSINGS

NEFE will be closed on March 29 for Good Friday.

Board of Trustees Appoints New Member

NEFE welcomes a new member to its Board of Trustees: David Strege, CFP®, CFA®, will serve an initial three-year term with the 14-member board.



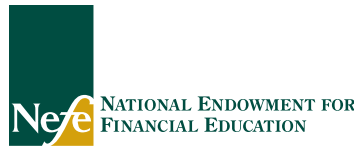
David Strege

“The NEFE mission aligns with my personal and professional philosophy to educate friends, family, and clients to become great stewards of their resources and to enable them to pursue an enriched life,” says Strege. “This opportunity is important to me and I look forward to working with everyone involved with NEFE to continue its legacy.”

Strege, a senior level fee-only financial planner and partner at Syverson Strege and Company in West Des Moines, Iowa, has practiced as a financial planner since 1981. In 1997, the Central Iowa chapter of the International Association for Financial Planning (IAFP), now Financial Planning Association® (FPA®), awarded Strege the Ric Jorgenson Award, presented annually to the financial planning professional who exemplifies excellence and high standards in the field and the community.

Strege served on the board of directors for the CFP Board of Standards from 2004-2008, leading the board as chairman in his final year. He also served on the FPA national board from 1996-2000 and is a former president of his local FPA

The mission of the National Endowment for Financial Education is to inspire empowered financial decision making for individuals and families through every stage of life.



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chapter. Currently, Strege is a member of the Chartered Financial Analyst (CFA) Institute, and the National Association of Personal Financial Advisors (NAPFA).

Strege is a graduate of Drake University. To learn more about NEFE's Board of Trustees, visit www.nefe.org/what-we-do/leadership.

Stop by our booth or look for us at the following conferences:



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|---|-----------------|----------------------|
| National Association of Secondary School Principals (NAASP) Annual Conference | Feb. 28–March 2 | National Harbor, Md. |
| Grants Managers Network (GMN) Annual Conference | March 18–20 | St. Petersburg, Fla. |
| Society of American Business Editors and Writers (SABEW) Annual Conference | April 4–6 | Washington, D.C. |
| American Council for Consumer Interests (ACCI) Annual Conference | April 10–12 | Portland, Ore. |
| National Business Education Association (NBEA) Annual Convention. | April 16–20 | Atlanta |
| National Council of Teachers of Mathematics (NCTM) Annual Meeting | April 17–20 | Denver |

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