Not all student loans are created equal

As a university financial aid officer in the 1990s, I was happy to advise families that 60 percent of all the aid awarded to students was in the form of grants. Grants were—and still are—the most desirable student aid, because unlike loans, grants need not be repaid. Today, times have changed and more than 70 percent of all need-based aid awarded takes the form of repayable loans, while grants—including Pell—are fast becoming an endangered species.

Today, one form or another of federal student loan is almost always included in aid packages. However, it should be noted there are different types of student loans with varying interest rates and repayment terms.

Students sometimes turn to private lenders for loans as an alternative to working part-time while in school. Also, private loans are frequently used to fill the gap between what college costs and what the student receives in institutional, state, and federal aid. They are sometimes also used to replace what has been calculated to be the family’s expected contribution.

Federal Stafford loans differ from private loans in that federal loans are provided exclusively through colleges and universities, while private loans are available through hundreds of private lending institutions. Federal loans are more desirable because their interest rates are low (around 7 percent) and repayment of both the interest and principle is usually delayed until after graduation. By contrast, student loans from private lenders generally have higher interest rates. They usually require financially qualified co-signers, and both the interest and amount borrowed begin to be repaid immediately following disbursement.

When borrowing through a student loan whether a Federal Stafford loan or from a private lender, it is important to remember it is not an all-or-nothing proposition. Students usually accept whatever aid is offered them, when in fact they may borrow any amount up to the maximum awarded. Choosing to borrow a few hundred dollars less now can mean substantial repayment savings later.

For many, student loans have become a necessary part of the college experience, but spending a little time exploring various loans and options can save thousands of dollars over time.

John Beacon
Vice President, Enrollment Management, Marketing, and Communications

on point

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No matter the reason for borrowing, private loans should be a last alternative after all other forms of assistance are exhausted.

There are numerous practical ways to avoid private lender borrowing. Working at a part-time job while a student can supplement other forms of aid and help to cover education expenses. A frequently overlooked, and not always preferred, source of funding is Army or Air Force ROTC. For those who take part, ROTC can pay for all of college and guarantee a high paying job upon graduation, while virtually eliminating the need to borrow.

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Recent graduate’s design becomes reality

Mitchel Lathrop had to wait five years before his idea morphed, changed, expanded, and became reality.

Lathrop designed a unique media plan to project images and videos onto walls and columns in the Hulman Memorial Student Union while he worked as a student assistant in Indiana State University’s video production office. While officials were intrigued by the idea, they ran into one problem.

“There wasn’t money at the time,” said Tracy Ford, video production manager.

So Lathrop shelved the plans, but neither he nor Ford forgot about them. Besides, he had a job to find as he prepared to graduate in 2010. A month before his graduation, he landed a position while at a conference in Kansas City.

“I happened to run into the Disney booth, and I happened to talk to the right person who happened to be looking for a video person who was also an Apple-certified tech,” Lathrop said. “It was the right place, right time, and they offered me a job on the spot.”

After finishing his classes, Lathrop moved west to California and began working for the Walt Disney Company doing production work, mostly for the California Adventure Park and Disneyland. In his job, he takes the video from designers and sends it out to screens in the parks for various displays.

Ford kept up with Lathrop as he moved on from the university.

“He’s special,” she said. “He has that energy and enthusiasm you wish you could see in every student.”

Ford immediately thought of Lathrop when Indiana State officials developed plans for the John W. Moore Welcome Center and wanted to incorporate an interactive display.

“He was the perfect person to ask because this is what he does at Disney,” she said.

Also as a side business, Lathrop had partnered with others to form a company called Pixel Density Design.

When Ford called requesting references to create the interactive display, Lathrop dusted off his old plans, reformed and expanded them with the newest technology and found himself returning to Terre Haute to help welcome future Sycamores to campus.

Pixel Density put together a system using Mac mini computers, touch screens, and transparent screens to create an interactive experience of photos and videos to tell the story of the ISU experience.

“It is a story of hope and success,” Lathrop said. “You come in, you see the pictures and the video, and you see what other students have already done. It’s the best of what we have to offer from the campus to the students.”

As an alumnus, Lathrop felt satisfaction in showing other Sycamores the possibilities for their futures.

“I kind of have a sense of pride in that I know if I were a student and I showed up here and saw the system, it would definitely make me more interested and especially more interested that a graduate from ISU came back and did the work,” he said.

Lathrop came to Indiana State from Covington, Ind., on the recommendation of his drama teacher.

“When I came here what I was impressed with the most was the small class sizes,” he said. “Especially with theater being a smaller major, you get a lot of one-on-one with the professors, and they are interested in developing your skills. It was definitely as much as you wanted to bite off, if you could deal with it, you could take the major as far as you wanted.”

He signed up for independent study courses, worked almost every production at the theater, participated in student government and Greek life, worked in the Office of Information Technology and video production. From all his experiences, he learned.

“For current college students, I would say make the most out of your major. You really get out what you put in,” he said. “As far as incoming students, I think that ISU is a good pick because you’re not just treated like a number. There is a network of people and connections in the professional world.”

That connection allowed Lathrop to return to ISU as a professional.

“I love working with Mitch. He’s so full of ideas and creativity that he inspires me,” Ford said. “Mitch is one of those students that had a spark and had a unique set of skills and knowledge of where he wanted to go with that.”

Lathrop sees himself continuing to work for Disney and the Pixel Density in the future.

“I really like what I am doing at Disney, and I think I will always probably have a part with Disney, whether it’s a full-time employee or a contractor,” he said.
For Indiana State University, Mother Nature picked a bad time to unleash a drought-busting summer storm on the evening of Aug. 15. Thousands of new students were scheduled to start arriving on campus the next morning to begin their college careers.

Stephanie Krull watched the storm roll in from a unique vantage point several blocks north of campus—a glass-walled waiting room at Union Hospital where she had gone after work that muggy Wednesday for a routine medical appointment.

“I saw trees violently swaying to and fro and knew we were in for some damage,” the university’s landscape and grounds manager recently recalled.

Krull had already called Loren Kerr, the university’s lead gardener and told him to assembly a crew to return to campus for storm clean-up.

Storm clean-up is just one of many tasks the university’s full-time grounds maintenance workers perform. A normal summer day finds them mowing somewhere on the 270-acre campus, tending to some of the university’s 2,400 trees or thousands of shrubs and other plants, or picking up trash on campus parking lots or along sidewalks. Fall brings the pickup of leaves from all those trees while winter—at least in recent years—has brought anything from a two-inch ice storm to unseasonably warm weather that allows for a jumpstart on spring and summer projects.

The job of maintaining the beauty of a park-like, major university campus in the heart of a medium-sized Midwestern city falls to a staff of just 18 employees.

“We’re fortunate that the university equips us well,” Krull said. “We are better equipped than many other schools I’ve visited allowing us to accomplish so much with a minimum number of people.”

Krull has been at Indiana State for six years. While the campus’ transformation from urban to park-like setting began more than 20 years ago, it was on her watch that the university earned a charter “Tree Campus USA” recognition bestowed by the Arbor Day Foundation in recognition of a strong commitment to urban forestry.

“I enjoy plants so much. I love trees and flowers and shrubs,” Krull said. “Everything green fascinates me and gives me joy. When people say how nice (campus) looks I agree with them and am thankful that we have the opportunity to enjoy this green space.”

Krull is pleased by the Tree Campus USA designation, and she is grateful for the Arbor Day Foundation’s support in providing tools for tree care. However, she lists as her proudest accomplishment improving the day-to-day operations of the grounds maintenance staff.

“When I got here there was a period of chaos and old ways of doing things that weren’t working anymore,” she said. “I think I worked pretty hard to gain the trust of some of the key people here in grounds, and we’ve done a lot to clean up the way we work, improve our image, and become more professional and reliable. I think that’s really happened. I think our folks are really proud to be here.”

Working at Indiana State isn’t exactly like coming home for Krull, but it’s close. Her dad, Mel Deardorf, grew up in Terre Haute, and she has several relatives here.

Krull was born in Logansport and grew up in Fort Wayne. She completed...(continued next page)
Krull (continued)
a bachelor's degree in landscape architecture but "it was tough to find a job in the early 1980s so I joined the Air Force," she said.

Krull met her husband Richard while in the military. After four years as an intelligence officer and four years as an Air Force wife, she stayed home for 10 more years to raise her children. Home was Hawaii, South Dakota, Texas, Colorado, and Nebraska. When Richard retired from the Air Force, Krull was able to return to her first career choice. After working for small landscape firms in Florida and in Fort Wayne, she ended up at Indiana State in 2006.

Krull loves her new hometown.
"I just have felt more welcomed in Terre Haute than I ever have experienced in any town," she said. "The people here have been really nice to me."

Visiting ISU, meeting with faculty and staff, and seeing the attractive campus firsthand helps many prospective students make their decision to attend Indiana State. Krull is pleased to play a part in that success.
"The urban forest is an important asset for a university," she said. "School can be high stress and life can be high stress and there's nothing more relaxing than looking out at a glowing green landscape."

Online Resources for Parents
Indiana State University offers a number of online resources to assist parents in working with their students throughout their college careers.

Net Price Calculator
Indiana State University has taken the mystery out of the actual cost of college. Students and families considering Indiana State can now use a sophisticated, online net price calculator that shows how much financial aid to expect, and how affordable education can be.

The calculator accurately estimates merit and need-based aid, work-study eligibility, Post-9/11 GI Bill and Yellow Ribbon military benefits, and federal education loans so students and their families have a clearer picture of their specific, out-of-pocket costs. Unique features of Indiana State’s calculator include a personalized affordability analysis that projects monthly education loan payments after graduation and instant translation of the calculator into Spanish.

The net price calculator takes about 10 minutes to complete and requires users to provide basic academic and financial information. Students can email or print their cost estimate for easy review and immediate arrange a campus visit, talk with a financial aid advisor, or apply.

The calculator can be accessed from the university’s home page or directly at https://indstate.studentaidcalculator.com.

Other Resources
Parents are encouraged to regularly check the Parents and Families website at www.instate.edu/parents. A wide range of information about upcoming events and university policies and procedures is located at this website. The website also contains a link to the Indiana State Parent Program on Facebook.

Sycamore Express (www.indstate.edu/express) is a helpful online resource for students and families. In the parent section of Sycamore Express, information about Web4Parent and FERPA is available. Web4Parent allows parents to access their student's records as long as the student provides the proper authorization.

ISU Mobile is the new mobile platform that replaces the ISU State Mobile app. You can access ISU Mobile by going to www.indstate.edu from any smartphone’s web browser or download the app from the iPhone and Android app stores. You can also download ISU Mobile by texting "mobile" to 63566.
The new mobile features include:
- Blackboard access to see course assignments, grades, class news, etc.;
- directory of people of and offices;
- campus map including bus route and schedule;
- athletics schedule, scores, and news;
- library catalog search; and
- campus news and events.
Alternative Spring Break

Is your student looking for something to do during spring break? Encourage her/him to sign up for one of our five Alternative Spring Break service trips. Alternative Spring Break gives participants practical skills and knowledge as well as exposing them to many social and environmental issues in other areas of the country. Students can also earn course credit for the experience by enrolling in RCSM 485—Community Development in Nonprofit Organizations. To obtain credit for RCSM 485, your student must register for the course during the spring semester registration.

This year’s trips include:

**Mission Immersion, Lexington, Ky.**

Mission Immersion works closely with a variety of agencies in the Lexington region. These agencies range in focus from children, youth, families, homelessness, and poverty, among others. The focus of the trip will be working with agencies who serve individuals and families living in poverty. While on this trip, students will have the opportunity to work with a variety of agencies, performing several tasks. Examples of the service work range from serving a community-wide dinner to facilitating educational workshops focused on poverty.

**Once Upon a Time, Maryville, Tenn.**

Located in the foothills of the Great Smoky Mountains, the mission focuses on the Eastern Band of the Cherokee Nation, the environment, and rural Appalachia. A typical week involves two days in the Snowbird Cherokee community, one day in either the Cherokee National Forest or Great Smoky Mountains National Park, and one day homesteading at Once Upon A Time or volunteering at Sequoyah Museum. Service projects may include trail maintenance, gathering and splitting firewood, craft projects with senior citizens, and volunteer work with the local child development center.

**Appalachian South Folklife Center, Pipestem, W.Va.**

The Appalachian South Folklife Center engages volunteers with community members and families who need assistance. At this site, the service may consist of yard work and home repair. There is a cultural educational piece to this trip; students will have the opportunity to learn about the history of the local community and the unique culture of the people raised in the Appalachian Mountains.

**Cumberland Trail Conference, Crossville, Tenn.**

The Cumberland Trail Conference, founded in 1997, has as its mission is to create and maintain the Cumberland Scenic Trail and the associated corridor. Students will have the opportunity to help create and build the Cumberland Scenic Trail, while learning about the historical, cultural, and natural resources of the Cumberland Plateau.

**Freedom Foundation, Selma, Ala.**

The Freedom Foundation focuses on educating and empowering local youth. Many of their projects focus on building confidence and creating an environment that is receptive to learning about different cultures. While visiting Selma, students will have the opportunity to work with the youth program and help with community clean-up and painting projects. Our students will also take part in non-violence training and learn more about the significance of Selma in the civil rights movement.

Cost: $400 (includes travel, lodging, and food for the week)
There are a limited number of spots on each trip—have your student register today by going to: www.indstate.edu/publicservice/events/asb/default.aspx

Habitat House

Work and fundraising continues on the 58th Habitat for Humanity House, sponsored by Indiana State University. Together with the Burskey Family—Arica, Mackenzee (age 13), Pete (age 9) and Cain (age 6). Ground was broken on July 26 in the Ryves neighborhood. The Habitat House project is a great opportunity for students to be a part of something bigger than themselves while learning about poverty and homelessness.

If you would like to make a donation toward the project, you can go to http://www.indstatefoundation.org/GivingOnline.aspx. Click Give Now and fill out the information. Under gift information, select other and designate your gift as Habitat House.
Visit Indiana State in 2013

Sycamore Preview Days
Tuesday, January 29, 2013
Monday, February 18, 2013
Saturday, April 20, 2013
Hulman Memorial Student Union
9:00 a.m.-3:00 p.m.

Sycamore Preview Days are special events for high school students, transfer students, and others interested in learning more about Indiana State University and college life. You and your student will have the opportunity to tour the campus, meet with academic advisors and faculty, talk to financial aid counselors, and learn more about scholarships and other ways to finance a college education.

Experience Indiana State
Saturday, February 23, 2013
Hulman Memorial Student Union
9:00 a.m.-3:00 p.m.

Experience Indiana State is a special event for newly admitted freshman and transfer students. You and your student will have an opportunity to meet with his/her academic unit, attend and experience a class at Indiana State, take a detailed tour of campus, and learn more about financial aid.

There is no cost to attend these events. Admissions and parking are free. Parents and families are invited and encouraged to attend. Lunch in the residence hall dining facilities will be provided at no cost. There is a small charge for students who chose to eat in the HMSU Commons food court. For more information about both of these programs, contact the Office of Admissions at admissions@indstate.edu or 1-800-GO-TO-ISU.

Sycamore Hoopla

Make plans to visit campus the weekend of February 8-10 for Sycamore Hoopla! It is a winter version of homecoming, jammed full of hoop action and fun!

Festivities kick off Friday, Feb. 8 as the ISU women’s basketball team hosts Creighton at 7:05 p.m. Come early to view the center’s large windows that will be decorated by campus organizations, residence halls, offices and departments.

The fifth annual Polar Plunge kicks off the schedule on Saturday, Feb. 9 at 9:30 a.m. The fundraiser for Special Olympics Indiana will take place on Hulman Center’s south patio in conjunction with Sycamore Hoopla. Check-in begins at 8:00 a.m. with plunging beginning at 9:30 a.m.

Following the plunge, the ISU men’s basketball team will tip off at 1:05 p.m. against Southern Illinois. The ISU women will be back on the court Sunday, Feb. 10 to play Drake at 2:05 p.m.

Make sure to check the Parent and Families Facebook page and website for additional activities for families!

FAFSA

The time for students and parents to complete and file the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) is just around the corner. The priority date used by the Office of Student Financial Aid at ISU is March 1. The State of Indiana deadline is March 10, 2013. Filing before the state deadline is crucial if a student is to be considered for any financial assistance from the State of Indiana. Please keep in mind that it is better to file with estimated information than to miss the deadline—March 10, 2013.

For more information, contact the Office of Student Financial Aid at 812-237-2215.

Parent Survey

Participate in the annual survey for Indiana State parents. Parents of current students who are under the age of 21 are invited to complete the annual Parent Survey, available online at www.indstate.edu/families through the first of April.

The Parents and Families Initiative wants to hear from you! The feedback you provide will help us better understand your areas of concern in order to develop material for the Parents and Families website, identify content for the ParentLink newsletter, and evaluate parent and family programming and services.

Last year, 206 people responded to our survey. In response to the feedback provided, we developed a guide to Indiana State lingo on the Parents and Families website, launched break transportation to the Indianapolis metro area and Northwest Indiana/Chicago, and started work on a parents and families guide to Indiana State University. We also began promoting more university events on both the website and the Parents and Families Facebook page to encourage families to come visit throughout the year.

It only takes a few minutes to complete the survey. We look forward to hearing from you!
Homecoming was a celebration of Sycamore memories as the university marked the 50th running of the Sycamore Tricycle Derby. The three founders of trike—Michael Simmons, Debbie Hulman Bareford and Tom Bareford—were in attendance to celebrate the campus event they founded in 1963 to encourage students to stay on campus. The trike race has come a long way since first run on the Quad in 1963, growing into a Homecoming tradition and earning the reputation as “the Loopiest College Sport” by Sports Illustrated in 1997.

In addition to the annual trike race, there were plenty of activities for the entire family—the Blue and White Parade, Tent City, football game, and praise service.

Mark your calendars for next year! The date for Homecoming 2013 is October 5 and 6.

Go online to view the 50th Trike booklet: www.indstate.edu/homecoming/images/Trike_50th_Booklet.pdf
Indiana State University by the Numbers

- 12,114 students in Fall 2012
- #3 school in the nation for community service participation
- $518.6 million impact on Indiana’s economy
- Recognized by Princeton Review as a Best in the Midwest for 8 years in a row
- Forbes top 600 national university
- $8 million in community service contributions
- Named a Tree Campus USA for four years in a row

SAVE 10%
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Store Hours
Monday-Friday—7:30 a.m.-8:00 p.m.
Saturday—9:00 a.m.-5:00 p.m.
Sunday—12:00-5:00 p.m.

One coupon per customer. This coupon can be redeemed at Barnes & Noble at Indiana State only. Not valid on past purchases and cannot be combined with any other offer, promotion, or clearance item. Coupon is not redeemable for cash.