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**DON'T DO IT**  
**CONSUMER ADVISORY ON STUDENT LOANS**  
**FROM THE SCHOLARSHIP FOUNDATION OF ST. LOUIS**

The Scholarship Foundation of St. Louis urges all students and families to exercise great caution in accepting student loans. Families (especially those who are not wealthy) are advised to be active consumers, seeking and verifying advice from a variety of sources and trusted advisors. As educational costs continue to rise and need-based financial aid suffers from state and federal budget cuts, more and more students are being packaged loans that are not in their best interest. **Excessive student loan debt can cause students to leave school before finishing their degrees, delay or derail important career and life decisions, and wreak long-term financial havoc on families.**

Not all loans are "good loans". Pursuing a degree requires careful financial management. The Scholarship Foundation offers the following tips to those who may need to borrow to finance their education:

1. If your total borrowing for one year is more than half your educational cost at a high-priced school or more than \$10,000 at low and moderate-cost schools, **DON'T DO IT.**
2. If you are being offered a PLUS (Parent Loan for Undergraduate Students) and your parents are disabled or unemployed, **DON'T DO IT.**
3. If your financial aid package includes Unsubsidized Stafford Loans or PLUS and your family will not have a way to make payments while you are in school, **DON'T DO IT.**
4. If your lender finds you by way of late-night television commercials, internet pop-ups, or other "quick and easy" methods, **DON'T DO IT.**

Postsecondary education is important; so is assuring that your educational goals are financially feasible and you've made the best decisions to safeguard your future.

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**Help is available to students and families in navigating the financial aid process and considering borrowing.** For more consumer information and individual guidance, contact The Scholarship Foundation of St. Louis at 314.725.7990 or visit [www.sfstl.org](http://www.sfstl.org). Students and their families may also visit [www.stlouisgraduates.org](http://www.stlouisgraduates.org) for information about other resources and agencies in the region who provide support to students with financial need.

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*The Scholarship Foundation of St. Louis, a nonprofit organization founded in 1920, is based upon the conviction that an educated citizenry is essential to a democracy. The Scholarship Foundation provides access to post-secondary education to members of our community who otherwise would not have the financial means to fulfill their educational goals. In the current academic year, 620 students are receiving \$3.3 million in interest-free and fee-free loans and \$380,000 in grants from The Scholarship Foundation, and approximately 3,000 students have participated in workshops, clinics, and individual financial aid advising offered by The Scholarship Foundation. The Scholarship Foundation's next interest-free loan application deadline is April 16.*