

# Nefe Digest

November/December 2005

A Publication of the National Endowment for Financial Education



## After 26 Years, Anthes Bids Farewell

As you read in the previous issue of *NEFE Digest*, Ted Beck became president and Chief Executive Officer of the National Endowment for Financial Education® (NEFE®) on October 1. Ted brings the professional experience and talent necessary to take the organization to the next level of its growth and development. I wish him, the staff, and all associated with NEFE, the very best.

I asked for space in this issue to provide a few personal remarks as I end my 26-year association with NEFE and, before it, the College for Financial Planning. Developing those remarks, however, has posed a bigger challenge than I anticipated. At first, I thought I would recount the many accomplishments of NEFE, the College, and the great people with whom I have worked. However, as I reflected over the past two-and one-half decades, I was afraid I would forget a significant person or event and have concluded that my early ideas for remarks did not work well.

When I left Kansas City and the traditional academic world in 1979, I could not have imagined what positive challenges and opportunities were ahead. Ultimately, I've come to realize that I have been a most fortunate individual. Thus, I retire from the National Endowment to "do other things" with a heart that is happy and full of gratitude.

For this, I want to thank all of the great people I have met and with whom I have worked—Board members, staff, students, graduates, and all associated with NEFE and the College.

My sincere thanks and best wishes.

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "William L. Anthes".

William L. Anthes, Ph.D.

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A Publication of



*William L. Anthes, Ph.D., will serve as president emeritus of the National Endowment for Financial Education through December 31, 2005. In January 2006, he will begin a three-year term as a member of the board of directors of the Financial Planning Standards Board (FPSB). He hopes to remain actively involved with both the financial planning and the financial literacy communities during his forthcoming retirement. The NEFE Board of Trustees and staff sincerely thank him for his vision, dedication, innovation, and numerous contributions to consumer and professional education.*



Back row:  
Brendan Johnson,  
Ivan Smith,  
Brett Shafter,  
Quincy Jones

Front row:  
Laurin Reynolds,  
Kate Powell,  
Caylen Gore

## New Teen Advisory Board Selected

A record number of applications recently submitted for the 2005-2006 NEFE Teen Resource Bureau<sup>SM</sup> (NTRB<sup>SM</sup>) Teen Advisory Board (TAB), has resulted in the selection of seven special teens to serve on the board. These young people will offer their unique perspectives on the NTRB, an interactive and dynamic Web site designed to help teens improve their money-management skills.

Representing a diverse cross-section of American teenagers, the newly chosen TAB members traveled from around the country to attend an orientation conference on August 15-17, 2005. At

the conference, the students learned about NEFE, discussed personal finance issues related to them and their peers, and offered feedback about the NTRB Web site. During their stay, they also visited the country's only bank designed especially for kids and took a tour of the Denver Mint. Over the course of their year-long term as TAB members, the teens will assist NEFE staff in developing effective and engaging content for the Web site, evaluate the site's current material and appearance, and submit various projects related to their own experiences with money-management issues.

In addition to offering their insights into the NTRB Web site and providing feedback from their peers, for the first time, TAB members also will be implementing individual financial literacy campaigns in each of their own high schools. During the conference, the students brainstormed about possible themes for these campaigns, ways to implement them, and effective strategies for having a positive and successful influence on their peers.

For more information about the NEFE Teen Resource Bureau or the Teen Advisory Board log on to [www.ntrbonline.org](http://www.ntrbonline.org).

## Brochure Helps Consumers Repair Credit

The average American credit card debt is about \$785 billion or approximately \$7,500 per household,<sup>1</sup> a sobering reminder that managing credit is a challenge that many individuals have yet to conquer. "Poor credit habits cut across all socioeconomic lines," says Brent Neiser, CFP<sup>®</sup>, director of Collaborative Programs at NEFE. "Unfortunately,

many Americans fail to realize that a negative credit record can create a major roadblock to their financial goals, from buying a house to landing a job."

The good news is that poor credit can be repaired over time. To help consumers improve their credit record, the Financial Planning Association (FPA<sup>™</sup>), National Foundation for Credit Counseling, Inc.<sup>®</sup> (NFCC<sup>®</sup>),

and NEFE developed *Overcoming the Credit Barrier: Clearing the Way to Your Financial Goals*, a 10-page brochure that outlines a step-by-step approach to improving credit.

"The brochure draws on the combined expertise of FPA, NFCC, and NEFE," Neiser explains. "For example, FPA

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*"The core message of Overcoming the Credit Barrier is that people can improve their credit by repaying debt, paying bills on time, and ensuring that creditors update their accounts accurately with the major credit reporting agencies,"*

## NEFE Launches Ad Campaign

The print ad at right is the first of five that will be appearing in this and subsequent issues of *NEFE Digest*. The ads are part of the country's first large-scale national financial literacy campaign, being sponsored by the National Endowment for Financial Education. The campaign, themed "Not if We Can Help It," launched in mid-September with television ads debuting on Time Warner's Cable News Network (CNN) and CNN "Headline News." The effort targets members of the general adult population aged approximately 25-60, with an income of \$35,000-\$100,000. CNN, as well as Time Warner publications and the America Online (AOL) Web site were selected for the campaign based on their ability to deliver its key message to members of the target audience.

NEFE, with the assistance of Los Angeles-based advertising agency Benenson Janson, developed television, radio, print, and Internet advertisements. The ads direct Americans to a newly developed Web site, "Smart About Money," where they can locate practical information on how to start achieving their financial goals.

In addition to the television advertisements, Internet banner ads will be displayed on AOL's "Personal Finance" and "Business News" sections. Print advertisements will run throughout the next year in a variety of national publications, including *Parenting*, *Sports Illustrated*, *Time*, *People*, and *Real Simple*. In addition, a simultaneous effort is has been launched to secure donated

space from network television and radio stations throughout the country with the distribution of Public Service Announcements (PSAs).

The campaign encourages Americans "to get smart about their money," and emphasizes the message that, regardless of income or life stage, making financially sound decisions doesn't

have to be a scary experience. By visiting the Web site, individuals can tap into resources that will help them make well-informed financial decisions.

Look for the next print ad to appear in the January/February 2006 issue of *NEFE Digest*. To learn more about the campaign, visit [www.smartaboutmoney.org](http://www.smartaboutmoney.org).



Is a great college for our kids out of the question?

We have some solutions that might be easier than you think. We're the National Endowment for Financial Education, a nonprofit foundation with nothing to sell and a lot to tell. For over 30 years, we've helped people just like you get smart about their money. Come to us for sound advice and practical information on how to start achieving all your financial goals. For everything from getting out of debt to managing your money wisely as you plan for the future - we've got to help. [www.smartaboutmoney.org](http://www.smartaboutmoney.org)  
It's time to get smart about your money.

Not if we can help it.

NEFE NATIONAL ENDOWMENT FOR FINANCIAL EDUCATION

## New NEFE Financial Literacy Campaign Airs on PBS

Beginning Tuesday, November 1, a "Not If We Can Help It" television ad will begin national distribution to affiliates of the Public Broadcasting Service (PBS) as part of the *Moneywise* series, hosted by Kelvin Boston. The 13-week series will include a 15-second television spot at the beginning and end of each 30-minute segment.

The program also airs on the PBS YOU Adult Education Channel, which reaches digital cable and direct satellite households, as well as on the American Armed Forces Radio and Television Service, reaching military bases throughout the United States and abroad. PBS affiliates will be given the opportunity to rerun the series for up to three years, resulting in an even greater number of potential viewers. It is estimated that during the first year of the series, approximately 17 million people will be exposed to the ads.

The topics in the *Moneywise* segments cover everything from financial empowerment to how economic issues relate to people of color. The 13 segment topics, in the order in which they will appear, include:

"Financial Emergencies Big and Small"; "Mutual Fund Basics"; "Business Start-ups"; "Girl, Make Your Money Grow"; "Military Finances"; "Paying for Health Care"; "Reverse Mortgage"; "Millionaires in the Making"; "The New Retirement Reality"; "Price of Pet Care"; "Credit Counseling—Good, Bad, and Ugly"; "Economic Empowerment 101"; and "One-On-One with Ambassador Andrew Young."

For information about the "Not If We Can Help It" campaign, visit [www.smartaboutmoney.org](http://www.smartaboutmoney.org).

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# Economic Independence Fund Awards

## \$1 Million to Community-Based Organizations

**A**meriprise Financial, Inc., formerly American Express Financial Advisors, recently granted \$1 million to 35 nonprofit organizations nationwide through the Economic Independence Fund (the Fund), a grantmaking program that, since its inception in 1999, has been administered by the National Endowment for Financial Education.

The Economic Independence Fund seeks to support local nonprofit organizations as they implement new financial education programs in their communities. These programs typically support disadvantaged and underserved individuals. The Fund has awarded more than \$3.5 million to 136 community-based organizations across the country since its first grants were announced in 2000.

“The reach of the Economic Independence Fund is substantial,” says Mare Canfield, director of Grants Administration at NEFE. “By granting money to local nonprofit groups throughout the country, the Fund directly impacts thousands of individuals and families, improving their financial health, and, by extension, their overall well-being.”

Grants awarded by the Economic Independence Fund support local community organizations seeking to incorporate financial literacy programs into their existing services. Grant recipients rely on the Financial Education Clearinghouse, an online database of existing financial education curricula and materials, to develop these projects. The Financial Education Clearinghouse also is funded by Ameriprise Financial, Inc., and is administered by NEFE.

The Fund awards grants annually for amounts ranging from \$15,000 to \$30,000 for projects with a duration between 12 and 24 months. This year’s projects, selected from a pool of 502 applicants, target a broad range of constituents, including newly employed

individuals, young workers, people moving from welfare to work, and immigrants. Funded projects focus on teaching a broad range of financial topics, from daily money management to retirement planning to self-sufficiency training.

“Our work is centered on shaping financial futures for a lifetime,” says James Cracchiolo, Chairman and CEO of Ameriprise Financial, Inc. “Financial education is the first step, and it is especially critical to make it accessible to people during pivotal times in their lives. If we can help them establish healthy budgeting, spending, and saving habits, we can help them become—and remain—financially independent for life. The net effect for society at large is a reduction in poverty and its incumbent problems.”

Following is a list of this year’s grant recipients and a brief description of their projects. For more information about the Economic Independence Fund, visit [www.nefe.org](http://www.nefe.org), and click on “Grantmaking.” To access the Financial Education Clearinghouse, click on “Multimedia Access.”

**AchieveAbility, Inc., Philadelphia, Pennsylvania: “AchieveAbility Family Financial Freedom Project” (\$30,000)**

This project will support those moving from welfare to work, the newly employed, young and low-income individuals, the formerly homeless, and single-parent families. It will provide these groups with a financial and economic literacy program, including formal classes, tutoring, and peer mentoring.

**Akron Summit Community Action, Inc. Akron, Ohio: “YouthBuild Financial Literacy Program” (\$30,000)**

Akron Summit Community Action, Inc., is an anti-poverty agency serving low-income individuals. This grant will

add financial literacy training as a component of the organization’s YouthBuild program, which is aimed at 18- to 24-year-old, low-income high school dropouts, who are in need of vocational skills development, counseling, and leadership training.

**Anchorage Literacy Project, Anchorage, Alaska: “My Money” (\$30,000)**

“My Money” classes will present financial management information to adults with low-level reading skills. Over the course of two years, the program will provide basic financial education to 224 adult learners by integrating financial content into reading classes. Thus, learners will improve their reading skills while receiving a financial education.

**Appalachian Community Enterprises, Inc., Cleveland, Georgia: “Together We Can: The Peer Prosperity Network” (\$30,000)**

This program will help struggling microentrepreneurs with a history of financial problems develop new ways of perceiving their relationship with money. It will focus on changing negative mental and psychological thought patterns through a variety of techniques, including a “Money Camp™ for Grown-ups” and peer support groups.

**The Arc of Anne Arundel County, Annapolis, Maryland: “Project Income: Financial Independence Training” (\$27,500)**

This program targets individuals with developmental disabilities who are newly employed, creating microenterprises, or wish to acquire economic independence. The Arc will utilize the Financial Education Clearinghouse materials to train staff members, individuals, and their “Circles of Support” (family members, caregivers, etc.) with the ultimate goal of helping the targeted individuals manage their finances.

**Boat People S.O.S., Inc.,  
Chamblee, Georgia: “Road to  
Independence Through Savings  
and Education (RISE)”  
(\$30,000)**

RISE will provide financial education for Vietnamese women who speak very little English and “Amerasians”—abandoned children of U.S. servicemen who lack basic literacy skills. Coming from a cash-based economy, many of these individuals do not have a bank account and have never used financial services in the U.S. Project activities will include monthly workshops presented in Vietnamese, four radio talk shows, and the production of an educational video for workshop participants to take home.

**BuildaBridge International,  
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania:  
“The Money News Network”  
(\$30,000)**

This project targets unemployed and/or underemployed residents in homeless shelters and transitional and group homes. Individuals will view “The Money News Network,” a financial management program comprised of interactive segments that introduce money-related terms and concepts. The program will be supplemented with group meetings, workbook assignments, and interactive games held in a classroom setting.

**Champlain Valley Office of  
Economic Opportunity, Inc.,  
Burlington, Vermont:  
“Life Savings Program”  
(\$30,000)**

This program will provide critical financial education to young workers and individuals moving off welfare. Its goal is to help individuals in taking measurable steps toward self-sufficiency through classes, counseling, networking seminars, and an innovative mentoring strategy involving bankers.

**Community Action Project of  
Tulsa County, Inc., Tulsa,  
Oklahoma: “Financial  
Management Education Project”  
(\$30,000)**

This financial management education course, offered in both English and



Spanish, will teach low- to moderate-income individuals how to create spending plans, manage and reduce debt, and grow their assets. The course will strengthen participants’ financial knowledge, help them budget for stability, and improve their ability to reach and maintain self-sufficiency.

**Easter Seals Southern California,  
Inc., Santa Ana, California:  
“Home Select Financial Literacy  
Education”  
(\$25,000)**

The goal of this project is to help low-income, English- and Spanish-speaking adults and individuals with disabilities become more fiscally knowledgeable by learning how to manage their financial resources. Participants will acquire lifelong money-management skills, including record keeping, budgeting and planning, credit card management, and banking.

**Family Service of Greater Baton  
Rouge, Baton Rouge, Louisiana:  
“Budgeting Wisely to Achieve  
Your Goals in Life”  
(\$23,000)**

Family Service of Greater Baton Rouge assists low-income parents with critical transportation needs through small loans of \$500-\$3,000. The organization will extend and expand applicant knowledge about all aspects of wise money management by adding a financial literacy component to existing group orientation sessions.

**Hillside Work-Scholarship  
Connection, Rochester, New York:  
“Financial Literacy Initiative”  
(\$30,000)**

Hillside Work-Scholarship Connection prevents at-risk students from dropping out of high school by helping them work toward graduation, employment opportunities, and secondary education. This project will train staff to provide financial education to

students with the goal of discouraging participants’ use of predatory lenders, rental centers, and high-fee check-cashing services.

**Interval House, Long Beach,  
California: “Interval House  
Financial Literacy Program”  
(\$30,000)**

This program will provide financial literacy and money-management training to low-income women and individuals who are victims of domestic violence. The financial management workshops will emphasize basic topics such as building savings, budgeting, banking, and credit management.

**ISED Ventures, Des Moines,  
Iowa: “Financial Education  
Services to Welfare-to-Work  
Families and Individuals”  
(\$30,000)**

ISED Ventures will provide financial education services to 300 individuals currently participating in the Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF) program. Clients will complete a personal budget and receive a copy of their credit report. Individuals with credit or debt problems will complete a debt reduction plan with a financial counselor. Those who do not currently have accounts through a local bank can open them with two financial institutions in Des Moines. In addition, clients can access ISED Ventures’ asset development programs, including Individual Development Accounts and microenterprise services.

**Maryland Council on Economic  
Education, Towson, Maryland:  
“Freedom Through Financial  
Education—An Opportunity for  
Inmates Enrolled in the GED  
Program in Maryland Correctional  
Institutions”  
(\$25,000)**

To better prepare prisoners for their life after incarceration, the Maryland Council on Economic Education will help Correctional Education Program teachers incorporate personal finance into the GED Correctional Education

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Program. Inmates enrolled in the GED program will learn financial skills that will help them transition to a successful independent life.

**Metropolitan Family Service, Portland, Oregon: “Choices for a Healthy Financial Future” (\$30,000)**

This program will help low-income families and individuals increase their understanding of basic money concepts and reduce their risk for debt problems, bankruptcy, and inadequate retirement savings. In classes offered throughout the community, clients will establish financial goals, create action plans, track spending, and learn to reduce debt and increase credit scores.

**Minneapolis Urban League, Minneapolis, Minnesota: “Young Professionals Money Management Program” (\$16,500)**

The Minneapolis Urban League will host eight financial literacy classes for clients from underserved and uneducated populations. This project seeks to educate members of minority groups on the basic money-management skills needed to accumulate wealth and move toward becoming economically self-sufficient.

**Mississippi State University, Starkville, Mississippi: “Healthy, Wealthy, and Wise Peer Financial Education Program” (\$30,000)**

Students about to enter the workforce, welfare-to-work recipients, Hispanic immigrants, new hires of government agencies and businesses, dislocated workers seeking new employment, military families, and community members with limited resources are the targets of this project. They will strive to reduce their debt, increase their savings, and gain confidence in their ability to make wise financial decisions by participating in brief educational sessions in familiar community settings.



**Operation ABLE of Michigan, Detroit, Michigan: “Operation ABLE Retirement Savings Project” (\$30,000)**

The Operation ABLE Retirement Savings Project is designed to bring financial and retirement saving education to mature, low-income African Americans living in the Detroit area. Participants will increase their financial knowledge and confidence, develop a personal financial plan, and establish a savings account.

**Pathways Behavioral Services, Inc., Waterloo, Iowa: “Smart Money Management” (\$30,000)**

The “Smart Money Management” program will help individuals working to overcome alcohol and drug addictions acquire the knowledge and skills necessary to manage their personal finances wisely. In order to increase its effectiveness, the curriculum is designed to be user-friendly, uncomplicated, and sensitive to the issues faced by people recovering from addiction.

**Penquis Community Action Program, Inc., Bangor, Maine: “Safe & Independent” (\$29,000)**

Domestic violence victims will receive financial education to help them live safely and independently from their abusers. The project will include financial education classes and one-on-one counseling. Women will increase their knowledge and skills concerning money management and will learn to initiate positive financial behaviors, such as developing budgets and setting financial goals.

**Plumb Place, Inc., Emporia, Kansas: “Financial Literacy Project” (\$19,000)**

Many residents of Plumb Place, an organization which provides

transitional housing to women in need, lack basic money-management skills that would allow them to move into permanent housing and be more fiscally responsible. Each participant in the program will learn the basic skills of budgeting, record keeping, banking, and saving.

**Pro Action of Steuben and Yates, Inc., Bath, New York: “Wealth Health Skills Program” (\$30,000)**

Over three-fourths of this organization’s current clients—low- and moderate-income families—have expressed an interest in building upon their personal finance skills. This project will train a pool of volunteers to work with participants on financial skills development in class settings, small group sessions, and one-on-one situations.

**Resource Center for Women, Inc., Largo, Florida: “Making Every Dollar Count” (\$30,000)**

Participants, primarily low-income working women, will be taught to master new financial behaviors, such as budgeting, comparison shopping, paying bills, and using financial institutions. This will enable them to effectively manage their own personal finances and plan for the future. Hands-on financial literacy training will increase their chances of becoming and staying economically self-sufficient.

**Sacramento Mutual Housing Association, Inc., Sacramento, California: “Train-the-Trainer Program for Financial Education Graduates” (\$30,000)**

Sacramento Mutual Housing Association has provided quality financial information to residents of its properties since 2000. The organization now aims to train several program graduates to become compensated peer workshop facilitators for their neighbors who express interest in financial literacy. Ten educators each will help at least 20 of their peers learn to save, use credit wisely, and reduce debt.

**Sistercare, Inc., Columbia, South Carolina: “Financial Literacy for Domestic Violence Survivors Program” (\$30,000)**

This project will integrate financial literacy education into the program of services that Sistercare provides for battered women who are staying in the organization’s emergency shelters. Financial education will be conducted in the shelter, where victims of domestic violence reside for up to 60 days.

**Skills for Living, Inc., Houston, Texas: “Skills for Living Community Program” (\$30,000)**

Skills For Living offers financial education programs to low-income families in Habitat for Humanity communities. This project will allow the organization to expand its programs to 50 families. The goal is to reduce foreclosure rates, increase household incomes by 7.5 percent, improve savings rates and families’ net worth, and provide ongoing financial services that will continue to build the community.

**Solutions Community Development Corporation, Inc., Holyoke, Massachusetts: “Financial Power Pathways” (\$30,000)**

Through a six-hour money-management seminar, individual counseling, and monthly two-hour workshops, 120 low- and moderate-income residents will learn to change their behavior regarding the management and planning of their personal finances and credit.

**Umpqua Community Development Corporation (UMDC), Roseburg, Oregon: “Financial Fitness Program Expansion” (\$30,000)**

UMDC’s Microenterprise Development and Lending (MEDAL) Program provides financial and business training, technical assistance, and small business loans or matched savings to low-income populations. Basic knowledge of budgeting, banking, building credit, and loan procedures usually is absent within

the target audience. By adding a financial literacy training component to its current business training, UMDC hopes to enhance the success rate of this program.

**University of Minnesota Foundation, Minneapolis, Minnesota: “Minnesota Latino Financial Literacy Project— Learning and Sharing Best Practices” (\$30,000)**

This project will evaluate and adapt a financial education curriculum for effective use with low-income, Spanish-speaking families in Minnesota, many of whom are immigrants. The curriculum will be available for later replication by educators across the country.



**West Side Ecumenical Ministry, Cleveland, Ohio: “Bilingual Financial Literacy Program” (\$30,000)**

In Ohio, the Hispanic community experiences an unemployment rate of 29.4 percent, higher than that of any other ethnic group in the state. Financial mismanagement may contribute to these individuals’ inability to attain self-sufficiency. This project intends to help Spanish-speaking individuals make sound financial decisions that ultimately will strengthen their family unit and enhance long-term prospects of continued employment.

**Worcester Youth Center, Inc., Worcester, Massachusetts: “Financial Literacy 101” (\$30,000)**

This financial literacy program will be provided to low-income children and young adults. The project is to include classes, interactive activities, and games conducted at convenient locations to allow easy access to participants. Incentives will be provided to encour-

age the establishment of savings accounts. Participants also will develop personal budgets and establish goals to direct their financial plan.

**Young Women’s Christian Association of Chester County, West Chester, Pennsylvania: “Project Independence” (\$25,000)**

This project is designed for recently divorced and widowed women, as well as women moving from welfare to work. Its goal is to increase their financial knowledge and give them skills to improve their financial well-being. The women will attend eight two-hour classroom sessions over a two-month period and also participate in four individual consultations with the instructor.

**YWCA National Capital Area, Washington, D.C.: “Building Pathways for Women and Work” (\$30,000)**

More than 35,000 children in Washington D.C. live in poverty, and 82 percent of them live in households headed solely by women. This project will address the significant barriers that thwart families’ ability to achieve self-sufficiency. The financial literacy component of this program will offer these women personal money-management skills that will equip them to maximize their earnings and plan for their families’ future.

**YWCA of Greater Pittsburgh, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania: “YWCA Greater Pittsburgh Financial Literacy Empowerment Program” (\$30,000)**

The median incomes of Pittsburgh’s female workers in various sectors are among the lowest in the nation. Below-average incomes and lack of money-management skills often send these women into debt, resulting in financial dependence on public assistance and predatory lenders. Through a series of 24 workshops, this program will provide financial education to impoverished women and mothers currently participating in employment programs or using childcare subsidies in order to maintain their jobs.

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All questions regarding *NEFE Digest* may be addressed to the Communications department, *Editor*: Rena Gardenswartz. NEFE is open Monday through Friday, from 8:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Mountain Time. The main telephone number is (303) 741-6333; the fax number is (303) 220-0838. Visit the NEFE Web site at [www.nefe.org](http://www.nefe.org).

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## Brochure Helps Consumers Repair Credit

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made the point that when a financial planner's client has credit problems, it creates an obstacle for many things that the planner could otherwise do for the client. Getting their credit repaired is a necessary first step these clients must take."

Profiles of people from various backgrounds and income levels are included in the booklet to illustrate how a lack of knowledge about credit issues and poor choices can negatively impact on one's ability to reach financial goals. The brochure encourages consumers, where appropriate, to enlist the services of professionals who work for nonprofit

credit counseling organizations, such as NFCC certified credit counselors. Tips are provided for choosing a credit counselor, as well as for interviewing and selecting a qualified financial advisor, such as a Certified Financial Planner® (CFP) certificant.

"The core message of *Overcoming the Credit Barrier* is that people can improve their credit by repaying debt, paying bills on time, and ensuring that creditors update their accounts accurately with the major credit reporting agencies," Neiser says.

FPA is a national membership organization for financial planners, including CFP certifiants. NFCC is the longest

serving and largest network of nonprofit credit counseling agencies nationwide. NFCC members are mostly known as Consumer Credit Counseling Services (CCCS). For more information, visit FPA's Web site at [www.fpanet.org](http://www.fpanet.org) and NFCC's Web site at [www.nfcc.org](http://www.nfcc.org).

1 CardWeb.com, Inc.

### Holiday Closings

NEFE will be closed November 24-25 for Thanksgiving, and December 23, 26, and 27 for Christmas.