



Book Three:
*Managing
Your Money*

Developing your Vision



while Attending College



Table of Contents

Developing *your* Vision *while* Attending College

Book Three: *Managing Your Money*

FOREWORD 2

 COMBINING TIMELESS TRADITIONS AND A COLLEGE EDUCATION 2

 GETTING THE ANSWERS TO YOUR QUESTIONS 2

MANAGING YOUR MONEY 4

 INTRODUCTION 4

 GETTING ORGANIZED 5

 SETTING UP A CHECKING ACCOUNT 6

 TIPS FOR USING A CHECKING ACCOUNT 10

 USING A SPENDING PLAN 12

 STRETCHING YOUR DOLLARS 18

 STAYING OUT OF DEBT 22

 10 WAYS TO TAKE CONTROL OF CREDIT CARDS 24

 IF YOU'RE IN DEBT TROUBLE 26

 EARNING EXTRA INCOME 28

 MAKE YOURSELF "EMPLOYABLE" 30

 SAVING MONEY: START NOW 32

 DOUBLE YOUR MONEY 32

 TRY SAVING BY PLUGGING SPENDING LEAKS 34

 WHY SAVE? 36

 ENJOY BEING A STUDENT 38



Foreword

Each person on this planet is a unique and special individual. Each one of us has gifts to contribute to the world. Deciding how to make that contribution, however, isn't always so easy.

Your Indian heritage can help guide your way. From ancient times until today, Native Americans have helped their people as teachers, caregivers, healers, artists, ecologists, leaders, and wise ones. For centuries, the wisdom of the people has been passed from generation to generation.

Combining Timeless Traditions and a College Education

Today, Indians still learn from their elders. But they also know that in the 21st century, Indians must find additional knowledge through education. They know that attending college is one of the best ways to develop their potential and earn a respected place in their community and tribe.

For you, college might mean a four-year degree or graduate school, or it might mean a one- or two-year vocational course or associate's degree. But no matter what path you pursue, a college education will help you develop a vision for the rest of your life.

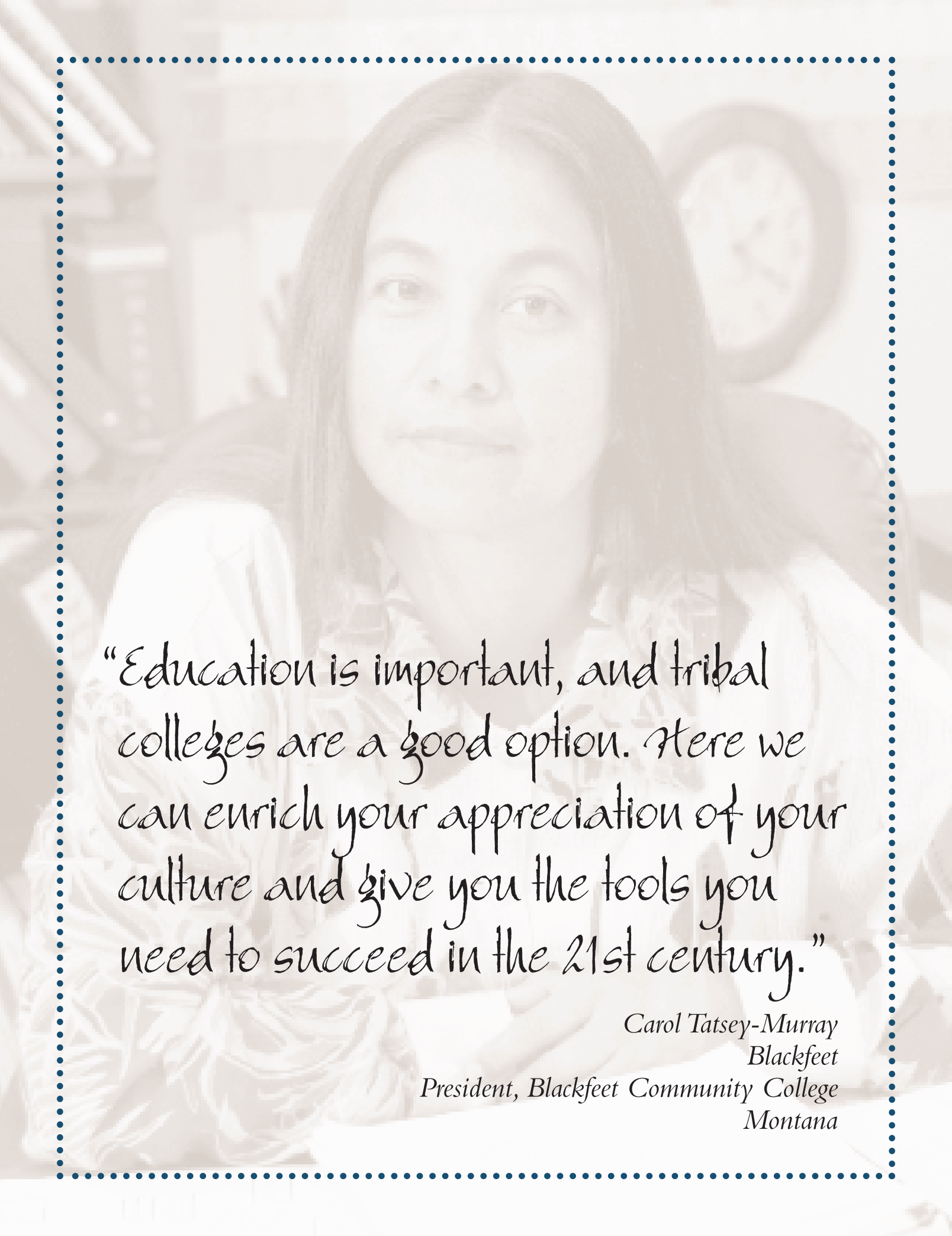
Getting the Answers to Your Questions

Going to college isn't easy, of course. But it is possible. That's why the American Indian College Fund and the National Endowment for Financial Education® have teamed up to produce a series of books to help you find the answers to your questions about attending college. Whether you are still in high school or are thinking about returning to school, we hope these books will be a useful source of information.

Please note that this series is divided into four books. Book One helps you sort out the decisions you need to make about going to college and choosing a school. Book Two provides information on paying for college and applying for financial aid. Book Three provides tips on how to manage your money while you're in school. Finally, Book Four looks beyond college to the careers and other opportunities that will be open to you because you have a college education.

Together, we hope these books will convince you that going to college is within your reach, no matter what your age or financial situation. It may be a difficult journey at times, but without doubt, it is worth the sacrifice.

And remember, you won't have to face the challenge alone. There are many people in your tribe, your community, and your school who will be willing and honored to help.



“Education is important, and tribal colleges are a good option. Here we can enrich your appreciation of your culture and give you the tools you need to succeed in the 21st century.”

*Carol Tatsey-Murray
Blackfeet
President, Blackfeet Community College
Montana*

Managing Your Money

Introduction

College is a time when you may feel both very rich and very poor. The feeling of richness comes from learning new things, meeting new people, and knowing that you are creating a bright new future for yourself, your family, and your tribe. In this sense, your college years are a wonderfully rich experience that you'll never forget.

At the same time, you may feel very poor during college. After you pay for tuition, fees, books, and supplies, there may be very little money left over.

Yet that money must cover food, rent, perhaps a car payment, gas, child care if you have young children, and more.

This book offers practical ideas for making your dollars stretch while you go to school. You'll learn about checking accounts, spending plans, using credit, buying smart, saving money, and taking advantage of special discounts available to college students. Think of this book as your crash course in managing money!



Salish Kootenai College, Montana

Setting Up a Checking Account

If you do not already have a checking account, consider setting one up now. A checking account will keep your money safe, and it lets you use the money when you need it.

Why not just use cash? Here are four reasons:

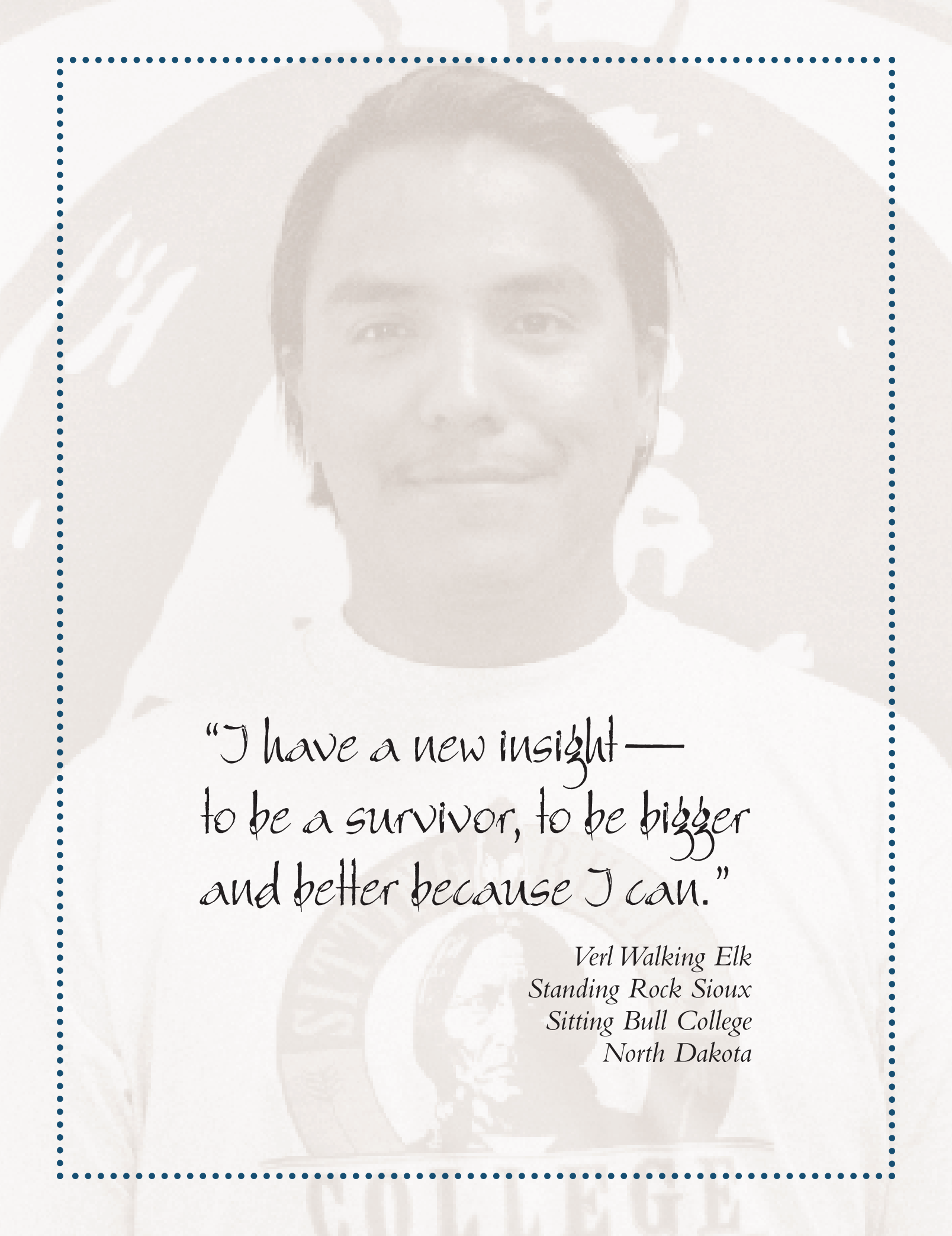
- ❖ A checking account is safer. Cash can be lost or stolen.
- ❖ Bills are easier to pay. Many bills must be paid by mail. If you don't have checks to mail, you must get—and pay for—a money order.
- ❖ Checks give you a record of having paid your bills. When a business or person cashes your check, the amount of the check is subtracted from your account and the check is then “canceled.” The canceled check shows that check was received by the business or individual and was cashed. Each month, your bank or credit union will either send you the actual canceled checks or give you a listing of the canceled checks.

- ❖ A checking account usually costs less than buying money orders. If you decide to use a money order, however, compare prices. For example, convenience stores often charge less to prepare money orders than the post office does. And although money orders cost more over time than a checking account, they are less expensive than check-cashing stores (see page 9 for more information about check-cashing stores).

Before you open a checking account, shop around. Banks, savings and loan offices, and credit unions all offer checking accounts. Try to find one that has low fees and is close to your home or college. Tell the bank you are a college student. Some banks give special price breaks to students. Or, ask your tribal leaders to recommend a bank, savings and loan, or credit union.

If the best price deal is at a bank far from your home, ask if the bank has an automated teller machine (ATM) nearby. You can do all your banking through an ATM. You also can bank by mail.





*“I have a new insight —
to be a survivor, to be bigger
and better because I can.”*

*Verl Walking Elk
Standing Rock Sioux
Sitting Bull College
North Dakota*

How Much Do Checking Accounts Cost?

Call several banks or credit unions to compare the costs of their checking accounts. Remember to ask if there are any special price breaks for college students.

CHECKING ACCT. FEATURE	BANK A NAME:	BANK B NAME:	S&L NAME:	CREDIT UNION NAME:
Monthly service charge				
Cost per check				
Cost to print 200 checks				
Bounced check fee				
Minimum balance to avoid fees				
Fee for falling below minimum balance				

The bank, savings and loan, or credit union I will use is:

Watch Out for Check-Cashing Stores

Some people like to cash their checks at a check-cashing store. This works, but at a price. Check-cashing stores charge a fee for cashing your checks. Often, it is as much as 3% to 4% (\$3 or \$4 for every \$100 of your check). This may not sound like much at first, but if you regularly cash checks at one of these stores, it could cost you several hundred dollars (or more) each year.

If you have a job, many of these stores also make “payday loans.” With a payday loan, you write a check for the amount you want, say \$200. The store loans you the \$200 and agrees not to cash the check until the next payday. What happens if

you don’t have the \$200—plus the store’s fee—by the next payday? You can carry over the loan, but you will pay a large fee. This cycle can keep going and going, as long as you pay the fees. Over time, you could pay as much as 650% in fees and interest charges. Why so much? Because many states have no rules limiting the amount of fees these stores can charge.

Most experts agree that using these services is an expensive way to cash a check or get a small loan. A checking account at a bank, savings and loan, or credit union is a wiser choice.



Little Big Horn College, Montana

Tips for Using a Checking Account



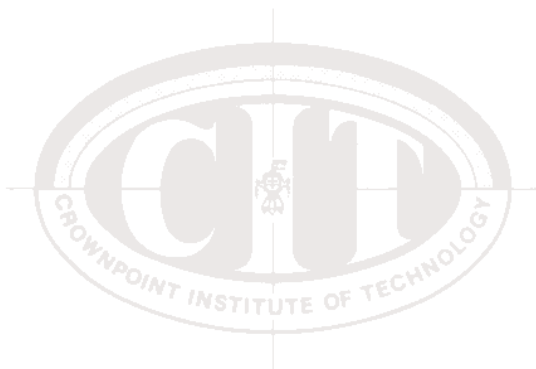
After you set up a checking account, take care of it.

Here are a few tips:

- ❖ Keep track of how much money is in your checking account. Write down the amount of each check in your checkbook register. Then subtract the amount of the check from your current balance to find out how much money you have left in your checking account.
- ❖ If you use an ATM machine, write down those transactions in your checkbook register, too.
- ❖ Don't write checks for more money than you have in your account. If you do, the check will "bounce." The bank will charge you as much as \$20 or \$30 for each bounced check. And, a bounced check will hurt your reputation with the bank and with the people to whom you owe money.
- ❖ When the bank mails your checking account statement each month, compare the bank's figures with your own, and make any adjustments. This is called "balancing your checkbook." If you're not sure how to balance your checkbook, ask a bank representative to help you.
- ❖ Promptly report any errors or lost or stolen checks or ATM cards to the bank or credit union.
- ❖ Keep your bank statements and canceled checks with your other financial records. Canceled checks are a good way to keep track of what you spend. In addition, you may need this information to re-apply for financial aid or to do your taxes.



Little Priest Tribal College



TURTLE MOUNTAIN
COMMUNITY COLLEGE



*Juan Perez
Klamath/Modoc
Salish Kootenai College
Montana*



Juan Perez brings life experience to his education. The first member of his family to graduate from high school, the 30-year-old attended a mainstream college for a year before serving eight years in the Army, including service in Desert Storm.

After the Army, Juan took a few classes at a tribal college, Salish Kootenai College (SKC). The experience changed him. Since then, he says, "Education has become very important to me."

After earning a bachelor's degree in human services, Juan plans to go to graduate school and, then, to work at SKC "to try to give back to the college what it has given me," he says.

Juan is an active student leader and was elected to the board of the National Indian Education Association. He also works part time to stay afloat financially. He puts his paychecks into a checking account and only writes checks to pay bills. Any extra change goes into an old coffee mug for "fun money."

"I have a dry erase board at home," Juan explains. "On one side I write down the things I need, and on the other side the things I want. Once in a while, I splurge on things I want, but not very often. My advice is to wait until you are out of school and have a steady paycheck, and then start spoiling yourself!"

Using a Spending Plan

A checking account is a safe place to keep your money. But your money will only go so far. Especially while you are in college, it seems like there is never enough money for everything.

This is where a spending plan comes in handy. A spending plan is your own financial road map. It helps you know exactly how much money you have coming in, where you must spend it, and where you might be able to save a few dollars.

To make a spending plan, you will need to: (1) identify your income, (2) list your expenses, (3) compare income and expenses, and (4) set priorities and make changes.

A spending plan works well for anyone, but for a college student, it is especially important. Often, you will receive a set amount of money at the beginning of each quarter or semester. Your challenge is to make the money last for the next three or four months!

A spending plan will help you do that.

A Special Note to Returning Students

If you've been out of school for a while, chances are you have more bills than someone who goes to college right after high school. You may even have a family to support. The spending plan described here will help you manage your college expenses and your family budget. It's not easy to juggle both, but it's well worth the effort. Hang in there!



Northwest Indian College, Washington

Step 1: Identify Income

The first step in developing a spending plan is to list the income you receive each month. If you receive a paycheck or public assistance every month, it will be easy to come up with these amounts.

But what if your income is different each month? For example, what if you receive a check for financial aid at the beginning of each semester or quarter? If you are in this situation, divide the amount of the check by the number of months it is expected to cover (four months if your college is on a semester schedule; three months for a quarter schedule).

Here is an example: Gerri receives a \$2,000 grant in September to cover school costs for the semester. She divides \$2,000 by 4 ($2,000 \div 4 = 500$) and enters \$500 on her monthly income worksheet.

Use the monthly income worksheet on this page to estimate your monthly income. Do not count as income any financial aid that is not sent to you, but is paid directly to the college.



Monthly Income Worksheet

Sources	Per Month
financial aid (grants, loans, scholarships) <i>paid directly to you</i>	\$ _____
after-tax wages from a job or work-study program	\$ _____
financial help from family	\$ _____
child support	\$ _____
public assistance	\$ _____
food stamps	\$ _____
interest on a savings account	\$ _____
other	\$ _____
TOTAL INCOME:	\$ _____

Deadlines and Dollars

For college students, getting financial aid on time means the difference between going to class or going into a panic.

To make sure your financial aid arrives on time, pay careful attention to all deadlines for applying for grants, scholarships, work study, and loans. These deadlines are not flexible.

If you miss them, your aid will arrive late—or not arrive at all.

Also remember, you must re-apply every year for financial aid. Make a note on your calendar when you must start the application process all over again.

Step 2: List Expenses

Some expenses, like food or rent, are paid every month. Other expenses, such as books, school supplies, and car insurance, come due every three or four months.

To estimate your monthly expenses, divide the amount of each expense by the number of months between payments. Write that amount on your monthly expense worksheet.

Here is an example. Henry must buy his books at the beginning of the school quarter. He estimates the cost of books at \$200. He divides \$200 by 3 (three months in a school quarter). The answer, \$67, is entered as his monthly expense for books.

Use the worksheet on this page to estimate your monthly expenses. Do not list as an expense any tuition or fees that are paid directly to the college by your financial aid sources.

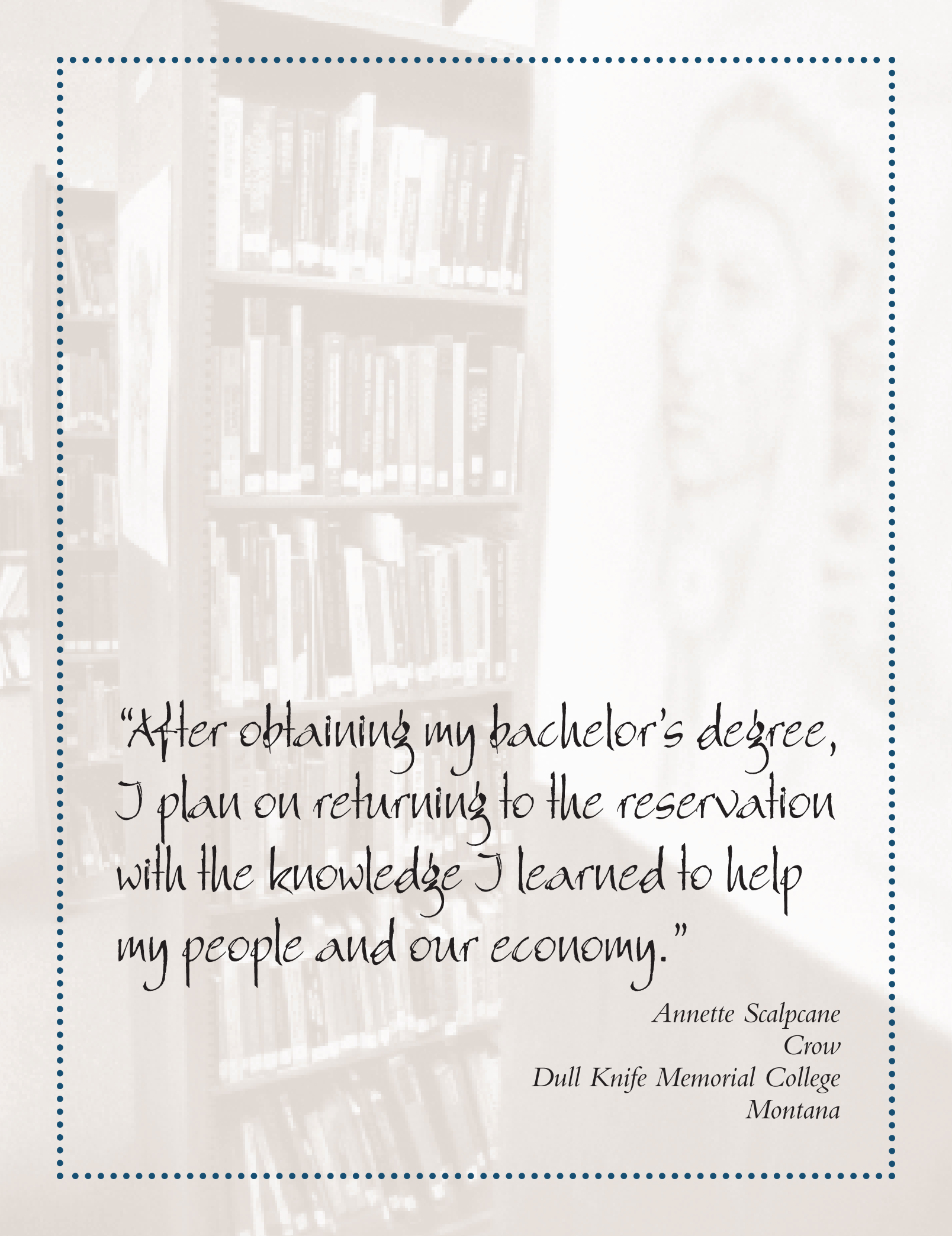
Also note that you may not have all the expenses listed here. For example, if you can charge your books against your financial aid, you will not have to pay for books out of your income. If you don't have young children, you won't have child care costs. If you live at home with your family, you may not have to pay any rent or utility bills. If you live near an Indian Health Service, you may not have to pay for health insurance. However, if you are going to a mainstream college far away from an Indian Health Service, the college will require you to buy health insurance.

Tip: Not sure how much you spend every month for things like meals, gas, or videos? Keep a notebook with you and jot down what you spend on everything for the next two or three months. At the end of the time, add up everything you have spent, divide by the number of months, and use the results to complete the worksheet that follows. Your canceled checks also can help you track your expenses.

Monthly Expenses Worksheet

<i>Sources</i>	<i>Per Month</i>
tuition and fees you are responsible for paying	\$ _____
books you pay for	\$ _____
supplies for school	\$ _____
transportation (gas, oil, car payment)	\$ _____
insurance (car, health)	\$ _____
room and board	\$ _____
rent or mortgage	\$ _____
heat, water, electricity	\$ _____
telephone	\$ _____
groceries	\$ _____
snacks/meals eaten out	\$ _____
child care	\$ _____
loan/credit card payments	\$ _____
clothes	\$ _____
entertainment (movies, dates, concerts)	\$ _____
savings*	\$ _____
other	\$ _____
TOTAL EXPENSES:	\$ _____

* If you think of saving money as a regular monthly expense, you will be more likely to stick with a savings plan. Savings tips are provided later in this book.



*“After obtaining my bachelor’s degree,
I plan on returning to the reservation
with the knowledge I learned to help
my people and our economy.”*

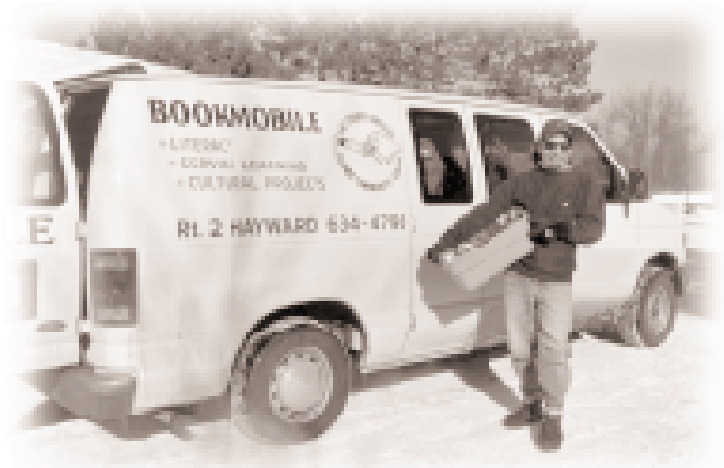
*Annette Scalpcane
Crow
Dull Knife Memorial College
Montana*

Step 3: Compare Income and Expenses

Write down your total
monthly income (from Step 1) \$ _____

Write down your total
monthly expenses (from Step 2) \$ _____

Subtract expenses from
income and list amount here \$ _____



Lac Courte Oreilles Ojibwa Community College, Wisconsin

Step 4: Set Priorities and Make Changes

Was there money left over at the end of the month?
Congratulations! If you treat it wisely (like putting it
into a savings account), you will be on your way to
building financial security.

But, maybe your expenses were more than your
income. Then what? First, look carefully at how you
spent the money. Did your spending get off track?

Getting back on track means two things: cutting back
expenses or increasing income (or both). Look over
your expenses again and see where money could be
saved. Even small steps, such as bringing a brown bag
lunch to school instead of buying something at a fast
food restaurant, can add up to significant savings.

(For more ideas, see the section on “Stretching Your
Dollars” on page 18.)

My ideas for cutting back on my spending:

Increasing income is another option to consider.

Some ideas include:

- ❖ looking for a part-time job (more on this later)
- ❖ turning a hobby into extra income
- ❖ selling unwanted items

My ideas for increasing my income:



*Jill Cadreau
Ojibwe
Bay Mills Community College
Michigan*

At age 19, Jill Cadreau is already making a difference for her people. Jill is active in Bay Mills Community College's Ojibwe Club, and has helped her teachers gather materials to incorporate tribal culture into the curriculum. Her goals: to become a teacher of Ojibwe language and mathematics at a tribal high school and help start up a tribal radio station.

Finding the money to go to school can be a challenge. "When I first started college, I did not have any financial aid," Jill says. "That was tough. Then, the financial aid officer at Bay Mills helped me get some scholarship help." Jill also works 15 hours a week as a teacher's assistant. She uses the

money from her job to pay for food, phone, and other bills.

"A key to managing money is to make a budget, either on paper or mentally, of what needs to be paid each month," Jill recommends. "Otherwise, it's too easy to overspend. I also save a little at the bank for times when I run short of money."

Jill also advises students to apply for every scholarship and grant they can. "Visit your tribal headquarters to find out about aid possibilities," she says. "If you are persistent, get decent grades, and are active in your community, you will prevail."

Stretching Your Dollars



Here are 25 ideas for stretching every dollar as far as possible.

1. Take advantage of special discounts available to college students. For example, going to the movies, riding the bus, or even ordering pizza might cost you less if you show your student I.D. (It's especially fun to get student discounts when you are an older student!) One place to find student discounts is on the Internet. Several Web site addresses are provided on page 20.
2. Compare prices on-campus with prices off-campus. For example, the school cafeteria may cost less than eating at a restaurant in town. Child care might cost less on campus. The student health center may be much cheaper than going to a doctor off campus. And the recreation center is probably free. On the other hand, school supplies might cost more at the college bookstore than at a big discount store.
3. Buy used books. As soon as you have your class schedule, start checking the campus bookstore for used books. If you don't need your books at the end of the semester or quarter, sell them.
4. Buy only the things you really need. Before you buy something, ask yourself: "Do I need this? Or do I just want it?" After you finish college and get a good job, you will be able to afford more of the things you "want."
5. Save up the money to buy something. Do not take out a loan or use a credit card.
6. Cut out costly habits, like smoking cigarettes or buying lottery tickets. (A \$2 pack of cigarettes a day gets expensive! If you light up from age 20 to age 65, you'll send \$32,850 up in smoke.)
7. Shop at thrift stores, garage sales, or flea markets.
8. Swap clothes with friends and relatives.
9. Look for sales and "off-season" bargains. Compare prices.
10. Avoid "rent-to-own" stores. You'll almost always end up paying much more than you would if you buy the furniture or other items outright.
11. Make a shopping list and stick to it. Do not buy on a whim or when you are hungry. Take cash to the store, not a credit card.
12. Shop for food at large grocery stores or food warehouses. Stock up on sales of non-perishable items like canned food and paper products. Avoid high-priced convenience stores.
13. Use coupons and buy store brands at supermarkets and drugstores.
14. Eat at home and cook your own food. (Example: A cake mix on sale costs about \$1 and makes 24 cupcakes. Buy 24 cupcakes at the bakery and you'll spend more than \$3.)
15. Take your lunches to school or work.
16. Share driving or use public transportation when available.



17. Shop around for the best price for car insurance; compare prices every year. Find out if there is a discount for full-time students or students with a certain grade point average.
18. Trade baby-sitting with neighbors or friends instead of paying for it.
19. Go to dollar movies or rent videos.
20. Write letters instead of calling long distance; use free campus e-mail to stay in touch with family and friends.
21. Give home-made gifts.
22. Read books, magazines, and newspapers at the library instead of buying them.
23. Use campus computers instead of buying your own.
24. Find out if you qualify for public assistance, such as food stamps, commodities programs, and child care subsidies.
25. Don't pay twice. If you are living in a dorm where the food is already paid for, cut down on eating out.

Buy Now or Buy Later?

Tired of feeling poor while you are in college? Tempted to go ahead and buy something, like a car, rather than constantly pinching pennies to go to school?

You can do a lot with a car. But you can do even more with an education. A car will move you over a road. An education will move you through life.

Here is an example. Let's say you have saved \$3,000 and use it to buy a car. What will the car be worth four years from now? A Blue Book value of about \$670.

Now invest that same \$3,000 in a college education. What will a college degree be worth four years from now? \$670,000 in higher lifetime earnings.

So what will it be: \$670 or \$670,000?

(Adapted from I Am Somebody by Anna Leider and the staff of Educational Access, Dearborn Trade, Chicago: 1992)



Diné College, Arizona

www Saves \$\$\$

Check out the Internet for discounts available to college students. Here are a few ideas to get you started; however, remember that Web sites change addresses frequently and new sites are being developed nearly every day.

- ❖ *General Discounts.* The Student Advantage Card is accepted at more than 20,000 national and local businesses. With the card, students can get discounts on everything from transportation to food to clothing. Membership costs \$20 a year. To find out if the card offers discounts on services near your college or home, go to www.studentadvantage.com.
- ❖ *Textbooks.* Compare textbook prices at your campus bookstore with prices for books you can purchase online. (Remember, ordering textbooks can mean a two or three-day wait for delivery, and you will need to use a credit card. The price also will include shipping and handling.)

Sites to explore:

- Amazon.com Inc. (www.amazon.com)
 - Big-Words.com (<http://bigwords.com>)
 - Follett College Stores Corp. (www.follett.com)
 - VarsityBooks.com (www.varsitybooks.com)
- ❖ *Travel.* Check out the web sites of individual airlines. They often have special deals for college students. For example, United Airlines gives students discounts through its United College Plus program. Amtrak and Greyhound offer rail and bus discounts through the Student Advantage Network, which provides a popular student discount card.
 - ❖ *Computers.* If you decide to buy a computer, use your student status to get discounts or rebates on a new personal computer. Apple Computer Inc. offers special discounts to students (www.apple.com/education/hed/students/). Dell Computer Corp. and Microsoft have teamed up to offer lower computer prices for college students through their Campus Essentials program (www.dell.com/client/edu/facstaff.htm).



“My personal goals are to continue following the Red Road and helping others to find it.”

*Wade Wiartalla
Sault Ste. Marie Chippewa
Bay Mills Community College
Michigan*

Staying Out of Debt



College students often are in debt. Tribal colleges try to help their students stay out of debt by using grants, scholarships, and work study, which do not have to be repaid, and avoiding student loans whenever possible.

If you are going to a mainstream college, however, one of the largest debts you may have is loans to pay your college expenses. Because a college education has so many benefits, most experts consider a college loan almost like an investment in your future. You will be able to repay it when you get started in your career. But other debt can be dangerous to your future.

One of the easiest ways to get into debt trouble is by using credit cards. As a college student, chances are you've been offered several credit cards, or maybe even have one or two of them.

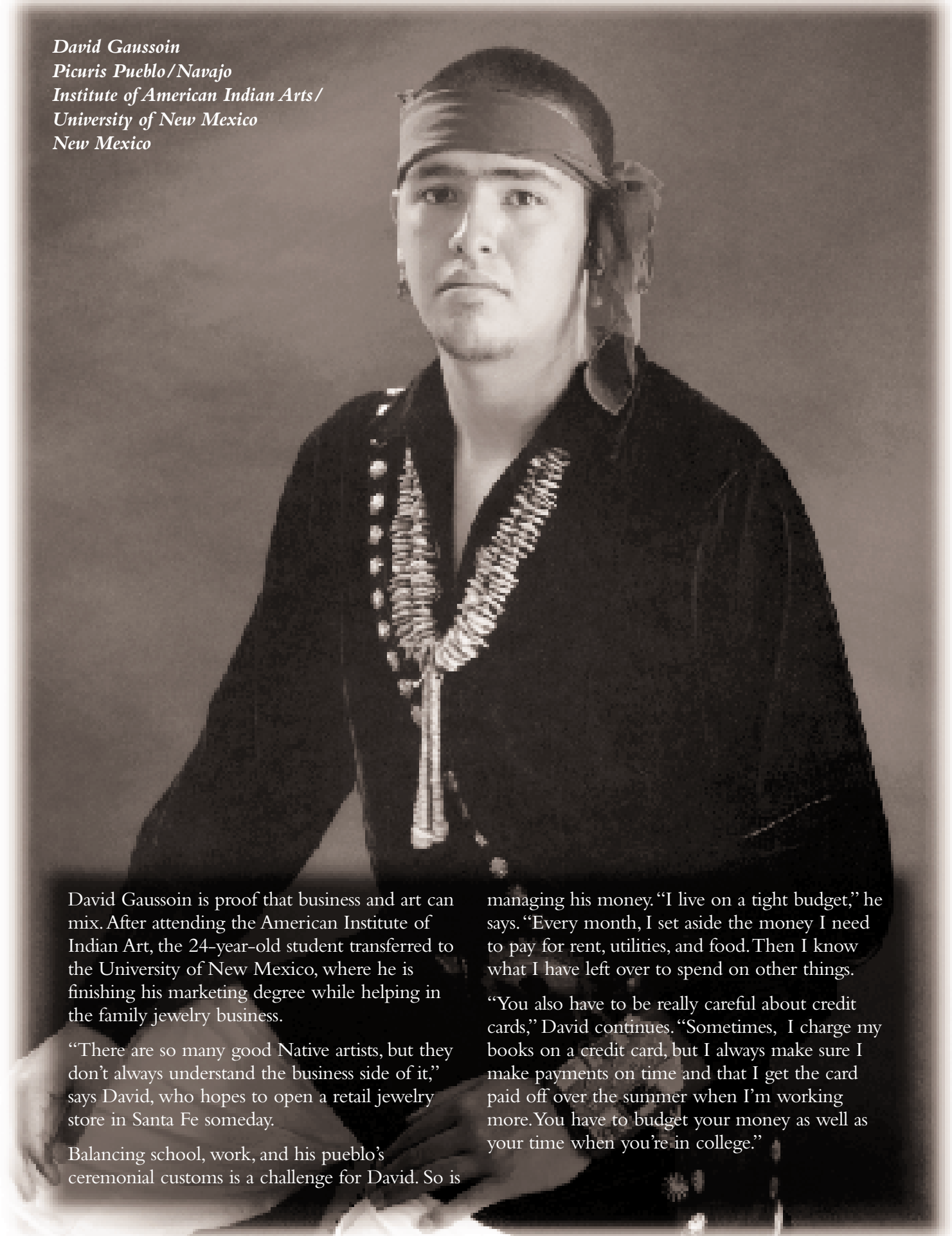
Credit cards are convenient, and they come in handy for emergencies if you pay them off every month.

Problems begin, though, when you start thinking of your credit card as extra money, instead of like the loan it really is. Or, to put it another way, you are taking out a loan to pay for a pizza long after you've eaten it!

If you have a balance on your credit cards, you are probably overspending. The tiny required minimum payments are tempting, but interest rates are high, and the ultimate cost you end up paying for things you charge can be stunning. Take the pizza example. If you think you have never eaten a \$100 pizza, try charging one on your credit card and paying the minimum for a few years.

Worse, if you start missing payments, you risk getting a poor credit record, which will follow you for years. It can hurt your chances of buying a home or a car someday. It can even hurt your chances of getting a job.





*David Gaussoin
Picuris Pueblo/Navajo
Institute of American Indian Arts/
University of New Mexico
New Mexico*

David Gaussoin is proof that business and art can mix. After attending the American Institute of Indian Art, the 24-year-old student transferred to the University of New Mexico, where he is finishing his marketing degree while helping in the family jewelry business.

“There are so many good Native artists, but they don’t always understand the business side of it,” says David, who hopes to open a retail jewelry store in Santa Fe someday.

Balancing school, work, and his pueblo’s ceremonial customs is a challenge for David. So is

managing his money. “I live on a tight budget,” he says. “Every month, I set aside the money I need to pay for rent, utilities, and food. Then I know what I have left over to spend on other things.

“You also have to be really careful about credit cards,” David continues. “Sometimes, I charge my books on a credit card, but I always make sure I make payments on time and that I get the card paid off over the summer when I’m working more. You have to budget your money as well as your time when you’re in college.”

10 Ways to Take Control of Credit Cards




It's easy to get into debt and much harder to get out of it. If you must have a credit card, here are 10 ways to keep it under control:

1. Only have one credit card.
2. Shop around for a card that has no annual fee, a lower interest rate (called the annual percentage rate or APR), and a 25-day grace period before interest is charged on new purchases. You can shop for the best credit card deals on the Internet. Try the Bank Rate Monitor's site (www.bankrate.com).
3. Pay off your credit card balance in full every month.
4. Mail the full payment several days before the due date so you won't owe any interest or late fees.
5. Think of your credit card as a loan. Before you pull out your credit card, ask yourself, "Would I really go to the bank and take out a loan to do this?" Another idea: If you think you want something, wait two weeks to buy it. That will help curb impulse spending.
6. Never lend your credit card to anyone. Regardless of who uses the card, you will still be responsible for paying the bill.
7. Do not take out a cash advance from a credit card unless you have a serious emergency. You'll probably pay a fee for the money, and the credit card company will begin charging interest immediately.
8. Stay away from marketing gimmicks like "convenience checks" sent to you by the credit card company. You'll pay more interest and get yourself further into debt. Tear up such offers.
9. If your credit cards are too tempting, leave them at home. Better yet, cut them up, throw them away, and close your account.
10. Reward yourself for getting out of debt. Make a list of things you enjoy that don't cost money and go for it!

My credit card situation:

- I do not have a credit card.
- I have _____ credit card(s).
- I owe \$_____ on my credit card(s).
- I plan to pay off my credit card by doing the following:
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- I will pay off my credit card by _____ (date).



A portrait of Iyonne Jewett, a woman with short dark hair and glasses, smiling slightly. The portrait is faded and serves as a background for the text. The entire image is framed by a blue dotted border.

*“The reservations are lacking in
adequate Native accounting services.
Our survival depends on economic
development.”*

*Iyonne Jewett
Lakota
Cheyenne River Community College
South Dakota*

If You're in Debt Trouble



If you are feeling overwhelmed with debt, try the ideas below. (Remember, we're talking about debts to buy a car, a TV, or other items. We are not talking about student loans. You will begin paying those loans after you graduate.)

- ❖ If you are in debt to a few businesses, call them and try to negotiate for smaller payments—at least for a while. Call them before you miss a payment. This may be difficult for you to do, but it's less embarrassing than receiving telephone calls from creditors demanding payment. And, the businesses may be more willing to work with you because you are showing them your willingness to pay them back.
- ❖ If you owe many businesses, it may be time for outside help. Start with your college's financial aid office. They may have special counselors who help students with debt problems. Or, consider working with a nonprofit debt counseling service, such as Consumer Credit Counseling Service. They can help you set up a repayment plan with your creditors. Look for a telephone number in the business section of the White Pages.
- ❖ Review your spending plan. Look for ways to cut expenses wherever possible. For example, can you carpool to school instead of driving? Can you trade baby-sitting instead of paying for child care?
- ❖ Try to find ways to increase income. Can you find a part-time job? If you are already working, will your boss give you a few extra hours each week so you can make a little more money? Do you have grown children living with you? Can they help out by paying for room and board? The next section of this book gives tips on finding and keeping a job.

- ❖ Use a debt recovery worksheet. Make several copies of the worksheet that follows (one per creditor). Then, list how much you owe to each creditor and how much you will pay each month. Soon, if you make steady payments, you will see the amount owed go down. It will shrink even faster if you pay something extra whenever you can. Put your worksheets in order, starting with the highest interest rate and going to the lowest. When one debt is eliminated, celebrate your progress (without using money).

My debt situation:

- I am not in debt.
- I am in debt, but I can easily make my payments.
- I am in debt, and I cannot easily make my payments. I need outside help.
- These are the steps I will take to get my debt under control:



Debt Recovery Worksheet

Owed to: _____

INTEREST RATE	AMOUNT OWED	MONTHLY PAYMENT	PAYMENT DUE DATE	AMOUNT PAID AND DATE

Building Good Credit

A good credit history is not something that just happens; it must be built up over time. Ironically, one of the best ways to build good credit is by going into debt (but remember, this should be minimal debt that can be paid off right away). Here are some tips for building good credit.

- ❖ Pay basic expenses, such as rent, on time.
- ❖ Pay loans before you spend money on other purchases.
- ❖ Make all loan payments on time.
- ❖ Do not bounce checks.
- ❖ Avoid using credit cards.



Earning Extra Income



Many college students work while they go to school. A job can help you get out of debt, pay your bills, start saving money, and feel more secure financially. And, when you begin looking for a permanent job after you graduate, your work experience will give you an advantage over others applying for the same job.

If you work and go to school at the same time, you will be busy. But your grades don't have to suffer. In fact, many students who work say they are more organized with their time and study more efficiently than before they had a job.

Finding a job isn't always easy. Depending on where you live, jobs may be scarce. However, the fact that you are in college will be an advantage. Employers will admire your efforts to get an education. You will be the kind of person employers like to hire.

Here are places to look for jobs:

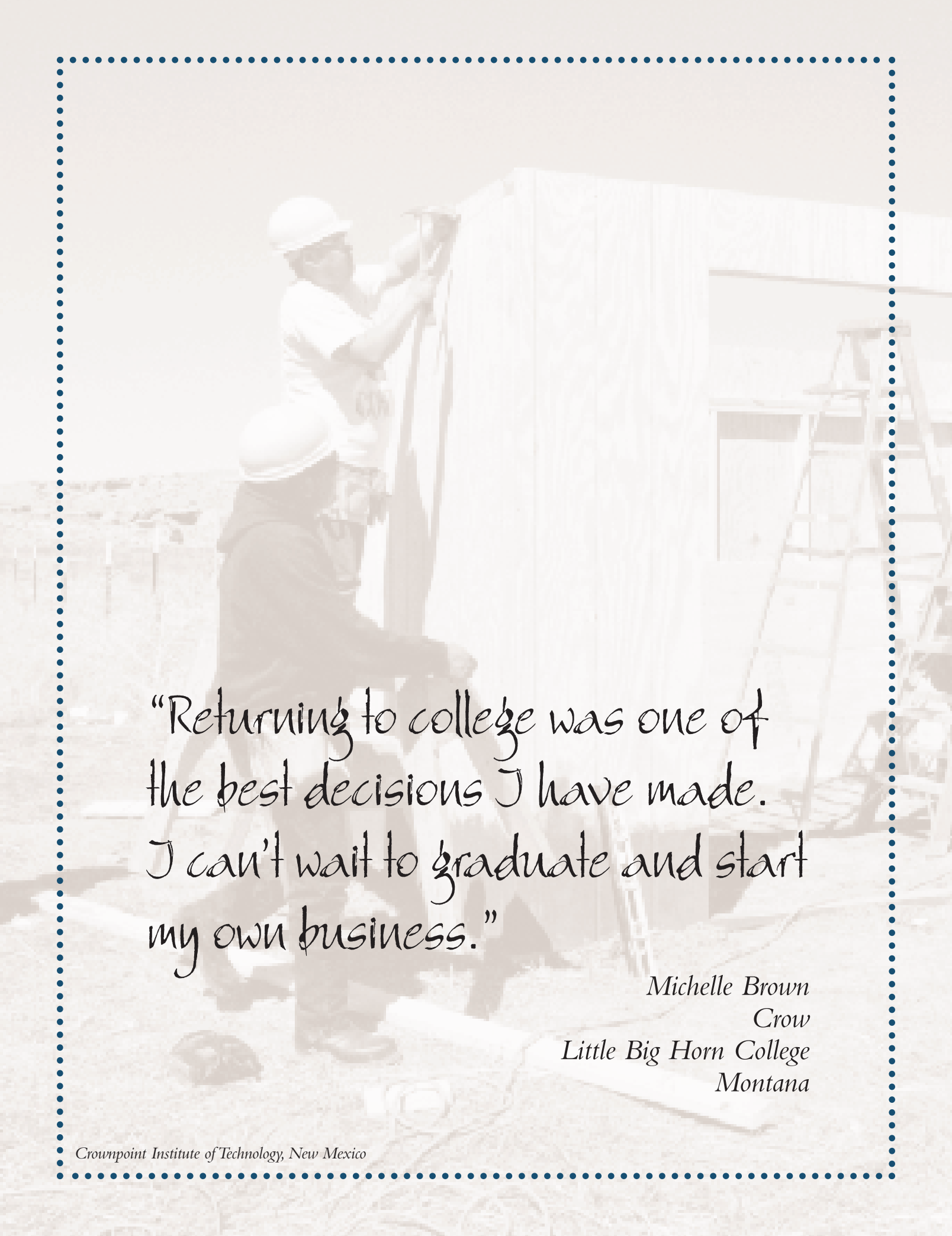
- ❖ Your college. Jobs may be available on campus, or your college may help you find jobs off campus. Visit your school's student employment office. (If you are already in a work-study program, you may not be allowed to work any more hours during the school year than you already are. But, you may be able to get a full-time summer job.)

- ❖ Your professors may know about summer jobs or internships in your field of study.
- ❖ Your tribe may be able to provide job leads.
- ❖ Read newspaper ads.
- ❖ Keep an eye out for help-wanted signs in windows or on store bulletin boards.
- ❖ Visit job placement centers run by your state, county, or city.
- ❖ Talk to people who work at a place where you would like to work.
- ❖ Ask family or friends to let you know if they hear about jobs you can do.

You also may be able to turn a hobby or special skill into a money maker. For example, are you artistic? Your tribe, college, or local art gallery may be able to help you sell your work. Do you enjoy taking care of kids? Put an ad offering day care on bulletin boards at your college. Are you an excellent student? Other students may pay you to tutor them.

Warning: Stay away from job ads that promise to pay you an income for "working from your home," especially if the ad asks you to send money for supplies first. This probably is a scam.





*“Returning to college was one of
the best decisions I have made.
I can’t wait to graduate and start
my own business.”*

*Michelle Brown
Crow
Little Big Horn College
Montana*

Make Yourself “Employable”

Looking for a job is one step. The second step is to make yourself “employable.” Here are some things to consider:

- ❖ Do you have a way to get to work?
- ❖ If you have children, will someone in the family take care of them, or will you have to pay for child care?
- ❖ Do you have the skills employers are looking for? For example, you might need to take a quick course on using the computer to land a job.
- ❖ Are you ready to fill out a job application? Make sure you have information such as your Social Security and driver’s license numbers, names and dates of previous employers, school history, and references.
- ❖ You may be asked to provide a resume. A resume is a one- or two-page description of your skills, education, and work experience. You can find examples of well-written resumes at the library.
- ❖ Are you ready for the job interview? Before you go to an interview, anticipate questions you may be asked and think about how you will answer them. Again, your librarian can help you find books that list common interview questions.
- ❖ Are you ready to do a good job? You have to keep the job after you get it! That means coming to work on time, working hard while you are there, and missing work only in an emergency. If you are dependable, get along well with your co-workers, and “go the extra mile” on the job, you’ll be a great employee!

My job plan:

The kinds of jobs I am qualified to do are:

I plan to look for a job in the following places:

Three people who would give me a good reference are (include names, addresses, and telephone numbers):

(Note: Make sure to ask these people if they are willing to be listed as a reference.)

School Is a Job, Too

Have you ever thought of going to college as a job? It is. In fact, it's probably the most important job you have right now. Certainly, it is the job that will give you the biggest payoff down the road.

Take your classes as seriously as you would take a job. That means:

- ❖ Go to class. You paid for that class. Don't waste your money by skipping it!
- ❖ Arrive on time and sit up front where you can hear and see well.
- ❖ Take part in class discussions. Even if you are shy, force yourself to offer your ideas. Ask questions if you disagree or don't understand something. Again, remember: You are paying for this class. Make sure you are getting the information you need.
- ❖ Be on time when you register for classes, apply for financial aid, meet your advisor, and participate in study groups. When you are on time, you show respect for others.
- ❖ Make an effort to get to know your professors and advisor. Ask for a few minutes of their time when you can sit down together to discuss any questions or concerns you have. So few students take the initiative to meet their teachers that professors really appreciate the ones who do.
- ❖ Introduce yourself to students in each of your classes. Ask if you can trade names, telephone numbers, and e-mail addresses so that if you have to miss a class, you can call them for assignments and notes.
- ❖ If you are going to a mainstream college, find out where the Native American center on campus is and get involved in it.
- ❖ Set up a quiet place to study at home, or find a quiet spot on campus where you can study. Schedule your study time just like you would schedule your work.
- ❖ Take care of yourself by eating well and getting the rest you need. Strive for balance in your spiritual, physical, intellectual, and emotional life. Choose your path and stay on it.

Saving Money: Start Now

Right now, saving money may seem like the last thing you can do. But if you give it a try, you may be surprised at how your savings can add up. Just as important, you will start the habit of saving, a habit that will help you the rest of your life.

Money put into a savings account earns interest, and money put into a mutual fund can pay dividends. Either way, the real power of money is that it can grow over time—if you save it in the first place. The more time you have to save, the more money you'll end up with.

Double Your Money

There is a formula called the “Rule of 72” that can estimate the number of years it will take to double your money when you invest it in a savings account, a mutual fund, or other investment.

Here's how it works:

Divide 72 by the interest rate you expect to earn. This will show you approximately how many years it will take to double your money.

Example:

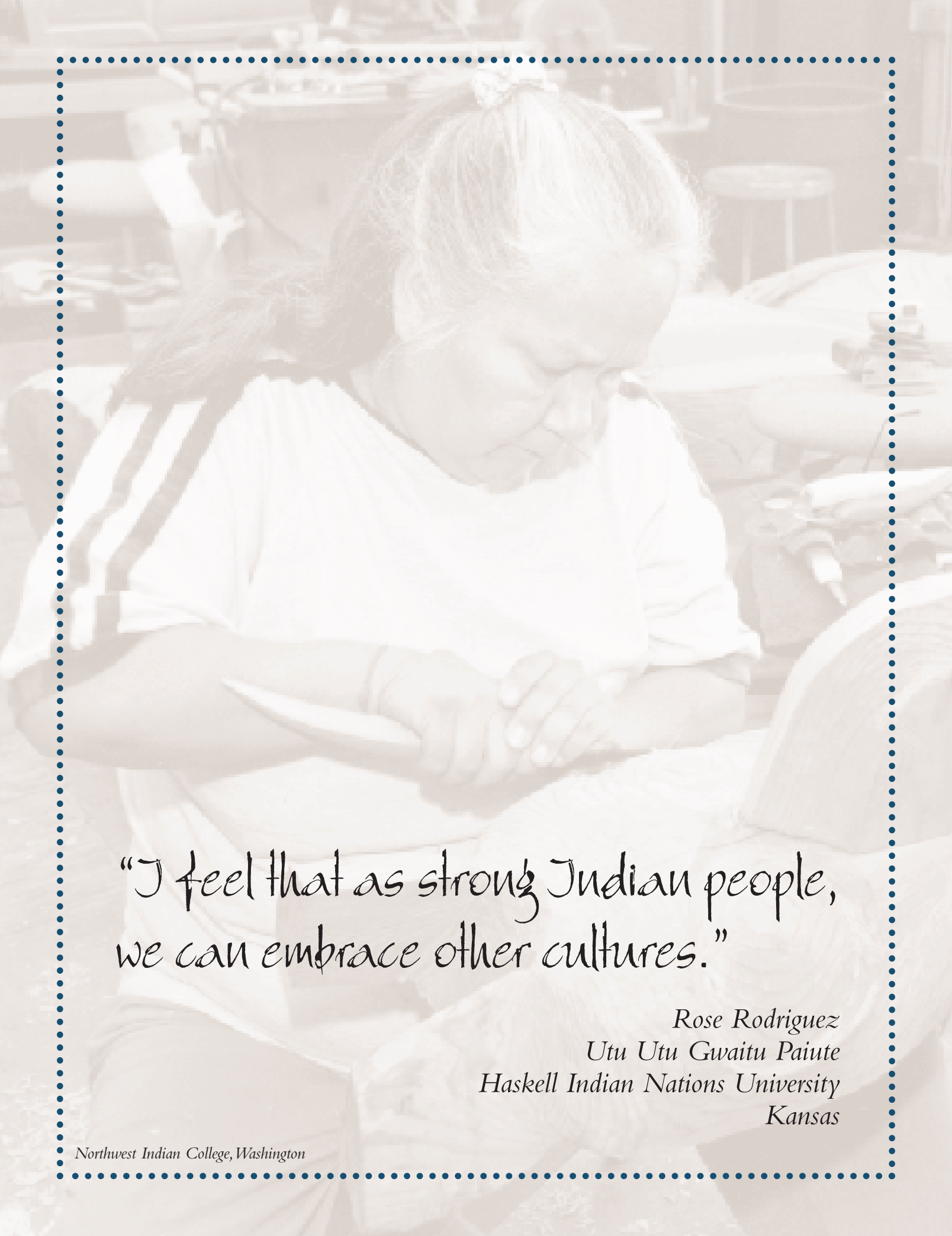
Assume you earn 8% interest on your money every year.

$$72 \div 8\% \text{ interest} = 9 \text{ years}$$

So, if you invest \$500 at 8% interest, the money will double to \$1,000 in just 9 years. Not bad!



Institute of American Indian Arts, New Mexico



*“I feel that as strong Indian people,
we can embrace other cultures.”*

*Rose Rodriguez
Utu Utu Gwaitu Paiute
Haskell Indian Nations University
Kansas*

Try Saving by Plugging Spending Leaks



One of the easiest ways to save is to cut back on spending and put what you save into a savings account or into an investment like a mutual fund. Use the chart below to estimate how much you could save each

month if you plugged some spending leaks. You don't need to give up these things altogether. Just cut back, and you can start to save.

ITEM	COST OF ITEM	COST PER MONTH	COST PER YEAR
Soda (Example)	55¢	\$16.50	\$198
Video rental			
Long-distance telephone calls			
Snacks from vending machines			
Eating out			
Movies			
Magazines			
New clothes			
Other			

Another idea is to think of saving money as *paying yourself first*. Here are some examples:

- ❖ When you plug a spending leak, like bringing your lunch to school instead of buying it, *pay yourself first* by putting what you've saved into your savings account. (See the section "Stretching Your Dollars" on page 18 for other ideas.)
- ❖ If you have a job, *pay yourself first*. Each pay day, take a certain amount of money (\$10, \$25, \$50) out of your paycheck and put it into a savings account *before* you pay any other bills.
- ❖ When you pay off a bill, continue making the same payment—but to yourself in a savings account.
- ❖ Every time your family gives you a cash gift, *pay yourself first* by putting 10% (\$1 out of every \$10 you receive) into your savings account before you spend the money.
- ❖ Another easy way to save: Put your loose change into a jar. Once a month, take the change to the bank and deposit it into your savings account.

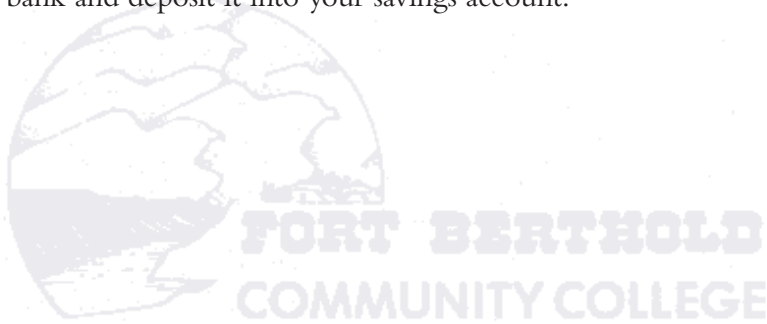
My savings plan:

I will save \$ _____ per month beginning today.

These are the ways I will save money:

I will set up a savings account or investment account at (name of bank, credit union, or mutual fund company) _____

by (date) _____ .



Why Save?

Saving has many worthwhile purposes.

Here are just a few of them:

- ❖ to pay for a college education
- ❖ to cope with emergencies, such as car repairs
- ❖ to buy expensive items, such as furniture, without going into debt
- ❖ to take a vacation
- ❖ to achieve financial goals and dreams
- ❖ to have peace of mind and less stress

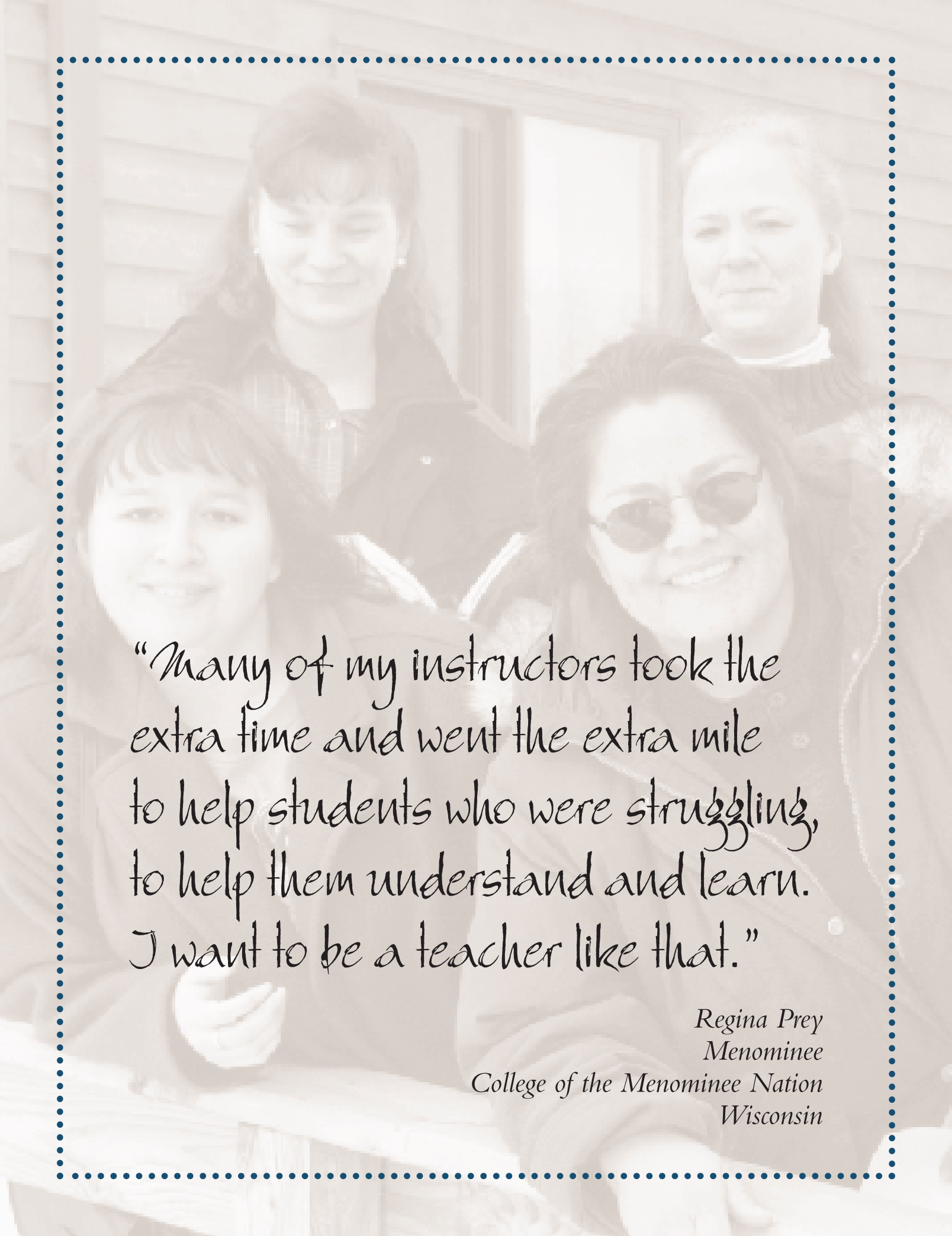


Fort Peck Community College, Montana

Want to Make Money Over a Cup of Coffee?

Do you buy a cup of coffee every day on the way to class or work? Instead, bring a thermos bottle of coffee. You can make coffee at home for a few pennies a cup. Buying it in a vending machine or at a convenience store can cost as much as a dollar a day.

If you go to school year-round or work full-time, you might buy about 240 cups of coffee a year. If you bring coffee from home and put the \$1 a day you save into an investment, you will save about \$240 a year. Now, assume that you do that for the next 30 years while you are working, and you get 9% interest each year on your investment. Those saved cups of coffee will add up to nearly \$33,000 for your retirement!



“Many of my instructors took the extra time and went the extra mile to help students who were struggling, to help them understand and learn. I want to be a teacher like that.”

*Regina Prey
Menominee
College of the Menominee Nation
Wisconsin*

Enjoy Being a Student



Managing money isn't always fun. It's hard work, in fact. But when you get your money worries under control, you will be free to enjoy your college years.

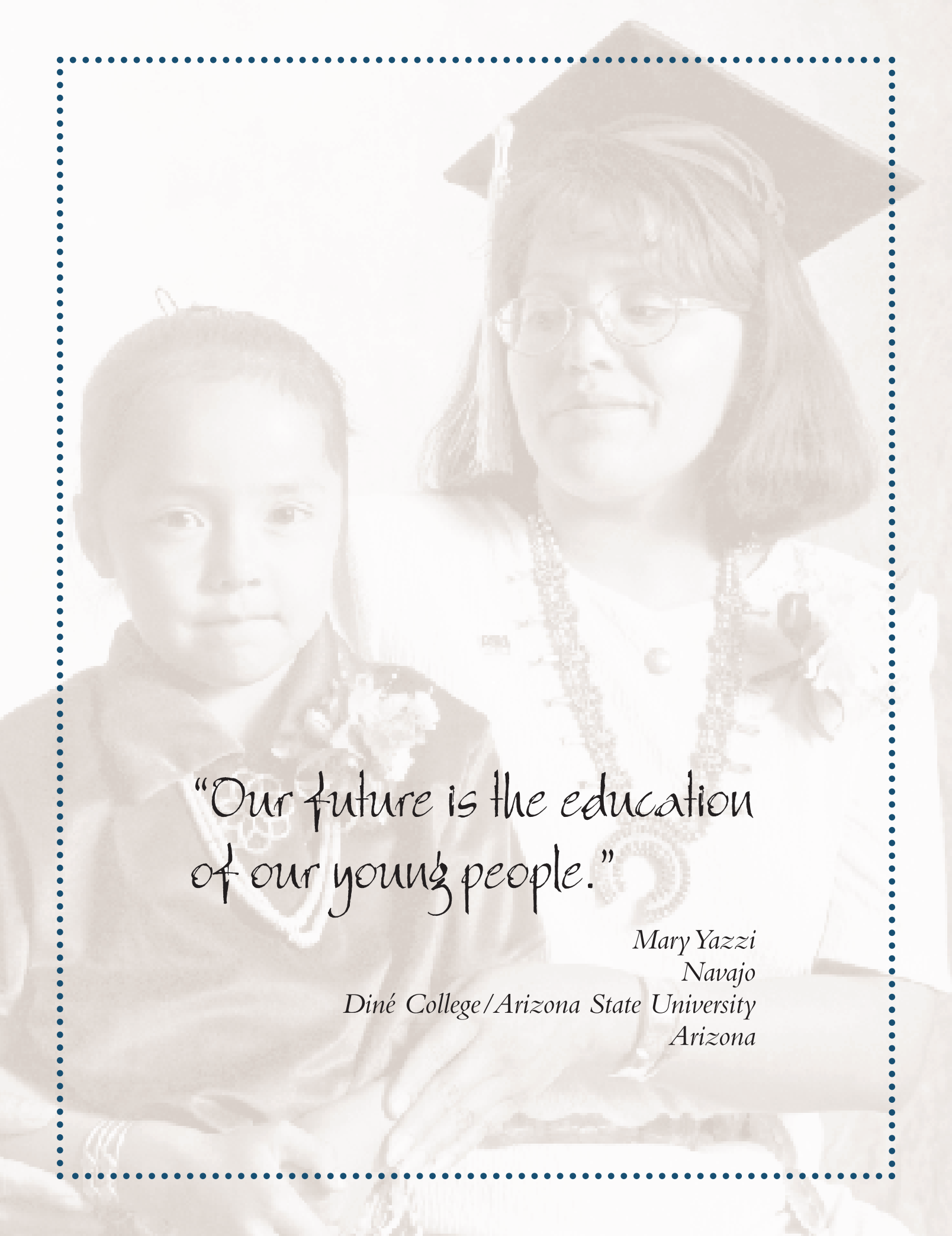
We hope you will take advantage of this time to build new friendships with other students, share ideas with your professors, take part in campus events, and have

fun with student discounts. Most important, we hope you will use this time to develop your vision of who you are and how you will contribute in the future to your family, your community, and your tribe. If you do this, your college years will indeed be the richest of your life.



Trina Lone Hill, Oglala Lakota College, South Dakota





*"Our future is the education
of our young people."*

*Mary Yazzi
Navajo
Diné College/Arizona State University
Arizona*



Developing your Vision while Attending College

Book Three: Managing Your Money

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William L. Anthes, Ph.D., *President*;

Brent A. Neiser, CFP, *Director of Collaborative Programs*;

and Carolyn S. Linville, *Project Coordinator*.

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