



Jersey State Bank offers tips to new college graduates

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JERSEYVILLE – Financial responsibility should be the top priority of college students across the nation as they start their careers. Jersey State Bank has identified six traps that could hinder new college graduates from securing their financial future.

“The financial lifestyle and habits college graduates establish now will chart their financial future and they can make their future even brighter with an early focus on sound financial planning” said James Hoefert, President/CEO.

According to Jersey State Bank, new college graduates should avoid the following financial traps:

Not having a budget. Simply put, don’t spend more than you make. Calculate the amount of money you’re taking home after taxes and then figure out how much money you can afford to spend each month while contributing to your savings. Be sure to factor in recurring expenses such as student loans, monthly rent, utilities, groceries, transportation expenses and car loans.

Forgoing an emergency fund. Make it a priority to set aside the equivalent of three to six months' worth of living expenses. Start putting some money away immediately, no matter how small the amount. A bank savings account is a smart place to stash your cash for a rainy day.

Paying bills late – or not at all. Each missed payment can hurt your credit history for up to seven years, and can affect your ability to get loans, the interest rates you pay on loans and your ability to get a job or rent an apartment. Consider setting up automatic payments for regular expenses like student loans, car payments and phone bills.

Racking up debt. Understand the responsibilities and benefits of credit. Shop around for a card that best suits your needs, and spend only what you can afford to pay back. It's a great tool if you use it responsibly.

Not thinking about the future. It may seem odd since you're just beginning your career, but now is the best time to start planning for your retirement. Contribute to your employer's 401K or similar account, especially if there is a company match. Invest enough to qualify for your company's full match – it's free money.

Ignoring help from your bank. Most banks offer online and mobile banking tools to manage your account night and day. Use these tools to check balances, pay bills, monitor transactions history and track budgets.

Jersey State Bank, the only locally owned Bank in Jersey County, has a long history as a trusted provider of financial products and services to Jersey County and the surrounding area. Established in 1903, the Bank has assets in excess of \$140 million and currently two offices to serve its customers in Jerseyville and Grafton.