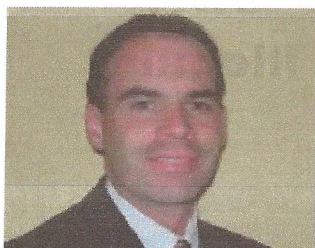
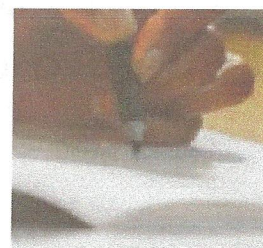


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We all know the analogy that goes on about a winter garden. It's said that the garden is not dead, but waiting, just waiting below the surface to bloom again in the spring. The same thought can be held about investing your money. It often feels like a tedious project as you put away little by little. But one day, you will look to find that it has been growing all along! Please call to make an appointment so we can discuss how to make your garden grow.



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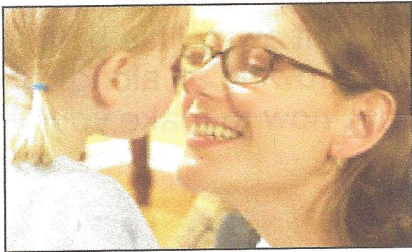
Financing College Costs on One Income

Lease or Buy? Understanding the Basics

Interesting Facts!

In 1916 Congress deleted the word "lawful" before the word "income" making illegal income taxable.

Financial Challenges for the Sandwich Generation



We all know it's true: For most parents, keeping life squared away can be challenging, considering their family and career obligations. It's easy to be caught in a tug-of-war, pulled in one direction by family responsibilities and in the other by your companies' day-to-day demands. Working baby boomers, in particular, sandwiched between obligations to their children and their aging parents, can easily feel like they're juggling three full-time jobs.

The financial responsibilities you face are many: investing time in your career...paying for a child's education or special needs...funding or providing caregiving for an aging parent...actively saving for your own retirement. How can you make it all work without feeling torn between competing priorities? In every area of your life, planning can help you develop strategies to best use your time and financial resources to achieve your goals.

Raising Children

All parents want the best for their children, and education fosters success. But with skyrocketing tuition costs, college can seem cost prohibitive. How can you meet the financial challenge? There are many options: scholarships, loans, grants, and financial aid. To round out your plan, start saving what you can as early as you can. You might be surprised at what you can accomplish with a disciplined approach and time on your side. To help you, there are federal tax credits and tax-efficient savings vehicles tailored

specifically for education, including prepaid tuition programs, college savings plans, and Coverdell Education Savings Accounts (ESAs).

Caring for Aging Parents

While raising families and cultivating careers, parents are often called on to care for aging parents, relatives, and loved ones. If it's not currently a reality for you, it may be in the future, and you will likely to face time constraints, as well as an increased financial burden.

Most people can't afford to put their work on hold to be a caregiver or to pay for extended care out-of-pocket. Long-term care insurance can help alleviate these concerns for you and your loved ones.



With many policies covering home-based care as well as stays in assisted living/residential care facilities and nursing homes, many people consider a long-term care policy an important component of their retirement plans; they see it as a way to avoid placing a caregiving burden on the next generation. Insurance can also help you preserve assets and meet your estate planning goals, such as leaving a legacy for children and grandchildren. As with most types of insurance, it is cost-effective to obtain coverage before you or a loved one needs it.

You First

Parents often have an inherent tendency to put the needs of others before their own. In terms of financial security, this can be a devastating mistake. In retirement, people tend to draw income from three main resources: Social Security, company-sponsored retirement plans, and personal savings.

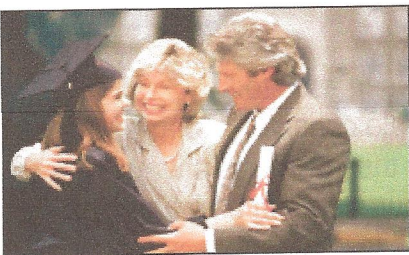
Unlike the assistance available for college, there are no loans or financial aid for retirement. So again, it's important to save what you can when you can. Contribute to your company's retirement plan and maximize your contributions. In addition, plan for the unexpected. Disability income insurance can help ensure you have a source of replacement income in the event of an accident or illness.

Looking Ahead

Family obligations can be demanding second job. With foresight, planning, and professional guidance, you can minimize the emotional and financial stress, and tailor a long-term plan for your specific situation.

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Financing College Costs on One Income



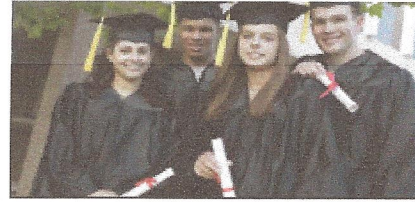
If you are like most parents, you're probably wondering how you'll be able to send your kids to college without going into serious debt. With the cost at private colleges averaging over \$38,000 per year (Source: Trends in College Pricing-2011, The College Board), paying the bill might seem overwhelming, especially if your family has only one wage earner.

One option might be to do nothing in the way of saving and simply hope for the best with the college financial aid system. However, that could be a risky proposition. When it comes to paying for college, unless your child is fortunate enough to get a full scholarship, most schools will expect you to pay some part of the bill. And, who knows what might be available in the way of college financial aid in the future?

What's a Parent to Do?

One of the myths about going to college is that you must go to a "prestige" school in order to have any chance in life. If that were true, not too many of us would have made it because those schools can take only a small percentage of each year's applicants. While it is true that a "designer label" degree may help gain entry into some "designer label" graduate and professional schools, there are many excellent, reasonably priced colleges that turn out graduates fully capable of competing in the real world. Check them out!





Who Needs Help?

Many families will need some financial assistance to pay for college, but need can go both ways: Colleges also have a need: for customers (students) in order to utilize the full capacity of their classrooms and dorms. Some colleges seek regional diversity in their student bodies and will provide aid to attract students from distant parts of the country. Expanding your geographical horizons could pay off with big savings. Perhaps your graduate-to-be is going to "kick back" or work during the summers between school years. Maybe going to summer school is a better idea. Some schools reduce their tuition and board fees for the summer term, and earning credits toward graduation at summer "discount" rates might lower the overall cost of getting a degree. Furthermore, colleges expect a student to contribute from his or her own earnings to fund the education, so part of the earnings from that summer job may be factored back into the payment of tuition bills.

Make Plans

Perhaps the most important thing in preparing for college expenses is to start *early*. When your child is first born, consider putting money away on a *regular* basis-however small the amount might be-in order to build up a college fund. The magic of **compounding** can work wonders with a seventeen-year time horizon!

For kids in high school, the sophomore year is not too early to begin investigating colleges, even though your child may have little idea about what he or she wants to do in life at that age. Good planning is a process of finding the "right fit" between your child and a college, a process better developed over a period of time than entered into at the last minute.

Whatever you do, don't despair! With a little detective work, some creative planning, and a willingness to forgo the "designer" degree, you *can* find a school that will provide your child with a fine education, and you do not have to go broke paying for it.

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go both ways: Colleges also havou do not have to go broke paying for it.
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Lease or Buy? Understanding the Basics



Leasing continues to grow in popularity among new car buyers. People who formerly purchased their vehicles may wonder how the option of leasing compares. Take Mike and Mary, for instance. They have always purchased their vehicles, but after hearing friends and relatives tout the benefits of leasing, they wonder whether it is better to lease or buy.

As Mike and Mary begin to look into the leasing process, understanding the details seems overwhelming. But, as they soon discover, the basics are pretty simple. If they purchase a vehicle, they own it. If they lease a vehicle, they pay to use it, typically for two to three years, and then return the car at the end of the contract.

Pros and Cons of Leasing

One of the main advantages of leasing is that it generally allows Mike and Mary to get more vehicle for their money. Since they are only paying a portion of the total value, they can expect to make a smaller monthly payment for a given vehicle or drive a more expensive make or model for a given monthly payment. Suppose, for example, they are considering

purchasing a mid-size sedan. For the same monthly payment they may be able to lease a high-end luxury sedan. Alternatively, if they prefer the mid-size model, they may be able to pay less per month with a lease than if they purchased it.

Yet, leasing is not for everyone, and there are tradeoffs to consider. Leases include many charges that may require large sums of cash at the start and at the end of the lease. Up-front costs may include a security deposit, a destination fee, and a registration fee. Lease-end charges may be assessed for "excessive wear and tear," excess mileage (usually at \$.10 to \$.25 per mile), and a disposition fee. If Mike and Mary were to end the lease early, they would expect to pay a high penalty. In addition, if they decided to purchase the car at the end of the lease, it may cost more than if they had originally purchased and financed the car.

When Buying Is a Better Option

Buying may be a better choice if Mike and Mary plan to keep the vehicle for a long time. Usually, if the financing costs over the life of a car loan are tallied and compared to the costs of leasing and then purchasing the leased vehicle, buying makes more economic sense. Also, once Mike and Mary own the car, they are free to drive it for years without a car payment, pass it on to a family member, or sell it. They may also maintain the vehicle as they wish, modify or customize it in any way they choose, and put unlimited miles on it without penalty.

Now that Mike and Mary understand the basics, they are in a better position to decide between leasing and buying. They will have to weigh the pros and cons carefully, taking into account both their short- and long-term objectives, as well as their driving habits. Though the lease process may at first seem daunting, understanding their options can help them get the best new car deal for their circumstances.

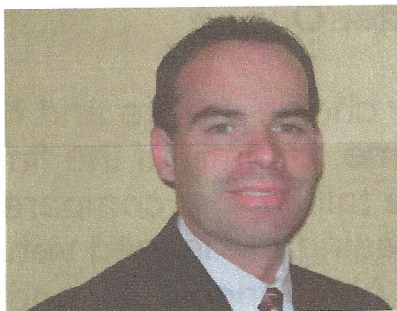
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