



The ~~NOVA~~debt Connection

A Garden State Consumer Credit Counseling Organization

January 2006

What Our Clients Are Saying...

“After losing my good paying job in 1998 due to health reasons, we had to rely upon my husband’s income, which child support payments are deducted from, leaving us with a mere \$21,000 a year to live on. Filing for Social Security Disability has been a very long and stressful event. With the every day calls from creditors, beginning on Sunday mornings at 8am, their persistence was literally driving me crazy. I couldn’t deal with the sound of our phone ringing. My stress took a toll on my concentration and the financial hardship put us into an inability to budget. I knew I wanted to pay the creditors in order to help somewhat in saving our good credit. I couldn’t remember due dates and stamps were too costly. Without Garden State throughout the last 4-5 years, my life would have been a nightmare. Through all the crying and stress, they always reassured me they’d be there to help. I can’t begin to thank them all so very much.”

JS, Iowa



Community Impact

Source: Becky Winters, Education Developer for Novadebt

Did you know that Novadebt is an approved Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) provider at our Freehold, NJ office location? We have employees who have been trained by the Internal Revenue Service and the State of New Jersey, to provide FREE tax preparation for individuals whose gross income for 2005 will be \$37,000 and below. While preparing your return, these volunteers can also help you determine if you meet the requirements for the Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC). EITC is a federal income tax credit that is refunded to qualified taxpayers after their taxes have been paid. Even if you don’t have to pay any taxes on your income, you may still qualify for a refund. EITC is based on the amount of your earned income; is set up on a sliding scale and claimed by filing a federal income tax return. If you do not live in the Freehold, NJ area, there are VITA tax programs located in most communities. To locate the site closest to you, call 1-800-829-1040.

On another note, the holidays have come to a close and the memories shared with families and friends will keep us “warm” throughout the coming winter months. Many of us received

new items of clothing as gifts. While placing new items in our closets and drawers, we may find that older, gently used items may be set aside to make way for the new. While tucking away those holiday gifts, keep in mind there are those of us who could put those gently used items to good use. That sweater, slacks, jeans or coat would be most welcome to someone who may not be as fortunate. Why not take those items and drop them off to a local agency? If you are not sure where to turn, contact your local United Way, or perhaps a local food bank. They can direct you to the proper contact. Our Outreach Group, here at Novadebt, has decided to do just that during the month of January. We’re calling it our “Mini Clothing Drive”, as it will include only employees from our offices. Larger efforts are planned once the weather warms up. We have seen the need first hand through our work within different communities. The saying goes...”Many hands make light work!”, so why not help in your own community?



Employee Spotlight – Glynnis DeLuca



Novadebt’s employee spotlight for January shines on ...

Glynnis DeLuca

Glynnis is the Counseling Support Representative for Novadebt’s Counseling Department and has been an asset ever since she started in September 2002.

Glynnis is an invaluable resource for the counselors and the management team. She is considered to be the brick in the

foundation who keeps the entire department in tact and our internal structure sound. She is the “go-to” person for the Counseling Department.

Glynnis is self-motivated, energetic, unselfish, and always accommodating. She performs her varied tasks with enthusiasm, a smile, and a positive attitude at all times. She multi-tasks successfully and immediately responds to the needs of the business. She never feels as if a task is too minor or too difficult. Glynnis treats each function with the same importance and is always accurate and thorough.

Glynnis’ favorite part of the job is helping

the wonderful counselors. She ensures that the Counseling Department has more time to assist clients, while she handles the clerical responsibilities.

She plays an active role in Novadebt’s Outreach efforts and is a part of our “Reach Out and Read” team.

In Glynnis’ spare time, she enjoys reading, exercising, traveling with her husband and spending time with her three children.

Thank you, Glynnis, for being a part of Novadebt’s team!



If you have any comments, questions, or suggestions for future news bulletins, please email bulletin@novadebt.com.

PERSONAL FINANCE PROGRAM

SOURCE: KAREN CASTELLANI, SENIOR COUNSELOR FOR NOVADebt

We are excited to announce that our Personal Financial Program (PFP) is now being offered to clients who have completed the Debt Management Program (DMP). This program is designed to provide you with the tools needed to lead a financially stable life. The PFP is a financial support system where we provide continued financial guidance in such areas as budgeting, credit report reviews, action plans, and goal setting. This program is in effect for up to six months. The following

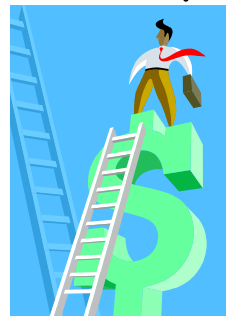
topics are included at various points over the six month period:

- Review of the “Credit When Credit is Due” course and the “Make Your Move” (home buying) course
- Analysis of your credit report, including providing your credit score, twice during the program
- Budgeting steps and tips including tracking your expenses and the materials to budget successfully
- Developing action plans for financial goals

- Monthly reviews of your progress by a certified counselor

We will work with you to provide education, direction, tools, and support, so that you will be able to set positive goals for your future financial success!

Please contact us at 800-772-4557 and we will explain how this program will benefit you!



Cut Energy Costs

Source: American Center for Credit Education—ACCE

As temperatures dip, energy costs inevitably rise. Next to your home heating system, your hot water heater is your home’s highest energy consumer. By taking a few simple measures, you can conserve energy and lower your bills year round.

Energy experts agree that the first step to conserving energy when it comes to your water heater is to replace one that is corroded or leaking. A leaky hot water heater—even if it only drips once per second—can cost as much as \$3 each month. You can also reduce your water heating costs by lowering the thermostat setting on your hot water heater. For each 10 degrees you reduce your water temperature, you can save between 3 to 5 percent in energy costs.

While manufacturers typically set water heater thermostats at 140 degrees, most households only need them to be set at 120 degrees. In fact, a thermostat set at 140 degrees can scald, serving as a safety hazard and unnecessarily raising energy bills. An added benefit of lowering the temperature is that this will slow mineral build up and corrosion in your water tank, therefore prolonging the life of your water heater.



“The Novadebt Connection” does not assume responsibility for any advice given. It is up to the reader to determine if advice is safe and suitable for their own situation.