

# SAFE Newsletter

StraightTalk® Association for Financial Empowerment

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## Believing You Can Improve Your Financial Life

Excerpts By Amanda Woods, Ohio Saves

When we find ourselves in times of financial hardship, it can overwhelm so many aspects of our lives. Maybe you have debt that you're trying to pay off, or your income has changed and you're trying to make ends meet. There is no question that these financial situations can cause us stress if we're unsure how to proceed. These feelings can be very isolating and can make it difficult to imagine that there is a way out of this phase of our life or that there is hope for a brighter tomorrow. I know it can be hard, but it is important to remember that there are always steps that you can take to begin to make the improvements necessary to improve your financial footing.

### Understanding where you are.



When looking to improve your financial life, a great place to start is knowing your credit score. SAFE frequently highlights the importance of checking your credit score, as well as understanding the

factors that go into creating your score. When you have this important piece of information, you'll be on your way to understanding how to take the necessary steps to improve it!

Another way to gain a better understanding of your current financial situation is to take a look at your budget. Tracking your income and expenses will allow you to get a clearer picture of what money you have coming in and what money you have going out each month. Once you've

tracked for the month, you'll be able to figure out your income and your expenses. From here, you can organize this information to help you better understand if there are some areas of your budget that you can adjust to help get you back on track.

### Understanding what steps to take.

Once you have a better understanding of your current financial situation, you'll be able to identify some steps to take to help ease your current financial burden. For example, if you're spending more than you're making each month, take a look at your expenses and see what changes can be made. Are you able to reduce your expenses? Perhaps there are bills that may not be necessary right now, like movie and music streaming services, that can easily be stopped. Have you called your lender and informed them about your current financial situation? They may be able to help! It's important to simply take a look at where your money is going, and to be honest with yourself about the changes that can be made.

### Asking for help.

Working to improve your financial situation can be overwhelming, and asking for help is an empowering step to take! Pursuing financial education will provide you with the knowledge that can help you make the changes necessary for a brighter financial future. No matter what the situation, you can do this! There is always hope to increase your financial security and make the changes necessary to live a financially healthy life. When things get tough, just know that you're not alone, and there are people and resources out there to help you through it! We recommend visiting SAFE's list of Educational Resources at [www.financiallysafes.org](http://www.financiallysafes.org) for more information on tackling your finances. Don't know where to start? It's never too late! *Learn more at [AmericaSaves.org](http://AmericaSaves.org).*

## SAFE 2020 Scholarship Winners

Each year, the StraightTalk® Association for Financial Empowerment (SAFE) awards a minimum of \$5,000 in scholarships to hard-working individuals looking to further their education or career. This year's field of applicants for the SAFE Scholarship was truly outstanding. The applicants represented a fantastic mix of individuals from many backgrounds with a variety of outstanding stories to tell. From high school seniors to PhD students and those entering the ROTC, our applicants were impressive in their commitment to helping others.

Selecting winners from this year's pool of applicants was an uplifting journey with dozens of examples of individuals who consistently put the needs of others before their own. This year, the scholarship committee selected three applicants who demonstrated an impressive drive for helping people, serving the underserved, and making an impact in and giving back to our communities. While the review and voting process is blind and completely anonymous, we are excited that all of this year's winners just so happened to be pursuing education in the healthcare field: a field certainly deserving of support during these uncertain times. Congratulations to:



### **Amanda Flick**

Amanda embodies the desire to make a positive difference in the lives of those around her. Whether by leading her peers in a number of educational roles or volunteering in her community, her goal is to aid in the lives of those in her community. She is currently pursuing a degree in nursing. Congratulations, Amanda!

### **Jennifer Simpson**

Jennifer lives out her desire to aid those around her every day in her role as a labor and delivery nurse. She is currently working full-time while pursuing her Master's in midwifery and has plans to pursue two other degrees upon successful completion of her current program. Congratulations, Jennifer!

### **Anneliese Probeck**

Anneliese displays an amazing drive to give back and has been heavily involved in her community for many years. She intends to enroll in a nursing program and is fully committed to continuing volunteering in her local community upon entering the work force. Congratulations, Anneliese!

**Congratulations again to all three winners!** We are so honored to help you towards your goals and wish you all the best of luck in your future endeavors.

