

FS News: Celebration and Education Edition

Welcome back to Summer one and all ~

We're off to a warm and smokey start here in the Midwest, and many parts of the nation...as the smoke drifts hither and thither with the jet stream, making it's way all the over to Europe. It's cutting into outdoor activities, but celebrations have continued to grow in numbers and enthusiasm now that we get to gather once again.

Cheers to Juneteenth, to Father's Day and to Solstice...and to our upcoming Fourth of July celebrations as well.

Fair Shake celebrates reaching mid-year with steady support from our envelope donors and intermittent surprise financial donations that keep the lights on and the newsletters coming to you. I receive thank you letters from folks in states that like Texas and California and Alabama who are starved for resources and information and are very grateful for the information I'm able to send them, thanks to you! Thank you, amazing donors! We're doing this together...for real ~ :)

I was going to spend a minute reflecting on America's birthday in this issue, but pressing news has come across my desk that has turned the tables to focus on education.

I want to start first with congratulating all of the graduates! You invested in yourselves and you're moving forward where you are. I'm wishing you all the best with whatever you do next. One of the most important thing to remember is that learning is not limited to school. School is one avenue for learning, but learning happens everywhere, all the time and across our entire lifespan! Since people graduate from programs, courses, and training year 'round, I'm sending this Congratulations! to all who have received certificates throughout this past year. Yay!!!

On the other side of the education coin, and In typical Supreme fashion the SCOTUS released one of their weightiest decisions at the 11th hour of their session. Late Friday afternoon, June 30th, they ruled against Student Loan Debt Relief. This ruling, of course, came close under the boot heels of them crushing affirmative action in higher ed, too.

40 million Americans will not see any relief from their federal student loans. The White House says 90 percent of those affected are people who make \$75,000 a year or less.

President Biden said that he "will stop at nothing to find other ways to deliver relief to hard-working middle-class families."

The Department of Education says the repayment process will start on Sept. 1 and the first payments will be due in October.

NEWS ABOUT THE PELL GRANT

Also posted today, the Department of Education stated that they have launched "a new process through which institutions of higher education can apply to offer postsecondary programs to confined or incarcerated individuals. For the first time in nearly 30 years, individuals enrolled in approved prison education programs (PEPs) will be eligible for Federal

Pell Grants outside the Pell pilot program. The Department will begin accepting applications on July 3, 2023, and will approve applications on a rolling basis.

According to the Vera Institute, more than 40,000 students received Pell Grants under the experiment through the 2021-22 award year. Based on current participation rates in Second Chance Pell Experiment, the Department estimates that an estimated 760,000 additional individuals to become eligible for a Pell Grant through prison education programs once institutions have fully developed their prison programs.

Nearly 200 postsecondary institutions participated in the Second Chance Pell Experiment and the Department has approved more than 160 of those institutions to transition” into the new program.

Sadly, they made no statement about correspondence courses so far. A lot of eager learners have asked about this issue and I will share any news I get on this front as soon as I hear it. Right now, the Pell seems to be offered prison by prison, not by state, or – most importantly – by learner.

Now for some GOOD NEWS:

HIGHER ED DEGREES ARE NO LONGER NEEDED FOR MOST STATE JOBS IN A GROWING NUMBER OF STATES

Virginia has eliminated degree requirements and preferences for nearly 90% of state positions” effective today. They are just the most recent state to make this change: Utah had already eliminated degree requirements for 98% of state jobs. And other states who have greatly reduced credential and preference requirements include Maryland, Pennsylvania, Alaska, Utah, Colorado, New Jersey, and North Carolina. Keep in mind that working for the state includes many paid holidays, vacation days and sick days. Working for the state includes amazing insurance plans and pension programs, and support for mental health. You can move up the ranks rather quickly in state jobs, too. Most state and city governments ‘banned the box’ years ago and are fully ‘fair chance’ employers.

SCHOOL OF THE POSSIBLE

Dave Gray, author of Liminal Thinking is building a School of the Possible with other Possibilitarians. He believes that “In any situation, there is always a next best step. This next best step is not always clear or obvious, but it is always within reach. Possibilities must be found, invented, created, coaxed, manifested, discovered.

The School of the Possible is not an accredited institution, nor do we desire to be. There is no group that is qualified to judge or certify a school that is questioning basic assumptions and rethinking education from the ground up. Our purpose: Design a better school to create a better world.

We are surrounded at every moment with invisible doorways that lead to an infinite number of possible futures. Some of the possibilities we face today are terrifying. It has never been more important to think and act proactively, to find and choose the paths that lead to better futures. Alan Kay once said “The best way to predict the future is to invent it.”

People in or who are moving to TEXAS:

Here's an opportunity to Grow with Google. The folks at GTBI GwG Support Program want to "equip people who have been impacted by the justice system with digital skills to get a job or start a business.

They will teach you about the 'cloud' google tools that can help you:

- Build Your Professional Brand
- Improve Your Resume with Practical Strategies
- Power Your Job Search with Google Tools
- Digital Skills for Everyday Tasks

To find out more write to: GTBI GwG Support Program 11314 Hillhaven Drive, Austin, TX 78748

QUOTES:

"The trouble with learning from experience is that you never graduate." – Doug Larson

"Any who stops learning is old, whether 20 or 80. Anyone who keeps learning stays young".
– Henry Ford

"Action is the antidote to despair." - Joan Baez

"If you can't get rid of the family skeleton, you may as well make it dance." - G.B. Shaw

"Drink your tea slowly and reverently, as if it is the axis on which the world earth revolves – slowly, evenly, without rushing toward the future." - Thich Nhat Hanh

"Change is not a bolt of lightning that arrives with a zap. It is a bridge built brick by brick, every day, with sweat and humility and slips. It is hard work, and slow work, but it can be thrilling to watch it take shape." — Sarah Hepola

"Where something becomes extremely difficult and unbearable, there we also stand already quite near its transformation." — Rainer Maria Rilke

Here's to learning and growing through our transitions!

Ubuntu and gratitude, ~ sue

As always, when you are released, remember to find support in your phone-gizmo:
2-1-1 Fairshake.net HelpYourselfTherapy.com FindHelp.org

Newsletters are available at FairShake.net for your family and friends to read or print.

Shine a light. By Tom Asacker

One of my first jobs was at a Procter & Gamble plant.
I worked the graveyard shift, loading soap on tractor-trailers.
I got paid by the pound.
When the shift ended, a few of us would head to a pool hall.
Whoever loaded the most poundage would pay.
I never paid, not once.
It wasn't for lack of desire.
The other guys had been working there longer and had developed a relationship with "management."
Some guy at a desk who determined which loaders got which size loads.
I never had a chance.
So I created a game for myself.
If I couldn't load the most weight, maybe I could load faster than everyone else.
I didn't make a penny more, but I did get a reputation.
The fastest loader on the dock.
Strangely, it made me happy.
It motivated me.
I thought about that time as I sit here, working on my new book.
A few weeks ago, I gave a presentation about belief to leaders at Procter & Gamble (funny how life unfolds).
When it was over, someone paid me a compliment and said, "I can't wait to read your new book."
And just like my reputation as the "fastest loader," that comment made me happy.
Since my return home, I've been on fire with ideas and resolve.
That one small sentiment, from someone I respect, lit up my belief in my work and myself.
It was easy to motivate myself to load soap.
It was a simple task.
Me against the soap.
So I simply shined my own light.
Writing a book is much different.
It's a solitary struggle.
It's not me against a blank page.
It's me against myself.
My rambling thoughts, inadequacies, doubts.
Over time, the vision gets murkier and murkier.
And so it gets harder and harder to visualize success and, therefore, to write.
The same thing happens to all of us.
We try to lose weight, but the scale doesn't budge.
We look for work, but keep getting rejections.
We put in long hours at work, but problems continue to pile up.
So what keeps us going?
For some, it's fear.
But for most of us, it's belief in our actions.
And that belief is fueled by visceral signs of progress.
A small win, a kind word, an attaboy.
No one will continue to walk down a pitch dark path.
They'll eventually sit down and wait for the first sign of light.
Those positive signals are the light.
And they make all the difference in the world.
So please, never stop shining them.