



...a brighter tomorrow

THE CONSUMER ADVOCATE

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DCC Now Offers Bankruptcy and Housing Counseling!

DCC is proud to announce that we have received approval from the Executive Office of the United States Trustees (EOUST) to offer bankruptcy counseling.

Bankruptcy courts require that consumers receive counseling by an approved agency, such as DCC, both prior to filing for bankruptcy (pre-petition) and after filing but before the bankruptcy is discharged (pre-discharge). During the counseling process, our counselors help consumers identify the behaviors that led to their financial situation, provide resources to help overcome their circumstances and arm them with the necessary tools to rebuild their finances.

Debt Counseling Corporation is also happy to announce that our application to become a HUD approved housing counseling agency has been approved by the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD)!

Housing counseling services are needed now, more than ever before. In February 2010, DCC launched our housing counseling program to address the specific needs of our local community. We were quickly selected by the Suffolk County Salvation Army as their premiere housing and credit counseling partner. Through the Salvation Army and other local community agencies, Debt Counseling Corporation's NCHC (NeighborWorks Center for Homeownership Education and Counseling) Certified Housing Counselors have helped hundreds of homeowners apply for assistance with their mortgages (i.e. loan modification, short sale, etc.) through their bank.



DCC's Pre-purchase Home Buying Workshops and Counseling Program continues to grow. This program educates first time homebuyers about the in's and out's of purchasing a home while pointing out the unanticipated financial responsibilities homeownership brings. Additionally, DCC connects first time homebuyers with local organizations that provide down payment or closing cost grants.

If you or someone you know is considering bankruptcy or in need of housing counseling, please pass along DCC's number or call us today at 1.888.354.6332. **We are here to help you on your path to ...a brighter tomorrow!**

Thank You

Citi, Bank of America, NeighborWorks, Discover, Cablevision and all of our other funders for your continued support!

Are You Missing Money??? Find it Now!

Every state, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands have consumer protection laws regarding unclaimed property or what is commonly referred to as abandoned property. Unclaimed or abandoned property may include money in accounts at financial institutions, such as a checking or savings account that had no activity for a period of twelve months or longer, paychecks that were never cashed, traveler's checks, insurance policies, pensions, stock accounts, trust funds, utility deposits, rent deposits, mortgage insurance refunds, store gift cards, and the like. You may think that it is impossible for you to have forgotten about your money, but CNN reports that as of 2008 there was over \$33 billion in unclaimed financial assets across the United States. Could any of that be yours?

The organization or financial institution where your property was unclaimed or abandoned is required to try and contact you so they can return the property/money to you. Typically, the financial institution or organization that holds the unclaimed funds mail letters requesting a response, however, you may disregard their attempts because they appear to be a scam. Or the letters are going to your last known mailing address and you no longer reside at the address they have on record.



Now is the time to do some research and claim any unclaimed property, free of charge! The agencies that handle unclaimed funds vary from state to state and may include the Attorney General, State Treasurer, State Department of Revenue or the like. To find the state agency that handles unclaimed property in the state you live or have resided in the past, visit the National Association of Unclaimed Property Administrators (NAUPA) website free of charge at www.unclaimedmoney.org, or www.missingmoney.com, a website supported by NAUPA. If you find you have unclaimed property, follow the procedures outlined by the state agency to claim your abandoned property. The majority of state agencies return unclaimed property/money at no cost or require a small handling fee. Once your unclaimed property/money is received, all you have to do is decide what to do with those funds! (*Debt Counseling Corporation recommends paying down your credit card debt faster or adding the funds to your savings account.)

BEWARE of companies that charge *you* to find and claim your abandoned property. There are companies that specialize in finding lost property and are typically called “finders” or “locaters”. Some companies actively solicit consumers they have already identified as having unclaimed/abandoned property and offer to help retrieve it...for a fee. The finder/locator of your unclaimed funds will require you to sign a contract whereby you agree to pay the finder a percentage of your unclaimed property. This could add up to a lot of money! Stay away from companies that want to charge you for this service because with a little research using the websites provided above, you can find your unclaimed funds (if any) without paying a third party agency!

If you have any questions regarding unclaimed property or any other financial questions, please contact one of our Certified Personal Finance Counselors today at 888.354.6332.

Debt Counseling's Success Stories

DCC periodically receives letters from consumers we educate as well as from clients paying down their credit card debt through DCC's Debt Management Program. They share their stories of financial burden which is successfully turned around with our help. DCC welcomes these stories as they are great encouragement to those who are just starting out on their road to ...a brighter tomorrow.

These stories help our clients know that they are not alone in their burden and they too can change their financial habits and/or pay down their credit card debt with the help of DCC. The following is one of our client's story of financial success:

"I just wanted to thank your company for taking the time to help me come up with a financial plan that would manage my credit card debt.

As a retired NYC Police Officer, I have trouble trusting many people. I always feel (like many others) that anyone that says they can "get rid of your credit card debt and clean up your credit score" is just out to take your money and that they are nothing but a scam.

I could not have been more wrong. After attending your debt counseling seminar at the Half Hollow Hills Library (NY) my wife and I decided to set up an appointment with one of your counselors. Her knowledge of available options to help people like myself who are in debt, is vast. She and her fellow counselor projected a feeling of caring. They took the time to explain all of our choices, answered all our questions and went out of their way to help us try to find a solution for our problems. These counselors went above and beyond their duties making us feel very comfortable. Their financial knowledge is impressive. I will surely recommend your company to anyone who needs your services."

~ John A., New York

Want to share your story? Email Carly Wardwell, Education Director at cwardwell@debtcounselingcorp.org.

Did You Know...DCC is on Facebook?

Find Debt Counseling Corporation on Facebook, by searching for "Debt Counseling Corp." and "like" our page today! By "liking" DCC, you will receive a "tip of the week", find links to articles about debt and credit, stay informed about DCC's new outreach activities, view pictures and videos of our past outreach events and be the first to know about changes in the economy that ultimately effect us all.

We invite you to join us on Facebook and share your budgeting or savings tips. Take a moment to share the story of how you achieved financial success! Start by "Liking" our page today!

DCC is also on Twitter. Follow us @DebtCounselingCorp today!

Celebrity \$ense

"It's not your salary that makes you rich, it's your spending habits"

~Charles A. Jaffe, Senior Columnist at Marketwatch

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Spotlight on the Community

Debt Counseling Corporation is proud to announce that we have accepted an invitation to host financial education workshops and offer onsite individualized financial counseling at the **Town of Babylon—Department of Human Services!**

To introduce DCC to the community and excite and empower community members to take control of their finances, DCC conducted three financial literacy workshops between July and September 2011. Together, DCC and the Town of Babylon created workshops based on a needs assessment conducted by the Town of Babylon staff. The first two workshops educated consumers about budgeting, debt options, credit reports, credit scores and the like. The third workshop taught consumers how to raise financially responsible children as well as teach parents how to prepare their teens for college. This included topics such as; the in's and out's of student loans, grant opportunities and available scholarship programs. Going forward, the Town of Babylon will schedule one on one counseling appointments once a month for community members.

Debt Counseling Corporation is pleased to announce that we conducted no less than eight **YES!** (Youth Educational Services) financial literacy workshops during the summer of 2011 camp season alone! DCC travelled to the **Suffolk County Girl Scouts** and **Bay Shore YMCA** to conduct fun, age appropriate workshops. This summer, the scouts learned about saving, spending and giving. Our lesson about saving was complemented by a craft. The participants decorated a flower pot (pictured) and then planted seeds to reinforce the idea that saving for that more costly item they *really* want, takes time. The scouts will be able to watch their plant grow—just like their savings!



...a brighter tomorrow

The mission of Debt Counseling Corporation is to educate the general public about debt management options such as budgeting, refinancing, and a debt management program; to provide consumers consistent, superior, individualized service; to provide each consumer with the tools they need to develop and modify a budget which will allow them to maintain a dignified lifestyle.