

# College Corner

## College Students Need Lesson In Identity Theft Prevention

(NAPSA)—College students won't be the only ones returning to school this year. Chances are good identity thieves will be right there with them. Fortunately, there are steps students and parents can take to protect students' identity from hungry thieves.

That's the word from Robert Siciliano, an expert on college security and identity theft. Siciliano is using his 25 years of experience in security work, white-collar crimes and self-defense to focus on college students, a group particularly susceptible to identity theft based on typically lax habits and often their own indifference.

Siciliano believes college students need to become more aware of identity theft and take steps to protect themselves. He stresses the importance of students learning to "take a minute for safety."

A recent Back-to-Campus security survey conducted on behalf of the Identity Theft Resource Center and uni-ball® pens found that 42 percent of students feel they are at little to no risk for identity theft, yet they engage in at-risk behaviors such as giving out their Social Security number online (40 percent), failing to lock doors (35 percent) and using the wrong pen to write checks (66 percent).

To help safeguard college students at school, following are tips both parents and students can use to help keep students from becoming victims:

1. Talk to your student about the importance of reconciling his



**Reconciling your bank statement every month and using a uni-ball gel pen with specially formulated ink to write checks are two quick ways to prevent identity theft.**

or her bank statement each month. Suspicious activity on an account is one of the quickest ways to spot theft in action and prevent fraud.

2. Ask the university not to use your student's Social Security number for identification purposes or to post grades. Many universities have already switched to systems that generate random identification numbers for student ID cards, but better to check first.

3. Invest in a lockbox or safe to securely store documents and valuables. Remind your student to never leave important documents or personal papers lying out in the open where they can be seen or stolen.

4. Keep all credit card and bank account statements locked in a safe place.

5. Use a uni-ball® pen that contains Uni Super Ink™ to write rent

checks and sign all important documents. Most uni-ball gel pens cost less than \$2 and contain specially formulated ink to prevent document fraud and check washing. Look for the words "Uni Super Ink" or "Helps Prevent Check Fraud" on select uni-ball pens.

6. Be careful to shield your PIN number from those behind you when using ATM machines. Be on the lookout for "skimmers," or fake card readers attached to the machine that retain cardholder account information for thieves.

7. Always lock car doors and entrances to your apartment, dorm room or house—especially first and second floor windows. If biking, secure your bike on campus and off with a sturdy lock.

8. Buy a diamond-cut document shredder to destroy credit card solicitations and other sensitive documents.

9. Be aware of what you post on the Internet, especially online social networks like Facebook and MySpace. You can never be sure of who is viewing your personal information or pictures.

10. Don't share online passwords with anyone—even friends. The risk is too great that it may be used against you.

For more information on college students and identity theft, visit [www.uniball-na.com](http://www.uniball-na.com). Take the Student Risk Index quiz and find out just how at risk your student may be.

