

Observations on Life

By: Scott MacDonald

My father died when I was six years old and was raised by a single mother. We never had any money but did not grow up in poverty either. Like my brother and sisters, I worked from an early age including washing dishes in junior high school, delivering newspapers, and cutting grass. For several years I worked on a factory floor assembly line while going to school.

In more recent years, I have been CEO or President of multiple companies. I have witnessed life from the bottom to the top of the ladder of life and have worked and enjoyed companionship with people from all walks of life including new immigrants and high profile investment bankers. My observations are reflected in the books I have written.

I share 25 lessons learned in my first book, *Saving Investa, How an ex-factory worker helped save one of Australia's iconic companies* including:

- Family is first
- Don't expect anyone to give you anything
- You make your own luck
- Players score points but teams win games
- Never be satisfied with what you know.
- Recognize change and get ahead of the curve

In my book, *Think Like a Dog, How dogs teach us to be happy in life and successful at work*, my dog Sadie and I translate canine behavior to desired human characteristics including:

- Being Persistent
- Living in the Moment
- Avoiding Certain Dogs
- Knowing when to bark
- Being loyal
- Leaving your mark

In my book, *Education Without Debt, Giving back and paying it forward*, my philosophy of giving back and helping those who follow and expecting all to pay it forward comes through. My MacDonald Scholarship programs have been implemented at six universities and about 100 students who could otherwise not afford college are receiving financial grants while participating in community service programs while in school.

The *San Diego Union Tribune* has written about me and my desire to help students receive an education on multiple occasions including more recently

<https://www.sandiegouniontribune.com/lifestyle/people/story/2021-02-13/philanthropist-tackles-the-issue-of-student-loan-debt-in-new-book-education-without-debt>

**What others are saying about Scott MacDonald's latest book,
*Education Without Debt, Giving back and paying it forward.***

From Kirkus Book Reviews on January 12, 2021

EDUCATION WITHOUT DEBT

GIVING BACK AND PAYING IT FORWARD

BY SCOTT MACDONALD · RELEASE DATE: JAN. 12, 2021

An astute study of the mounting student debt crisis in the United States, including its principal causes and possible remedies.

MacDonald, the author of *Think Like a Dog* (2019) and a corporate turnaround specialist, observes that the steady accumulation of student debt in America has become unsustainable. In 2018, the total amount surpassed \$1.5 trillion with no signs of significant abatement. This staggering figure has caused extraordinary damage, both economically and socially. Homeownership has significantly diminished, and college graduates are putting off marriage and major purchases; they're also seeking higher-paying jobs, which is a blow to the public-service sector. In this book, the author furnishes a meticulous and accessible account of the ballooning costs of college education, including the steep decline in government aid per student and the ever-increasing budgets that are allocated to university administrators. MacDonald also ably sketches a synopsis of the history of tuition assistance from its beginnings as a function of private patronage to its transformation by the GI Bill following World War II. First-person accounts of struggles with college debt add a touching human element to his analysis by poignantly illustrating the real-world consequences of the crisis. One 18-year-old contributor tells of how the pinch of her financial aid predicament made her first week of college a "mental hell," as her inability to pay for school made her feel "completely out of control." MacDonald doesn't limit his study to grim diagnoses of problems, though; he also expertly discusses the ways in which some colleges are conscientiously responding to the issue by, for example, offering no-loan financial

aid packages. The author lucidly notes that the crisis is not merely a financial one, but also a societal one, in that it “limits an individual’s future choices” as well as the “availability of education as a path to a better life for many Americans.”

An analytically rigorous and movingly impassioned introduction to a major national issue.

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Chancellor Kevin Guskiewicz, The University of North Carolina:

“The MacDonald Scholarships are another fantastic opportunity for our students at Carolina to receive an excellent education and serve the public good. This book tells Scott MacDonald’s story and the story of so many students across the country who are struggling with the burden of college debt. Institutions of higher education must address this critical problem so that our universities can continue to be engines for economic mobility. We are glad that Carolina’s commitment to access and affordability, and in particular the stories of our students and programs like the Carolina Covenant, is included in these pages.”

Provost and Executive Vice President Lauren Robel, Indiana University

“This book by imaginative philanthropist-businessman Scott MacDonald tackles one of the hottest issues of the recent presidential campaign: the explosion of student debt. Blending smart analysis of its causes with humanizing and empathic stories of the burden this debt places on student futures and lives, MacDonald argues for a mixed plate of solutions that are built on his own creative approach to philanthropy. That approach, which leaves students better off and better people than when MacDonald finds them, is one worth replicating across the country. A must-read for those interested in how to build public-private solutions to one of our nation’s most pressing issues.”

Educator and Author Jacqueline Thousand

“Thanks to Scott MacDonald for his fact finding on the sources of the exploding costs of an American college education and our country’s historic lending practices that have thwarted a financially unencumbered future through education for so many of our youth. The personal stories, starting with the author’s own, are alternately heartbreaking and uplifting motivators for U.S. citizens to individually and collectively rethink the financing of higher education and consider his 9 sets of suggested “what must be done” actions to enable our citizenry to realize the American dream of a better life through higher education while escaping crippling debt and paying it forward as educated leaders of our future society.”