



10 Ways 10 Days

Invest In Minnesota's Future

7th Way

Invest in Higher Education

Justin Lewandowski is 24 years old and lives in Saint Cloud.

At age 18, Justin started at Saint Cloud State University with bright eyes cast toward the future.

"I fully believed in what I had been taught my entire life," he said. "If you study hard and work your way through college, you will have endless potential."

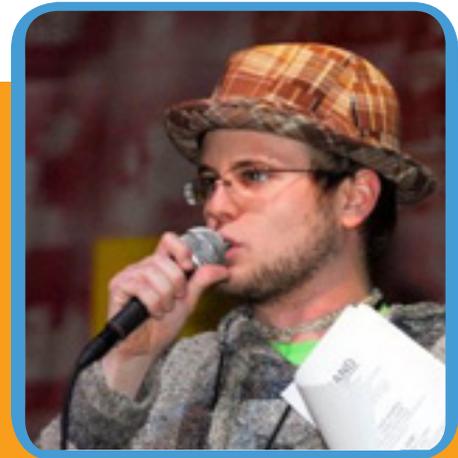
But by age 20, he found himself working 50 hours a week just to afford school and pay the bills while attending classes full time — and on top of that he was worried about the future job market.

The financial strain and debt burden became too much, and Justin decided to put his education on hold. Today, he is still working full time and is also active in the community. He even started his own nonprofit working with local artists and musicians to grow a culture of community development through the arts.

To further his career, Justin knows he needs to go back to school. But he is afraid that the cost of college will leave him once again struggling just to make ends meet. "I see my story as the story of so many young people today. We want to be active and contribute to our communities, but too many of us are overwhelmed just trying to succeed and make ends meet juggling both work and school."

State investments in financial aid for our public colleges and universities are critical so Justin and others can afford school and meet their full potential. In 2011, Minnesota ranked 3rd in the nation in the average graduate's debt, which is a drag on the economy and contributes to lagging completion rates. Making higher education affordable for the next generation of Minnesotans is an investment in our future workforce - and our future community leaders.

For more information about 10 Ways In 10 Days and Invest in Minnesota, contact Leah Gardner at 651-757-3063 or visit our website at www.investinmn.org.



All Minnesotans benefit when we invest in our communities.

With fair and adequate revenues, we can invest in our schools and colleges, support and maintain our roads and bridges, and provide care and dignity to our senior citizens and people with disabilities.

After a decade of deep budget cuts, it's time to raise revenues fairly in order to move our state forward and invest in prosperity for all Minnesotans.

Invest in Minnesota is a coalition of faith, labor and nonprofit organizations united to support revenue raised fairly to invest in Minnesota's future.

