

Scholarships

Winning scholarships takes time, acquired knowledge and elbow grease; it is never too late to start planning and strategizing.

Financial Aid and Student Services are here to help you find and win scholarships.

Filling out your Free Application For Student Aid is the first important step.

The FAFSA tells you and the financial aid department how much you can receive in loan and grant money. You can file online.

LOANS are money you have to pay back. There are subsidized loans like the Stafford loan and there are unsubsidized loans that are available to all in which you pay full interest upon the start of the loan.

SCHOLARSHIPS and GRANTS are awards you don't pay back. Depending on the grant or scholarship, they are paid to institution or directly to student, some are paid in a lump sum or over time and some are institutional awards, which are paid directly to business office. Merit based scholarships are awarded for interests, talent, achievement. Many of these scholarships do not consider financial need or GPA. Need based scholarships are based on families income. The more expensive the college, the more need based aid you will receive. Your FAFSA determines this need.

WEBSITES TO look INTO:

www.gocollege.com

www.fastweb.com

www.scholarshipcoach.com

www.scholaraid.com

www.scholarshipexperts.com

www.collegelink.com

www.scholarships101.com

www.usnews.com/usnews/edu/dollars/scholar/search/html

www.collegequest.com

www.fastaid.com

OH- www.regents.state.oh.us

IN- www.ai.org.ssaci

KY- www.kheaa.com

TIPS ON HUNTING:

- Search for tomorrow, today – plan ahead, look at grad scholarships too
- Organize your awards by getting a folder for each application
- Keep notes and date what you did and copy all applications sent
- Form a letter for requesting applications
- If you don't heard from them after 3 weeks, send another letter or follow up

PLAYING THE GAME

- Scholarship applying is like playing a game.
- Cultivate your skill at applying for
 - Merit-based scholarships
- Understand the specific mission of organization awarding the scholarship
- Once you apply to 2 you have done 60% of the work to apply for 10
- Bridge multiple applications, recycle old essays, and use generic recommendation letters to gain a time advantage
- Who the judges are and what they expect, this gives you strategic edge when applying

JUDGING CRITERIA

- Hard Work – let the judges know how much time goes into your artwork
- They like to see that you have a can do spirit and overcome obstacles
- Perseverance, stick with your goal
- Individual initiative, core character trait, finding a solution to a problem
- Opening with a dramatic sentence, that can help who judges
- Responsibility is a sign of maturity, confidence, and trust, use it
- Demonstrate that you have thought about where you want to go and how to get there
- Character, your core ethical and moral fabric, communicate your core values

RECOMMENDATION LETTERS

- Develop a list of potential recommendation writers
- Seek to accumulate numerous recommendations
- Cultivate relationships with potential recommenders
- Communicate effectively with letter writers
- Minimize the work for recommendation writers
- Give the writers a packet full of information about the scholarship and why you are applying
- Give the writers a list of addresses and contacts to write to
- Tell your recommendation letter writer your theme so your package is unified

STRATEGIES

- Decide on Appropriate Theme
- Framework that puts activities, interests and credentials in order
- Convey something important about who you are and what you care about
- Focus on key areas of your life
- Primary theme, main message you are communicating
- Secondary theme, illustrates another aspect of your life
- Enhance Credibility
- Applicants who seem most the most credible are the ones who communicate the strongest theme
- Stay balanced in your activities
- Well rounded applicants = better chances.

SPECIFIC STRATEGIES

- Collect clues... read all scholarship program materials, their website, etc.
- Ask for past winning entries
- Ask other students in the school who have received the award in the past
- Get an overall impression of the school. mission, agenda, what traits do they value
- Pay attention to details: make sure you understand all application specifics
- Look for a unique angle to write about - personal qualities, overcoming obstacles, etc.
- Define the award, emphasize personal attributes to match the definition such as community service, volunteering, etc.
- Play up your aspects that other applicants are unlikely to include

7 WAYS PARENTS CAN HELP

- Help search for scholarships in books at libraries, H.S. career centers, etc.
- Strategize with child to make sure they understand mission of scholarship
- Provide research assistance by compiling background information
- Organize for your child by sending out letters on behalf and making calls for apps
- Be a sounding board and offer suggestions but don't criticize
- Proofread and edit the applications
- Support and encourage them by making sure they learn from past

WINNING ESSAY WRITING

- Show and describe, paint a picture
- Keep things personal, this stands out from other applicants
- Use effective organization, 3 part format: intro, body, and conclusion
- Make each sentence count toward the development of your main idea
- Make your essay unique and memorable, act like a judge, engage the reader with personal stories, use a metaphor
- Get others to read your essays to proof read such as the English tutor

THE FINAL DETAILS

- Make copies for reference and safety
- Type your application
- Don't leave spaces blank, add more detail and descriptions of the activities
- File away old printouts, it saves time in case something happens to the mailed application
- If applicable, strengthen your application by adding portfolio pieces and relevant stuff
- Mail your application, insure that it gets there by certified mail or by priority mail with an acknowledgement receipt

WHEN YOU WIN...

- Get to know the scholarship administrator: find out exactly how the scholarship is awarded, be aware of the procedure of getting the money to you, sometimes they can help you in times of trouble

- Variations in payment include: one time lump to you, one time lump to school, term by term fixed payments to you, unscheduled payments to you, unscheduled payments to school
- Track the details, make a list of what you have won, make a chart of key information, pay attention to it
- Talk to the business office in the school to track the money, it may need to be signed by you before being entered to pay your tuition