

Scholarship Search

**SCHOLARSHIPS
CAN BE AWARDED
ON THE BASIS OF:**

- INTERESTS
- NATIONALITY
- TALENTS
- BACKGROUND
- ACADEMICS
- ATHLETICS

**UNLIKE OTHER
TYPES OF
FINANCIAL
AID, MANY
SCHOLARSHIPS
ARE MERIT-BASED
VERSUS NEED-
BASED.**

WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

Let's face it, when you think of paying for college, the first thing that often comes to mind is, "How can I get a scholarship to help pay for school?" Everyone dreams of winning some of the billions of dollars of "free" scholarship money that is available each year for college. Here are some steps to help you achieve this goal:

Make a Plan

- Decide where you want to go and what career you might want to follow.
- Think about how you want to make a mark on your community, industry, or area of interest.

**Remember: Your plan can change;
you just need to have one!**

Make a list of steps you've taken or plan to take to reach your goal:

- Classes you've taken and grades you've received
- Extracurricular activities
- Jobs and volunteer efforts
- Books, blogs, newspapers, magazines, and other works you've read
- Portfolios of art or written work
- Videos of athletics, dance, drama
- Major and/or career interest
- List of people to ask for letters of recommendation
- Topics for essays

THE GOAL OF
THE LETTER OF
RECOMMENDATION,
THE INTERVIEW
AND THE ESSAY IS
THE SAME:

TO LET THE
SCHOLARSHIP
COMMITTEE
KNOW WHY YOU
ARE THE PERFECT
RECIPIENT OF THEIR
SCHOLARSHIP!

Begin your search

- High school website or counseling office
- Parents' employers
- Neighborhood businesses
- Other local high school and community college websites
- Churches or religious organizations
- Service organizations (Lions Club, Rotary Club, etc.)
- Colleges of interest
- Professional organizations (i.e., American Institute of Architects)

Online scholarship databases such as:

www.FASTWEB.com

www.CollegeBoard.org

www.finaid.org

www.meritaid.com

www.ed.gov/finaid

www.scholarships.com

Scholarship Apps such as:

Scholarships.com

Scholly

Fastweb College Scholarships

Take action! Complete the applications with these points in mind:

Understand Yourself

What are your strengths, weaknesses, values, goals, and dreams? Have you overcome any obstacles? Have you had any unique experiences? Do you have any special qualities? Be GENUINE and avoid sounding arrogant.

Understand Your Audience

Remember that judges are looking for certain characteristics: effort, passion, perseverance, initiative, and team work. Is the scholarship presented by a school, a corporation, a local business, or social organization? Why would they want to award a scholarship?

Decide on a Focus or Theme

Examples include: Are you someone with an exceptional or unusual talent or artistic gift? Are you active in politics or social change? Are you deeply passionate about community service or working with animals?

APPLYING FOR
SCHOLARSHIPS
CAN GIVE YOU
OTHER BENEFITS
TOO:

PROVIDES
PRACTICE WITH
APPLICATIONS
AND ESSAYS

ADDS TO YOUR
LIST OF AWARDS
AND HONORS

DEMONSTRATES
THAT YOU ARE
A STRONG
COLLEGE
APPLICANT

Other scholarship tips

Scholarship applications may include three areas you are likely to see on your college applications as well: **Letters of Recommendation, Essays, and Interviews.** Use these tips to help with your scholarship applications:

Letters of Recommendation:

Develop relationships with teachers, coaches, and other adults you trust and respect. They can help you with advice on the application process, help review your applications and write letters of recommendation. When asking for a letter of recommendation, consider adults who are strong writers, and know your strengths well. Provide them with important details: deadline, mailing address, and a list of your activities and achievements you want them to highlight.

Essays:

- Write in your own voice.
- Demonstrate impeccable spelling, grammar, punctuation, and organization.
- Include real stories and examples whenever possible.
- Remember that scholarship committees read hundreds of essays. You want yours to STAND OUT! Make it interesting without sounding exaggerated.
- Use strong action verbs and adjectives to keep their interest.
- Always remain within the word limit.
- Choose a prompt that highlights your personal strengths. These strengths should be your key message.
- Remember that you can RECYCLE these essays. Take your best essay and use it as a foundation for other essays.

Interviews: Three steps for perfection!

Prepare: Learn about the sponsor(s) of the scholarship and their mission. Make sure you connect why YOU are the perfect candidate for their award.

Practice: Review potential question and practice answering them with a friend, parent, or mentor.

Relax: The topic of the interview will be one that you know the most about—YOU. The more comfortable and conversational you are, the more likely the interviewer will connect with you.

**CAUTION! BE CERTAIN THAT YOU ARE PRACTICING
GOOD SCHOLARSHIP SAFETY.**

- Never give out personal/financial information to someone calling your home.
- Never pay fees for scholarship applications or information.
- Make certain you are applying to a scholarship and not a loan.
- If in doubt, check out the organization with the Better Business Bureau or run a check on Google.
- Beware of scams! Many organizations try to imitate government agencies by using official names and terms.

Notes:

