



Scholarship Application Tips & Resources

Scholarships come in all shapes and size from all sorts of places. They may be one-time awards of a few hundred dollars, or they might be worth tens of thousands of dollars each year for several years. Scholarships are given out by a variety of programs, community organizations and colleges. **Beware:** The most common scholarship scams are ones that charge for information or services that are otherwise *freely* available. The key to avoiding scams is to never pay for commercial financial aid services (such as paying a company to fill out your FAFSA) or for scholarship searches.

While You're Searching

1. Check in with the counseling office, and let your counselor know you are interested in going to college and finding available scholarships.
2. **Check with the Financial Aid office at the colleges/post-secondary schools to which you are applying.** Schools that you plan to apply to often have scholarships for first-year students and you need to look for those opportunities on the school's website. Many private universities also require you to complete the CSS Profile (<https://cssprofile.collegeboard.org>) AND the FAFSA (www.fafsa.ed.gov) in order to be considered for their campus' scholarship programs.
3. Search for scholarships on the Internet. Here are some free resources/web sites to check out::

www.fastweb.com
www.scholarships.com
www.petersons.com/scholarship
www.cappex.com (*Best Database*)
<https://bigfuture.collegeboard.org/pay-for-college> (*Best Resources*)
www.californiacolleges.edu
<https://horatioalger.org/>

www.hsf.net
www.scholarshipamerica.org
www.unigo.com/scholarships (*Best Search Function*)
<https://hispanicheritage.org/>
www.maldef.org (*Resources for Undocumented Students*)



Seniors Only: Ask for local scholarship updates by EMAIL at: roxanne.becker@salinasuhd.org
In your email state "Scholarship Updates Please" and provide your email address.

Before You Apply

1. Make special note of application deadlines—they can vary from late summer to late spring.
2. Apply for as many scholarships as you are eligible for—several smaller scholarships can add up to a lot of money!

During Your Application Process

1. Read the supplemental materials with the scholarship application to better understand the program's focus (community service, academics, subject interest). Then, answer the questions with the focus area in mind.
2. Answer questions as they are asked. Don't go off-topic.
3. If there is a financial component to the application, make sure you get accurate and complete information from your parent/guardian to assure your eligibility.
4. Take your time. Write down everything you can think of for each question, and then **set the application aside for a day (a day only....) before finishing it.**
5. However, don't wait until the last minute to complete your application, especially if you are applying online. Computer systems can get clogged with the large volume of applicants hoping to submit their qualifications during the last few days and hours before a deadline.
6. Ask your teachers and/or counselor who knows you well for a letter of recommendation. Give them a resume or "Brag Sheet" highlighting your achievements and involvement in the community. Be sure to allow them 2-3 weeks to complete the letter.
7. Last but not least, review your application with an adult (your parent, teacher or counselor) to assure you haven't left out something important.