



The Nuts & Bolts of Applying for Scholarships

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Providing Access to Learning

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Objectives:

- To gain a **greater understanding** of the scholarship application process.
- To understand when a scholarship is **right for you** and you are right for it.
- To avoid the **pitfalls and traps** associated with applying for scholarships.
- To **successfully** apply for and receive scholarship funds.



Scholarship, defining the term

- *The Oxford Dictionary of Current English*, copyright 1996 defines scholarship “as a financial award for a student etc., given for scholarly achievement.”



- **FREE MONEY!**



Scholarships can be earned for more than just academic merit!

- Religion
- GPA
- Gender
- Race
- Nationality
- Ethnicity
- Parent's profession
- Volunteer history
- Field of interest
- Political party
- First in family to attend college
- Willingness to work in economically depressed areas
- Whomever applies
- **A combination of one or more of these factors*



What do I need to find scholarship funds?

- Access to a computer
- A little planning
- A lot of research
- A lot of common sense



Successful Students Have:

- Good Grade Point Averages
- Developed Positive Relationships with faculty, staff, other students & community members
- The Ability to navigate Higher Education Systems (Financial Aid, Registration, Student Life & Leadership, Library Research Tools, Etc.)
- Contributed to a democratic society (Volunteered)

Successful Students Learn

how to:

- Improve their Grade Point Averages each Semester
- Develop Positive Relationships
- Navigate Higher Education Systems
- Look for new Volunteer Opportunities



Is it worth the effort?

Two ways to think about the time spent researching scholarship opportunities.

Example 1:

1. \$1000 Scholarship / 10 hours of research & completing applications= **\$100** per hour
2. Per day = \$800
3. Per week = \$4000
4. Per month = \$17,333
5. **Per year = \$208,000**



Is it worth the effort?

Two ways to think about the time spent researching scholarship opportunities.

Example 2:

2. You will have refined your research and writing skills and will be more likely to succeed in similar future endeavors



Scholarships

Where do they come From?

- Federal Government
- State Government
- Colleges & Universities
(Private and Public)
- Public & Private Sources
(Cooperation, Charitable & Personal Foundations)
- College or University Application

Where to Research Scholarships



- Financial Aid Offices
- Academic Department's website of any college or university
- Local Libraries
- High schools
- Religious Organizations
- Professional organizations
- Scholarship web sites:
http://www.pvc.maricopa.edu/finaid/fa_search &
[PVCC General Scholarship Application](#)



Avoid Scams

- Safe Scholarship Applications can be found on the scholarship websites of an accredited college or university
- If you are not sure of the legitimacy of a scholarship, ask the financial aid department at any higher education institution.
- Avoid going to a search engine and typing “scholarships”



Tips to Avoid Scams

- **Fees to Apply** - Avoid scholarships that ask you to put any money down to apply, or they offer to apply for you
- **Guarantees** - No legitimate scholarship has a guarantee
- **Unnecessary Glitz and Glamour** - If the scholarship application reads like an ad, don't apply.
- **Requests for Too Much Info** - you receive a phone call on behalf of the scholarship claiming they need your bank account number to deposit your winnings or that they need your social security number to confirm your identity. Do NOT give the your information.
- **False Endorsements** – If it claims to be endorsed by the U.S. Department of Education or any other government group, do not apply



Tips to Avoid Scams

- **No Real Address** - If the only address you can find for a scholarship is a P.O. Box address, do not apply
- **No Real Phone Number** - If you can't find a phone number for the scholarship sponsor, don't apply
- **No Eligibility Requirements** - If anyone, anywhere is eligible for the scholarship, it is most likely a fake.
- **Un-requested Offers** - If you receive scholarship information in the mail one day when you did not request it, it is most likely a scam
- **The "You Won" Phone Call** - You will **never** be notified by phone of winning a scholarship
- **No History** - Another way to tell if a scholarship is a scam is if you can't find any documentation of previous winners or previous award amounts



Safe Scholarship Websites

- Think of any college or university that you are thinking about attending.
- Be sure that the suffix on the web address is **.EDU**
- Look for a link that says scholarships or go to their financial aid department's website to look for the scholarship link.



Research Tips

During your research you should ask the following questions:

- Why **does** this scholarship fit me?
- What is the application deadline?
- How much \$\$\$?
- What additional documents are needed to complete the application?
- What is my strategy for moving forward?

Core Components of Scholarship Applications



- Scholarship Application
- Personal Essay
- Letters of Recommendation
- Academic Transcripts
(Official or unofficial – Plan ahead. Official require a fee and takes time)
- Scholarship Interview



Application

- Paper application (**always type**)
- Web application
- *Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA)

Some scholarships require that you complete a FAFSA along with the scholarship application.



Application Process

- Read the application instructions carefully
- If you have **questions**, contact the scholarship organization.
- **NOTE DEADLINE!!!**
- Before filling out any application forms, **make extra copies** in case you make mistakes.
- **Proofread** your application and have at least two other people review your essays
- Make a **copy** of the completed forms before mailing them
- Consider sending your documents through **certified mail** or receipt return



Personal Essay

Areas to Address to address:

- A. Who are you?
- B. What are your life experiences?
- C. Where do you want to go?
- D. What are your goals?
- E. What keeps you focused on your goal to attend a college or university?
- F. Community Service involvement?



Writing Assistance

- *"Tips For Writing Your Essay"*
" (
http://www.ehow.com/how_5031515_write-college-scholarship-personal-statement.html#ixzz1DETDvpah)
- The OWL at PURDUE <http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/642/01/>
- PVCC learning Support Center



Letters of Recommendation

- A. Teachers/Faculty
- B. Religious leaders
- C. Political leaders
- D. Leaders and/or members of Professional organizations



Letters of Recommendation

- A. Should come from professional or academic contacts and never come from friends or neighbors
- B. Should be from someone who you have established a positive relationship with and they can provide you with a positive reference; be realistic.
- C. Should always be on letterhead
- D. If possible, should be reviewed before submission



Letters of Recommendation Best Practices

- Be **proactive**, ask Early!
- **Inform** them of your deadline & **set date**.
- Ask for **more** recommendations than you need in order to use for next scholarship application.
- **Contact** them a couple of times as a reminder.
- **Résumé, transcript, computer disk.**



Letters of Recommendation Best Practices

- Create work and volunteer **Résumés**
- Provide **transcripts** for other schools you have attended.
- Place all of these documents and information on a **flash-drive**.

Scholarship Interview

Have Someone Interview You



Some good things to practice answering include:

- What is your biggest academic achievement?
- What extracurricular activities do you take part in?
- How have you overcome a large obstacle?
- What are some awards you have won?
- What do you want to do after you graduate from college?
- How do you see yourself using your degree?

Scholarship Interview

Things to Remember



- **Be On Time** - Do not be late! Make a good impression and arrive a few minutes early.
- **Be Conscious of Your Behaviors** - Don't fidget, make eye contact, be aware of your posture, and don't be afraid to be confident in your answers.
- **Dress Appropriately** - A suit and tie will look professional. A dress or skirt and shirt are a fitting choice for a young woman.



Scholarship Interview Things to Remember

- **Know Yourself** - If you don't know the answer to a question, don't try to fake your way through it.
- **Ask a Few Questions** - About the company or foundation that is sponsoring the scholarship or about the scholarship itself if it's not answered in the application.
- **Try Not to Be Too Nervous!** - Be prepared. Interviewers will no doubt expect some level of nervousness on the part of the applicants, but being unprepared shows itself differently. Your application was impressive enough to get you called in for an interview.



Academic Transcripts

- **Requires transcript (s)**
 - 1) from all the schools you have attended
 - 2) request them early
 - 3) Request them on line or call institution
- Nominal **fee** for **official** transcripts
- **Follow up** after a few weeks have passed and you or scholarship organization has not received transcript
- If you have to hand-deliver an official transcript, **do not tamper with the seal/stamp**
- this **WILL** render the transcript invalid



Scholarship

Don'ts & Do's



Don'ts

- Don't think that it's not worth the effort to apply for a scholarship.
- Don't submit a late application, be aware of all deadlines



DON'T!!!

Never Pay to Apply for a Scholarship!

Don't waste your money or time on scholarship search services that promise to help you “tap into vast amounts of unclaimed financial aid funds.” There are many opportunities that provide the same information for free.



Do's

- Do Apply, Apply, Apply often!
- Do give them:
 1. **what** they want
 2. **when** they want it
 3. **how** they want it
- Do keep hard copies and save what you can in a digital format.



Do: Goal Setting

- Make the commitment to win a scholarship
- If you missed deadlines, check next year for the scholarship posting
- Develop the attributes to be the scholarship's profile
- Become the (Coke, IBM, Maricopa, PVCC, Faculty, Dougherty, etc.) scholarship winner
- **Be deliberate and intentional!**