

# Scholarship Search

## Successful Applications

*Multiply your opportunities for being awarded!*

1. Start your search early.
2. Read eligibility requirements carefully.
3. Organize all your scholarship materials.
4. Proofread your application carefully.
5. Do not leave items blank.
6. Follow instructions *exactly*.
7. Make sure your application is legible.
8. Make copies of everything you send—file in a safe place.
9. Double check your application.
10. Get your application in EARLY—don't wait until the day before or of the deadline.

## Scam Slogans & Phrases

*How to protect yourself from being slammed*

- “The scholarship is guaranteed or your money back.”
- “You can't get this information anywhere else!”
- “I just need your credit card or bank account number to hold this scholarship.”
- “We'll do all the work...”
- “The scholarship will cost some money.”
- “You've been selected by a 'national foundation' to receive a scholarship.”
- “You're a finalist” in a contest you never entered.

Remember, never invest more than postage in conducting a scholarship search!



## Basic Tips on Internet Searches

*Make every effort count...*

- ♣ Make a list of organizations, churches, and foundations to use as subcategories for your search. Being specific will decrease the time you spend in your search and will yield better results.
- ♣ Use a variety of search engines because each will yield different results, i.e., google, yahoo, and altavista.
- ♣ After reaching a desired web site, check the sides or top of the home page for links to scholarships, grants, financial aid, funding financial assistance, or education, etc.
- ♣ Keep a list of web sites visited to reduce duplication in your search.

## Documents

*What you'll need to have on hand for applications*

- € *References* - put together a list of persons whom you can contact to write letters on your behalf such as:
  - Teachers
  - Counselors
  - Pastor
  - Club Advisors/Coaches
- € *Transcripts/Transcript Request Form*  
Some institutions will allow you to send an unofficial transcript, and others will require that you have the transcript sent directly from the school.
- € *College Essay*  
Have a copy on disk so that you can change parts of the essay to relate more directly to the specific scholarship/grant for which you are applying.
- € *Resume*
- € *Portfolio*
- € *Documentation of ethnicity*
- € *Documentation of disability*
- € *Cover Letter* (keep on disk to change as needed)
- € *Financial Information* (completed tax returns)
- € *Letters of Acceptance* from colleges/universities
- € *Thank you cards* to send to people who helped you

## Scholarship Websites

### General Databases

www.collegeanswer.com  
www.collegenet.com/mach25  
www.studentawards.com  
www.fastweb.com  
www.nationalmerit.org (HS Juniors)  
www.petersons.com  
www.srnexpress.com  
www.kmfonline.org (student loan)  
www.scholarshiphunter.com  
www.scholarship-page.com  
www.financialaid.com  
www.fedscholarships.com  
www.scholarshipmanagement.org  
www.fastaid.com  
www.aasa.org (HS Juniors)  
www.scholarshipexperts.com  
www.feea.org  
www.collegescholarships.com  
www.princetonreview.com  
www.collegeboard.com  
www.scholarships.com  
www.mapping-your-future.org  
www.absolutelyscholarships.com  
www.americorps.org  
www.ducktapeclub.com  
<http://scholarships.brokescholars.com>

### Ethnic Minorities

www.hispanicfund.org  
www.hsf.net  
www.collegefund.org  
www.uncf.org  
www.blackexcel.org  
<http://scholarships.fatomei.com/college.html>

### Students with Disabilities

www.kmfonline.org (student loan/grants)  
www.nfb.org/nfb/scholarship\_program.asp  
www.ela.org  
www.gmsp.org

### International/Study abroad

www.internationalscholarships.com  
www.iefaf.org

### Nontraditional

www.legion-aux.org  
www.bpwusa.org

## MILITARY SCHOLARSHIP WEBSITES

www.militaryscholar.org  
www.aerhq.org (Army)  
www.afas.org (Air Force)  
<http://www.marine-scholars.org>  
www.nmcrs.org (Navy/Marine Corps)  
www.cgmahq.org (Coast Guard)  
www.legion-aux.org  
www.afcea.org  
www.military.com

## Organize Your Materials

- € Develop a simple spreadsheet to track applications you have completed and submitted.
- € Create a filing drawer using a milk crate, large box, or other container.
- € As you apply, create one file folder for EACH institution that you apply to for funding.
- € Have a separate file for each of the following to make it easy to refer to or include in a packet along with your application:
  - Your personal background including documentation
  - Family background
  - Resume (copies) or on disk/USB to print as needed
  - Financial Information (tax documents, student aid report from FAFSA, etc.)
  - Letters of Acceptance from colleges, universities, trade/technical schools
  - Portfolio
  - Envelopes (large and regular) and first-class stamps

## Apply & Track

- Make sure you create a file for EVERY institution to which you apply. Keep copies of everything you submit!
- Enter information into your spreadsheet. Make sure you check off each item that is required as you complete it, and the date you sent information.
- Use a wall calendar to backdate and enter important deadlines. Write down dates to call back institutions to confirm receipt of your materials, or to follow up as needed. Don't forget to follow up with your references, too!
- Send out your thank you notes as you go along. Do NOT wait!

## Understanding the Terminology

Scholarships – money you are given for something *you have done or can do*, e.g., academic or athletic record. Sometimes used interchangeably with grants and tuition discounting.

Tuition Discount – discount applied against tuition as a type of scholarship. Generally used by private colleges and universities.

Grants – money you receive because of *who you are*, e.g., race, demographics.

Merit Based Award - monies given to whichever applicant is the best at the subject of the scholarship. Income is no consideration.

Need Based Award – money that is offered solely on the basis of financial need.

Low/No Interest Loans – money that must be repaid.

Federal Aid – monies that are provided to students/families through the United States Department of Education. In ALL cases, students must complete the Free Application For Federal Student Aid (FAFSA). Includes grants and loans.

State Aid – monies provided through individual states in which the student resides. In most cases, the FAFSA will be used so students will need to complete this document.

## Scholarship Categories

**(For most scholarships, students must have applied and been accepted to a college/university)**

Academic – strictly based on overall (cumulative) GPA. May use weighted or unweighted GPA.

Merit/Service – awarded on the basis of services performed, contributions to the community, or academic record of performance—not just strictly the GPA—may also include rank, test scores, review of transcripts and courses completed.

Major – award is made on the basis of what academic major a student will pursue in college.

Talent – awarded on the basis of fine and performing arts talents such as art, theater, and music, or sports.

Ethnic – awarded on the basis of a student's genealogical background.

Employment – award is given only to students who are employed by a particular organization, or to the students of parents (in some cases immediate family members) who work for a particular organization.

Military – award made on the basis of completed service in a branch of the military or *expected* service upon graduation from college.

Religious – recipient must be a member of this particular religious organization.

Membership/Affiliation – student or family member (generally parents/grandparents) is a member of a particular organization. This includes unions, clubs, and societies.