

Scholarships are available for freshman, sophomores, juniors and seniors.

Here are some tips for a successful search:

- Begin your search early in high school and early in the year. Many scholarships come out in the fall that you might qualify for, if you wait until the second half of the year to begin applying you might miss out on something good.
- Make time to search for scholarships. It takes time to read the qualifications criteria and if you give yourself allotted time to do it, you will feel less overwhelmed.
- Make sure you are eligible! Read the eligibility requirements of each scholarship carefully. Many have age limits, nationality restrictions or are intended for specific academic fields. If you are not eligible, your application will most likely be disregarded and thrown away by the scholarship review committee. This is not only a waste of your time, but also for those who provided you with letters of recommendation.
- Scholarships should always be free. Stay away from those scholarships that ask for money upfront.
- Don't overlook non-online college scholarship opportunities. Look in your own community and ask around to see who is providing college tuition assistance in your area. Check with your employer or your parent's employer for possible sponsor scholarships. Many businesses want to help out their employees by sponsoring them or their children to go to school.
- Apply to many scholarships. Apply to every scholarship for which you are eligible. Don't avoid a scholarship because you think the requirements are too hard for you to complete or you think there's no way to win. The more difficult a scholarship's requirements, the less competition you may have. And don't rule out smaller scholarships. Many times there is less competition for the smaller offers and it may be easier to win. Remember, every dollar adds up!
- Write one really good essay and use it for multiple scholarships if they don't give you a prompt. When writing your essay, make sure you write it in your own voice. Also, make sure you use spell check and have someone else proofread your essay.
- Be mindful of the scholarship details! Carefully read all the instructions and make sure your application is filled out correctly and completely. Make sure you include all requested items. Some scholarships are need-based and will request financial information to determine a candidate's need.

- Watch deadlines. You can't turn in late work. When the deadline passes, it passes. Get organized! Use a calendar and create a detailed list with the deadlines and items needed for each scholarship. Organizing by due date is best. This way you'll be able to see which scholarships you'll need to plan for ahead of time.
- Create a separate email for your scholarship searches. You will receive "college spam" and you don't want your working email to fill up with information that you don't need. Check the email daily for any new scholarships or alerts!
- Use free scholarship matching services. Their databases are updated frequently and the sites will email you notifications of new scholarships that match your personal background profile.
- Think outside the box when it comes to your scholarship search. Consider your family, lifestyle, interests & hobbies, medical status, religion and more when looking for possible scholarships. Your parent/grandparent in the Vietnam War? There's a scholarship for that. Diagnosed with diabetes in middle school? There's a scholarship for that as well. First in your family to attend college? They have scholarships for that too. Really brainstorm and consider asking your parents' input. Your family background can qualify you for a plethora of college scholarships.
- Request letters of recommendation from people who know you well. Letters of recommendation are a very important part of any application. You should ask for letters of recommendation from people who are able to talk about your unique abilities and skills. Teachers, mentors, coaches, community leaders and bosses are all ideal sources for letters of recommendation. Avoid using friends or relatives. Don't wait until the last minute to ask for your letters of recommendation!! And be sure to send a thank you note if someone writes a letter of recommendation for you!
- Get someone else to read your application. Scholarship applications can be greatly improved by having someone else read it. They can help identify typos or other errors, provide constructive feedback and can often think of things that you hadn't thought of. If possible, ask someone who knows you well and who knows where you're coming from.
- If a scholarship interview is required, dress professionally. You will also want to make sure your social media accounts do not have any inappropriate content or pictures. You only have one chance to make a great first impression!!
- Make copies of everything you submit. Before you send your application, make a copy of the entire packet and keep it on file. You'll want to keep a copy of every item you send in case someone needs additional documents at some point in the review process. Materials can get lost or misplaced, and it will be your responsibility to make sure the scholarship review committees have what they need to make their decisions.