

SCHOLAR DOLLARS: FINDING & GETTING SCHOLARSHIPS

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UNDERSTANDING SCHOLARSHIPS

- Can be need-based and/or merit-based
- Can come from public and private sources
- Can come from colleges or outside groups
- Offered for all stages of education
- Sometimes can be used to fund research, travel, or other projects, *not just classes*
- Often require institutional nomination



UNDERSTANDING DISBURSEMENTS

- Scholarships can be given to...
 - The student
 - The current institution
 - The future institution
- Scholarships may be paid...
 - In full at once
 - In installments
 - Only when/as needed (last-dollar)
 - “Up to \$35,000” does not guarantee \$35,000



TEN SIMPLE STEPS

- Most scholarship applications require the same basic steps
- Requirements can be fairly predictable
- Common pitfalls:
 - Forgetting to follow each step
 - Getting ahead of yourself
- Slow and steady...



STEP 1: EVALUATE YOURSELF

- Who are you?
- Why do *you* deserve a scholarship?
- What's your "hook"?
- What are your unique traits?
- What are your strengths and weaknesses?

Remember: *If you don't know who you are, the scholarship committee can't get to know you, either.*



STEP 2: DETERMINE YOUR GOALS

- What are your priorities?
- How much money do you need to accomplish those specific goals?
- How do you plan to use the funds?

Remember: Know the details of each scholarship you're considering – if they won't help you reach your goals, are they worth the effort?



STEP 3: START SEARCHING

- Phi Theta Kappa (scholarships.ptk.org)
- Search Directories (CollegeFish.org)
- Local/Regional Foundations
- Your College's Financial Aid Office
- Non-Profit Organizations
- Employers & Unions

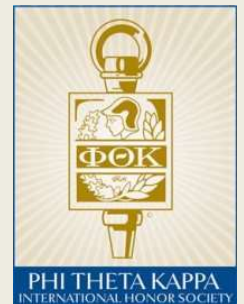
Remember: Keep your eyes open – opportunities pop up all the time in life, but they don't always announce themselves.



PHI THETA KAPPA SCHOLARSHIPS

- All-USA/All-State/Coca-Cola Academic Teams (F)
- Coca-Cola Leaders of Promise (S)
- Frank Lanza Memorial Scholars (S)
- GEICO Business Student Scholars (S)
- Guistwhite Scholars (F)
- Hites Transfer Scholars (F)
- Transfer Scholarships
- Nota Bene Prizes
- Honors Case Study Challenge Prizes

Visit scholarships.ptk.org for details



OTHER NATIONAL SCHOLARSHIPS

- Jack Kent Cooke Foundation Undergraduate Transfer Scholars
- Jeannette Rankin Foundation
- United Negro College Fund
- Hispanic Scholarship Fund
- Pearson Prize for Higher Education
- International Scholar Laureate Program

Remember: Not all national scholarships are open to two-year college students!



STEP 4: DREAM REALISTICALLY

- Aim for success, but keep your goals clear and manageable
- Don't overload yourself with applications
- Budget scholarship-related expenses
- Pick scholarships that seem like likely fits and pass on the big stretches
 - Ex.: Don't apply for liberal arts scholarships if you've only taken business courses
- Ask your advisers for their input



STEP 5: PLAN IT OUT

- **Prepare your deadlines calendar**
 - Note postmark and due dates
 - Give your recommenders an earlier deadline to make sure you have their letters on time
 - Determine length of transcript wait
 - Compare your scholarship schedule against your classes – no scholarship essays and finals at the same time!



STEP 5: PLAN IT OUT

- Determine your budget
 - Costs can include postage, transcripts, score reports, and photocopies
 - Include an extra cushion for overnight charges (but try to avoid them!)
 - Find out if your college will cover your expenses for certain scholarships

Warning: If a scholarship application (or service) costs money, it's a scam – don't do it!



STEP 6: DETERMINE WHAT THEY *REALLY* WANT

- It's not just about GPA! (or Phi Theta Kappa...)
- View previous recipient info to get an idea of what the “typical” recipient is like
- Think about the essay prompts – are there common themes?

*The directions can actually be quite helpful –
read them!*



STEP 7: START ASSEMBLING “EASY” MATERIALS

- You will almost invariably need...
 - Your *official* transcript (often 2 copies)
 - An updated résumé (possibly their format)
- You will often need...
 - Your high school transcript/GED scores
 - SAT or ACT scores (if you have any)
 - Verification of enrollment or acceptance
 - FAFSA or household tax information
 - Verification of organization membership



STEP 8: PREPARE YOUR RÉSUMÉ

- List employment history, cocurricular experiences, and awards previously won
- List major leadership positions first
 - But also list in terms of what's meaningful to *you* – show your passion
- Don't list frivolous activities or titles
- Don't use acronyms people won't know

Remember: Keep it believable – there are only 24 hours in a day!



STEP 9: “MEET” YOUR RECOMMENDERS

- Give your recommenders a copy of your résumé and essays *early on*
- Meet with them to answer any questions
- Let them know what you’d like stressed
- Request to see draft recommendations

Remember: *They are doing a huge favor for you – help them as much as you can, be flexible with their time, and say “thank you” often.*



STEP 10: THE ALL-IMPORTANT ESSAYS

- Avoid controversial topics or highly emotional issues
- Write on the topic(s); don't stray
- Be specific and give examples
- Stay within the word count
- Revise, revise, revise
- Proof-read, proof-read, proof-read
- Save copies of your essays
- Use your college's writing center for feedback



STEP 10: THE ALL-IMPORTANT ESSAYS

Example #1

- “As a child, I was badly beaten by my drug-addict parents. We never had any money and I had to start working at 14 to support my sisters. I had an abusive boyfriend and became a single mother at 16. I dropped out of high school, was homeless. My life was going nowhere. Then, I decided to get my GED and am now earning my A.A.”

Example #2

- “Growing up, my home situation was not the best. However, I knew early on that education would save me. I worked hard to achieve my GED and then get into college. I have excelled in classes and been involved with my community. I am looking forward to completing my B.A. and eventually my PhD so I can teach others.”

STEP 10: THE ALL-IMPORTANT ESSAYS

- Think about how you want to present yourself to the committee and the world
 - Discussing your struggles vs. defining yourself by them
 - Overcoming challenges vs. seeking pity
- What are you comfortable having shared?
 - Check for publicity clauses
 - If you don't want it in the newspaper...



COMMON MISTAKES

- Not meeting the basic requirements
- Not meeting the deadlines
- Not meeting font/word count requirements
- Recycling essays without editing details
- Sending unwanted extra materials
- Not following professional letter etiquette
- Submitting things improperly/out of order
- Waiting until the very last minute



SECRETS OF WINNERS...

- Have someone else read everything
- Pick target scholarships and stick to them
- Present résumé honestly
- Write about what you love
- Show what makes you unique
 - But don't sell yourself out...

***“Think Big. Work Hard.
Achieve.”***



...AND THE LESSONS OF OTHERS

- There are countless opportunities out there – never get discouraged
- Always keep revising and trying again
- Take advantage of the application process to reflect and get to know yourself better

Life always works out.



Do you have questions?

**Would you like to hold this
workshop for your chapter?**

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