

SCHOLARSHIP INFORMATION

Scholarships at Colleges

- When beginning your search for a college to attend make sure to check out all that you are interested in applying to. Often one general application will qualify you for several scholarships offered through your college of choice. Many scholarships are also offered through college departments, by major or by area of interest. Check with the financial aid office for additional scholarships.

Program/Occupational Scholarships

- Check with your particular program of study to see if the profession you will be working in has scholarships that you are eligible to receive.

Community Scholarships

- Communities are a great source for gift aid such as scholarships. Often your chances of receiving a community scholarship are greater because the application pool is smaller. Listen to school announcements and check in the counseling center for local scholarship opportunities. Also check with churches, private organizations and area businesses for more information. Large companies in your area and your parent's employers are also great places to search.

The Internet

- The Internet is a great source to find a wide variety of scholarships. Use a search engine such as "Google" and type in your interest areas, possible career choices, colleges you wish to attend, etc. There are a number of scholarship search sites that can match you to scholarship opportunities. Be aware that they will ask you to participate in survey, ask you to sign up to receive information for online universities, and will sometime sell your information. You can do the search sites and decline surveys and not provide information to outside sources. You may want to set up an email account just for this purpose to avoid spam issues.

Scholarship Application Tips

Completing a scholarship application can be a difficult task. Below are some tips to help you complete your application and essays.

- **Pay close attention to scholarship application deadlines** as applications submitted past the deadline will not be considered. The first scholarship deadlines begin in the fall for the following school year.
- **Neat Appearance.** Neatness, punctuation, grammar and spelling are important. Have someone read it over for you to make sure it looks and sounds good.
- **Prepare letters of recommendation.** Ask a few people to write letters of recommendation on your behalf so you will have them ready for future scholarship and college applications. Give people enough time to write the letter, but make sure you give them a date that you need the letter by. Prepare a scholarship resume outlining your involvement in activities in and out of school, community service and other information that you would like them to include.
- When writing your essays let your **personality shine** through. While scholastic achievements are important, in most cases, they are not the only items considered. Think about including your clubs, sports, volunteer and community involvement, honors and achievements, financial need, personal stories or valuable lessons learned.
- Thinking about **common essay questions** can help you prepare for a scholarship essay. Typical questions might include: What are your short and long-term goals? Describe any unusual family or personal circumstances that have affected your achievement in school? What are your work or extracurricular activities? List experiences related to your field of study?
- **Proofread** your essays and applications in addition to having a least one other person proofread your application. Spelling errors or poor writing skills will have a negative effect on your chances of receiving the scholarship.
- **Keep a copy** of everything you submit!
- If you are notified that you have received a scholarship always send a **thank you note to the donor.**
- **Scholarships are a numbers game** so the more you apply for the more you will be likely to receive.

Search Engine Sites

- www.collegeboard.com
- www.fastweb.com
- www.collegenet.com
- www.scholarshipexperts.com
- www.mtcis.intocareers.org (finaid sort, bigskyhs, plan7ing)

State Scholarships

- Montana has a number of scholarships for Montana students attending Montana schools. Check out www.scholarship.mt.gov
- If you have done 100 hours of community service in the last calendar year then you are eligible for the MT Youth Serve Scholarship: <http://serve.mt.gov/youth-servemontana/>

What kinds of federal grants are available?

- The U.S. Department of Education offers a variety of federal grants to students attending four-year colleges or universities, community colleges, and career schools.
- [Federal Pell Grants](#)
- [Federal Supplemental Educational Opportunity Grants \(FSEOG\)](#)
- [Teacher Education Assistance for College and Higher Education \(TEACH\) Grants](#)
- [Iraq and Afghanistan Service Grants](#)

Minority Scholarships

- The Gates Millennium Scholarships at www.noinations.gmsp.org
Check with your particular ethnic group to see if they have scholarships for education.

Native American Scholarships

- If you are Native American, check with your tribe to see if there is higher education money to assist you while attending school. In the state of Montana, if you have proof of 25% native blood you can get a tuition waiver to in-state schools.