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Montgomery College Office of Financial Aid
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"Whatever you do, do it passionately well"
St. Francis of Sales

SCHOLARSHIP OPPORTUNITIES

The earlier you apply, the greater the chance you have of receiving aid.
Start by completing these 5 steps and then continue to complete even more applications for **private scholarships**.

1a. The U.S. Department of Education is a great starting point for information on education after high school and how to pay for it – **www.studentaid.ed.gov** and of course **www.fafsa.ed.gov**

1b. This is only the first part. The second part is submitting the required documents to the institution's financial aid office that you plan on attending. **(*Note * MC Priority deadline: May 15th)**

***MC Priority Deadline means we will accept FAFSA Verification Documents after May 15th; however files will be completed on a first come first served basis. It is in your best interest to submit FAFSA Verification Documents to MC Financial Aid before May 15th.**

2a. *Maryland Residents:*

MD Educational Assistance Grants and more - Contact MHEC at 410-260-4565 or 1-800-974-1024
Also complete the 4 separate applications for scholarships offered from your state legislators. (Delegate and Senatorial Scholarships)

www.mhec.state.md.us.
Complete their Online Scholarship Search

2b. *DC Residents:*

DCTAG and DCLEAP – Visit DC State Education Office at
https://hefs.seo.dc.gov/appforms/seo_logon.aspx

DCCAPP – Visit **DC College Access Program**
www.dccap.org

3. Montgomery College Foundation Scholarship Opportunities provide hundreds of scholarships each year for MC Students. Applications will be available online after March 1st 2008
http://www.montgomerycollege.edu/finaid/foundation.html

4. **The Herb Block Scholarship** is for High School graduates of DC, Montgomery County, Prince George's County, Arlington, Fairfax, Falls Church or Alexandria. Visit **www.herbblockfoundation.org**

5. **Montgomery College's Grants and Scholarships webpage has a listing of private scholarships with links to their sites. Students should check this page monthly as more scholarships are continually added. Deadline dates are displayed next to the link. http://www.montgomerycollege.edu/finaid/grants.html**

*************** Also see the MC Transfer Scholarship Page *************

http://www.montgomerycollege.edu/Departments/studev/schol.htm

*************** International Students ******************

http://maldef.org/leadership/scholarships/general/

Esperanza Education Fund

Other Sources

Scholarship Resource Network or SRN Express – features a database with mostly private, non-needs based scholarships – **www.srnexpress.com/index.cfm** .

The College Board has downloadable applications for the form required by certain colleges - College Scholarship Financial Aid Profile –– **www.collegeboard.org**

College Net Mach25 Scholarship Database – offers over 500,000 scholarships from sponsor organizations. Website will allow students to save listings and create letters requesting information – **www.collegenet.com/mach25**

The Coalition of America's Colleges and Universities has developed resources to help parents and students who are looking for answers. The Coalition's website is
www.CollegeIsPossible.org

College Goal Sunday is a resource to help families apply for financial aid using the FAFSA. The website is **http://www.go2goal.org**

UNCF/The College Fund – Lists scholarships available to students attending historically black colleges that are members of the Fund – **www.uncf.org/scholarships/index.asp**

Sallie Mae's Online Scholarship Service provides access to a College Aid Sources for Higher Education database, one of the oldest scholarship databases – **www.salliemae.com/plan/freemoney/search.html**

FastWEB – lists thousands of private scholarships available.
This site boasts one of the largest free scholarship databases with over 1.3 million listings – www.fastweb.com

www.scholarshipworkshop.com
www.iefa.org or www.internationalscholarships.com (or international students and study abroad opportunities)

www.coca-colascholars.org
www.elks.org
www.vfw.org

U.S News and World Report Scholarship Research Center
http://www.usnews.com (click on education, then financial aid)

Phi Theta Kappa Scholarship Opportunities
http://scholarships.ptk.org/ And
http://scholarships.ptk.org/schollisting.htm (by state)

www.highbeam.com
http://www.collegenet.com/mach25/app

Hispanic Scholarship Fund-
http://www.hsf.net/Scholarships.aspx?id=424
MULTIPLE OPPORTUNITIES!!!

**** YAHOO AND GOOGLE ****
EDUCATION:Financial Aid:Scholarship Programs

Scholarship Checklists

Special thanks to Mariann Ragins & www.scholarshipworkshop.com

The Research Checklist

1. Have you exhausted the resources of the public library? For example, have you looked in all scholarship directories, vertical files or pamphlets and brochures, magazines, books, and college catalogs?
2. Have you looked in general college guides such as *Peterson's Guide to Four-Year Colleges*?
3. Have you looked in the telephone book for local private organizations such as fraternities, sororities, clubs, associations and civic organizations?
4. Have you contacted national associations and clubs?
5. Have you contacted the local radio and television stations?
6. Have you contacted the Chamber of Commerce in your area?
7. Have you talked with your guidance counselor about college fairs in your area or attended one?
8. Have you spoken with your guidance counselor about scholarships or financial aid opportunities?
9. Have you visited a nearby college campus?
10. Have you contacted the banks in your area about trust funds, scholarships and awards?
11. Have you contacted the Board of Education or state financial aid agency for information about general and special scholarships, such as those for students interesting in becoming teachers? (Refer to *Winning Scholarships for College* for state agency information)
12. Have you used the World Wide Web and the Internet to find sources of monetary aid? Have you visited your school's web site or spoken to your counselor or career center advisor about scholarship opportunities?

The Application Checklist

1. All applications should be typed, NO EXCEPTIONS–– unless the application requests that you print. If so, use black ink.

2. Make photocopies of applications as you receive them. To avoid possible mistakes, complete the photocopied applications by hand well ahead of the deadline. Also make a handwritten list of frequently asked questions and your answers to them. When it's time to submit, use the handwritten application and frequent answer list as your guide to complete the actual application you plan to send. Always keep a copy of your completed applications. You may need them to prepare for interviews.

3. Set up a file system for all applications you receive so that you can locate them easily as deadlines draw near. A file system is also helpful because you can refer to an application for information to use on another one.

4. All sections of the application that you are not directly responsible for should be given to those who are responsible for them as soon as possible.
For example, recommendation forms for counselors, teachers, or secondary and mid-year school reports. This is especially important when doing online applications. It is very easy to forget the sections others need to complete for you.

5. If you apply for a scholarship online, print the application first. Complete it offline. Then complete the application online. Print it again and proofread online before you hit the SEND button. It is very easy to make mistakes on electronic applications.

6. Arrange to have your scores from the SAT, ACT, and other required standardized tests sent to the colleges shortly after you've sent them a completed application, if you haven't already done so during the registration phase for these tests. Make sure to check with the colleges/universities to ensure that they have received them.

7. Include your personal résumé. Most applications have space for you to list your activities and special awards, but it looks more professional to include a résumé. Never leave the spaces blank for the information they request on an application. Instead, type on the application, "See additional information on a separate sheet." The separate sheet will be your résumé.

8. Type essays and other supporting material on good quality paper. Use paper with a weight of at least 24 lb.

9. With your application include articles that may have appeared in your local newspaper about you or your activities.

10. Include samples of your work that are extraordinary, or award-winning. Don't be afraid to send along copies of poetry, artwork, or even videos or cassette recordings of your special talents, which may include singing or dancing or playing the piano. Any special talent or hobby that you have should be flaunted. It makes your application stand out from others. When you include extra information, make sure it really is outstanding or extraordinary.
And don't overload your application with extra material. Include no more than 2 or 3 examples of outstanding work. If possible, try to make sure that all of your material will fit into a 9" x 12" envelope. Most importantly, if a scholarship program or college/university asks that you not include additional information, don't.

11. Some programs that issue applications specifically request that additional pages be kept to a minimum if they are allowed at all. Respect their wishes.

12. Complete the FAFSA (Free Application for Federal Student Aid).

13. For questions that do not apply to you, write "not applicable" in the answer blank, or abbreviated "NA," to show that you have not overlooked the question.

14. If you are not sure about the spelling of a word look it up in the dictionary. Do not rely solely on the spell check function of a computer software program. You could still have mistakes in your essay and application unless you proofread them carefully.

15. Make a recommendation list. You may be required to list the names and addresses of your references. Some schools and scholarship programs ask for this so that they can send recommendation forms to these individuals directly, without using the student as a medium.

16. As a part of the application process you may also be required to submit a graded writing sample from your English class. Discuss this with your English teacher so you can select the best sample of your writing. Writing samples should express a clear, concise writing style that reflects your viewpoint. Some colleges are now requiring the SAT Writing Subject Test to get an idea of a student's writing skills.

17. Many college admissions application packages contain applications for financial aid as well. Whether you are applying for admission or a Scholarship, pay close attention to all sections of an application because you have to be admitted to a college before you can win a scholarship sponsored/administered by it.

10 TIPS for SCHOLARSHIPS

Winning a scholarship isn't easy. Scholarship providers can get hundreds or even thousands of applications each year, but have only a handful of scholarships to award. This means you have to work even harder than usual. That's why we want you to be prepared when completeting your application, so listen carefully. Here's a list of common "Do's & Don'ts" that applicants make when submitting an application.

DO'S

1. Apply only if you are eligible. Make sure you apply for all of which you are eligible, but make sure you read all the scholarship requirements and directions carefully. Each scholarship has different requirements.

2. Follow the instructions. Provide everything that's required, but don't supply things that aren't requested. We recommend you contact the scholarship office if you have any questions about the instructions. If it seems unclear, call, don't assume. Following the instructions is one of the most basic criteria used by selection committees to cull applicants.

3. Complete the application in full. If a question doesn't apply, note that on the application. Don't just leave a blank, supply all the information requested. This includes additional supporting material, such as transcripts, letters of recommendation and essays, if applicable. It's imperative you provide the correct support materials in the correct format to be considered.

4. Neatness counts. Always try to type your application. If you can't, that's ok too, just print neatly and legibly in ink. Make several photocopies of the application form before you fill it out. Use the copies as a working draft while you develop your masterpiece, Picasso.

5. Write an essay that makes a strong impression. Even the simplest experience can be monumental. Remember, the key to writing a strong essay is to be personal and specific. Include concrete details to make your experience come alive.

6. Watch for deadlines. To help keep yourself on track, impose your own deadline that is at least two weeks prior to the official deadline. This allows you plenty of time in case a problem occurs. Don't rely on extensions – very few scholarship providers allow them.

7. Make sure your application gets where it needs to go. We suggest you double check the mailing address and send your application through certified mail to ensure it is received on time and in good condition. The earlier we receive your paperwork, the better we are able to assist you.

8. Keep a back-up file in case anything goes wrong. Before sending the application, make a copy of the entire packet. If your application goes astray, you'll be able to reproduce it quickly. Be prepared!

9. Give it a final "once-over." Proofread the entire application carefully. Be on the lookout for misspelled words or grammatical errors. Ask a friend, teacher or parent to proofread it as well. Do everything you can to make sure your application is perfect!

10. Ask for help if you need it. If you have problems completing the application, don't hesitate to call us. We love to hear from you!

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