

## High School Sophomores

**Welcome, sophomores! Now is a great time to begin planning for your scholarship application process.** If you haven't done so already, please read the scholarship tips for freshmen available in our membership group, as you will find the upcoming guidance more informative if you are familiar with our advice for freshmen.

**The first step is to find ways to get involved in extracurricular activities that are of interest to you.** You do not have to join a surplus of clubs or activities; in fact, most colleges like to see consistent and deep demonstrated interest in a few activities rather than a student who stretches themselves too thin. Think quality not quantity. Selecting a reasonable number of activities will also allow you more time to take on leadership roles in the ensuing years within that activity. Dedicate yourself to finding something you truly enjoy.

**After you have identified your main interests, look for a way to get involved in your community to assist others.** Most scholarships are related to volunteerism or some type of involvement in your community. For instance, if you love math club, check out volunteer opportunities to tutor underserved kids in math. If you are interested in the environment, volunteer at the local forest preserve. If you love art, offer to paint a mural at the local elementary school. The key is to pursue and/or create opportunities that excite you, as this will naturally lead you to discuss them with enthusiasm in your college and scholarship essays and applications.

**Scholarship categories to consider beyond community involvement:**

- **Work ethic/consistent employment** – if you like to work and enjoy your job, there are several scholarships that reward a great work ethic. There is even one called the “Strong Work Ethic” scholarship for seniors in high school. Start now to have a great story to tell.
- **Sports/athletics** – perhaps you are involved in your sport year-round, and it is difficult to find time to participate in many activities outside of that commitment. Various scholarships for sports involvement are available (even if you don't plan to play at the college level). One example is the BigSun Scholarship.



# Guide to College Scholarships

- **Academics** – many scholarships reward a specific interest in academics. Examples include the Regeneron Science Talent Search for students that are interested in completing a research project on their own or in a group, the Breakthrough Junior Challenge – a contest where you submit a video explaining a favorite math, science or physics concept, and the MathWorks Math Modeling Challenge where you solve math problems in a team of students.

**Start your research with an internet search of the activities in which you participate and/or your interests.** You will be amazed by how many opportunities you will find!

**Looking for expert assistance? Through our Scholarship Search and Guidance Package, one of our knowledgeable educational consultants assists families with the development of a curated list of 60+ potential scholarship opportunities, customized to each student. Contact us for more information!**

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