

High School Seniors

Welcome to scholarship season! Plan to start early and apply often! Ideally the summer before senior year is a great time to get organized. Do not want to wait until you receive your college decisions to start hunting for money! Be proactive so you have as many opportunities as possible. Please take a few minutes to read the scholarship tips for juniors on our membership page as this will give you a great background.

Here are some additional tips:

Your best opportunities to receive the maximum amount of college funding are any merit scholarships offered at your colleges of choice. Spend some time figuring out how much you might be offered. Keep in mind that many highly selective colleges like the Ivies, Stanford, and MIT do not offer merit aid, only need-based aid. Some colleges will have a very transparent data table of what you will receive based on your GPA and ACT or SAT scores. You will know exactly what you need to submit to receive a certain amount of money. Other colleges are not as transparent, but you can obtain a good estimate by running the college's net price calculator.

Make sure you stay organized and on top of the merit scholarship process. Some colleges will automatically consider you for merit money when you apply. Others will have an extra application for merit aid that you must submit. Determine the criteria for each college on your list the summer before senior year so that you are prepared to follow through with added application tasks.

The other source for money is scholarships: national, regional, and local. As you might expect, national scholarships are the most difficult to win as you are competing against many students across the US. Regional scholarships offer better odds, but local scholarships give you the best chance of winning as they will only include students from your town or high school.

Keep in mind that a great deal of scholarship money is available each year for incoming college students, but you need to make a serious, dedicated effort in your scholarship applications.

Places to search:

- Perform an internet search of your activities, major, organizations to which you belong, and personal interests. For instance, you might search for “scholarships for bowlers” or “scholarships for Eagle Scouts.”
- Check out some of the big scholarship sites – raise.me, scholarships.com, fastweb.com, and even the collegeboard.org site for its scholarship repository. You may have to sign up for an account, but it's a great way to set up notifications for scholarships that match your parameters.

Make sure you research local scholarships carefully. Examples are the junior women's league in your town, the Lions Club, the Rotary, your church, your parents' employers, or your employer. Some high schools will have a scholarship list from local businesses that create scholarships for graduating seniors. Local scholarships represent your best chance for earning funds, so make sure you apply to all the options that align with your profile.

If the scholarship search process seems overwhelming and you are seeking guidance, Laura George Consulting can help! We offer a Scholarship Search and Guidance package in which one of our expert educational consultants conducts the research and produces a curated scholarship list that includes a minimum of 60 scholarship opportunities specific for your profile.

Whether you create your own list or we assist you, it is important to select the scholarships you feel you are most likely to win and put your maximum effort into those. A great example is one of our former students who applied to 35 scholarships and won five worth a total of \$10,000! **The key is to apply to as many scholarships as possible and invest the time to present yourself well in the applications.**

Happy scholarship hunting!