

vol. 6



The Scholarship Coach

THE SCHOLARSHIP COACH

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ABOUT SCHOLARSHIP AMERICA

Scholarship America believes that every student deserves an opportunity to go to college, regardless of their financial status.

Scholarship America mobilizes support for students getting into and graduating from college. Since 1958, Scholarship America has distributed more than \$3.1 billion in scholarship assistance to more than 2 million students, funding both entry-level and multi-year scholarships and emergency financial grants. More information is available at www.scholarshipamerica.org.

ABOUT THE SCHOLARSHIP COACH

The Scholarship Coach is a blog run by Scholarship America on U.S. News and World Report's website for the purpose of educating students and parents about scholarships. The Scholarship Coach was started in 2010 and features weekly articles addressing common scholarship questions, as well as featuring special scholarships and dispensing valuable advice students should use to make their applications stand out. Students with special concerns are able to get answers by asking marketing@scholarshipamerica.org.

New blog posts are live every Thursday at www.usnews.com/education/blogs/the-scholarship-coach

Improve Your Scholarship Hunt With Alternative Search Engines

(Originally Published 12/12/13)

By Michelle Showalter



When we're asked for basic scholarship advice, two things immediately come to mind. One is to search early and often for college scholarships, and the other is to avoid paying a company or a person to help you match to scholarships. You can find plenty of free scholarship searches, and they're often better than available paid services.

A while back, we highlighted [five useful scholarship search engines](#). All of those resources continue to be excellent places to start your search. They're reputable, free and comprehensive, so be sure to take advantage of them.

In addition, there are other great scholarship search engines that you might not know as well, all of them free to use.

1. Zinch: [Zinch](#) may not be the first scholarship search engine you think of when starting your hunt for money for college, but it's a unique resource to turn to and includes more than \$1 billion in scholarships. But scholarship information is only the beginning.

The college admission process involves much more than just finding free money. Creating a student profile on Zinch allows you to learn about, interact with and be recruited by hundreds of colleges and universities around the world.

Another advantage to Zinch is that it was created by college students, so they're good at knowing what future college students need.

2. ScholarshipExperts.com: Created in 2000 by a group of parents, education professionals and students, [ScholarshipExperts](#) claims to specialize in getting accurate and current scholarship information to students without compromising on user privacy.

In order to get tailored results, you need to create a user profile, but it's easy to do and your information is kept secure. The inclusion of instant access to scholarship applications right from the website is one unique feature of ScholarshipExperts. If an application is not

available electronically, you can even request it be mailed to you.

3. Peterson's college scholarship search: [Peterson's](#) may not seem like a catchy name for a scholarship search engine – but that's because it's a lot more than just a place to find scholarships. Founded in the 1960s, the company offers free online test prep, school searches and career tools, as well as a database of scholarships from 5,000 providers, in addition to the books and services it sells.

Their website is straightforward and easy to use, and within seconds you can be matched to a variety of scholarships, without having to go through the hassle of creating a profile. You can find more than \$1.5 million in scholarships, grants and prizes.

Peterson's is currently giving away a [\\$5,000 scholarship prize](#), but students must enter before the Dec. 31 deadline.

4. FindTuition.com: As with Zinch and ScholarshipExperts, you must create an

online profile in order to find scholarships through [FindTuition.com](#). FindTuition claims to have a database of more than 1.7 million scholarships worth a total of \$7 billion.

Though their main focus is matching students to scholarships, FindTuition also offers college application tracking, scholarship deadline reminders and information on other types of financial aid and loan consolidation.

Make Quick Work of These Easy Scholarship Applications

(Originally Published 9/19/13)

By Matt Konrad



Whether you're a high school junior just getting started on scholarship applications, or a college student with a sheaf of essays, you've learned by now that applying for college cash can take awhile.

But that's not always the case. More and more scholarship programs are testing faster and easier applications that involve creating videos, sending tweets or texts or even just registering for a mailing list. These quick-and-easy applications are a great way to boost scholarship chances without committing too much time – which is always in short supply for students.

There are a few potential drawbacks to scholarship programs like these. Because they're easy to apply for, you'll have a lot of competition and your academic and community achievements won't have much effect on your chances.

In addition, some programs may require you to share marketing messages or solicit votes in order to increase your chances.

It's up to you whether you're comfortable doing so, but you should always check those expectations before you apply.

If you're ready to hop on your phone and start applying, one of your first stops should be DoSomething.org's [scholarship listing](#). The long-standing youth activism organization offers a rotating array of scholarship competitions that usually require nothing more than a text message to enter.

Current open programs include the \$4,000 "Fed Up" School Lunch Scholarship, where all you need to do is text in a picture of your school lunch and answer 10 questions about school nutrition to be eligible. If you want to loop in a few friends, invite them to play "The Bully Text," an anti-bullying game. You'll automatically be entered to win \$3,000.

Deadlines and programs vary, so it's worth following [@DoSomething](#) on Twitter for updates.

As you explore your college choices, take advantage of built-in scholarship programs

from a couple of the nation's largest school searches. College Prowler offers registered users a [monthly chance to win](#) their \$2,000 "No Essay" scholarship just for having an account.

And CollegeWeekLive, which hosts online college fairs and live chats with admissions representatives, gives out a \$1,000 monthly [scholarship to students who log in](#) and visit three colleges that interest them.

Your random knowledge can turn into quick and easy scholarship applications, as well. The Common Knowledge Scholarship Foundation offers [scholarships ranging from \\$250 to \\$2,500](#).

More and more scholarship programs are testing faster and easier applications that involve creating videos, sending tweets or texts or even just registering for a mailing list.

To apply, all you need to do is to sign up for the site and play trivia quizzes. Topics range from general knowledge to specific subjects, books or films, and there are even occasional quizzes that your parents can play to help earn you points.

For more specific testing, check out the [American Fire Sprinkler Association's \\$2,000 scholarship](#) for high school seniors. Even if you don't know the first thing about sprinklers, you can enter the contest by reading a brief essay and answering a 10-question open-book quiz.

Those aren't the only ways to use your online presence for college cash, either. The [Dr Pepper Tuition Giveaway](#) awards over \$1 million in tuition to students around the country. To get started, students 18 and older have the opportunity to tell their story to Dr Pepper by submitting a short statement.

Once submitted, students are asked to promote their stories with their social networks, and their friends and followers will then have the opportunity to vote for their favorites. The five stories with the most votes by the end of the promotion will each win \$10,000 to be used toward tuition.

To up the ante, this year each student between the ages of 18 and 24 whose story receives at least 50 votes will be invited to submit a 60-second video as well. Dr Pepper judges will select contestants with the most compelling videos to compete for a chance to win one of four \$100,000 tuition grand prizes during halftime competitions at the Dr Pepper ACC Championship, Big Ten Championship, PAC-12 Championship and SEC Championship football games.

Finally, you can also enter a number of scholarship competitions on Twitter. These 140-character contests crop up frequently and [we try and keep our eye on them](#) at our Twitter account.

Most aren't as lucrative as the University of Iowa's \$38,000 [one-tweet business-school award](#), but programs like 1ForAll's [#FreeToTweet contest](#), the [140 Scholarship](#) and the [Short and Tweet Scholarship](#) are still well worth entering.

With all of these scholarship programs, you don't have anything to lose!



Leverage Social Media in Your Scholarship Search

(Originally Published 4/4/13)

By Matt Konrad

For millions, social media have become an integral part of everyday life. We use Twitter, Facebook or Instagram on our computers, phones and tablets all day long to make all kinds of connections.

Social media use is so ingrained in many high school and college students' lives that it's almost second nature. However, if you're applying to college or **seeking scholarships**, it's important to take some time off from games like "FarmVille" to consider how everyday social networking can help – or hurt – your chances.

Following are four tips for **scholarship seekers** on how they can best use social media.

1. Be your best self: The most important advice for any social media user is to be authentic but tactful. Your Instagram photos, tweets and Facebook posts should reflect the people and things you care about; after all, they'll help you remember the great times you've had in school for years to come.

However, it's also crucial that you put some thought into what you post and what you don't, lest you become the next cautionary tale about compromising pictures or an unfortunate choice of words. No matter how much you want to document that crazy party – and no matter how private you make your posts – the fact remains that if it's out there with your name or picture attached, it can always be spread more widely than you intend.

We like the **advice offered by Katherine Cohen**: if you'd be embarrassed for your grandparents (or your college admissions officer) to see it, you probably shouldn't post it.

2. Join the conversations you care about: This tip goes hand in hand with putting your best face forward on social media. Whether you're passionate about environmental issues, political debates or international soccer, chances are there's a sizable social media community that shares those passions.

Joining the conversation by retweeting, replying to and blogging about others in the field is an ideal way to enhance your online presence, which can come in handy when you're looking at colleges. According to a **2009 study from the National Association for College Admissions Counseling**, around a quarter of colleges research prospective students via search engines, and 17 percent do so specifically on social networks. In addition, 85 percent of colleges use social media for recruitment, so if you're interested in a school, follow it.

Of course, the benefits go deeper than that. Online engagement with your areas of interest and your prospective schools means you'll delve deeper and stay more informed – and your admissions and scholarship essays will reap the rewards of that.

3. Find social scholarships: Speaking of scholarships, your social media can be invaluable tools for searching and even applying for scholarships. Scholarship America regularly posts about new scholarship opportunities on **Facebook** and on **Twitter at ScholAmerica**, and we've rounded up a few other **Twitter feeds to follow for scholarship** advice.

Beyond those resources, you can also use social media much more directly for a handful of scholarships. The **Scholarships.com Short and Tweet Scholarship** opens every few months, and awards \$1,000 scholarships for the best 140-character answers on Twitter to their question. **CollegeNET** has a similar program, which awards weekly scholarships for the best responses in its forum. And if you're into longer-form media, the **CollegeScholarships.org Blogging Scholarship** provides an annual \$1,000 award to a student who runs a great blog;

applications for the scholarship are open now.

4. Look beyond Twitter and Facebook: While these two (along with the fast-growing Instagram) have become entrenched as the most widely used social networks, they're not the only ones that can help with your scholarship efforts. YouTube has become a central focus for plenty of major scholarship and tuition-assistance programs, most notably the **Dr Pepper Tuition Giveaway**, which offers more than \$1 million each year and requires applicants to upload video applications.

If you're a user of Foursquare, the location-based check-in service, you can explore tips about your college and its surroundings and earn campus rewards. And if you're looking to bolster your resume with internships in your field, LinkedIn offers a dedicated portal **just for student jobs**. In short, wherever you are in your education career, you can find a way to use social media to your advantage.

5 Simple Steps to Get Organized for Scholarship Season

(Originally Published 1/3/13)

By Janine Fugate



The day after Christmas, stores suddenly have row upon row of storage solutions, organizers, and cleaning products displayed—and they’re probably on sale to boot. That’s because January is a great time to **get organized**. A new year is a fresh start, so why not take this opportunity to put a little organization around your scholarship research?

Here are five simple steps to get you organized well into the new year.

Step 1: List the scholarships you’ve already found and for which you’re likely to be eligible. Include the name of the sponsoring organization and the address.

Step 2: Bookmark the websites or write down offline resources for these scholarship opportunities so you can refer back to eligibility criteria and application requirements, such as **letters of recommendation**, **essays**, transcripts, and FAFSA information.

Step 3: Find the deadlines for the scholarships you will be applying for, and then put the deadlines into the calendar on your smartphone or tablet so you don’t miss one.

Students should map out their plan of attack for scholarship applications and deadlines.

Be careful, though: Don’t just set a reminder for the day the application is due. Set a reminder for two to three weeks in advance of the application deadline so that you have enough time to complete the paperwork and gather all required recommendations.

Step 4: Note whether the application must be mailed by USPS, or if it can be E-mailed or submitted through an online form. If the application must be mailed by USPS, build extra time into your application schedule for mailing.

Step 5: Now that you have an organization system, do some more research to find additional scholarship opportunities and return to Step 1.

Follow These Five Steps To Get Organized:

1. **Make a list** of scholarships.
2. **Keep track** of scholarship resources for easy reference.
3. **Use a calendar** so you don’t miss crucial deadlines.
4. Know the scholarship **submission requirements**.
5. Find more scholarships and **start the process all over again!**

6 Ways to Get Great Scholarship Recommendation Letters

(Originally Published 3/7/13)

By Michelle Showalter

It's officially March, which means there are roughly two weeks of winter remaining and two months of the school year left to go—and not long before you'll be packing up your car and heading to college, possibly for the first time in your life. These next few months are going to fly by, which means you should start checking things off your college to-do list now.

Since we're also in prime scholarship season, we suggest that searching and applying for scholarships be the first thing you do to get ready for college. That way you can rest easy knowing that your degree won't come with a shockingly high student loan bill. And because your teachers, advisers, and mentors will likely get many requests for letters of recommendation, now's the time to approach them if you want a high-quality, timely response. Follow these tips to successfully solicit recommendations.

1. Avoid relatives: If you're all set to ask your favorite auntie to transfer her bragging into a written letter of recommendation, we implore you—don't! Though she may be your

biggest fan, you need someone who will be taken seriously, and scholarship evaluators will likely skip over letters from parents or relatives. Instead, plan on asking a trusted teacher or mentor.

2. Think about the subject matter: Though getting a recommendation from a teacher is always better than asking your best friend to write one for you, we suggest you don't just turn to your favorite teacher for a generic letter.

Is the scholarship given by your church or place of worship? Think about asking your youth director to write one for you. If the scholarship rewards applicants for their **volunteer work**, turn to a mentor or adviser at one of the organizations where you volunteer. The same goes for a scholarship geared specifically toward a certain subject matter or major: Ask a teacher whose expertise lies in the same field.

Picking a person who can speak to your abilities for the specific scholarship for which

you're applying will result in a higher quality, more meaningful letter of recommendation.

3. Don't wait until the last minute: Teachers are busy, especially in the spring! A lot of work has to get done before the end of the school year rolls around, and your scholarship letter of recommendation will not exactly be a teacher's highest priority, especially if there are a hundred other students asking for one, too.

Ask as early as possible. By giving your teacher or adviser plenty of time to write, you'll be more likely to get a letter that is well thought out, organized, and professional—not to mention handed in on time.

Because your teachers, advisers, and mentors will likely get many requests for letters of recommendation, now's the time to approach them if you want a high-quality, timely response.

4. Ask nicely: This goes hand-in-hand with not waiting until the last minute. If you're rude, ungrateful or if you ask for a letter the day before it's due, the person you ask is going to be a lot less willing to do you this favor, let alone write nice things about you. If you don't mind your Ps and Qs, you could be flat out rejected or end up with a lousy letter, both things best to avoid.

5. Share the nitty gritty details: Once you find the perfect person to ask, make sure you provide all of the important details—and we do mean all of them. That includes: your

full name (don't assume that your favorite teacher knows your last name, as many have hundreds of students they teach daily); your complete contact information; past classes in which you were enrolled, and/or a brief reminder of the history of your relationship; the focus of the scholarship and what you'd like them to focus on in their letter; and instructions for what needs to be done with the letter, such as whether they should send it back to you, or mail it directly to the scholarship committee.

6. Say thank you: In fact, we recommend **thanking your recommender** formally, preferably with a handwritten note. You'll likely apply to multiple scholarships over the next couple months, and there's a strong possibility that you'll have to ask this person for another letter of recommendation—if not for a scholarship, than possibly for college applications. It's always best to stay on his or her good side!

4 Ways to Make Your Scholarship Essay Stand Out

(Originally Published 1/31/13)

By Matt Konrad



It's not easy to separate your scholarship application from the crowd. After all, even if you fit the criteria to a "T," you're still likely to be one of a number of applicants with similar grades, goals, activities, and aspirations.

That's where a great application essay comes in. The essay is your best chance to make the case for why you should receive the scholarship; it helps the scholarship provider learn about **the person behind the application**, and gives them a much more detailed look at your school and home life.

If you use them right, those few paragraphs can help your application stand out—and could mean the difference between getting a "thanks for applying" E-mail and an award check.

Of course, putting so much emphasis on an essay may make it seem like a daunting task, especially if you don't consider yourself a great writer.

By following these four tips, just about anyone can create a standout essay.

1. Know your audience: Although we're looking at scholarship essays as a whole, it's important to realize that every scholarship provider is looking for a specific student who meets unique criteria. When you get your application, look closely at the questions, the organization giving the scholarship, and any past recipients you can find.

Are they emphasizing classroom performance? Looking for someone who's dealt with adversity at home? Interested in character or community service more than grades? Whatever the answer, your research will put you a step ahead of applicants who are copying and pasting "one-size-fits-all" essays.

2. Plan far in advance: You can also avoid the "one-size-fits-all" essay by getting an early start on each application. Begin your research and planning a week or so before you think you should, and you'll be able to take enough time to turn out something great.

This will also give you time to craft an outline, which can help your essay stay concise and on target. Think of two or three main points you want to make in response to the essay question, add some supporting information under each of them, and consider a sentence or two of introduction and conclusion. Before you know it, you'll have built the structure and thesis of your essay, and you won't have to rush to write it.

3. Make it personal and passionate: When you do start writing, don't forget that the main purpose of your essay is to convince the scholarship provider that you're the student they've been looking for. Answer the questions you've set out in your outline, but make sure every point you make is illustrated with a specific detail that shows you care about the subject.

Don't just mention that you **work with disadvantaged kids**; tell them how your love of soccer got you into coaching those kids. Don't just tell them about your acting awards; show how the stage helped you conquer your shyness. Putting your unique

interests and perspectives on the page will go a very long way toward creating a memorable essay.

4. Find an editor: Last but not least, make sure you have time to run your essay by a good editor, whether it's a parent, teacher, or grammar-nerd friend. Even a well-researched and passionately written essay can be derailed by spelling mistakes or awkward sentences, and if you've spent a lot of time looking at your words, it's easy to miss basic mistakes.

A few minutes of proofreading by a trusted editor can make a huge difference. I also recommend reading your essay aloud to yourself, so you can hear how it flows.

Scholarship essays are **a big component of your applications**, and can be a major headache, too. But by starting early, answering the right questions, and describing what makes you unique, you'll be writing standout essays without the stress.

Say Thanks for Scholarships in Style

(Originally Published 5/2/2013)

By Matt Konrad

Summer's almost here and the rush of admissions and scholarship applications has died down. Soon, you'll hopefully be accepting scholarship awards left and right. But even then, there's still one vital step in the process: the thank-you letter.

Taking the time to send a written note of thanks to the sponsor of your scholarship lets them know exactly how much you appreciate their gift to you, and their ongoing generous support of students. And the task of writing thank-you letters is actually a quick, simple process with some hidden benefits. Here's how to make it easy.

1. Put away the computer and grab a pen: The best thank-you letters are those that are handwritten. With most applications being submitted via email or an online form, a handwritten note on resume-quality paper is a great way for sponsors to feel a little more personally connected to you.

You're the student they've chosen to support – no matter what words you use to say thanks, they'll be impressed by the fact that

you've taken the time to write a note by hand. (If your handwriting is truly, illegibly terrible, you can make an exception and type your letter, but make sure you sign and address it by hand.)

2. Take a practice run: There's nothing more frustrating than composing a perfectly constructed, beautifully worded letter on your nicest stationery – and then running out of room before you're done.

Whether you're using "thank you" note cards or full sheets of paper, we recommend writing your first draft on scratch paper in the appropriate size. That way, you'll ensure that you have enough space, and you can cross out and reword and modify until you're totally happy with the result.

3. Don't skimp on the details: As for what your letter should actually say: keep it simple, detailed and all about you. As we said before, you are the student that the sponsor has chosen to support, and you're who they want to know about.

Start with a basic sentence of thanks for their scholarship (and double-check that you get the name of the scholarship right); then go on to tell them exactly how the money will benefit you.

Something like this is perfect: "Your \$2,500 award will cover my fall semester's tuition at Great State University, giving me time to row on the crew team while pursuing my pre-law coursework."

You're the student they've chosen to support – no matter what words you use to say thanks, they'll be impressed by the fact that you've taken the time to write a note by hand.

4. Get it in the right hands: When it comes to addressing your letter, we recommend you go right to the top. If your scholarship was sponsored by a local or national company, find the name of the president or CEO and the address of the corporate headquarters. If it was provided by a community or scholarship foundation, do the same for the executive director. Either way, address your salutation to "Dear Mr. or Ms. Last Name." Sometimes, you won't be able to find a specific name; in that case, address your thank-you to the scholarship selection committee instead.

After all, you've probably heard your parents complain about mail being nothing but bills, advertising and junk. It's no different in most offices – and that means that your handwritten letter will be a refreshing break from the routine.

5. Be willing to share: At my organization, Scholarship America, we love to share thank-you letters and success stories from our recipients, but once they head off to college they can be tough to track down. If you're okay with your scholarship sponsor sharing your story, include a sentence or two in your thank-you letter that gives them permission to do so.

By telling the story of a real student like you, companies can illustrate the impact of their gift, which will help them raise more money and help more students in the future.

If you want to help even further, you can follow up (but not replace) your letter by thanking the sponsor on Twitter and Facebook, too. Those informal, public thanks can be shared by the sponsor to encourage more students to apply. And, if you're wondering what's in it for you: they'll also be a nice addition to the search results when future sponsors or admissions officers Google your name!

6 New Scholarships to Help Pay for College

(Originally Published 2/21/13)

By Matt Konrad



There are plenty of scholarships out there with long, storied histories: the [Rhodes Scholarship](#), the Truman and Fulbright programs, the National Merit awards, and many others. But these [venerable scholarship programs](#) are just a fraction of those available.

There are brand new, often lucrative awards funded every year. You may not yet have encountered these six recently created—or soon-to-be-established—scholarships, but you can stay ahead of the curve by keeping an eye out for them in the coming months.

One nationwide scholarship program kicks off this week as part of National FFA Week. The National FFA Organization, formerly Future Farmers of America, and Tractor Supply Company have started fundraising for the National FFA Foundation [Growing Scholars Program](#). Customers at the retailer's 1,150 stores can contribute to the new scholarship throughout February.

FFA members who are college-bound high school seniors or college students will be eligible for awards. If you're affiliated with

your local FFA, make sure you keep an eye on the program for more information in coming months.

Another new scholarship comes from software giant Adobe. Since 2006, the company behind Photoshop and Flash has operated the [Adobe Youth Voices initiative](#), which provides digital creative tools to students exploring video, Web development, animation, and design in underserved communities. According to Adobe, \$1 million will be awarded to high school seniors who participate in the Adobe Youth Voices program and who intend to pursue education leading to a career in a creative field through the [Adobe Creativity Scholarship](#). The first applications will be accepted later this spring.

While these new scholarships haven't yet started to accept applications, there are a few you can apply to now. If you've got a great story about stretching your college dollars, check out [The Craziest Thing I Did to Save Money](#) scholarship contest from DoSomething.org and H&R Block. Applying for the award is simple: just connect to

DoSomething on Facebook and [upload a story and photo](#) detailing the craziest thing you've done to save money. One winner will cash in to the tune of \$4,000.

In California, the [PG&E Bright Minds Scholarship Program](#) made a huge impact on students when it debuted last year: 90 finalists received \$2,500 scholarships, and the top 10 recipients each earned awards of up to \$30,000 per year. The program is now accepting its second round of applications; if you're a high school senior or collegiate undergrad living in a county served by PG&E, it's well worth your time to apply by February 28.

On the opposite coast, high school students in Connecticut can apply now for one of the nation's newest scholarships. The state's recently retired senator established the [Joe Lieberman Connecticut Scholarship](#), which will be awarded to up to five high school seniors who demonstrate leadership potential and community service.

Winners will earn \$1,500, and the award is renewable for up to three years as long

as the student maintains a 3.0 GPA at an accredited institution. Don't delay—applications for this new award will be accepted through April 1, but only the first 500 applications will be processed.

Lieberman isn't the only government figure connected to a new scholarship. The [GE-Reagan Foundation Scholarship](#), an award honoring the late President Reagan, recently ended its 2013 application period. Aspiring GE-Reagan scholars must be high school seniors who "demonstrate the attributes of leadership, drive, integrity, and citizenship" in addition to financial need and academic achievement. Current juniors shouldn't miss applying for next year's program; GE-Reagan Scholars earn \$10,000 initial awards, which are renewable for up to three more years for a total of \$40,000.

Explore Scholarships to Make Public Universities Affordable

(Originally Published 8/1/13)

By Matt Konrad

Choosing between a public and private school is one of the most significant and personal decisions facing prospective college students.

Do you want your college experience to center on a big, vibrant public campus, with a giant football stadium and wide selection of majors? Or do you like the appeal of a small, pleasant private institution, with more personal classes and a tight-knit community?

Whichever option fits your dreams, you'll also have to think about the reality of paying for college. And just as there are stereotypes of the public and private college experiences, there are also stereotypes about the costs.

Many assume that public schools are cheap and private schools are expensive. On the surface, these stereotypes ring true.

According to the College Board, the average **cost of attendance** for a private four-year college including tuition, fees, books and room and board is just under

\$40,000 per year. This compares with an average cost of around \$18,000 for in-state students attending a public university.

But that's not the whole story. There are a few factors that can make a big difference in cost, including residency, financial aid, a school's endowment and scholarship options.

The Western Undergraduate Exchange allows students from 15 states to attend colleges throughout the exchange for reduced tuition.

While public colleges and universities do feature a lower sticker price and cost of attendance than private schools, there's a hidden facet to the savings: residency requirements. That \$18,000 cost for state residents jumps to an average of \$31,000 for students who live outside the state, putting total costs closer to a private school bill.

If your dream college is an out-of-state public school, there are ways to deal with the difference. I grew up in South Dakota and attended the University of Minnesota. I was able to pay in-state tuition rates thanks to a reciprocity agreement between the two states, in which South Dakota and Minnesota residents could attend colleges in either state for the lower in-state price.

Many states have similar compacts with their neighbors, and they can take a big chunk out of your tuition. The **Western Undergraduate Exchange** allows students from 15 states to attend colleges throughout the exchange for reduced tuition.

There are also a few scholarships out there designed just for students at public colleges. These are also frequently state-based.

In Texas, the College For All Texans initiative features a **Top 10 Percent Scholarship Program**. Through this program, any incoming or continuing college students who graduate in the top 10 percent of their high school class and who attend a public college or university in Texas are eligible to receive \$2,000 per year.

That amount doubles if you're an upperclassman studying in a "shortage field," which includes teaching, nursing or a **STEM** major.

In North Carolina, the **People Helping People** scholarship, funded by the State Employees' Credit Union, offers generous awards to one graduating senior from each of the state's public and charter high schools. Established in 2004, this renewable scholarship awards \$1,250 per semester for up to eight semesters – a total of \$10,000 over four years.

The scholarship is open to applicants who plan to attend a public university in North Carolina, and you can see a few **recent winners** online. Plan to contact your high school counselor in January if you're interested in applying.

If you are among the approximately 8,300 students to be named a National Merit scholar, you should also take a look at public institutions. Many Ivy League and elite private schools do not offer National Merit awards with university money, but quite a few public schools still do.

Finally, students should check out the **higher education offices** in their state and those where they are considering attending college.

A public university education can be a great experience, especially if you take steps to make sure it's also a great value.

Find Scholarships to Finance a Private College Education

(Originally Published 8/8/13)

By Matt Konrad

Last week, **The Scholarship Coach** looked at scholarships and strategies for making **public university education** as affordable as possible. Next, we're looking at the other side of the public vs. private decision.

If you're dreaming of a private college education, there are ways you can pay for your degree without a massive student loan bill after graduation.

The conventional wisdom about private colleges is that they're small, selective and expensive. In terms of sticker price, there's a lot of truth to the cliché about cost.

The College Board's most recent figures indicate that the **average published price** of a private four-year college is nearly \$40,000 per year for undergraduates. This is an \$8,000 increase over a decade ago and around \$15,000 more than in the 1992-1993 school year.

While the total cost of attending a private school may have skyrocketed, that same

chart also indicates something more surprising. The net price – how much a student pays after receiving financial aid from the college – is growing at a much slower pace.

Although the published sticker price of a private college's tuition and fees averages \$29,000, the average tuition that students and their families have to pay is actually closer to \$13,000.

Private schools are making a concerted effort to **expand their financial aid packages** and provide students as much help as possible in the form of grants, work-study funds and merit- and need-based scholarships. In fact, last year the nation's private colleges offered incoming freshmen their biggest-ever average discount of 45 percent off list prices, the Wall Street Journal reports.

Despite their higher prices, private colleges tend to offer more generous financial aid packages than public schools.

While public college finances are often subject to the whims of state budgets and government spending, private school financial aid is usually more stable and based on sizable long-term endowments. According to the Wall Street Journal, this means that even though less than 13 percent of U.S. undergraduates attend private colleges, those schools provide around 70 percent of total undergraduate grant dollars.

If you're heading to a private college, institutional aid can make a huge difference. Make sure you fill out your FAFSA thoroughly, accurately and quickly, and get in touch with financial aid advisors at your preferred school early in the process to find out exactly what you can expect based on your family's financial situation. If you're going into your junior year of high school this fall, it's not too early to start your research.

Even with grants and institutional scholarships at an all-time high, your private college education can still be a sizable investment. There are some private-school-specific scholarships you can turn to as well to help make up some of the difference.

Many private college scholarships are easiest to find at the state level. The Minnesota Private College Council, for example, is a coalition of 17 private liberal arts colleges.

In addition to their research and advocacy, the council and its **donors fund a number of scholarships**. Many of these scholarships are awarded directly by a school's financial aid office based on a student's need or merit criteria. Others, like the **Jay and Rose Phillips Family Foundation Scholarship**, require a separate and more specific application.

Other states and cities offer similar assistance. New York's Commission on Independent Colleges and Universities has an array of **scholarship options** for residents and students.

The Say Yes Syracuse program offers additional aid to students from low-income families who attend the organization's private college **partner institutions**.

Resources and scholarships are also available through the Private Illinois Colleges and Universities coalition, which provides a pair of annual **scholarships for community-college transfer students** coming to a member school. In Iowa, sophomores and juniors at private colleges can apply for average awards of \$7,600 through the **Carver Scholars** program.

Choosing between a public and private college is a big and highly personal decision and finances can and should be a part of it. But no matter which style of school feels right for you, it's a great investment in your future, and there's plenty of financial aid out there to help make it affordable.

These Distance-Learning Scholarships Bring Your Online Degree Closer

(Originally Published 1/17/13)

By Matt Konrad



Every year, an increasing number of students pursue some or all of their college education online.

Whether it's at online-only schools or through distance-learning programs from traditional colleges, these Web-based programs offer a wide array of options and a ton of flexibility—especially for part-time, returning, and nontraditional students.

If they're from properly accredited institutions, online credits can help you earn your general requirements faster, and if you're looking for a mid-career change, you can pursue a new degree during one or two nights a week. Fortunately, the increasing presence of online degrees also means an increase in scholarships geared specifically toward online students.

First and foremost, many general scholarships and federal financial aid programs can be applied to tuition at accredited online institutions. Check out the resources at studentaid.gov to find out more, and be sure to talk with your college's

financial aid office about available options. We'd also recommend finding a few alumni to talk to; it takes a little more work for online campuses, but it's worth it.

Once you've decided to pursue distance learning, and you've checked out your grant, loan, and general scholarship options, it's time to delve into specifics. The [GetEducated.com Distance Learning Scholarship](#) is an excellent place to start. Offered twice a year, with application deadlines on March 15 and October 15, this \$1,000 scholarship is open to students anywhere in the United States who have a 3.0 GPA or better in an accredited online degree program.

To apply, you'll need to write a 500-word essay on what your degree will mean to you. And while you're on the site, check out GetEducated.com's other resources, which include guides to various degree programs and lists of known scams.

The SR Education Group's [Guide to Online Schools](#) is another excellent resource for

researching distance learning programs. And, just like GetEducated.com, they also sponsor their own set of scholarships. Currently, there are four \$2,000 scholarships available: the Military Scholarship, Women's Scholarship, Community College Scholarship, and Single-Parent Scholarship are awarded every two months with rolling deadlines, so check the site out to find out when you need to apply.

If you're pursuing online classes at a traditional university, you're likely to qualify for many of the scholarships in your college's and department's general funds. In addition, some schools also offer online-specific awards. [Pennsylvania State University—World Campus](#) is one of the widest-ranging programs in terms of financial aid, offering more than a [dozen scholarships](#) that are funded by the school's endowment and open especially to distance-learning students.

Similar ranges of scholarships can also be found via colleges that are mostly or entirely online. The nonprofit [Western Governors University](#), for example, funds 10 separate [scholarships for incoming students](#),

which range from \$1,000 to \$2,500; enrolled students are also able to access a number of other programs.

National University, a nonprofit institution with several campus sites and a host of online degrees, provides [scholarships for new, continuing, and transfer students](#). And the for-profit [Walden University](#), an online college focused on social change, offers [undergrad and graduate scholarships](#) to students all the way up to the doctoral level.

These are a few highlights from the growing world of online education. If you've decided distance learning is the right fit for you, they're excellent places to start your search for colleges, degree programs, and scholarships.



Investigate Scholarships for Journalism Students

(Originally Published 10/17/13)

By Carissa Chang

A job in journalism may be a great option for those of you who dream of breaking news, writing thoughtful magazine articles or traveling the world as a reporter. The landscape of media outlets, organizations and associations has never been more diverse, and there are a number of ways to turn your journalism interests into a career after college.

It's no secret that [newsrooms across the country are cutting back](#), especially as more print and broadcast journalism transitions to online outlets.

However, a natural curiosity for public affairs and a confidence in communication can apply to many different types of professions, from advertising to reporting to public relations – and digital journalism has opened up specialized publishing options never before possible.

As you discover the issues you're most passionate about, consider how these passions align with potential areas of specialization within journalism.

For example, if you're invested in the intersection of journalism and technology, the [AP-Google Scholarship](#) may be the perfect fit for you. The program gives six \$20,000 scholarship awards for innovative projects that further the ideals of digital journalism.

Die-hard sports fans should take a look at the [Associated Press Sports Editors](#), which offers four \$1,500 scholarships for sports journalism students.

There are a number of organizations that offer scholarship, internship and grant programs to minority students. For example, the [NABJ Scholarship](#) from the National Association of Black Journalists offers a \$2,500 scholarship award to students interested in pursuing a career in journalism. Applicants must be a NABJ member to apply.

Essay questions are a good way to put your writing abilities to use. The [Society of Professional Journalists](#) offers a high school essay contest to answer the

question, "Why is it important that we have news media that are independent of the government?" First-, second- and third-place winners receive \$1,000, \$500 and \$300, respectively.

And if you're a punctuation maven, your editorial skills can pay off with scholarships like the \$2,500 [Aubespain Award](#) from the American Copy Editors Society Education Fund. Four \$1,000 awards are also given out, along with a travel stipend to attend the group's annual conference.

Journalism scholarships aren't just for writers. If you've always been comfortable in front of a camera and can't wait for your time to shine on TV or radio, the [Broadcast Education Association](#) administers seven scholarship awards ranging from \$1,500 to \$5,000 for broadcast journalism students.

A natural curiosity for public affairs and a confidence in communication can apply to many different types of professions, from advertising to reporting to public relations.

If you'd rather be behind the camera, the National Press Photographers Foundation offers undergraduate and graduate scholarship [awards to photojournalism students](#).

Scholarships can be paramount in covering the cost of tuition while in school, and hands-on opportunities like grants and internships can be just as valuable when

you're not in classes. For anyone interested in journalism, it's important to chase these firsthand experiences that many future employers will look for.

For example, the [Chips Quinn Scholars Program for Diversity in Journalism](#) provides paid internships nationwide, as well as a one-week college course for credit. Participating in an internship or training experience with news veterans can give your journalism connections and expertise a boost.

Don't forget that journalism or communication departments at colleges and universities offer institution-specific awards and internship programs, too. Take advantage of the unique partnerships that exist at schools, such as the [University of Missouri School of Journalism's New York Program](#).

Finally, remember that awards can be for various grade levels, whether you're a high school student applying to college or a student returning to school to hone your journalism know-how. And finding and applying for scholarship programs will make good use of your reporting skills!



Build Your Architecture Career With College Scholarships

(Originally Published 8/29/13)

By Matt Konrad

As a college-bound student, you've taken a lot of tests. Many of you have probably heard, as a result of your strengths, that you're either "left-brained" or "right-brained."

The former description generally covers those who excel at math, logic and reasoning. The latter is usually the province of creative and artistic minds.

These kinds of assessments have likely helped you narrow down a college major and a career path. But if you don't have an obvious preference for either side – if you like thinking about math and music, or science and sculpture – it can be a little tougher to figure out what you want to study during your college years.

Fortunately, architecture is one popular career field that can combine creativity with practicality. A good architect needs to be able to devise new ideas and envision new forms that are – sometimes literally – outside of the box. The same architect also has to have the exacting technical skills and spatial

logic to turn those ideas into long-lasting buildings.

Architecture is an ideal field for using both sides of your brain, and it also requires a pretty set path of college studies, interning and finally **becoming licensed** before you're officially an architect. It may seem like a lot of education, but there are many scholarships that can help pay for it pretty much every step of the way.

The Scholarship Coach has mentioned professional associations before as an excellent source of scholarship dollars, and the world of architecture is no exception. The American Institute of Architects provides a number of **award and scholarship programs**, including the AIA/AAF Minority and Disadvantaged Scholarship.

This scholarship is given to minority or financially disadvantaged high school graduates, community college **transfer students** and college freshmen. AIA also awards the a/e ProNet David W. Lakamp AIA Scholarship, for

seniors and grad students focusing on practice management.

Applications for the Lakamp Scholarship are open through November and applications for the minority and disadvantaged students scholarship open in December for the 2014 school year.

AIA also provides dozens of local and regional scholarships for architecture students through their **Component Scholarships**. With AIA component chapters everywhere from Alaska to Atlanta, there are plenty of opportunities for architecture scholarships near you.

The **American Institute of Architecture Students** is another organization that can help you throughout your architectural education. Membership allows you to access AIAS resources, network with your peers and mentors and apply for the **ATrust Scholarship**.

This scholarship provides a \$1,000 award to five student members each year. Students must be in the last year of their bachelor's study or the first year of a master's study to apply. In addition, searching for scholarships on the AIAS website will lead to overviews of financial aid and other details at a number of the country's prominent architecture schools.

While AIA and AIAS provide general scholarships, there are also plenty of options out there for specialized programs and specific backgrounds. The American Association of University Women offers **fellowships for women** in specific fields of study, including architecture. Those awards range from \$5,000 to \$18,000 and are open for application through January 10.

If you're a junior or senior enrolled in an architecture or structural engineering program at one of 40 participating colleges, consider applying for the **Simpson Strong-Tie Scholarship Program**. Applications open Sept. 1 for 57 \$1,000 scholarships for upperclassmen each year. A list of eligible schools can be found on the application website.

You can also find awards based on your chosen specialization. The American Society of Landscape Architects can help you out with a host of **scholarships and fellowships** around the country.

The **American Concrete Institute** is giving out nine \$7,000-\$10,000 fellowships and scholarships for 2014-2015. Applications are due by Oct. 15 and require a nomination from a faculty member.

If you want to tinker in a few different areas, the Association of Collegiate Schools of Architecture hosts rotating **student design competitions** in areas ranging from "Timber in the City" to "Preservation as Provocation."

Much like the decision to pursue architecture in the first place, these scholarship competitions will provide a challenge to both sides of your brain.

STEM Scholarships Abound for Aspiring Scientists

(Originally Published 6/20/13)

By Michelle Showalter



You've probably heard the acronym STEM – science, technology, engineering and math – over and over again during the last decade. This blog has covered the topic on a handful of occasions, as careers in the STEM fields are hotter than ever right now.

Selecting a major in one of the STEM fields often leads to a lucrative job straight out of college. And even though you may be looking forward to big money after college graduation, chances are you could also use some extra cash for tuition in the fall. If you have a love for science, technology, engineering or math, and you're thinking of majoring in a related field, you have access to fantastic scholarship opportunities.

Most [scholarship deadlines](#) have passed for the 2013-14 academic year, but there's still time to meet the July 31 deadline for the [Thermo Scientific Pierce Scholarship Program](#). If you've got your heart set on becoming a scientist, you don't want to miss out on this \$10,000 scholarship.

Thermo Fisher Scientific is offering two \$10,000 scholarships and four \$5,000 scholarships for the 2013-14 school year to help provide educational support for the future generation of scientists. Eligibility requirements are available on the organization's website.

This next scholarship is for women with an interest in mobile computing or STEM fields. The [BlackBerry Scholars Program](#) is a global, full-tuition, four-year scholarship program designed to increase the number of women studying and influencing the future of mobile computing, including science, technology, engineering and math.

Women entering their first year of study in the 2013-14 academic year should apply by the June 26 deadline. Up to 10 awards will be granted, and you can view the [eligibility criteria](#) online.

[Great Lakes Higher Education Corporation](#), one of the largest student loan providers and guarantors in the U.S., offers U.S. residents up to 750 undergraduate and

graduate STEM [scholarships](#). Receiving one of these \$2,500 awards could put a nice dent in your tuition costs.

Other eligibility requirements include: having a minimum GPA of 2.75; demonstrating financial need; and being enrolled full-time with a declared major in a STEM field of study at a public or private two-year college, four-year college, university or vocational-technical school.

Are you a resident of Orange County, Calif. or Salt Lake City County, Utah and considering a major in one of the STEM fields? If so, we have the perfect scholarship for you.

The [Edwards Lifesciences Scholarship Program](#) offers \$2,500 renewable undergraduate scholarships for full-time STEM study at an accredited two- or four-year college or university of your choice. If you're one of the 10 winners, you can use your scholarship for tuition, fees, books and supplies.

Awards may be renewed for up to three additional years or until completion of your bachelor's degree. All you have to do is maintain a 3.0 GPA and continue to major in a STEM field of study.

Finally, if you're entering your junior or senior year of college and are studying an industrial automation-related discipline – such as robots designed to complete manufacturing tasks – you may be eligible to apply for one of two \$5,000 [ASCO Numatics Scholarships](#). Designed for U.S. upperclassmen or graduate students, the merit-based scholarships are awarded based on potential to lead and make a significant contribution to the engineering, instrumentation, systems and automation professions.

Additionally, ASCO Numatics awards \$1,000 grants to the engineering departments of the colleges where winners are enrolled. And by receiving one of these scholarships, you may become eligible for an ASCO Numatics internship.



Scholarships to Give Your Medical Education a Shot in the Arm

(Originally Published 3/14/13)

By Matt Konrad

Sometimes earning an undergraduate degree is only the beginning of a student's educational goal.

Thousands of new college students start school every year with the ultimate hope of an advanced degree—and few of those degrees have the mystique of an M.D.

Unfortunately, there are also few educational paths that have a price tag and time commitment quite as large as medical school. While new doctors will graduate into a profession with plenty of earning potential, they also tend to leave their seven to eight years of school with far higher debt than most graduates. Seventy-nine percent of med students graduated in 2012 with education debt of \$100,000 or more, according to the [Association of American Medical Colleges](#).

To help offset some of your potential debt, you can turn to scholarships every step of the way, from undergrad to resident. It will come as no surprise that since medical schools themselves are highly competitive, so are their scholarship competitions. Learn

the criteria and start your applications early so that when you can finally call yourself “doc,” you can enjoy the fruits of your labor instead of shelling out money to loan companies.

If you're heading into your junior or senior year of college next year and you're planning on a career in health or medicine, you can apply for the [Gallagher Koster Health Careers Scholarship](#), which will award five \$5,000 scholarships to students who apply by May 3. Students in a wide variety of healthcare-related majors—from biology to nursing to child development, and more—are invited to apply, as long as they anticipate graduating between spring of 2014 and spring of 2015.

The [Palo Alto Foundation Medical Group](#) is one of a number of more locally focused organizations that give out pre-med scholarships, and its awards are among the largest. The scholarship pays out \$20,000 over five years to its recipients, who must be high school seniors from one of the four California counties served by the foundation.

It's an amazing opportunity if you live in the area; if not, you should spend a day or two talking to your own local and regional clinics and health foundations to find out about similar programs.

For students who have completed their undergrad education and are entering medical school, the [National Health Service Corps Scholarship](#) is a potentially attractive option. Much like teachers, future doctors can have their tuition, fees, and a living stipend paid by the federal government.

In return, students pledge to practice after graduation in a “high-need,” often low-income community. If you participate in the program, you promise to work for one year in a “Health Professional Shortage Area” for each year of assistance you receive. If you're concerned about graduating with debt, it's an excellent option; the 2013 application cycle will open later this month.

The Palo Alto Foundation Medical Group is one of a number of more locally focused organizations that give out pre-med scholarships, and its awards are among the largest.

If you don't go the federal route when you enroll in medical school, you should check out the scholarships provided by the [American Medical Association](#), which include the \$10,000 [Minority Scholars](#) and [Physicians of Tomorrow](#) awards. Note that you'll need to be nominated by your school for these

programs; make sure and consult your adviser so you don't miss out!

While you're there, find out about your school's need-based awards (which most med schools offer), and see if yours is one of the smaller number of institutions (like Washington University in St. Louis and Vanderbilt University) that offer merit aid to med students.

Finally, there are a couple of programs that can help you out as you get closer to residency and practice. The Association of American Medical Colleges' [Nickens Student Scholarship](#) provides \$5,000 to outstanding third-year students who have shown leadership in addressing healthcare inequities. And, if you're looking to get your foot in the door at America's most famous health-care provider, the [Mayo School of Graduate Education](#) offers \$2,500 diversity scholarships and \$1,000 departmental scholarships for clerkships at Mayo Clinic hospitals.

Scholarships Served Up for Nutrition Students

(Originally Published 4/11/13)

By Michelle Showalter



There are few things more important to your health and well-being than knowing what kinds of food you should – and shouldn't – put into your body.

With 60 million Americans over the age of 20 that are obese, and 9 million children and teens overweight, the subject of proper nutrition is a hot topic right now – so much so that even the first lady is getting involved in a big way. Michelle Obama has initiated a campaign to eliminate childhood obesity and speaks regularly about the importance of childhood nutrition, advocating for healthier school lunch options, a new food pyramid and access to affordable healthy food.

With so much attention being paid to a proper diet, you can bet there will be plenty of jobs available for those who are looking at a career in nutrition and dietetics. If you're passionate about healthy eating, these [scholarships](#) for nutrition majors may be right up your alley.

If you're enrolled in a nutrition or dietetics program, you should seriously consider

joining [The Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics](#). For only \$50, you can become a student member and take advantage of the many benefits the Academy offers, including the opportunity to apply for scholarships.

With America's population aging, there will soon be an increase in demand for nutritionists at nursing homes and home care agencies.

In fact, the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics Foundation is the largest provider of dietetic scholarships to students at all levels, awarding scholarships ranging from \$500 to \$10,000 every year. To learn more about the application process, visit the [academy's website](#). In addition to scholarships, there's also the opportunity to apply for one of their [continuing education, recognition or program development awards](#).

Scholarships are also available through many of the organization's individual affiliate dietetic associations and practice groups. Just be aware that some require specific group membership or residency in a specific state.

Another great scholarship opportunity for those interested in studying nutrition comes from [CANFIT](#), an organization committed to working with communities and policymakers to ensure kids in low-income communities and communities of color are in healthy eating and physically active environments. Students living in California and of African-American, American Indian or Alaska Native, Asian American, Pacific Islander or Latino/Hispanic descent are encouraged to apply for CANFIT's graduate and undergraduate [scholarship opportunities](#).

Finally, if you're enrolled at an institution with an accredited dietetic or nutrition program, make sure you check with your financial aid office to learn what other scholarship opportunities are available to you through your school.

Many institutions will offer scholarships just for those enrolled in the program – which hopefully means less competition! Michigan State University, Simmons College, Georgia State University and the University of Utah, among others, all offer nutrition scholarships and internship opportunities.

Whether you're looking forward to planning food and nutrition programs, or you're anxious to advise people on healthier eating habits and diet modifications, you couldn't have picked a better time to become a nutritionist. With America's population aging, there will soon be an increase in [demand for nutritionists](#) at nursing homes and home care agencies.

Many people will turn to nutritionists to help combat America's growing obesity problem. Whatever career path you choose, there are bound to be scholarship opportunities out there to help you fulfill your dream of helping others make healthy food choices.

Pursue Wildlife Studies With Zoology Scholarships

(Originally Published 10/3/13)

By Angela Frisk



If you are pursuing a degree in zoology, you're probably driven by a genuine passion for science and a love of animals. Preparing for a career as a zoologist can take years of school – and most biological scientists don't get into their field for the money.

If you're headed for a career in the life sciences and looking for a way to lower your education costs, you should apply for these scholarships.

As is true with any academic majors or programs of study, students should always research the scholarship and research programs available directly from their school. Many colleges and universities offer dedicated scholarships for graduate and undergraduate zoology and biology majors.

Weber State University in Utah offers three different memorial [scholarships for zoology and biology majors](#). These scholarships were established as a way to memorialize professors at the university who were passionate about the life sciences and to recognize the importance of financial support

in encouraging young people to pursue their studies.

Elsewhere, the University of Oklahoma offers the [M. Blanche Adams and M. Frances Adams Scholarships](#) to undergraduate and graduate students studying biology or zoology. Multiple awards ranging from \$600 to \$2,500 are granted for tuition and research.

The [Udall Scholarship](#) is available for students pursuing careers related to environmental preservation. This includes two categories of awards reserved for Native American and Alaska Native students.

The [Barry Goldwater Scholarship and Excellence in Education Program](#) is open to scientists, including zoologists, who are in their sophomore or junior year of college and helps pay for tuition and fees.

Research is often an integral part of a zoology degree program. In addition to the college scholarships above, the research grants are also available to help fund zoological research projects.

The American Museum of Natural History offers Theodore Roosevelt Memorial Grants to support research on North American fauna, wildlife conservation and natural history. The museum also offers the Lerner Gray Fund for Marine Research. More information can be found on their [graduate school website](#).

The Smithsonian Institution [offers stipends to support students](#) participating in its fellowship programs.

These programs are available at major research hubs, including the National Zoological Park, where there is a collection of more than 380 species; the Smithsonian Environmental Research Center, which is the world's leading research center on environmental studies of the coastal zone; and the Smithsonian Tropical Research Institute, where you can study alongside young scientists in diverse fields related to tropical biology.

Zoology majors who are focusing their studies on ornithology are in luck. There

are plenty of scholarships available to fund research in this highly appreciated field.

The Wilson Ornithological Society [offers several research grants to students](#) with a focus on ornithological research. One of them, the George A. Hall/Harold F. Mayfield Award, grants \$1,000 to an independent researcher and is even open to high school students. The American Museum of Natural History also awards [grants for ornithological research](#).

Last but not least, you can let your research take you abroad with scholarships to study internationally, like the International Ph.D. Fellowships at [Zoological Station Anton Dohrn of Naples](#), Italy or through the range of [zoology research scholarships](#) offered for study at the University of Tasmania in Australia.

If you do what you love, maybe money will follow – but it can sure be helpful to save that money from the beginning. There is plenty of funding out there for zoology students if you know where to look, so use this information as a jumping-off point to find funding for your tuition, fees and research expenses.

4 Places to Look for Aviation Scholarships

(Originally Published 12/13/12)

By Janine Fugate



December 17 marks the 109th anniversary of the Wright Brothers' first controlled, powered, and sustained heavier-than-air human flight. In honor of their soaring accomplishment, we've researched a number of scholarships for students whose heads are in the clouds.

The **Astronaut Scholarship Foundation** (ASF), created by the Mercury 7 astronauts, awards twenty-eight \$10,000 scholarships annually. Their mission is to promote the importance of science and technology to the general public, and they provide college scholarships for students pursuing science, technology, engineering, or math (STEM) degrees.

Scholarship candidates must be at least second year (sophomore) college students, have excellent grades, and have conducted a substantial amount of lab and research work in their field. In addition, they must be nominated by a faculty member at one of the 27 participating colleges and universities, so check the list and contact the ASF liaison at

your school if you are interested in applying for this prestigious award.

The Ninety-Nines (99s), Inc., the International Organization of Women Pilots, whose Amelia Earhart Memorial Scholarships & Awards provide fully paid flight training, jet type training, technical training, emergency maneuver training, and a \$5,000 renewable academic scholarship.

Women pursuing flight should look into the variety of scholarships available through **The Ninety-Nines (99s), Inc., the International Organization of Women Pilots**, whose Amelia Earhart Memorial Scholarships & Awards provide fully paid flight training, jet

type training, technical training, emergency maneuver training, and a \$5,000 renewable academic scholarship toward one year of a college degree in aviation or aerospace.

Eligible applicants are 99s members; a recommendation from your local chapter must accompany the application. The deadline is right around the corner—after December 20, applicants will need to wait another year.

The **Aircraft Electronics Association Educational Foundation** scholarship program provides scholarship assistance for students interested in careers in the aircraft electronics and aviation maintenance industry.

Awards range from \$1,000 to \$35,000 and include scholarships for specific schools (Tom Taylor Memorial Scholarships to Spartan College of Aeronautics & Technology in Tulsa, Okla.); studying in Canada (Field Aviation Co. Inc. Scholarship); type of program (Chuck Peacock Memorial Scholarship for students planning to study

aviation management); and birth continent (Monte R. Mitchell Global Scholarship for European students pursuing a degree in aviation maintenance technology). The application deadline for scholarships available through AEA is Feb. 15, 2013.

If you are a resident of New England, look no further for scholarship opportunities than the **Aero Club of New England**. ACONE provides numerous scholarship awards for pilot training and aircraft maintenance.

To be eligible for the Aircraft Maintenance Scholarship, students must use the scholarship funds within one year, demonstrate financial need, and be at least 16 years old. To be eligible for the Pilot Scholarship, students must also hold current Airman and Medical Certificates and have accumulated a total flight time of 100 hours. Applications must be submitted by March 30, 2013 for consideration.

3 Hot Scholarship Trends to Watch for in 2014

(Originally Published 11/7/13)

By Matt Konrad

When it comes to finding and winning scholarships, some things never change. Good grades, school and community involvement and leadership always pay off. Starting your searches and applications early is always the right idea. Applications that ask you for upfront fees are pretty much always suspect.

But that's not to say that the scholarship world never changes. Shifts in financial aid rules, government funding, workforce demands and even the popularity of certain college majors mean that no two scholarship years are quite the same.

As one of the nation's largest managers of scholarship programs, Scholarship America has a front-row seat to these changes and trends. Here are three we think will become even more prominent in 2014.

1. Scholarships for specific majors: At the current pace, the U.S. will have at least 3 million fewer college graduates than its [workforce needs by 2025](#), according

to Georgetown University's Center on Education and the Workforce.

In response, a higher percentage of the companies and foundations that sponsor college scholarships are focusing increasingly on individual, in-demand majors. More corporate scholarship programs are providing awards to outstanding students majoring in the company's field – helping the student succeed and the company find its next generation of leaders.

The [Buick Achievers Scholarship Program](#), for example, devotes its 1,100 scholarships solely to students in majors relevant to the auto industry.

As the American workforce becomes more technology-based, it's not surprising that science, technology, engineering and math majors, the so-called STEM fields, are the most noticeable examples of this trend.

Big-name, big-money awards like the [Intel Science Talent Search](#) and the [Google in Education](#) scholarships are just two

examples of the funding available for these subjects. It's a trend

2. Renewable and multiyear scholarships: Getting into college is important, and graduating with a mountain of student loan debt is bad. But the real worst-case scenario is getting into college, building up debt and then having to drop out before getting a degree to help you pay down that debt.

Financial issues are the most common [reason students have to drop out of college](#), according to a study conducted by the nonprofit Public Agenda. Family contributions, higher household income and scholarship aid all drastically reduce the dropout rate.

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To help counteract the dropout trend, scholarship providers are beginning to recognize the importance of awards that go beyond students' freshman years and provide them support throughout their college career. Scholarship America recently introduced the [Dream Award](#), a program open only to current college students who need funding for their second, third and fourth years of college.

In addition, if you're a college sophomore, you should make friends with your academic department's adviser. With many majors kicking into high gear for upperclassmen, having this person as a mentor is your best chance to find department-specific scholarships for your final two years of school.

3. Transfer and trade-school scholarships: Scholarship providers are also adapting to the increasingly popular money-saving strategy of students beginning their studies at a junior college and then transferring to a four-year college to reduce tuition costs and decrease overall debt upon graduation.

Two-year, community and junior colleges tend to be cheaper and have more flexible schedules than four-year universities, making them excellent choices for students who want to live at home, balance work and school or spend less on tuition. Earlier this year, The Scholarship Coach covered a variety of [scholarships for students ready to transfer](#) from two-year to four-year schools.

One of the biggest, the [Jack Kent Cooke Foundation Undergraduate Transfer Scholarship](#), closes this week, so if you're a great student at a community college, don't miss out.

Finally, if you're attending a two-year school for an associate degree or certification before embarking on a career, scholarships for you are increasingly prevalent and include fields such as [cooking](#), [cosmetology](#) and [automotive tech](#). Like the other workforce-driven scholarship trends, expect these to continue in 2014 and beyond.

5 Scholarships for In-Demand College Majors

(Originally Published 5/23/13)

By Michelle Showalter

Selecting a college major can be one of the easiest – or most difficult – decisions a person can make in their lifetime.

Some of you have known you've wanted to become a veterinarian since the day you brought home your fifth grade classroom's pet hamster. For others, choosing between economics or nursing will be a decision you grapple with even after you force yourself to decide at the end of your sophomore year of college.

If you're completely undecided and need a push in a certain direction, you may want to see if your interests align with one of these hot, high-paying majors, and then check out the corresponding scholarships.

Take note that those interested in a career in science, technology, engineering and math (STEM) will have a leg up on everyone else.

1. Engineering: By far the hottest major out there right now is engineering of practically any sort.

From petroleum to electrical to aerospace engineering, there is a huge demand for all kinds of engineers – and that's reflected in the average starting salary of \$51,700 to \$97,900, according to the online salary database PayScale.

Unfortunately, your first paycheck four years from now can't go toward your tuition payment today, so we suggest you turn to scholarships for help.

The **SMART Scholarship** (Science, Mathematics & Research for Transformation), established by the Department of Defense, offers a huge incentive for engineering and math majors studying in the U.S. by covering full tuition and education-related fees, offering paid summer internships, a health insurance reimbursement, mentoring and more. The catch is that you have to be willing to work for the Department of Defense after graduation.

2. Computer science: Many of you have likely heard of the huge array of perks that working for a Silicon Valley company

can bring. From free gyms, haircuts and massages to game rooms and swimming pools, companies like Google know how to keep employees in the office.

With an average starting salary of more than \$55,000, according to PayScale, the pay isn't too shabby, either. However, we don't recommend that you become a computer science major for the slim possibility that you could end up working for Google.

But if you're interested in building the next great iPhone app and like the look of that starting salary, a career in computer science may be perfect for you – especially because the chances of finding a well-paying job after graduation look good.

Those considering majoring in computer science should think about applying for the **Wayne V. Black Memorial Scholarship**, a \$5,000 award from the Energy Telecommunications and Electrical Association.

3. Finance: When you got your first allowance money or your first paycheck as a fast food employee, did you immediately start figuring out what to spend, what to save and how to invest it?

Maybe you weren't playing the stock market, but if you've always loved balancing your checkbook, a career in finance could be right up your alley. You'll also have plenty of money to play with outside of work, since finance careers are generally lucrative.

If you're interested in government finance, check out the scholarships offered by the **Government Finance Officers Association**. Scholarships range from a \$10,000 scholarship studying government finance at the graduate level to scholarships

for minority students studying governmental finance or other related fields.

4. Applied and general mathematics: If you've always loved crunching numbers, you may want to consider a career in mathematics or statistics, especially because the career outlook for recent math major grads is fantastic, and the average starting salary at around \$50,000, per PayScale, isn't half bad either.

But if your calculations for how you're going to afford college just aren't adding up, we suggest you look for math-related scholarships to offset the cost.

And if you're a woman, we suggest you look first at the Association for Women in Mathematics' **Alice T. Shafer Prize for Excellence in Mathematics**, open to undergraduate women interested in math. The 2014 Schafer Prize will be awarded at the Joint Mathematics Meetings in Baltimore in January 2014.

5. Economics: Finally, a high-paying major for those of us who loathe math and science! Well, that's not exactly true. Econ majors will have to endure math and statistics classes, and the highest-paying jobs do fall in the banking and finance fields. But you can also use a degree in economics to establish a career in law, consulting or government and nonprofit work.

To find scholarships for economics majors, we suggest you check with your college or university's financial aid office. Most will offer scholarships for those studying economics.

For example, the University of South Dakota offers **eight scholarships** that are available to econ majors, and Boise State University has **five economics scholarships**.

Consider Scholarships for High-Paying College Majors

(Originally Published 9/12/13)

By Michelle Showalter

If you've just entered your first year of college, you likely brought with you a lot of well-meaning advice from friends and relatives on what major you should select. One person may advise you to choose a major based solely on its post-college moneymaking potential, while another may be encouraging you to simply "do what you love."

The truth is that you should weigh both the salary potential of and your level of interest in a particular field before officially declaring your major. You should also consider the amount of loan debt you'll have postgraduation.

Earlier this year, we covered "[5 Scholarships for In-Demand College Majors](#)." Not surprisingly, almost all of them were science or math related.

But what about lucrative majors for those of us who break out in a sweat at the thought of basic algebra? You may not be bringing in \$100,000 when you graduate, but you can start out your career at a healthy salary

level with room to grow. Here are a few majors to look into, and some scholarships to match. As always, be sure to check with your college or high school about additional scholarship opportunities.

Government and political science: A lot of people would scoff at the idea that political science majors could make any money. And while it's true that selecting political science, government or international relations for your major will land you an [average starting salary](#) between \$40,000 and \$42,000, according to a report by PayScale.com, mid-career salary can reach nearly \$100,000 per year.

Common career paths for students in these majors include lobbyists, diplomats and journalists. Many who choose this major will go into law, which can also affect your moneymaking possibilities.

Students choosing one of these majors should consider the [Betty Rendel Scholarship](#) from the National Federation of Republican Women or the [Kennedy](#)

[Scholarship Award](#) from the Massachusetts Democratic Party.

Business administration and management: If you have dreams of one day being in charge – either of your own business or someone else's – majoring in business administration and management is definitely something to consider. This field is vast, so we suggest you pick your favorite path and stick with it. Options include operations management, human resources management or general management.

A reported [starting salary around \\$57,000](#) is nothing to scoff at, and you have the potential to make more once you are in a management position.

Students in this field should consider the [Jane M. Klausman Women in Business Scholarship](#).

Geologist: If you've always loved nature, science and the earth, consider becoming a geologist. With a median pay of over \$80,000 and a [faster-than-average rate of job growth](#), according to the federal Department of Labor, you can live comfortably and do what you love, whether that's becoming a researcher or scientist (the most lucrative path), working in a trade field or teaching at the high school or college level.

Budding geologists should consider the [American Institute of Professional Geologists Scholarship](#).

Advertising and marketing: If you're a creative thinker and you dream of one day crafting your own ad campaigns, becoming an advertising or marketing major certainly isn't a bad choice. While demand and starting salary can vary by industry and geography, a median salary of over \$75,000

is certainly inviting, according to the same PayScale.com report.

Plus, the field is vast, so you'll have lots of options when thinking about your ideal career. Possible paths include public relations, market research, promotions, sales and marketing strategies.

Advertising and marketing students should target the [Lagrant Foundation Scholarship](#).

Food science: If you love food and science, consider a career as a food scientist and you'll get the best of both worlds, plus a median salary of over \$80,000, as reported by PayScale.com. As a food scientist, you can be responsible for creating safer foods, more efficient food processing techniques and better preservatives. You also have the option to invent new products or study food-related illnesses.

Students interested in food science should apply for the [Goya Foods Culinary Arts and Food Sciences Scholarship Program](#).

Four years of hard work isn't worth it if you end up at a job you can't stand – even if you are making big money. On the other hand, if you don't weigh potential salary as a deciding factor when considering a major, you could end up with your dream job, but struggle to pay the bills each month.

When selecting a major, our advice is to pick something that balances what you love with your potential salary. But also keep in mind your own extenuating circumstances. If you've always wanted to be a teacher and can't imagine doing anything else, by all means, become a teacher!



Find Scholarships for College Degrees That Employers Want

(Originally Published 12/5/13)

By Matt Konrad

The Scholarship Coach has on several occasions featured [scholarship opportunities for in-demand majors](#). Past subjects have included high-paying future jobs with great postgraduate placement, great majors focused on [STEM fields](#) and majors outside science and engineering fields.

Now, we want to take one more look at some in-demand fields. These areas didn't quite fit into either of the previous discussions on the topic, and they may not be the first that come to mind.

These majors are featured on this year's ThinkAdvisor list of 30 [majors with the highest starting salary](#), and they're worth looking into if you're undeclared, undecided or just exploring your options.

Construction management: Construction is traditionally a blue-collar job. But, as outlined by U.S. News, builders are looking more and more for construction managers who have real-world experience and a bachelor's degree.

A course of study in construction management combines classes from the worlds of architecture, civil engineering and hands-on carpentry. The median midcareer salary ranges upward of \$80,000 per year, according to ThinkAdvisor's list.

This growing field is rich in scholarships for undergraduate students. You can get a decent [overview of scholarship programs](#) at ConstructMyFuture.com, a website run by a group of construction industry trade associations.

In addition, the Associated General Contractors of America offers current college students [scholarships worth \\$2,500 per year](#), renewable for up to three years.

Supply chain management: Global business has never operated more quickly or with more international complexity. As a result, the once-obscure major of supply chain management is growing in popularity at business schools.

The University of Illinois advertises the program as being "for those who are innovative enough to think creatively, yet meticulous enough to forecast the big picture."

Thanks to the unique personalities and requirements of the job, supply chain managers can earn as much as \$50,000 right out of school, according to ThinkAdvisor.

The [L.L. Waters Scholarship](#), presented by the American Society of Transportation and Logistics, is one of the longest-running scholarships focused on logistics and supply chain management.

This year's winner was just announced and applications open in April for the annual award. In addition, the Council of Supply Chain Management Professionals [gives out a number of awards](#) through its local and regional "roundtables." And most schools that offer the program, such as Rutgers University, have [dedicated scholarships](#).

Builders are looking more and more for construction managers who have real-world experience and a bachelor's degree.

Actuarial mathematics: This relatively new major is another product of business complexity. Just like supply chain management reflects new skills needed in production, actuarial math reflects new needs of the financial world.

Today's high-level financial and insurance professionals require a specialized

combination of math, statistics, economics and analysis, and ThinkAdvisor's featured list notes that skill set is worth a median midcareer salary of more than \$100,000.


Actuarial math doesn't feature a ton of specific, national scholarships. Fortunately, since it's so interdisciplinary – with elements of business, math and science – your school will offer plenty of options.

If you're at a college or business school with a dedicated insurance or risk management department, there are likely to be even more scholarship options. The [departmental scholarships](#) at Georgia State University are a good example.

Nursing: As the nation's population ages, employment demand for graduates with health care degrees such as nursing is among the most stable. If you're interested in a career helping people, great nursing programs are available at colleges throughout the country.

In addition, nursing careers offer flexible degree options – you can pursue an associate or bachelor's to start – a growing field with an average starting salary, according to PayScale.com, of \$54,000.

In addition to the [scholarships for nurses](#) we've looked at in the past, students currently enrolled in nursing school can apply now for the [National Student Nursing Association's scholarship fund](#) and the AfterCollege/AACN \$10,000 Scholarship Fund, which awards one \$2,500 scholarship each quarter.



Try These Scholarships for Hot and Not-So-Hot Majors

(Originally Published 2/28/13)

By Angela Frisk

If you've struggled to choose a major, worried about finding a job after graduation, or are unsure if taking out hefty student loans is worth the investment, you aren't alone. Fortunately, research is being conducted to help you make informed decisions as you embark on your college career.

The [Center for Education and the Workforce](#) at Georgetown University outlined the results of the U.S. Census Bureau's American Community Survey Estimates in a 2012 report that described [the financial returns and unemployment rates](#) for various college majors. If you happen to be studying one of the top-earning majors, congratulations! But if your major falls on the low end of the salary and job-prospect scale, it may be time to rethink your future.

Outlook: Not So Good.

Professions in the arts and humanities bear the brunt of an economy run aground. The collapse of the housing market led to the highest rate of unemployment among majors discussed in the report, 13.9 percent, for

recent architecture grads. If you're in this area of study—and worried about your employment prospects—make out a list of the pros and cons of a switch to engineering. You just might find a new path to consider.

But if you have a passion for architecture and can't imagine a future doing anything else, there's a silver lining: scholarship opportunities. The [American Architecture Foundation](#) offers grants and scholarships to architecture students.

According to the report, anthropology and archeology majors bottomed out with a meager median salary of \$28,000 for recent grads and an unemployment rate of 10.5 percent, and graduates with majors in film, video and photographic arts, fine arts, and religious studies faced higher unemployment rates and earned a paltry median salary of \$30,000.

The U.S. Department of State offers scholarship programs for students of all levels interested in [cultural and language experiences](#). You're a creative and motivated person; that's what got you into

the arts in the first place. Use those qualities to your advantage and you may find support in unexpected places. Do some digging in your local arts community and you will likely find ways to pursue your artistic endeavors, in and out of the classroom. Many community organizations will also sponsor exchanges and exhibitions for local artists.

Outlook: Promising.

Not surprisingly, the report states majors with high scientific and technical content had the best job placement and salary prospects.

According to the report, engineering majors had a 3.4 percent unemployment rate and the highest earnings for recent grads, an average of \$55,000.

If you are thinking about earning a degree related to engineering, math, or computers, there are plenty of scholarships available from the [Society of Women Engineers](#), [IBM](#), and [Honeywell](#). The [Society for Science and the Public](#) and [Intel](#) also both support competitive programs for high school students interested in science and technology.

If you're considering a major in science and technology you'd better be passionate about this field. Yes, the job prospects are great, but that comes at the price of many long weekends in the library and late nights in the lab. Degree programs in science and technology can be highly competitive and challenging, and workers in these fields are often expected to complete a higher degree to stay competitive in the field.

If you have no interest in a career in science and technology, you may find your calling in the fields of education, health care, or business. According to the report, earning

a bachelor's degree in education and healthcare is more valuable than a degree in architecture, humanities, journalism, computers, social science, arts, or business, as far as job placement is concerned. Recent graduates with healthcare degrees see a 5.4 percent unemployment rate and the third-highest median salary, \$43,000.

Two large organizations that recognize the sunny outlook for students in these fields are the [National Education Association](#) and the [National Science Foundation](#). They fund several scholarship programs for students majoring in education and the sciences.

If you have a sharp mind for decision-making and leadership and love working with people, a business degree can channel those qualities into a stable and rewarding career. Management information systems and statistics is a technology-oriented business major with a rapidly rebounding job market. With this degree, you can look forward to a 4.4 percent unemployment rate and high earnings, like the reported \$74,000 enjoyed by experienced grads.

Unsure where to start your business scholarship search? The [United Negro College Fund](#), the [Government Finance Officers Association](#), [Future Farmers of America](#), and [Women in Public Finance](#) offer generous scholarships for business-related majors.

While economic factors may weigh heavily on your mind when choosing your career path, it's important to choose a major that fits your interests as well as your budget. Striking a balance between personal fulfillment and financial security can be difficult to maneuver, but doing so can lead you to land a rewarding career in which you'll excel.