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Scholarshoppe

A Note from the Scholarship PCCs

As the first trimester comes to an end, the Peer College Counselors coordinating scholarships are proud to present *Scholarshoppe*! *Scholarshoppe* is the Counseling Services publication in which we provide important information about scholarships, financial aid, and other money-related college topics. The Scholarship PCCs this year are Austin Hopkins, Nicholli Bernard, and Adele Bernard, and are advised by counselor Lori Hackney. This year, we are excited to announce that the NCSSM Counseling website is up and running, and we are busy posting scholarship opportunities on the site. The link to the website is: <http://www.ncssm.edu/counseling/>. Be sure to check the Scholarship page of the website often so that you do not miss a deadline or a scholarship opportunity that you are interested in. Some scholarships are only advertised through the website, so check in frequently. This issue of *Scholarshoppe* focuses on the general information regarding scholarships and financial aid. If you have any questions after reading the issue, do not hesitate to approach us! We're here to answer questions and to help out our peers through the college process. Happy reading!



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Special points of interest

- Financial Aid!
- FAFSA and CSS
- Highlighted Scholarship
- Financial Aid Workshop
- And much more!!

Sources of Financial Aid

With the cost of attendance of colleges and universities increasing in the last few years, few students can afford to finance higher education without assistance. However, the jargon and paperwork can often be confusing to even the most seasoned applicant. We'll take a moment to define each of the common sources of financial aid.



“Even if you don’t earn a full-ride, remember that every penny counts and will help move you one step closer to your dream.”

- **Public**
 - Federal– FAFSA (Free Application for Federal Student Aid) is a way to obtain federal and state money from the federal government to determined need
 - State– Grants are awards (usually need-based) funded by the student's home state
- **College/University**
 - Need-based– FAFSA/ CSS PROFILE (money awarded by the University due to displayed need)
 - Merit– possible application process or student may be considered by applying by a certain deadline. Be sure to check deadlines dates!
- Athletic– scholarships awarded for recruitment as an NCAA DI/ DII athlete.
- **Independent (non-University) Organizations**
 - General– requirements vary according to the nature of the scholarship.
 - Contests– submit essay, art, or project for judging and an award is given based on placement in contest.
 - Competitions– larger applicant pool than contest, multiple award rounds with decreasing financial amounts according to applicant’s position.
 - Loans– money given by banks that must be paid back eventually.

How to Apply For FAFSA

Step 1: Get free information and help from your school counselor, the financial aid office at the college you plan to attend, or the U.S department of Education (ED) a www.FederalStudentAid.ed.gov or 1-800-4-FED-AID (1-800-433-3243). Free help is available any time during the application process.

Step 2: Get a PIN (personal Identification number). A PIN lets you apply, “sign” your online Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA), make corrections to your application information, and more -all online at www.pin.ed.gov.

Step 3: Collect the documents needed to apply, including income tax returns and W- 2 forms (and other records of income). A full list of what you need is at www.fafsa.ed.gov. Tax returns not completed at the time you apply? Estimate the tax information, apply, and correct information later.

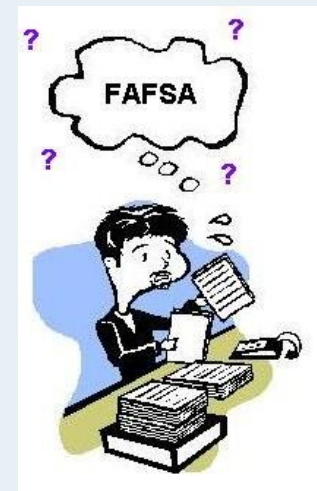
Step 4: Complete the FAFSA between Jan. 1st, 2012 and March 1st, 2012 It is important to apply as soon as possible after Jan. 1st to meet school and state aid deadlines. Apply online at www.fafsa,.ed.gov.

Step 5: ED will send you your Student Aid Report (SAR)— the result of your FAFSA. Review your SAR, and if necessary, make changes or corrections and submit your SAR for processing. Your complete, correct SAR will contain your Expected Family Contribution (EFC)— the number used to determine your federal student aid eligibility.

Step 6: If you are selected for verification, your school’s financial aid office will ask you to submit tax returns and other documents, as appropriate. Be sure to meet the school’s deadlines, or you will not receive federal student aid.

Step 7: Whether you are selected for verification or not, make sure the financial aid office at your colleges has all the information needed to determine your eligibility.

Step 8: Contact the financial aid office if you have any questions about the aid being offered. Review award letters from schools to compare amounts and types of aid being offered. Decide which school to attend based upon a combination of (a) how well the school suits your needs and (b) its affordability after all aid is taken into account.



Look Locally!

When applying for scholarships, most students tend to focus on the popular scholarships offered by universities or nationally well-known scholarships. Because of the high number of applicants, these scholarships are more challenging to receive. While students should apply for these scholarships, they also should apply to local scholarships in their community. Many students do not think to look locally for scholarships and typically, there are a smaller number of students who apply for them. In some cases, students may have a better chance of receiving local scholarships. Be sure to contact the counseling office at your home high school and see how scholarships are publicized. Also, check with local businesses and organizations to see if they offer scholarships.



CSS Profile

The CSS PROFILE is another way of getting financial aid for college. The profile is used by colleges to understand students' financial needs that may not be interpreted by the FAFSA. Hundreds of colleges and universities use the PROFILE system to award private grants and financial aid packages. Check the colleges to which you are applying to see if they accept, or require the CSS PROFILE, and what each college's deadline is for receiving it. Unlike the FAFSA, which is through the government, the PROFILE is offered by College Board and requires a fee of \$25 for the initial application and \$16 for each additional college to which you want information sent. This fee covers the cost of processing and sending

information to universities.

However, there is a fee-waiver available for families with very low incomes and assets. The fee waiver covers PROFILE registration and reporting to up to six colleges or programs. If you are eligible for this waiver, you will be notified while completing the process online. The Profile is available at: <https://profileonline.collegeboard.com/index.jsp>. You will need your family's financial information from the 2011 calendar year, including W-2's and income tax returns. For help or more information, see your counselor, or a Peer College Counselor. You can also contact College Board with your questions at help@cssprofile.org or call (305) 329-9793.

The Counselors' Corner

Q: What are the most common scholarships for which NCCSM students apply?

A: The most common are the Morehead, Park, Belk, Emory, Robertson, and the Levine Scholarships.

Q: What are the biggest roadblocks students come across?

A: Not everyone has a lot of demonstrated financial need, but many scholarships are need-based.

Q: What tips do you have for students applying for scholarships?

A: -Be constantly on the lookout for different scholarships, because there are so many different requirements and deadlines you need to meet.

-Apply for scholarships even if they are only very small amounts. They can really help.

-Be patient and persistent.

-Don't procrastinate in your search for scholarships. If you wait too long, you will miss scholarship opportunities!

Financial Aid 101 – Workshop For Parents and Students

For Parents/Guardians, Students, and anyone who is concerned about how to pay for college.

Financial Aid 101 is a financial aid workshop led by Davidson College's Director of Financial Aid, David Gelinas.

Financial Aid 101 will cover:

- need-based financial aid (definitions, packaging, strategies)
- grant and scholarship programs administered by the State of North Carolina
- federal and institutional methodologies
- FAFSA and CSS/Financial Aid PROFILE
- supplemental loan programs and payment plans
- merit-based scholarships

Financial Aid 101 will be hosted in the **NCSSM ETC Auditorium** on **January 29th, 2012**, from **2:00 pm—4:00 pm**.



“Be constantly on the lookout for different scholarships, because there are so many different deadlines you need to meet.”

Scholarship Spotlight

Elks National Foundation Most Valuable Student Scholarships

Deadline Date: December 2, 2011

Requirements: Any high school senior who is an U.S. citizen is eligible. Male and female students compete separately for identical awards.

Description: The Elks National Foundation will award 500 four-year scholarships to the highest-rated applicants in the 2012 competition.

Award Amount: 500 awards for the 2012-13 through 2015-16 academic years.

- 2 First-Place Awards of \$60,000
- 2 Second-Place Awards of \$40,000
- 2 Jack London Third-Place Awards of \$20,000
- 2 Fourth-Place Awards of \$16,000
- 2 Fifth-Place Awards of \$12,000
- 4 Sixth-Place Awards of \$10,000
- 4 Seventh-Place Awards of \$8,000
- 482 Runners-Up Awards of \$4,000

Web Address: <http://www.elks.org/ENF/scholars/mvs.cfm>

Check the website for your local Elks Lodge!

Question and Answer: Scholarships

Q: What tips can you give me on applying for scholarships?

A: 1. Start early. The earlier you begin looking and applying for scholarships, the more money you can find!

2. Don't depend entirely on the financial aid package from the college or university. These often include loans or work study, which is *not* free money.

3. Look for various sources: Remember, ten \$1,000 scholarships are just as good as one \$10,000 scholarship.

4. Set regular times each week to devote to the scholarship application process. If you don't schedule it, it likely won't happen. And don't wait until the college application process is done. Just think about all the money you would be missing!

5. Get at least three people to edit your application essays: one (like a teacher) for conventions like spelling and grammar, one (like your counselor) for the fit with the program's purpose, and one (like a friend or family member) for whether your essay reflects who you really are. Remember, if the program doesn't accept you as you really are, it may not be the best one for you.

6. Be courteous to your recommenders. Give them the materials they request and plenty of time to submit before the deadlines.

7. Submit all scholarship applications well in advance of the deadline. Procrastination will do you no good and will likely show in your application.

8. Once you've submitted your application, relax! Remember, this isn't the only scholarship you're applying for. Your happiness does not depend entirely on whether or not you receive it.

9. If you are called in for an interview or another round of competition, go forward with confidence! Your counselor is available to help you prepare for interviews.