

# PAYING FOR HIGHER EDUCATION



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## Acing Your Scholarship Search

Scholarships are for students of all ages; some are even targeted specifically to adult learners.

Scholarships are financial aid awards that do not have to be paid back and are typically funded by sources outside of the school's financial aid office. To receive scholarship aid, students must actively search and apply for these awards.

Keep the following tips in mind when searching and applying for scholarships:



### 5 TIPS FOR SUCCESS

#### 1. FILE THE FAFSA AT [FAFSA.GOV](https://fafsa.gov)

Many scholarship organizations request a copy of your SAR (Student Aid Report = FAFSA summary) as part of their application process.

#### 2. USE FREE SCHOLARSHIP SEARCHES

Never pay for a scholarship search. Instead use free search sites to build your list of potential scholarships. Legitimate scholarship organizations are trying to give away money, not take your money.

Use the resources on the next page to begin building your list. Using the right key words or search terms will yield the best results. Here are some recommended search terms:

- Adult Student
- Non-Traditional Student
- Returning to School
- Adult Learner
- Lifelong Learner
- Non-Traditional Situation
- Returning Student
- Graduate Student



### 3. DEVELOP A STRATEGY FOR SUCCESS.

Determine how much time you can dedicate per week to completing applications—even an hour or two can result in one or two complete applications per week.

- Research and identify 10 scholarships you are eligible for. Organize the scholarships by deadline and tackle the applications with the earliest deadlines first.
- Once you have written a few solid essays, reuse them for other scholarship applications by making small changes to meet the new scholarship's essay requirements.
- Organize your materials—keep copies of your SAR, essays, recommendations, etc.
- Stay focused and positive! The more quality applications you submit, the more likely your efforts will pay off.

### 4. MEET DEADLINES AND SUBMIT COMPLETE APPLICATIONS.

The scholarship selection process can be very competitive. Don't give the selection committee any reason to reject your application. Late or incomplete applications or essays with errors are easy to dismiss. Start early and have another set of eyes review your application to catch any punctuation, spelling and grammatical errors.

Know your audience. Are you writing a persuasive essay to teach someone something, or are you writing to show experts what you already know? Understanding your audience can make your scholarship essays stronger.

Treat the scholarship application like a job application. Use a professional sounding email address and provide a valid mailing address and telephone number. If awarded the scholarship, you want to be sure you receive the notification letter.

### 5. APPLY EVERY YEAR.

Some scholarships are eligible for renewal. If you are awarded a scholarship, find out if it can be renewed, and if so, submit the renewal application and required documents by the deadline.

Keep searching for new scholarships each year. Any money you receive from a scholarship helps limit the amount of money you have to borrow.

Maintain strong academic performance—grades and progress matter!

# SCHOLARSHIP RESOURCES



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## LOCAL

- College financial aid office
- Dean of the department in which you're enrolled
- Your employer
- Your parent's employer
- Local civic organizations
- Faith-based institutions
- Town office



## NATIONWIDE

- [fame.igrad.com/scholarships](http://fame.igrad.com/scholarships)
- [CollegeBoard.org](http://CollegeBoard.org)
- [CollegeNET.com](http://CollegeNET.com)
- [FastWeb.com](http://FastWeb.com)
- [CollegeScholarships.org](http://CollegeScholarships.org)
- [Chegg.com](http://Chegg.com)
- [Cappex.com](http://Cappex.com)
- [Petersons.com](http://Petersons.com)



## MAINE

- Finance Authority of Maine ([FAMEmaine.com](http://FAMEmaine.com))
- Maine Community Foundation ([MaineCF.org](http://MaineCF.org))



Textbook rental company  
Chegg uses a portion of its revenue to fund its \$1,000

Monthly Scholarship. On the first of each month, Chegg posts a question; students have until the end of the month to submit their two-minute answer.

[Chegg.com/scholarships](http://Chegg.com/scholarships)

## SCHOLARSHIPS FOR ADULT LEARNERS

### Adult Degree Completion Scholarship from the University of Maine

supports adult students returning to college after an absence of three years or more and who are completing their first baccalaureate degree. [maine.edu/admissions-aid/scholarships](http://maine.edu/admissions-aid/scholarships)

### Maine Competitive Skills Scholarship

helps workers learn new skills and succeed in a changing economy. [MaineCareerCenter.com](http://MaineCareerCenter.com).

### Adult Learner Scholarship Fund

This scholarship is for nontraditional students who want to change their life for the better through education and training. The scholarship supports a range of training, including attending two- and four-year colleges and universities, completing a certificate and other non-degree programs, or attempting a self-directed learning experience with a clear goal. [MaineCF.org](http://MaineCF.org).

PO Box 949  
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Augusta, ME 04332

**1-800-228-3734**  
TTY: 207-626-2717

[FAMEmaine.com](http://FAMEmaine.com)