

**We Need Money for College! How Can My Child Find Scholarships?**

**Types of Financial Aid:**

* **Scholarships & Grants**:
	+ Awarded based on financial need, academics, talents, unique characteristics
	+ Free money that does not need to be repaid
* **Work Study**:
	+ A part-time job working somewhere on the college campus
	+ **Answer** **YES** to FAFSA question: Are you interested in work study?
	+ Average award is $750/semester or $1,500/year
	+ Must complete FAFSA every year to have work study renewed
* **Loans**:
	+ Money that is borrowed and must be repaid

**Who gives scholarships?**

* Foundations
* Businesses
* Employers
* Civic organizations and charities
* Colleges and universities

**Types of scholarships**

* Merit/Academic: GPA; strength in subject area
* Need based: FAFSA based
* Community service: Giving back—quality vs. quantity
* College specific: Schools you are applying to
* Workplace: Parent, self
* Major Specific: Discipline you will be studying
* Student Specific: Religious, ethnic, gender, interests
* Athletic: Play four years
* Unusual: [**www.finaid.org/scholarships/unusual.phtml**](http://www.finaid.org/scholarships/unusual.phtml)

**How can I find scholarships?**

* **Parent + Student = Team:**
	+ Parents can help with research
	+ Students can apply
* **Naviance**: Scholarships that have been sent to FWHS are all listed in Naviance. Go to the Colleges tab…scroll down to the bottom of the page to **Scholarships & Money**
* **Scholarship Match**: Scholarships that might be suitable for you based on your information listed in Naviance
* **Scholarship List**: All scholarships that FWHS has listed in Naviance
* **Scholarship Applications**: Scholarships that you have applied to via Naviance
* **Scholarship Search**: A national database of scholarships; when you enter your information, you will receive notices about scholarships for which you might be eligible
* **Colleges**:
	+ Many colleges have their own scholarships
	+ Contact the colleges’ financial aid offices where you are applying and ask what scholarships are available and which ones you are eligible for
* **Fairfield Scholarship Foundation** <http://fairfieldscholarshipfoundation.org/>
	+ Scholarships available to FLHS and FWHS students
	+ One application for multiple scholarships
	+ *Application available in early April – See School Counselor*
* **\*Fairfield County Community Foundation** [www.fccfoundation.org](http://www.fccfoundation.org)
	+ Can apply for and be awarded up to four scholarships
	+ *Applications available in January; close in late March*
	+ Required materials for the online application
* Most current official Transcript
* Letter of Recommendation (2nd letter if required by scholarship criteria).
* Complete copy of your Student Aid Report (SAR) that is available online by completing the Free Application for Federal Student Aid. Visit [www.FAFSA.ed.gov](http://www.FAFSA.ed.gov)
* Personal Statement/Essay (2nd essay if required by the scholarship)
* **CT Council for Philanthropy** <https://www.ctphilanthropy.org/resources/scholarships-youth-opportunities>
	+ Various regional scholarships
* **The College Place – Connecticut** [www.ecmcfoundation.org](http://www.ecmcfoundation.org)
	+ Assistance with FAFSA and scholarships
	+ Ms. Holly Franquet, Director; hfranquet@ecmc.org; 203-335-0381
	+ “Like” on Facebook: **The College Place-CT** for helpful tips and scholarship announcements.
* **Newspapers, TV, Social Media, Community/Civic Organizations, Professional Associations, Religious Organizations, Clubs, APPS, etc.**
* **Other resources/Search websites**:
	+ **U.S. Dept. of Education** <http://studentaid.ed.gov/types/grants-scholarships/finding-scholarships>
	+ **U.S. Dept. of Labor** <http://careerinfonet.org/scholarshipsearch>
	+ **The Smart Student Guide to Financial Aid** [www.finaid.org](http://www.finaid.org)
	+ [www.studentscholarships.org](http://www.studentscholarships.org)
	+ [www.BigFuture.CollegeBoard.org](http://www.BigFuture.CollegeBoard.org)
	+ [www.CollegeNet.com](http://www.CollegeNet.com)
	+ www.studentaid.ed.gov
	+ [www.scholarships.com](http://www.scholarships.com)
	+ [www.fastweb.com](http://www.fastweb.com)

**How are scholarships awarded?**

* Committee reviews and selects candidates and winners
* Reasons for success:
	+ Met the criteria outlined by the scholarship sponsors
	+ Approached the application process strategically and selectively

**How do I apply for scholarships?**

* Organization is a **MUST**! Collect your information:
	+ FWHS School Code = 070186
	+ Letters of recommendation
	+ Create a separate email account for scholarships
	+ Resume
	+ Transcript
	+ Goals/Personal Statement (Why am I going to college? What do I want to study? Career? Etc.)
	+ Colleges you are considering
	+ College major (if you have decided)
	+ FAFSA info
	+ School/community awards
	+ Portfolio (if applicable)
* Set a goal for your applications: one per week? Two? Ten per month?
* Determine which and how many scholarships you want to apply for
	+ Check scholarship provider website (or application, if paper)
	+ **READ & FOLLOW application directions**
* Create a spreadsheet with deadlines and requirements
* Create folders for each application and required documents
* Give yourself plenty of time for each application
* Schedule it into your day/week
* Save your essays by theme, e.g., leadership, community service, etc. so you can tweak and reuse them where applicable
* Meet all deadlines and **PROOFREAD to** **make sure there are no errors!**

**Tips for writing effective scholarship essays:**

* Read the directions and make sure you understand them before you start writing.
* Research sponsor: Read “Mission Statement” and “About Us” so you can relate it to you when applicable
* Think about what you are going to write and organize your thoughts before you start writing. Self-reflection: Skills, interests, experiences, major, career
* Begin the writing process by writing an outline.
* Make sure your outline touches on every aspect required per the instructions.
* Write your essay by elaborating on each point in the outline.
* Use clear, concise and simple language throughout the essay.
* State your accomplishments without coming across as if you are bragging.
* Make sure grammar & spelling are impeccable.
* Read question again and then read your essay to be certain that the essay addresses every point.
* Have someone with strong writing & editing skills proofread the essay.

**Avoiding Scholarship Scams**:

* The Federal Trade Commission suggests you look for these warning signs of scholarship scams:
* **“**The scholarship is guaranteed or your money back.”
* “The scholarship service will do all the work.”
* “The scholarship will cost some money.”

**Avoiding Scholarship Scams** **Continued…..**

* “You can’t get this information anywhere else.”
* “You are a ‘finalist’ in a contest you never entered, or you have been selected by a ‘national foundation’ to receive a scholarship.”
* “The scholarship service needs your credit card or checking account number in advance.”
* The federal and state governments only make scholarship offers via FAFSA
* Don’t give out your social security number to search programs
* If it sounds too good to be true…it most likely is
* **NEVER PAY ANYONE OR ANY ORGANIZATION TO FIND SCHOLARSHIPS FOR YOU!**

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**Students should ALWAYS write a thank you letter to the scholarship donor** **when they receive an award**

* During their first year of college, contact the donor occasionally to let them know how they are doing; it is not only courteous, but a very useful networking tool for future scholarship, internship and career opportunities.

**\*Tips to Prepare Successful Applications for the Fairfield County Community Foundation Scholarships**

* 9th grade:
	+ Students need to begin a track record of community service.
	+ **Grades matter as well as the level of class difficulty--2.7 GPA required to apply for FCCD scholarships**
* **10th grade:**
	+ **Students should participate in extra-curricular activities** and/or work part-time as well.
* **11th grade:**
	+ **Students should identify adults to write strong and insightful letters of recommendation**
	+ **Students should think about what they want to study, what college they want to attend, and career direction.**
* **12th grade:**
	+ **Identify college choices and career goals.**
	+ Research available scholarships on the FCCF website [www.fccfoundation.org](http://www.fccfoundation.org).

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