

## **Funding College**

There are three main ways high school students can help fund their college educations:

1. Money from the government (Grants and Loans)
2. Money from the colleges (Scholarships)
3. Money from elsewhere (Independent Scholarships, Contests, and Awards)

### **Money from the government:**

The U.S. Government has programs that help college student fund their college education. There are two ways in which they do so. First, there are the governmental grants. Grants are the same thing as a scholarship in the respect that they do not have to be paid back. These include Pell Grants, SMART Grants, FSEOG Grants, TEACH Grants, Work Study, etc. Second, the U.S. Government is also happy to provide loans to any student who qualifies. Unfortunately, loans have to be paid back and many accrue interest while students are in college. These include Stafford Loans, Perkins Loans, Direct PLUS Loans, etc. To be considered for the governmental college funding options you only need to fill out the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA). The FAFSA is found online at [www.FAFSA.ed.gov](http://www.FAFSA.ed.gov). By filling out this form, students will be considered for governmental loans and grants based on their family's estimated financial need.

### **Money from the colleges:**

Almost all colleges or universities have scholarships available to prospective and enrolled students. These are known as Institutional Scholarships. These scholarships come in many forms and amounts. The "lion's share" of these scholarships are available to entering freshman students who qualify for them. These include merit scholarships, sports scholarships, band scholarships, etc. Most colleges consider prospective students for merit scholarships when they complete the admissions application; however, other colleges require a separate application. Go to the scholarship page of your prospective schools. In addition to entering freshman scholarships, there are current student scholarships for students that are already enrolled in the colleges. These are for students who have excelled during their first few semesters of college and are usually administered by the Financial Aid/Scholarship Office at the colleges and universities.

### **Money from elsewhere:**

The third option for funding college is independent Scholarships, contests and awards. Independent scholarships are scholarships that have no connection to the government or the individual colleges or universities. They are administered by private organizations, corporations, groups or foundations. They come in the form of merit and non-merit based awards, contests, sweepstakes and competitions.

These awards and scholarships do not conflict with the governmental grants/loans or institutional scholarships. You can apply for as many as you want. Fortunately, there are many free websites and services that compile these awards and scholarships for you. Below is a list of just a few of these websites:

- Cappex – [www.cappex.com/scholarships](http://www.cappex.com/scholarships)
- College Board (SAT) –  
[www.collegeboard.com](http://www.collegeboard.com)
- College Scholarships –  
[www.collegescholarships.com](http://www.collegescholarships.com)
- FAFSA – [www.FAFSA.ed.gov](http://www.FAFSA.ed.gov)
- Fast Web – [www.fastweb.com](http://www.fastweb.com)
  - [www.lela.org](http://www.lela.org) then click on scholarship search in the lower left corner
- Mach25 – [www.finaid.com](http://www.finaid.com)
- Sallie Mae – [www.salliemae.com](http://www.salliemae.com)
- Scholarships.com – [www.scholarships.com](http://www.scholarships.com)
- Scholarship Experts –  
[www.scholarshipexperts.com](http://www.scholarshipexperts.com)
- SRN Express – [www.srnexpress.com](http://www.srnexpress.com)
- Wired Scholar – [www.wiredscholars.com](http://www.wiredscholars.com)

None of these websites are comprehensive. There is not one website that has all of the independent scholarships and awards. In reality, there are thousands of independent scholarships. Enter your attributes in the scholarship sites above and see which ones they suggest you should apply to. I will email any scholarships that I receive to the senior class. Also, scholarships are listed in students' Naviance accounts. Please ask them to log in and show you the opportunities available to them through this program.

