

# Northern Virginia Community College

Connect with NOVA

---

Home > Current Students > Paying for College > Financial Aid > Scholarships > Scholarships: Where are they?

---

## Scholarships: Where are they?

Magazines and newspaper articles state that there are literally thousands of dollars available in private scholarships; this is true. The main difficulty is getting the donor and recipient together. Some students have pursued private local funds in a systematic way and have obtained as much as \$1,000 or more in one year. This can be done, but it takes time and effort on the student's part to research the information and to send out applications to scholarship sponsors.

The rest of this guide is devoted to teaching students how to proceed in this research, and describes the application process necessary to receive scholarship funds.

### STEP ONE: COLLECTION INFORMATION

To begin, obtain names, addresses and applications for as many scholarships as possible. It is important to plan ahead and begin early. Compose a brief letter requesting information and applications for the scholarships. Reproduce this letter and send it to as many sources as possible. Some possibilities include:

1. The Northern Virginia Community College Educational Foundation: The Northern Virginia Community College Educational Foundation offers numerous scholarship opportunities sponsored by generous donors. **Criteria and deadlines vary.** Contact the Campus Counseling Center, the College Financial Aid Office, or browse the scholarships for available Foundation Scholarships.
2. Local Clubs: Call your local Chamber of Commerce for names and addresses of men's and women's clubs, service groups, veterans' or professional organizations, such as the Rotary, Kiwanis, Soroptimist, Elks, etc. Local clubs offer scholarships ranging in value; some have additional scholarships available through a National Chapter. These are usually "one time" awards; therefore, they are not typically renewable.
3. Religious Organization: Frequently, religious groups have both local and national scholarships available to members and their children. They range in value and are usually not renewable.
4. Local Businesses: Scholarships provide a tax incentive for businesses. Systematically check through the Yellow Pages and mail letters requesting information and any application materials on scholarship opportunities. Small local businesses may offer "one time" awards; however, larger corporations may have scholarships which may be renewed. Ask your parents if their employers offer scholarships to dependents of employees.
5. State Department of Education: [www.schev.edu](http://www.schev.edu) Contact your State's Department of Education to inquire if there are scholarships available to you. Virginia has scholarships

available in teaching and health-related fields. Following graduation, these scholarships may require you to work in Virginia for a specified time in exchange for receiving the funds. Other states may offer scholarships or grants for study in Virginia if you are a resident. Your campus financial aid information service can provide you with address and telephone information.

#### 6. Other Sources of Information:

a) There is a Scholarship Bulletin Board located near the campus Financial Aid Information Service or the counseling center which regularly lists scholarship offerings. Check the criteria and deadline dates monthly. Obtain the appropriate application and the NVCC Scholarship Tip Sheet.

b) Web Sites: NVCC provides links to several scholarship sources from its web page at [www.nvcc.edu](http://www.nvcc.edu). The following web sites are widely used:

<http://www.fastweb.com> - FastWEB: A free personalized scholarship search

<http://www.collegeboard.org> – The College Board: SAT information, college search, apply on-line and scholarship search

<http://www.salliemae.com/planning/scholarships.html> Free online Scholarship search

<http://www.finaid.org> -- Provides information on scholarship databases and scholarship scams.

c) Research Sources: Many references are available in public libraries. A bibliography selected references is attached.

### **STEP TWO: ORGANIZE THE INFORMATION YOU HAVE RECEIVED**

Application deadlines and eligibility criteria are important. Sort the scholarship offerings by deadline dates. Arrange them by month and review the eligibility requirements. Select those for which you appear most eligible and discard any that are not appropriate. If your major is in a field related to the ones listed under the eligibility requirements, consider applying for that scholarship. Think carefully as you select/discard applications. Do not assume that you will be rejected if you do not fit the profile exactly.

### **STEP THREE: COMPLETE AND MAIL APPLICATIONS**

Now begin the actual process of applying for funds. Each month complete and send out applications which are due in the following month. For example, in early March prepare and mail all applications which are due in April. Be sure to meet deadlines!

Remember, it is permissible to attach a brief note to an application explaining any special circumstances contributing to your financial need. Also, mention why you are a "good investment" for these funds based on your grade point average, community service and college activity. Be sure your application is grammatically correct. Use complete sentences and proper punctuation. Proof read your application for spelling errors. Make sure all information is legible. Consider typing your application. Neatness counts!

### **STEP FOUR: APPLYING FUNDS TO YOUR ACCOUNT**