

# NAVIGATING YOUR FINANCIAL FUTURE

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## FOR HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS

### About Financial Aid

The first mistake many students and families make is assuming they can't afford a postsecondary education. Don't be discouraged by the sticker price for your education until you know how much financial aid may be available to you.

Financial aid can significantly reduce the cost of any education, but it can be tricky to estimate future student aid. Two factors generally determine who gets student aid and the amount, merit and need.

- "Merit-based" aid is given to students who do something exceptionally well (like music, athletics, or academics) or to students who plan to have a career in an area that will benefit the community or the country (like teaching, science, math, and engineering).
- "Need-based" aid is given to students who demonstrate a lack of financial resources to pay for college.



### DID YOU KNOW?

You may also research these websites for scholarship opportunities:

- <http://www.finaid.org>
- <http://www.Fastweb.com>
- <http://www.gmsp.org>

### Who Provides Financial Aid?

#### The U.S. Government

Learn about the [types of federal student assistance available](#), how the process works, eligibility rules, and more. The FAFSA is the application form for these programs. (FAFSA.GOV)

#### The State of Florida

Learn about the [financial aid programs available in your state](#). The FAFSA may be the only form you need; however, some programs require students to complete the Florida Financial Aid Application (FFAA). Also, be aware of state deadlines!

#### Your College, University, or Vocational School

Your [college or university financial aid office](#) will use the information from your FAFSA to determine your eligibility for some federal and state programs. Most schools have their own financial aid programs,

which may be based on your FAFSA results. Ask your financial aid office about the aid they offer and if you need to complete any forms in addition to the FAFSA.

#### Private Sources

Some independent scholarship programs accept the FAFSA, but most require other applications. Many of these scholarships are not based on financial need. This is the kind of financial aid that you usually need to seek. A free scholarship search engine, like [Fastweb](#), can help you find and submit applications to scholarship programs that may be right for you.

#### Navigating Your Financial Future (NyFF)

See [Financial Aid Resources](#) for scholarship opportunities.