Scholarship 411
For Parents

Guiding principles

- Your student is eligible for scholarship money regardless of income, academic performance, test scores, or ethnicity. Many scholarships only require a brief (250 word) essay in addition to the application.
- Effort is required by a student to access these funds for college.
- Many scholarships require similar elements (letter of recommendation, personal statement, resume, etc.). Gathering these materials now when opportunities are at a peak will assist in making the most of your student's scholarship time.
- Waiting for a financial aid award letter in the spring is too late to impact their funding for college.
- No scholarships are guaranteed. Never send money in order to apply for a scholarship. Be careful about sending any personal information like your social security number or bank account number. Any personal information that you provide, including email address, may be shared with others.

Scholarship Vocabulary

Athletic Scholarship – Scholarship awarded based on athletic ability. At a minimum, an athletic scholarship must be a one academic year agreement. Students who are interested in playing Division I or Division II in the NCAA must register with the NCAA Eligibility Center to qualify as a student athlete.

College Now Scholarships – College Now has a variety of scholarships available to your scholar. As an active participant in this program he/she will be eligible for at least one source of funding. Other opportunities are also available based on need or other criteria. Students will be made aware of these opportunities in February. Students who are selected for College Now scholarships are required to participate in an online mentoring program and maintain a 2.0 GPA while in college.

Contests/Sweepstakes - Contests and sweepstakes typically won't ask for your academic achievements, standardized test scores or financial needs, but they're also more competitive because they're so easy to apply for and winners are usually chosen at random. Your chances of winning in a contest or sweepstakes vary widely, based on the number of applicants who enter each drawing. Requirements may be as simple as sending off an email or completing an online form, and you won't be asked to come up with an essay on why you're deserving of the free money. You **should not** pay an entry fee for any legitimate contest or sweepstake.

Deadline – The date the scholarship must be received. Be careful. Many scholarships are very specific. Some are due at 12:01am (the morning of the date) while others will list 11:59pm. Some require that the scholarship be postmarked by that time while others actually expect it to be at the location by the

deadline. Also pay attention to how the scholarship is to be submitted. Some scholarships require a hard copy of material while others will accept an electronic version.

Departmental Scholarships – Scholarships that are awarded at a college or university based on a student's achievements in their area of concentration. Typically these are awarded to upper classmen. However, occasionally there are opportunities for freshmen. Usually a search of the specific college or department is needed in order to locate these opportunities.

EFC – This stands for **expected family contribution**. When the FAFSA is completed it is calculated by the Federal Government to determine eligibility for aid. It is what the government believes is affordable for a family to pay for one student for one year based on your family's income and assets.

Essay Contest – Scholarship based solely on a written composition submitted by a student. Typically there is a specific prompt that a student must be responding to in order to qualify. Locally Stop the Hate is one of the most prominent scholarships in the Cleveland area.

Institutional Scholarship – Money awarded by a college or university to a student based on a variety of criteria. Many schools do not require any additional information beyond the application for admission. However, many schools have deadlines are earlier than the regular admission deadline. Be sure to research the deadlines for each school you scholar is considering.

Merit Scholarship – Scholarship that is offered based on an accomplishment of a student. It typically is awarded based on an academic accomplishment but it could also due to other criteria (leadership, community service, specific skills).

Naviance – A web based tool that your student is using to assist with the entire college process. This tool serves as a search engine, a vehicle for submitting college applications, and as an electronic portfolio. Parents may also create an account to view their student's information. Your College Now Advisor can assist you with accessing this account by providing a password to use to register. The URL for Naviance is connection.naviance.com/_____.

Need Based Aid – Many highly competitive universities provide need based aid in lieu of merit scholarships. A student who is accepted to an institution who offers need based aid will be offered additional aid to fund any gaps between the cost of attendance and their family's EFC.

Renewable Scholarship – Scholarship that a student will receive each year that they are in undergraduate school. Typically a student is required to maintain certain criteria in order to continue funding. The most common criteria is a minimum grade point average.

Scholarship Search – There are countless search engines to assist students with locating scholarships. Naviance not only has a data base of scholarships that local students receive but it also contains multiple national searches. Many students will spend countless hours looking for scholarships but then will not have the time to actually apply. Many scholarship sites make you create a "profile" before you're allowed to use their site. Create a scholarship only email account for yourself and use this account when making your profiles. You'll then avoid any spam and stay more organized!