

Financial Aid Overview

Scholarships and financial aid are issues of great interest to many students and their parents as they plan a program to pay for college or vocational training.

There are four main types of financial aid:

- Grants: money given to the student based on financial need.
- Scholarships: money awarded to the student, usually on merit.
- Loans: money borrowed by student or parent that must be repaid.
- Work-Study: money the student earns by working at a college job.

THE FAFSA

The vast majority of financial aid is in the form of grants, subsidized loans and work-study. This money is made available to students by filing the FAFSA (Free Application for Federal Student Aid) after January 1st of the senior year of high school. The criteria for determining financial need is primarily the parents and student's earnings and assets. The FAFSA is used to determine not only the aid received from the federal government, but also from the California State government such as Cal Grants. If students are applying to private schools, they usually must also file a separate form developed by that college or the PROFILE, a standard form used by many private schools. Parents should inquire about this from the college in the early fall of the senior year.

The RJUHSD offers four free workshops that detail the filing of the FAFSA. Contact the College & Career Center at your respective school for location, dates and times.

SCHOLARSHIPS

When the topic of financial aid for college comes up, the first thing that parents and students think about are scholarships. There is an image of millions of dollars laying out there, just waiting for an application. While there is a significant amount of money available in scholarships, they are not easy to get. Most scholarships have very specific eligibility requirements. These requirements can include outstanding academic achievement, high test scores, athletic ability, disabilities, ethnic group identity, religion, and many others. Most scholarships are very competitive and the rewards generally go to those students who are very persistent. Here are some points to bear in mind.

1. Most large scholarships are associated with a particular school. Call the school's financial aid office and ask them what scholarships are available to incoming freshmen. Generally students must have an outstanding GPA (3.75+) and high SAT scores (1950+). You will tend to see these opportunities at California State Universities and private schools such as University of the Pacific and University of San Francisco. These schools are trying to encourage UC qualified students to attend their campuses. UC academic scholarships are applied for when filing the college application and are very competitive and difficult to get. Don't count on much help from high profile private schools like Stanford or Harvard. Since their rejection rates are 90%, they do not need to offer inducements to attend their college. They can, however, be very generous to students who demonstrate financial need.
2. Athletic and talent scholarships are school specific and go to those who are truly outstanding. Unless you are a bona fide "blue-chipper" you will probably have to market yourself by contacting the college coach yourself and sending them an athletic resume. They may then ask for more information such as

a videotape of your performance. If you're a singer or musician you will probably have to submit a tape as well as go in for an audition. You should start making these contacts in your junior year. If you wait until you're a senior to begin making contacts it could be too late.

3. Use the "finaid.org" web-site to use free scholarship search services such as "fastweb", the college board's "ExPAN" and "SRN Express." You can start scouting these data-bases in the spring of your junior year, but you will not be able to apply for most scholarships until you are a senior.
4. Listen to the school bulletin. Many organizations send scholarship applications directly to the school. Check with your College & Career Center.
5. Your best chances for scholarships outside of a specific college are local scholarships. The Roseville Joint Union High School District has a Local Scholarship program in February. These awards range from \$200 to \$2,000. The scholarships are easier to get because the competition pool is not as great. Also be sure to check with your church and your parents place of employment. Hewlett-Packard, for example, can be very generous to the children of their employees.

Any questions regarding Financial Aid can be made to Mr. Walt Wild. See the College & Career Center Directory for phone numbers.

