There are numerous myths surrounding scholarships. Even though scholarships are often competitive, most students are unaware they qualify for all types of scholarships. The following are some of the more common myths:

* **You should begin searching for scholarships during your senior year.**
Many students begin applying during their senior year, but it's recommended to begin searching and applying for scholarships before you're a senior in high school. Those who begin applying their senior year should begin early in the year to meet deadlines and have time to attend to other college preparation activities. Many scholarships must be applied for before January, so you'll enhance your opportunities by applying early. It's advisable to start searching and applying for scholarships while you're a junior in high school.
* **Scholarships are only for top scholars and athletes.**
This is not true. Numerous scholarships are available for students’ exceling in art, music, theater, and other extra-curricular activities. Likewise, many private organizations sponsor scholarships for people from specific ethnic, cultural, or religious backgrounds. Students applying for non-academic scholarships must still satisfy minimum GPA requirements.
* **You have to be a great essay writer to get one.**
This is not always true. It's more important to be able to clearly express your abilities, qualifications, and goals, than be a great writer. Closely follow the instructions and answer the questions in simple and clear sentences.
* **You have to be a high school student to win a scholarship.**
There are all types of scholarships available to college students. Likewise, many schools and organizations sponsor scholarships for students enrolled in graduate programs.
* **Most scholarship awards are small and not worth the effort of applying.**
There are all kinds of scholarships that fall between $1,000 and $5,000. College is very expensive. In addition to tuition fees, students must buy books and pay room and board expenses. Students who receive scholarships often do not need student loans to pay their schooling expenses. Since every dollar helps, apply for multiple scholarships.
* **Scholarships are all heavily weighted towards minorities and those with documented financial need.**
All types of scholarships are available to minorities and students who cannot afford college, but there are also numerous academic, extra-curricular activity, athletic, and other types of scholarships.
* **Scholarship competition is too intense. It's not worth bothering.**
It's competitive, but many students do not properly fill out application forms and neglect key application requirements. Students not following instructions or submitting incomplete applications are often not considered. In many cases, small percentages of applicants properly follow application instructions. Moreover, conducting research and applying for scholarships is time consuming, but you'd be surprised about how many scholarships you qualify for. Often, students who apply for multiple scholarships receive some awards.
* **Finding scholarships takes forever and you're ineligible for 90% of what you find.**
Research can be time consuming, but there are numerous online resources that will simply your search. Additionally, most schools offer services for students interested in learning about and applying for scholarships.
* **The scholarship application process is a one-time thing.**
Most scholarships are awarded on an annual basis. Even after receiving an award, to retain a scholarship, you will more than likely be required to re-apply each year. Begin looking for scholarships during the summer and fall months.
* **Billions of dollars in scholarship funds go unawarded each year.**
Although some scholarships are never awarded, the combined total figure is not in the billion dollar range. It's difficult to calculate the total annual dollar amount of scholarship funds never dispersed. This figure is often cited by individuals participating in scholarship scams.