

How to Earn Scholarships

All too often students will approach their school counselor late in their senior year and ask how they can get scholarships. While there might be a few scholarships to apply for at that point, it is too late for most opportunities. The best way to be competitive for most scholarship opportunities is to work all four years in high school, focusing on the following criteria: academics, activities, service and citizenship.

A. Academics: Class Rank/GPA Test Scores (ACT/SAT) Transcript (college prep)

*Academic measures are the most important factors for most scholarships. Together they are good indicators of your preparation and probability of college success. Students who take challenging courses predictably score higher on admissions tests. It pays off to have challenging courses on your transcript.

B. Activities: Sports Community School Church Clubs/Organizations Leadership

*Scholarship donors and college admissions officials want people who have done good things. They are more likely to do good things in the future. Active people are more developed and generally more capable. Those who do nothing will be passed by.

C. Service: Library City Hall Chamber of Commerce School Church Retirement Homes
Hospital Clubs (Lions, VFW, etc.) Employers Raise Funds for a Cause

*Scholarship donors & college admissions officials want people who are community minded. They know that community minded people will improve any organization, as well as portray it in a positive light.

*Activities & Service will create associations & networks, which will lead to choices & opportunities.

D: Citizenship: Recommendations References Reputation Social Media

*People with scholarship money don't give it to people who get into trouble. Give people (especially teachers) good things to say and write about you. Remember, your behavior on social media will either help you or hurt you—be mature. Make sure that the digital you is the best you.

E: Organization: Keep a list of names, places, roles, dates, times, awards, honors, positions, etc.

*Maintain a file of your scholarship preparation throughout school (use your Portfolio). This will save you a lot of time and work when you are a senior. Also, your applications will be more complete and competitive.

REMEMBER: It takes 4 years to put yourself in a position to win scholarships. Start now.

Therefore, to be competitive for scholarships, you must:

Be a good student. Get good grades.

Be active and participate.

Be caring and helpful.

Be a good citizen.

Be organized.