

Scholarship Prep Kit



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Introduction to Prep Kit

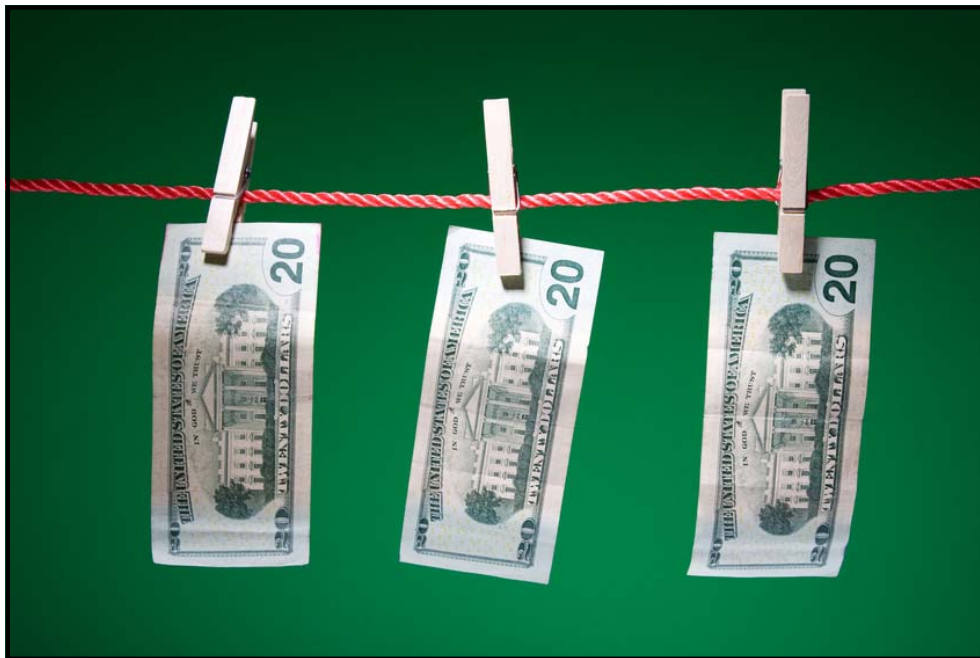
The focus of this kit will be preparation. Finding and completing requirements for scholarships can be highly challenging. So, if your goal is to win scholarship money you need to prepare for the journey ahead. With this prep kit you can meet the scholarship challenges head-on.

Successful scholarship recipients have one thing in common: they start early. It is never too early to start preparing for the requirements set before you. Some of these requirements may include resumes that detailed the past and present accomplishments, community service experience, work activities, and educational experiences. Also, most require a personal essay. This essay will help make you stand out among the other applicants. It's important to have a complete and comprehensive personal essay in place and ready to go when the scholarship applications open. These essays, if written early, can be proofread for errors and adjustments and can be tailored to specific scholarships.

Letters of recommendation are written with a general audience in mind and acquired way in advance of need. It is not in your best interests to ask someone at the last minute to write a letter of recommendation. Most people do not want to write recommendations if not given time enough.

Many scholarships require current transcripts. These are easily acquired. Make sure you have them on hand.

Applying for scholarships is much like applying for jobs; one must have a workable package ready when the right opportunity comes up.



Build Your Resume

Name

Address

Phone

Email

Objective: _____

Education: _____
College, major, grade point average if high, dates of attendance

Trade schools attended, field of study, certificate earned, dates attended < 10 years

High School, diploma earned, grade point average if high, dates of attendance

High School Diploma by Examination (GED)

Civic Activities/Community Involvement:

1. Organization:_____

Dates of Involvement:_____

Time Commitment: _____

Duties:_____

2. Organization:_____

Dates of Involvement:_____

Time Commitment: _____

Duties:_____

Resume—Continued

May have more...

Clubs/Committees:

Organization: _____

Dates of Involvement: _____

Time Commitment: _____

Duties: _____

Special Honors/Awards:

(i.e., Volunteer of the year 2004 - nominee, National Honor's Society Scholarship - 2010)



Crafting Your Personal Essay

*Use this form to help clarify your goals, objectives and strengths
—all components of a standard personal essay.*

Objectives:

(An objective is a goal or purpose. Ex: what do you want to be when you grow up

and how are you going to get there.)

Plan/Goal:

(Maybe you do not REALLY know what your goal is, but at this time BE goal-oriented.)

Timeframe:

(Be realistic: it might take five years at 12 credits each semester to complete a

bachelor's degree program, depending upon the pre-requisites. A reality based plan

will show scholarship committees that you have done your trip-planning ahead.)

How will you utilize the degree?

(Dream big! This is your chance to impress the committee with your ideas.)

Address specific qualifications for the degree:

Why did you make it your goal to earn a university degree?

Personal Essay—Continued

What makes you unique? What makes you more qualified than other applicants? Why choose you?

Scholarship committees want to choose the best person to represent their organization.

Give them good reasons to choose you over the others who might apply!

Do NOT be afraid to say great things about yourself.

Highlight your accomplishments relative to your goal attainment.

Explanation(s) for past mistakes or situations:

We all have mistakes or situations in our past that we can learn from.

What creates success is owning them, acknowledging what you could have

improved and determining what you will do in the future to avoid the same situation.

Nobody appreciates a blamer—be careful how you write this section!



Letters of Recommendation

While it may be more convenient to ask your recommenders to send their letter via an email, the value of an actual signature cannot be understated.

Keep in mind the following guidelines:

- Current date (within two years)
- Give your recommenders lots of time to write the letter
- Create your own fact sheet about yourself and give it to your recommender (or your resume)
- IMPORTANT: Use special forms if they are required. (Sample attached)
- Find out if the letters need to be sealed in an envelope, and whether they should be delivered separately (by mail?) or with the packet

HINT: Ask for multiple copies to have on hand for the future.

#1

Recommender: _____
(name)

Date asked: _____

Date to pick up _____

#2

Recommender: _____
(name)

Date asked: _____

Date to pick up _____

How to request transcripts

Each institution of learning has a process for requesting a transcript. You will need to know if you are required to provide an official (sealed in an envelope and labeled official) or an unofficial transcript. Refer to the specific scholarship application to know which is required.

Laws require written release from the student authorizing a school to release a transcript to anyone other than the student. Do not be surprised when you are asked to submit one. Plan ahead for transcript processing times. It is extremely rare that you can just walk in and get an official transcript printed. Contact your school or check out the appropriate website to learn about their process for requesting this information.

- If you are requesting an official transcript from the University of Alaska system, you may do so online at www.uaonline.alaska.edu. There is a charge for an official transcript, so have your credit or debit card available.
- Each state usually has one central office that issues official GED transcripts. In Alaska they are issued by the Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development - 907.465.4685.
- It is recommended that you request a few copies to have on-hand for future application packets.

The Final Steps...

More Preparation?

Not all scholarships require an interview, however, some do. Create and practice some interview questions. Even if you do not know what might be asked of you in a scholarship interview, think about the logical ones. Think about what you would ask someone if you were on the selection committee.

Follow Up!

Following up is a critical part of any undertaking. In the scholarship race, it can make the difference in your future success. Some scholarships allow a recipient to apply for the award again. If this is the case, exercising good etiquette might set you miles ahead of the competition!

A simple Thank-You note to the committee for taking the time to review your application, and a Thank-You to the donor or donating organization are great ways of showing your thoughtful nature and could be a bonus for you if you are allowed to re-apply for the scholarship.

Submit a copy of your semester grades to show that you completed the semester and let the organization/donor know you appreciated their support—again.

Be sure to send a Thank-You to your recommenders, especially if they wrote a great letter. You may need to ask them again!

Don't get rejected because you...

- Didn't answer these types of questions thoroughly — What makes you unique? What makes you more qualified than other applicants? Why choose you?
- Didn't apply on time. Be very aware of deadlines.
- Didn't follow directions (i.e., shiny folder covers or not attaching all requested documents)
- Didn't use proper grammar, spelling or punctuation. Have someone proofread your application!
- Didn't check application for completeness. Have someone check the application to make sure you have included everything that's required.

