

Scholarship Basics

Where to Start

Research available scholarships:

- Review local Triton College and Triton College Foundation Scholarships as listed or on the Web at www.triton.edu/finaid under Scholarships: Complete List.
To apply: Complete the application and return it to the Scholarship Office, located in Room B-216W.
- Check out the links on the Web to search nationwide databases at www.triton.edu/finaid under Scholarships: Links.
To apply: For outside scholarships, students may write, call, or visit individual scholarship Web sites to obtain and submit the application.
- Browse through the Scholarship Directory on the Web at www.triton.edu/finaid under Scholarships: Scholarship Directory.
To apply: Follow individual scholarship requirements.

How to Prepare

Get organized and keep the scholarships you are working on separate from those you have not started. Use a calendar to keep track of dates and deadlines. Create a folder for each scholarship application and materials.

Know your time frame to apply. Complete and send the easiest scholarships first. Then focus on the scholarships with earlier deadlines and ones that may require more time. Allow plenty of time when requesting letters of recommendation.

Submit Your Application

Remember to check spelling and grammar. Proofread your materials and have a teacher, parent or friend read over your application and essay if submitting online or by mail. They can provide feedback and catch mistakes.

The Scholarship Essay

Before you begin

Develop a theme that fits the scholarship. Learn about the provider's mission and goals. Include elements in your essay to complement the sponsor's expectations. For example, if the provider is interested in community outreach, highlight ways you impact your community within your essay.

A FEW TOPIC IDEAS:

Personal achievements

- Talk about specific interactions you may have had with others. Do you still keep in touch with anyone you've helped? How did you influence their lives?
- How did your achievements reflect your values? Why are your achievements important to you? Did you do something that received high praise or recognition?
- Personalize your experience. For example, what makes the volunteer and community service you've performed unique? What made you stand out?

Tip: *Judges want to see how your achievements impact you personally!*

Academic plans and career goals

- Instead of saying, "I love to cook," discuss a specific assignment or project that you worked on that sparked your interest.
- Avoid saying that you selected a major or career path to "help people." What specific actions can you take to improve the lives of others? Discuss how your values are relevant to what you will be studying in school.

Tip: *Don't focus on the classes you hope to take in college. Focus on your degree and future goals and why they are important to you.*

Social issues and current events

- Think about current issues or events in the news that you feel strongly about.
- Do you know a lot about a controversial topic?
- Do you know of someone who is directly involved in an issue who might be able to provide insight?

Tip: *Summarize the issue briefly. Share your perspective, offer constructive criticism and address all sides of the issue, not just your own.*

Mentors, admirers and influences

- Think about your friends and family, community and the things you've learned outside of the classroom. Pick specific people, incidents and learning experiences to write about that will allow your personality to come through.
- Is there a person you aspire to be like within your chosen degree or career path? Someone who encouraged you to succeed? Focus on specific qualities or actions that the person has inspired in you.

Tip: *When writing about others, be sure to focus on how this person has inspired you and shaped your life.*

What do Judges Look For?

- Is your application presented well? Type your essay, place the application, essay and other contents in a large folder for mailing. Do not fold any of the materials.
- Did you include all required documents? Make sure you include all required academic transcripts, references and letters of recommendation.
- Did you answer all of the questions? Double-check that you haven't forgotten any required information.

For more information, contact the Triton College Scholarship Office at (708) 456-0300, Ext. 3044.

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www.triton.edu/finaid**

