

# HOW TO SAVE MONEY ON COLLEGE

Generations of Americans have used college as a ticket to a better future, not just in terms of money, but also in terms of a higher quality of life. But a college education is a serious investment and most students will need help paying for their degree. Here are some ways you can save money on college:

**Start at a community college.** Taking classes at a community college can save you tens of thousands of dollars. For example, Triton College's In-District tuition rate is \$118 per credit hour. At Northern Illinois University, the in-state rate is \$697 per credit hour.

**Apply for Financial Aid.** Every student should file the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) every year, even if they are unsure if they will qualify. There is no standard income cut-off for Financial Aid. Multiple factors are considered including family size and the number of children enrolled in college.

**Transfer to an in-state school.** When you're ready to transfer to a four-year institution, choose a school in Illinois so you can take advantage of in-state tuition rates. Going to a school out of state can double your tuition bill. For example, in-state tuition at The University of Illinois is \$15,868 per year. Out of state tuition is \$31,981 per year.

**Search for scholarships of all sizes.** Competition for large scholarships can be intense. But smaller scholarships are much easier to get. In fact, many small scholarships go unclaimed because no one applies.

**Try and graduate in four years.** Remember, time is money so you should take as many classes as you can each semester. A fifth (or six, or seventh) year in college will cost you thousands in ancillary expenses like housing and transportation.