

Financial Field Guide

By City Library Teen Squad Volunteer, Rocio (2021)

College can be expensive.

Many times students are told to apply for scholarships as a way to pay, but that is easier said than done. Applying for scholarships, especially those that cover four year tuition, required countless steps. It is not just getting good grades, but having volunteer hours, writing personal statements, getting recommendation letters among other things.

This guide provides different resources to help guide you through the process of applying for financial aid. How to prepare before applying, getting the right requirements, websites, programs, and writing centers to help.

Programs

While in high school it is important to involve yourself with different programs that can help you throughout the years. They are meant to help everyone enroll into college and be able to pursue a successful college life.

Each school may or may not have them all, you can check your school website or ask faculty where they can direct you.

AVID (Advancement Via Individual Determination)

AVID begins typically during middle school, but you can also join during your freshman year. If you do want to enroll, you must contact the AVID advisor.

Services Provided:

- Help teach you note taking
- Critical analysis skills
- College advice
- College visits
- Tutoring
- Volunteer and internships opportunities
- College application
- Scholarships

GEAR UP (Gaining Early Awareness and Readiness for Undergraduate Programs)

You can become part of GEAR UP anytime just need to fill out an application if you want to. They provide workshops and other events to help students during school and if they wish to go to college.

- Tutoring
- Volunteering opportunities
- Internships
- College applications
- Scholarships
- ACT
- College visits
- Help for first year of college
- Letter of recommendation

TRiO

Trio is a program that is offered both in high school and college to help low income and first generation students prepare and go into college. During high school they offer different workshops and services during the school year and summer.

Every college also has it. It is alright if you don't apply during high school. You can just contact TRIO advisor and they will help you get set up.

PACE

Only college freshman can apply

Program provide by SLCC

- Has advisors for students
- College visits
- Job shadowing
- scholarship

College Credit/Experience during High School

During high school you can gain college credit for a much cheaper cost or even free. You can also gain experiences for different career paths.

One way of getting college credit and experience is by taking AP, CTE, TRIO and CE classes.

AP (Advance Placement) requires you to take or teach yourself the required material to take an exam. Depending on your score you can get full college credit. The test is scored between 1 to 5, five being the highest, this earns you full college credit. You must get a three or higher to pass the yrly and get some college credit. You will have to pay for the exam. There is usually a financial aid offer that will lower or cover the cost completely. Once you pass it is important to inform the college advisor in order to transfer the credit over.

CE (concurrent enrollment) are college classes for free to get college credit as well. It is a partnership between local high schools with colleges and universities. You must pass the class with at least C- in order to get credit, anything lower will not qualify.

CTE (Career and Technical Education) are classes which teach different skills to prepare students. For students who already know which career pathway you want to follow or for students who just want to try out new opportunities. Check your high school CTE classes and see if they offer anything that could be beneficial for you to prepare. Talk to counselors and ask to be placed into these classes.

Internships are short term periods where students get work experience. These are offered up by companies and organizations. Depending on the company/organization some may pay you, other times you will work for free. You can ask counselors or teachers if they know of any opportunities. If you know of a company you like to work for, you can email them asking if they have an internship.

Preparing for Scholarships

Scholarships are not as easy as they may seem. For those to cover full tuition, housing, and other expenses you must do extra work. These scholarships typically require you to have good grades, personal statements, letters of recommendation, volunteer hours, or any experience with leadership.

It is, of course, important to have good grades especially if you want to go into any Ivy schools. Sometimes life may get in the way, and it is understandable if you fail a class or your grades drop as long as you show that you improve and work to fix it.

Volunteering is one activity that you must complete ahead of time. It can vary but some scholarships/schools may ask for 40 to 200 hours of volunteer work. It cannot be completed in one week, and you should start as soon as you can. Here are places to look for volunteer:

Asking teachers/counselors

Teachers and counselors are constantly being informed about different opportunities. They will be able to provide you with information or tell you who you can contact.

Community Websites/post

Community websites will usually have information about any local volunteer services.

Homeless centers

Homeless centers are always looking for people to come and serve food. You will need parental permission if you are under 18.

Religious services

If you are part of any religion, most times they will have a variety of jobs from cleaning, to projects, or being a mentor.

Public Library

Many public libraries have a [volunteer program](#) for teenagers where they create their own projects which are posted on their website. The project can be about anything it is up to you. The Salt Lake City Public Library has one!

Pride Center

They provide different jobs all year around. Anyone can apply.

Just Serve

It is an organization that provides thousands of opportunities anywhere in the United States.

For students that are too busy, work or just couldn't volunteer there are still other scholarships that you can get.

Going to college fairs, visiting campus, attending events where college advisors come to seek is a big step. You must learn and see the possible options that are being offered in

state and out of state. Another thing to consider is looking and doing more personal research about the college you wish to attend.

Scholarships

[Key to Success](#)

It is an app and website for students in Utah to access scholarships from Utah colleges. The more scholarships you fill, you will gain points that can be used to get cards to stores, restaurants, etc.

[Complete Scholarships](#)

It is a website, where you fill out basic information about yourself and will provide you with a variety of scholarships.

[Career one Stop](#)

A website provided by the U.S Department of Labor

[Niche](#)

[Scholarships](#)

[The College Board](#)

[Chegg](#)

[Unigo](#)

Scholarship Websites for Utah Colleges

Every college has a scholarship website.

[University of Utah](#)

[Weber State](#)

[Westminster](#)

[Utah Valley University](#)

[Brigham Young University](#)

[Utah State University](#)

[Davis Tech](#)

[Southern Utah University](#)

[Salt Lake Community College](#)

[Snow College](#)

Filling Out the Application

Personal statements are semantically essays that say something about yourself. Each scholarship will be different. Some might ask you to answer a question, others may leave it up to you. There are countless ways of writing personal statements, here are some websites that can help guide you.

- [Owl Purdue](#)
- [Writing center](#)
- [Indeed](#)

Writing centers

There are writing centers both online and in schools. At school you can ask teachers or go to tutors to help plan, draft, revise your personal statement as well.

[Brainfuse](#) is a website provided by the Public library to help students with any type of work.

Letter of Recommendation

Typically you will be asked only for two; it can vary depending on the scholarship. You can get letters of recommendation from teachers, mentors, employers, counselors, and volunteer leaders. It is important that you ask a couple weeks or days ahead of time.

Undocumented Students

DACA

Every person deserves a chance to go into a college while getting financial aid. DACA is a government program that gives young immigrants a working permit, protection from deportation, and allows you to attend college.

It is important to apply and each college also offers up different workshops and events to help students who [qualify to apply](#).

Scholarships

[**Educate Utah**](#)

[**Dream Utah**](#)

[**Career one Stop**](#)

[**Niche**](#)

[**Scholarships**](#)

[**Chegg**](#)

[**Unigo**](#)

All of these Utah colleges provide scholarships for undocumented students

[**University of Utah**](#)

[**Weber State**](#)

[**Westminster**](#)

[**Utah Valley University**](#)

[**Brigham Young University**](#)

[**Utah State University**](#)

[**Davis Tech**](#)

[**Southern Utah University**](#)

[**Salt Lake Community College**](#)

[**Snow College**](#)

FAFSA

[FAFSA](#) is an application for students to get financial aid. It estimates how much money you are qualified to get through the pell grant. Many colleges require you to fill them out or to apply for scholarships among other things. It is important to fill it out ahead of time to qualify for more money. It will also allow you to apply for work studies which are jobs on offer by schools to students.

For those first time applying they usually will require you to fill out basic information for the first sections. As it continues you must either provide your parents or own tax information. It is important to fill out all the information properly.

There are workshops offered by AVID, GEAR UP, and colleges to help out parents and students fill out the information properly.