

HOW TO FIND & EARN SCHOLARSHIPS



- Build your college list with schools offering scholarships/merit aid to students without financial need.
- GPA and SAT/ACT scores are critical for many scholarships.
- Some “outside” scholarships require FAFSA to be on file, so file FAFSA (and CSS Profile, if applicable).
- Outside Scholarships: Many are based on interests, employer, college, membership, ethnicity, ancestry, community service, local area (Ventura County, Ronald Reagan, etc.), large national (Coca-Cola), etc.
- Try for odd-sounding scholarships. You can’t win it if you’re not in it.
- Good things come to those who wait, but the 1st ones there get the best stuff.
- Improve odds of winning by applying for less competitive/local scholarships.
- Always check your high school CCC & Naviance for all available scholarships.
- Leadership, impact and community service involvement are huge draws for institutional (college/university) & outside scholarships.
- Extra-curricular Activity Depth vs. Breadth: Discuss at least 1 thing you committed to for all of your high school years.
- Resources for figuring out what schools are a Reach vs. Target vs. Likely for you and why it matters for merit aid: Naviance, College Board, Fastweb, CA Colleges, RaiseMe, guide books, guidance counselors, college counselors, etc.
- Have someone with expert eyes proofread your college/scholarship essays.
- Send thank you notes to anyone who wrote a letter of recommendation for you and to those who awarded a scholarship to you.