



September 1, 2015

STUDENTS, PLEASE SHARE WITH YOUR PARENTS!!! COUNSELORS: MRS. COLLINS (A-FI)

<http://kenn.cr.k12.ia.us/academics/scholarships/>

MRS. WESSELS (Fo-La)

MRS. CLORE (Le-Ri)

MR. JACOBSEN (Ro-Z)

MRS. HERRITY (9th)

MRS. RICHEY (PACT)

WELCOME TO KENNEDY!!!!

This newsletter is designed to help make students and parents aware of all of the scholarship opportunities that are available to Kennedy students. Each newsletter will feature a scholarship for students to be planning for. Even though students are freshmen and sophomores, there are several scholarships that will require students to plan.

The first scholarship is the Danforth Scholar Program for the Washington University of St. Louis.

Award: full or partial tuition scholarship

Deadline: January 15, 2016 (Separate nomination deadline of November 13, 2015)

Website for more information: <http://tinyurl.com/danforthscholarinfo>

Eligibility: Danforth Scholars may receive full or partial tuition scholarship. The scholarship is renewed each year for the duration of the degree program, provided the scholar progresses academically and upholds the high standards of character required of scholars. This is a merit based program, but need will be considered as part of the award process. **To be considered for this prestigious award, a student must be nominated by an individual who has substantive knowledge of the students' accomplishments and goals.** In addition to outstanding academic performance, the committee is interested in activities that illustrate the candidate's exceptional commitment to community service, high moral character, and similar qualities that exemplify the Danforths' legacy at Washington University. The selection committee finds it helpful to learn of specific examples of leadership, academic and personal achievements that set this student apart from his or her peers.

Required Credentials:

- ACT score above 30
- Class rank in the top 5%
- Demonstrated leadership ability
- Distinguished academic accomplishment
- Sincere commitment to service
- Exemplary moral character

Freshmen Tips

- Use Smart Lunch!
- Get a jump on college prep by choosing a challenging class schedule with honors and AP classes.
- Show colleges you're a well-rounded student by getting involved in extracurricular activities.
- Explore colleges: What kinds of schools should you be looking for?
- Find volunteer activities that are good for you and good for the world.
- Join an interesting club or sport.
- Have fun!

Sophomore Tips

- Use Smart Lunch!
- Get to know your guidance counselors: They can help you figure out which colleges and careers will be a good fit for you and help you create a schedule that fits your goals.
- Attend college fairs in your area.
- Consider an internship or job shadow with Workplace Learning Connection.
- Start financial planning: Once you have a list of prospective colleges – or even types of colleges you might be interested in (public vs. private, for example), compare the cost of tuition to your realistic budget.

PSAT Information

The PSAT (Preliminary Scholastic Aptitude Test) is generally a comprehensive tool for academically strong **juniors** who score well on standardized tests. The test predicts a score range for how a student might score on the SAT, demonstrates how the student compares to juniors across the country on this specific test, and is used to identify students throughout the nation for National Merit Scholarships. For **sophomores**, the PSAT is taken to practice test-taking skills, help students determine AP courses that may be right for him/her, and help determine a student's strengths and weaknesses in the areas of writing, reading, and mathematic skills. **Sophomores cannot use their PSAT scores to qualify for scholarships as they can when taken as a junior.**

The PSAT will be given to all sophomore students from 8:00 a.m. until around 11:30 a.m., Wednesday, October 14th, at Kennedy High School. There is no need for sophomores to register for the test; they will all be tested free of charge in the large gymnasium on October 14th. They should **bring their school ID and a calculator to school that day.**

In September, all sophomores will receive a PSAT booklet that explains the test in further detail and offers a number of sample questions students can use to prepare for the test if interested.

As of the fall of 2015, all students will be tested using the new, redesigned PSAT. The new test format continues to test reasoning skills, but places a clearer, stronger focus on the knowledge, skills, and understandings most important for success after high school. The new format places greater emphasis on a student's ability to determine the meaning of words in extended contexts and how word choice shapes meaning, tone, and impact. The test measures a student's skills in two core areas: Evidence-Based Reading and Writing and Math and is composed of three sections—Reading, Writing, and Math.

Once students receive their score reports, counselors plan to review the reports with the sophomore class during SMART Lunch or a sophomore class meeting. This will help students better understand their results and how the information can help them make decisions in future academic planning. Your test results will let you know which AP courses you should check out.

Please call the counseling office at 558-2233 if you have any questions concerning the PSAT.

There are **two basic types of scholarships**. The **first type** are scholarships that colleges and universities give to good students as inducements to choose to attend their school. These scholarships are strictly for students with high GPAs and good standardized test scores. You usually apply for these scholarships simply by applying to the school, although you should check with your school of choice to make sure. Also, specific colleges and departments within a large university may have additional scholarships available that you need to apply for separately.

The **second type** of scholarship is the private scholarship. A foundation, a large company, a non-profit organization, or a church group may create a scholarship and set any criteria they like. They could ask for an essay, a speech, community service, leadership, or anything else they wish. They could decide that only left-handers qualify for the scholarship, or only students from particular schools, or of a particular ethnic origin. Each scholarship is unique, and the qualifying and submission criteria are too. With the above in mind, here are some tips:

1. **Get good grades!** No matter what anyone says, grades do matter. If you have a good or great GPA, getting scholarships will be a lot easier than if you only have a fair GPA. You can improve your GPA by retaking classes you may have failed or passed with a poor grade.
2. **You do not have to be an exceptional student to get a scholarship.** This may seem like a contradiction of number one above, but it's really not. Yes, GPA matters, but so do extracurricular activities, community service, hobbies, interests, essay-writing, and so forth. No matter who you are, there is a scholarship for which you could qualify. Good grades just make it easier, but there are many scholarships that do not ask about grades at all.
3. **Start early.** Apply for scholarships in your freshman year of high school. There are plenty of scholarships available to high school students of all grade levels. Also keep in mind that your freshman year counts more than your senior year because your senior year is usually not on your transcript when you apply for scholarships and to colleges.
4. **Apply at the right time.** In other words, don't procrastinate! Scholarship deadlines usually fall from October to March. Look for scholarships year-round, but be prepared to apply for many more during the fall and winter. Private organizations do not arbitrarily assign deadlines for their scholarships. They want enough time to evaluate all the candidates for their scholarship, and they want to notify winners before their high school graduations. Also, submit your applications early rather than just barely on time. It looks much better.
5. **Pay attention to details!** Read all the instructions. Do not allow your hard work to be thrown away simply because you did not follow the directions. If you do not follow the application's directions precisely, your application will be discarded.
6. **You do not have to go to a four-year university to receive a scholarship.** Are you planning on going to community college or a trade or technical school? How about cosmetology school? Whatever your dreams, if you plan to pursue any sort of formal education after graduation, there's a scholarship for you. Many scholarships are not just for students going to big universities.
7. **Avoid scholarship scams.** You never have to pay money to receive a scholarship, aside from postage to mail in your application. Also beware if you are told you won a scholarship for which you did not apply. It's most likely a scam. For more information on avoiding scams, visit this site: Scholarship and Financial Aid Scams - <http://tinyurl.com/avoidscholarshipscam>.
8. **Take rigorous courses.** Colleges and scholarship committees look at GPA, but they also look at the courses you take. A "B" in an AP or honors course means more than an "A" in a keyboarding course. Yes, go ahead and take the keyboarding course, but also take some tougher courses, too.
9. **Don't be afraid to search for scholarships yourself.** The counselors are here to help you. Feel free to contact them for assistance. However, there is much you can do on your own, too. You know better than anyone else what your talents and interests are. Seek out scholarships for which you may be uniquely qualified.
10. **Take the PSAT in October of your junior year.** Every high school sophomore and junior should take the PSAT, which is the National Merit Scholarship Qualifying Test, in the fall. While only juniors can enter the **National Merit Scholarship** (<http://www.nationalmerit.org/>) competition, it is good practice for sophomores to take it as well. Both the UofA and ASU offer very generous scholarships of over \$12,500 a year to National Merit Finalists and over \$10,000 a year to National Merit Semi-Finalists. That is more than the Presidential Scholarship at both schools! The only way to enter the scholarship competition is to take the test.
11. **Don't forget the Kennedy Scholarship Webpage:** <http://kenn.cr.k12.ia.us/academics/scholarships/>

Never Too Early to Look for College Scholarships



Is it ever too early to start searching for college scholarships? Probably not.

Once in high school, if you are serious about college, your scholarship search should begin. You don't need to have any idea of what college you plan to attend, nor do you need to know what you want to study in college, to begin competing for scholarship money. There is no rule that you need to wait until you are a high school senior to start applying for scholarships. While scholarships targeted toward high school freshmen, or high school students in general are for modest amounts of money, they are excellent motivators to keep you working hard through high school and help you build skills needed to get bigger and better scholarships along the way. Here are some scholarship opportunities that ninth-graders should explore:

- Students as young as those in 7th grade can win a **Young Naturalist Scholarship** (<http://www.amnh.org/learn-teach/young-naturalist-awards>). Students must conduct original research in biology, astronomy or earth science. Twelve scholarships valued at \$2,500 are available.
- The **Fountainhead Essay Contest** (<https://www.aynrand.org/students/essay-contests>) is open to all high school students and encourages them to participate in an essay contest on Ayn Rand's novel *The Fountainhead*. It awards 236 scholarships in amounts up to \$10,000.
- The **NRA Civil Rights Defense Fund** (<https://www.nradefensefund.org/contests-scholarships.aspx>) gives \$1,000 awards to the students who win its writing contest. Students in 9th and 10th grades are judged separately from those in 11th and 12th, and there are runner-up awards as well.
- The **American Legion** has several scholarships available, including the National High School Oratorical Contest (<http://www.legion.org/scholarships/oratorical>) which is open to high school students. Students can win up to \$18,000 in this speech contest.
- Budding poets should compete in the **National High School Poetry Contest** (<http://www.highschoolpoetrycontest.com>). Any high school student can submit an unpublished poem of less than 20 lines for a chance to win \$1,500.
- **AXA Achievement Community Scholarships** (<https://us.axa.com/axa-foundation/about.html>) offers high school students in every state the chance to compete for scholarships of as much \$25,000. Students must show ambition, drive and determination to reach goals; respect for self, family and community; and the ability to succeed in college.
- High School Students interested in media should compete for the **Courageous Persuaders Scholarships** (<http://www.courageouspersuaders.com/contest.htm>) in which they must create a 30-second TV commercial targeted at discouraging middle school students from underage drinking. Students can win up to \$3,000.
- The **Christophers organization** has an Annual Poster Contest (<http://www.christophers.org/Page.aspx?pid=274>) for students in grades 9 through 12. Students can win up to \$1,000 for the best original poster with the "You Can Make a Difference" theme.
- High school students can compete in the **National Peace Essay Contest** (<http://tinyurl.com/ntlpeace>) in which first-place state winners receive \$1,000 and are invited to Washington for a five-day awards program.

In addition to applying for scholarship contests as early as your freshman year of high school, you should also realize that what you do this year will weigh heavily on your future college career. If you don't begin high school by taking a rigorous course of study and participating in extracurricular activities, you may find that you already have eliminated your chances of standing out in high school.

By **Andrea Hermitt** (<http://www.dailyfinance.com/2010/12/22/never-too-early-to-look-for-college-scholarships/>)