



PREPPING FOR COLLEGE



FAFSA AND FINANCIAL AID FOR SENIORS

Opens: October 1st

Deadline: March 2

IN ORDER TO RECEIVE ANY TYPE OF FINANCIAL AID, YOU MUST COMPLETE THE FAFSA.

**YOU WILL NOT RECEIVE ANY GRANTS, LOANS, SCHOLARSHIP MONEY
IF YOU HAVE NOT COMPLETED THE FAFSA.**

The Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) available online from October 1 – March 2, 2017. If you are planning to attend college next fall and hope to receive financial aid, it's important to complete the form and submit it as soon as possible, as some financial aid is provided on a first-come, first-served basis.

Here are some of the items you will need:

- Your Social Security number and your parents' Social Security numbers, if you are a dependent.
- Your driver's license number, if you have one.
- 2016 federal tax information for you and your parents if you are providing parent information. If you have not filed your taxes, you can still submit your FAFSA by estimating family income.
- Records of untaxed income, such as Social Security benefits, welfare benefits, and veterans' benefits for you and your parents.
- Students should check with each college to see if there are additional documents that need to be filed.

Steps in applying for financial aid:

- Visit fafsa.ed.gov (NOT fafsa.com) to get started. The deadline to submit the FAFSA is March 2, 2017.
- File the FAFSA as soon as possible. You may file before your tax returns are available by estimating your 2016 income, then log back into fafsa.ed.gov to add the actual figures.
- Give your Cal Grant forms to Mrs. Lajoie for GPA verification. She will be sending the GPA's electronically.
- Apply for scholarships and grants in addition to any aid your college offers.
- Keep track of progress. Monitor all information you receive from individual colleges regarding fees, payment schedules, etc.
- Federal Financial Aid programs include – Federal Direct Loans, Federal Pell Grant, Federal Perkins Loan Program, Federal PLUS, Federal Subsidized Stafford Loans, Federal Unsubsidized Stafford Loans and Federal Work Study.
- Complete the CCS Profile if you are applying to a private university. This is similar to the FAFSA with more detailed information.



SENIOR YEAR COLLEGE PLANNING CALENDAR

During your senior year, you will finalize your college choice. This year is filled with admission applications, scholarship essays, financial aid information and the need to meet deadlines. Throughout your senior year, continue to build your resume by achieving academic success, as well as participating in extra-curricular activities. Colleges are very interested in well-rounded students.

DECEMBER

- ◆ December 2nd SAT.
- ◆ December 9th ACT.
- ◆ You and your parents need to sign up for a PIN to complete your FAFSA online.
- ◆ Finalize admissions applications for any private colleges
- ◆ Urge your parents to file their taxes as soon as possible after January 1st.
- ◆ Research and apply for other financial aid, including grants and scholarships.
- ◆ Watch for early admissions notices (they tend to arrive in December or January).

FEBRUARY

- ◆ Be mindful of deadlines. Always submit information on time.
- ◆ Watch for notices indicating your Student Aid Report (SAR) from the FAFSA is ready.
- ◆ Review your SAR for errors and make any corrections as indicated.
- ◆ Rank your top school choices. Continue to work hard in your classes. Don't get "senioritis."

MARCH

- ◆ March 2nd FAFSA deadline.
- ◆ Check with the financial aid offices to ensure your paperwork is complete. Submit tax forms if needed.
- ◆ Narrow your school choices and make campus visits.
- ◆ Be on the lookout for acceptance letters

APRIL

- ◆ Compare financial aid award letters.
- ◆ Make your final school decision and mail deposits, as required. Check with the institution for the absolute latest date you may make this decision.
- ◆ Check with the school you've chosen about returning financial aid award letters.
- ◆ Notify the schools you have chosen NOT to attend. Be sure the financial aid award is sufficient before notifying these schools.
- ◆ Plan for registration, orientation, and housing, and mark your calendar with important dates.

MAY

- ◆ Be aware of any summer orientation sessions that you must attend at the school in which you will enroll, and make plans accordingly.
- ◆ Finalize your summer job plans, and make a plan for saving a portion of your summer earnings.
- ◆ Prepare a realistic student budget.
- ◆ Follow up with your high school to ensure Mrs. Lajoie forwards your final school transcripts to the college.

JUNE

- ◆ Plan for college transportation.
- ◆ Notify the school counseling office where to send your final transcript
- ◆ Follow up with the financial aid office to ensure all paperwork is complete.
- ◆ Save money from your summer job.
- ◆ Send "thank you notes" to everyone who helped you plan and prepare for college.



Scholarship Opportunities

The 2018 Ventura County Community Foundation Scholarship Program applications are now available on the VCCF website! Visit www.vccf.org then click on "Apply/Donate to a Scholarship" at the top of the page to follow the steps for online registration, to download the 2018 Scholarship Guidelines (describing the eligibility criteria for each scholarship offered this year), and to learn the details of this year's program. There is a Frequently Asked Questions (pages 16-18) in the 2017 Scholarship Guidelines document. This year the entire application process will be online. Students create an account at the site using their email address and creating a password. The process is pretty self-explanatory. The process begins with a questionnaire that helps the program determine eligibility. Students respond to a series of questions and then move on to complete the rest of the application.

Every student will need to download and complete the 2018 Scholarship Application Activities & Work Summary. When they get to that part of the application, there is a link to this document. They will download the form and complete it, and then upload it to their STARS Online application using the Upload Documents Tab part of their application. Students who are applying for scholarships requiring demonstration of financial need must download the 2018 Financial Aid Assistance Questionnaire, complete and sign the form, and then upload that in the Upload Documents Tab of their online scholarship. The upload tab part is where they upload their transcript of all work to date as well.

There is a separate tab for requesting Letters of Recommendation. All applicants have to submit two letters of recommendation. They will need to have the email addresses of their proposed recommenders in order to request the letters. At least one of the two letters must be from a current faculty member – that is, someone who is teaching at the school the applicant currently attends. The other can be from a counselor, other teacher, employer, or volunteer supervisor. There are two exceptions to this rule: applicants for the Cheryl Shearer Scholarship and/or the Ventura County Career and Technical Education Scholarship may not be currently enrolled in college. If this is the case for either of these scholarships, VCCF will accept letters from current and past employers. For applicants to the TEACH Scholarships (for current/former foster youth), letters may be from social workers, counselors, and others. If TEACH applicants wish to be considered for other VCCF scholarships, they should ask one current teacher for a letter of recommendation to go with their packet. All applicants have to submit two letters of recommendation. The 2018 Scholarship Guidelines are posted on the VCCF website as a PDF. We encourage you to download this document as it lists the current opportunities as well as eligibility criteria. The deadline for applications is January 28, 2018.

Stephen J. Brady Scholarship - \$5000, 5 awards. Applicants must have demonstrated on-going commitment to their community by performing unpaid volunteer services impacting hunger in the US within the last 12 months. Added consideration is given to students working to fight childhood hunger. <http://www.studentscholarships.org/scholarship.php>. Deadline: December 4, 2016.

Davidson Fellows Scholarships - \$50,000, 20 awards. Applicants must be US citizens, or a permanent resident of the US, have completed significant work in the submission categories, be able to demonstrate that the work is his or her own creation. <http://www.studentscholarships.org/scholarship.php>. Deadline: February 5, 2018.

Gilbraitti Scholarship - \$500, 1 award. Applicants must be attending college in the Fall of 2018. <http://mortgagebrokerslangley.ca/mortgagecompany.php>. Deadline: February 26, 2018.

BigSun Organization Scholarship - \$500, 1 award. Applicants must be student athletes. <http://bigsunathletics.com/>. Deadline: June 18, 2018.

GE-Reagan Foundation Scholarship - \$10,000 (renewable up to \$40,000 per student). High school students who embody the characteristics of President Ronald Reagan at school, in the community, in the workplace and at home. Looking for students with leadership, drive, integrity, citizenship. www.reaganfoundation.org/scholarships. Deadline: January 7, 2018.

Ronald McDonald House Charities. The RMHC seeks to invest in students who are exemplary role models in their communities and have the initiative to fulfill their educational goals. <http://rmhc.org>. Deadline: January 15, 2018.

CA Association of Collectors - \$2,500, \$2,000, \$1,500 awards. One page application and a 700-1,000 word essay on "The importance of establishing and maintaining good financial credit during your college years." www.cacesf.org. Email entries to scholarship@cacollectors.net. Deadline: January 14, 2018.

Edison International - \$40,000 (multiple scholarships). High school seniors planning to study science, math, engineering or technology. www.scholarshipamerica.org/edisonscholars. Deadline: January 8, 2018.



Scholarship Opportunities

Elks Legacy Award – 250 \$4,000 awards will be given. Must be a college-bound high school senior and child or grandchild of an Elks member. Students will be judged on knowledge, charity, community service and integrity. Deadline: January 29, 2018. www.elks.org/enf/scholars.

Elks Most Valuable Student Award – 500 awards will be given in various amounts. Must be a high school senior and US citizen. Applicants will be judged on scholarship, leadership, financial need. Deadline: December 4, 2018. www.elks.org/enf/scholars.

Lucille Rader Scholarship – Two \$3,000 scholarships will be given. Applicants must be female, Catholic students of strong moral character with a minimum, unweighted GPA of 3.2, who compete on a team sport and attend a Catholic school within the Archdiocese of Los Angeles. Deadline: April 1, 2018. See Mrs. Lajoie for application.

Gene Haas/SME Education Foundation Scholarships - Graduating high school seniors who want to pursue an associate degree or technology certificate in machining, are eligible for the one-year scholarship. Award amounts will range from \$1,000 to \$2,500 for each scholarship, depending on the cost of the applicants program. Visit <http://www.smeeef.org/scholarships/page/gene-haas-machine-technology-scholarships> for application information.

Soroptimist International of Ventura - \$1500. Award given to girls 14-17 who are active in volunteer community service and who reside in Ventura. See Mrs. Lajoie for application. Deadline: January 1, 2018.

The Italian Catholic Federation – Multiple \$400 scholarships. Applicants must be Roman Catholic graduating seniors of Italian descent with a GPA of at least 3.2. www.ICF.org. Deadline is March 11, 2018.

Santa Clara Valley Wellness Foundation – Four \$500 scholarships available. Students must be interested in the health field of study. Graduating seniors who have resided in Fillmore, Piru or Santa Paula for at least 3 years. See Mrs. Lajoie for application. Deadline: March 4, 2018.

Ventura County Chinese-American Association - College bound senior, SAT/ACT scores. Have played a role in promoting the understanding of Chinese cultural heritage and/or give suggestions to VCCA how it can improve the harmony between ethnic groups in a multicultural community. See Mrs. Lajoie for application. Deadline: April 1, 2018

JUNIORS – JUMP-START YOUR COLLEGE PLANNING

Ideally, you've already been thinking about college and investigating your choices, but now is the time for action. Just ask any senior. Time goes by very quickly.

Here are some things to do:

- ◆ Continue to take challenging courses and do well in them! Your grades from this year and last year will determine your college application GPA.
- ◆ Begin to make a preliminary list of colleges you would like to investigate further. Surf the Internet and use college resources in the counseling office or library.
- ◆ Make plans to visit colleges this spring when classes are in session.
- ◆ Start or update an academic resume/brag sheet.
- ◆ Plan to register for the SAT and/or the ACT and take it in the Spring.

SAT

March 10 – Register by February 9

May 5 – Register by April 6

June 2 – Register by May 3

ACT

February 10 – Register by January 12

April 14 – Register by March 9

June 9 – Register by May 4

July 14 – Register by June 15