College grant and scholarship information

DC Office of the State Superintendent of Education is hosting a College Application and Exploration Month. **November 1 to 30.** [Register today](#)!

FAFSA: The Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) is a free online application for college financial aid eligibility. It is used by schools to put together your federal student aid package. This package can include grants for college, work-study, federal student loans, and even state and school financial aid. You must complete the FASFA if you want to apply for federal and state financial aid. Many colleges and universities, especially public institutions, also require the FAFSA. **You must submit the FAFSA every year that you want aid.**

- **The best option is to complete the [web-based version](#) of the FAFSA,** known as FAFSA on the Web. It includes step-by-step instructions for completing the online FAFSA as well as pre-application worksheets. You can [obtain a FAFSA ID](#) to electronically sign the form. *If you have technical questions about using FAFSA on the Web, call 1-800-4-FED-AID.*
- FAFSA on the Web offers several benefits, including:
    - You will get your Student Aid Report (SAR) sooner than with the paper or PDF forms.
    - Your FAFSA will be more accurate, since the FAFSA on the Web has built-in edit checks to catch simple errors and help you avoid errors.
    - The online FAFSA allows you to list up to ten colleges, while the paper FAFSA has space only for four colleges.
    - ***You can now file FAFSA from your mobile phone.***
- **The best time to complete FAFSA is January 1ˢᵗ of every year you want aid.**
- **Documents you need to complete FAFSA:** The FAFSA questions ask for information about you (name, date of birth, address, etc.) and your financial situation. Depending on your circumstances (for instance, whether you're a U.S. citizen or what tax form you used), you might need the following information or documents as you fill out the application:
    - Your Social Security number (it's important that you enter it correctly on the FAFSA form!)
    - Your driver's license number if you have one
    - Federal tax information or tax returns including IRS W-2 information
    - Records of your untaxed income, such as child support received, interest income, and veteran's non-education benefits

    Keep these records! You may need them again.

- **Students who were in foster care must apply as independent:** An independent student is one of the following: at least 24 years old, married, a graduate or professional student, a veteran, a member of the armed forces, an orphan, a ward of the court, or someone with legal dependents other than a spouse, an emancipated minor, **someone who was in foster care at any time since their 13ᵗʰ birthday** or someone who is homeless or at risk of becoming homeless.
    - **Applying as independent means that you only report your information, versus your and your parent's information.**

ETV Education Training Voucher (information via the Child and Family Services Agency):

The Education and Training Voucher (ETV) Program is a national program for youth who qualify and are likely to age out of the foster care system. ETV offers financial assistance to eligible youth to attend an accredited college, university, vocational or technical college.

o Child and Family Services Agency (CFSA) administers the ETV program through CFSA's Office of Youth Empowerment. ETVs can be applied toward the cost of attendance at an institution of higher education, which includes colleges, universities, community colleges, and training institutions. An ETV voucher may be received more than once but the youth must re-apply each academic year. ETVs are distributed in order of application on a first-come, first-served basis, until the ETV funds are exhausted.

o The ETV program provides an eligible youth with financial assistance in the form of a voucher for up to $5,000 per academic year.

o ETV funds are to be used after all other forms of financial aid (including but not limited to DC ONE, funds through FASFA, and scholarships) have been utilized. The total amount provided may not exceed the cost of attendance at the youth's institution of higher education. Youth are responsible for all other expenses after the $5,000 cap.

   ▪ Example: the total cost of attending "State College" is $10,000; the student receives $6,000 through FASFA and $2,000 through DC ONE. In addition, the youth has received a $1,500 scholarship from the area alumni. Thus, the total amount of ETV that the youth can receive is $500 (i.e., $10,000 – ($6,000 + $2,000 + $1,500) = $500).

o **ETVs can be used for the cost of attendance, which may include the following costs**:
   ▪ Tuition
   ▪ Fees
   ▪ Books
   ▪ Room and board
   ▪ Supplies
   ▪ Transportation costs
   ▪ Computers
      ➢ **Note: In general, a youth who receives a desktop computer from CFSA is not eligible for ETV computer funds under this section. The only exception is a youth who is required to have a laptop computer in connection with a college major in a computer-related field may receive ETV computer funds for a laptop computer.**
   ▪ Dependent allowance
   ▪ Disability allowance
   ▪ Cooperative education allowance
   ▪ Loan fees
      ➢ **Note: ETVs cannot be used for the payment of past or current loans.**

o If a youth is enrolled for less than half time (as determined by the institution), "cost of attendance" includes tuition, fees, and an allowance only for books, supplies, and transportation (as determined by the institution), and dependent-care expenses.

o If a youth is enrolled in a correspondence education program, the cost of attendance includes tuition, fees. If required, costs shall include books and supplies, travel, and room and board costs incurred specifically in fulfilling any required period of residential training.

- If a youth is incarcerated, the cost of attendance includes tuition and fees as well as books and supplies when required.
- If a youth is enrolled in a study abroad program that has been approved for credit by the youth's home institution, the cost of attendance includes reasonable costs associated with the study program as determined by the institution where the student is enrolled.
- If a youth is receiving all or part of the instruction by means of telecommunications technology, no distinction shall be made with respect to the mode of instruction when determining costs.

- **Eligibility:**
  - For youth ages 18 to 21 the following criteria apply:
    a. U.S. citizenship or legal residency.
    b. Out-of-home care at the age of 15 years or older or adopted after the age of 16.
    c. High school diploma or equivalent, or general education development (GED).
    d. Enrolled in post-secondary school or training program as a full-time or part-time student.
    e. An application has been submitted to the post-secondary school or training program for financial aid.
    f. The post-secondary education or training was initiated before reaching the age of 21.
    g. Satisfactory academic progress (i.e., at least a cumulative grade point average of 2.0 on a 4.0 scale) or academic standing consistent with the institution's graduation requirements for the federal student financial aid program.
  - Youth 21 to 23 must fulfill both of the following eligibility criteria:
    a. Meet all eligibility requirements for youth ages 18 to 21 (above).
    b. Be participating in the voucher program on the date they reach age 21 in order to be eligible to receive assistance until reaching the age of 23 years old, as long as they are enrolled in a post-secondary education or training program and are making satisfactory progress toward completion of that program.
  - Students who were adopted from the District of Columbia's foster care system after age 16 and meet the same eligibility requirements for foster youth (above) are also eligible.

- **Application Process**
  - Apply [here](#)

DC TAG [students who graduated from a DC high school only]

The DC Tuition Assistance Grant is a grant provided to eligible DC students to help cover college tuition cost. DCTAG was created by Congress in 1999 for the purpose of expanding higher education choices for college-bound residents of the District of Columbia.

DC TAG provides grants of up to $10,000 toward the difference between in-state and out-of-state tuition at public colleges throughout the US, Guam and Puerto Rico and smaller tuition subsidies (up 70 $2,500 a year) to those who attend a private college in the Washington, DC area.

- o **The DCTAG application (the OneApp) opens on February 1 each year.**
- o **The deadline for DCTAG is June 30th of each year, unless the 30th falls on a Sunday, in that case the application will close July 1st.**
- o **Eligibility: DCTAG applicants must be:**
  - A US citizen or have an eligible non-citizenship status;
  - One who is attending an eligible public or private college or university;
  - A District of Columbia resident for at least 12 consecutive months prior to the applicant's first time in college and maintain continued domicile throughout the applicant's college matriculation (NOTE: Dependent students' (under age 24) domicile is established though the parent or guardian);
  - Not in a defaulted status with federal student loans;
  - A high school graduate or a General Equivalency Diploma (GED) recipient;
  - Accepted for enrollment in, or working towards, a first undergraduate degree on, at least, a half-time basis as a regular degree-seeking student;
  - One who has not earned or received a bachelor's degree;
  - One who is not a professional or graduate-level degree candidate;
  - In compliance with Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) as defined by the college/university of enrollment or accepted enrollment;
  - 26 years of age or younger; and
  - In compliance with DCTAG maximum income thresholds. To determine income level by award year and first year of postsecondary education, please review this guidance - DCTAG Maximum Income

- o Apply here – **Please visit the home page before applying**.

GRANTS

Pell Grants

A Pell Grant is a subsidy the U.S. federal government provides for students who need it to pay for college. Federal Pell Grants are limited to students with financial need, who have not earned their first bachelor's degree, or who are enrolled in certain post-baccalaureate programs, through participating institutions.

- o To get a Pell grant, you must complete the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) [see above].
- o The maximum amount of Pell Grant funding a student can receive for the 2019-2020 award year (July 1st, 2019 – June 30th, 2020) is $6,195. This amount changes yearly.
- o **A Federal Pell Grant, unlike a loan, does not have to be repaid,** except under certain circumstances, such as:
    - You withdrew early from the program for which the grant was given to you.
    - Your enrollment status changed in a way that reduced your eligibility for your grant (for instance, if you switch from full-time enrollment to part-time, your grant amount will be reduced).
    - You received outside scholarships or grants that reduced your need for federal student aid.
- o *You are not eligible to receive a Federal Pell Grant if you **are** incarcerated in a federal or state penal institution or are subject to an involuntary civil commitment upon completion of a period of incarceration for a forcible or non-forcible sexual offense.*

SCHOLARSHIPS

There are many scholarships available for those who want to attend college. Scholarships are often targeted to certain groups of students (examples include those who will be the first in their family to attend college, come from certain areas of the country, plan to have a particular major, have a specific ethnic or religious background).

Scholarships listed here may be of interest to DCFYI youth. Sources for finding other scholarships are included at the end of this section. If you find others you think are particularly relevant, please share them with us!

Foster Care to Success

o   For individuals who were in foster care or orphaned while living in the U.S.
o   Application is open from January 1-March 31 annually.
o   Award is up to $5,000.
o   Renewable for up to five years.
o   **Eligibility**:
   ▪   Have been in public or private foster care for the 12 consecutive months leading up to and including their 18th birthday; OR have been adopted or placed into legal guardianship after their 16th birthday; OR have been orphaned for at least one year at the time of their 18th birthday and not subsequently adopted
   ▪   Be under the age of 25 on March 31 of the year in which they apply if they have not previously received scholarship funding from Foster Care to Success
   ▪   Have been in foster care or orphaned while living in the United States. *U.S. citizenship is not required.*
   ▪   Have been accepted into or expect to be accepted into an accredited, Pell-eligible college or other postsecondary school.
o   [Visit website](#) to apply.

The Herb Block Foundation

o   Provides financial assistance to students of all ages to attend community colleges in the DC metro area.
o   The Herb Block Scholarship will provide up to $8,000 per academic year and up to $16,000 over the life of the scholarship.
o   It is renewable for up to five years, provided that the student continues to meet all other eligibility criteria and has not reached the monetary cap.
o   **Needs Base**: It is a 'last dollar' scholarship, meaning that the calculation of a student's need takes into account all other financial aid awards the student receives.
o   **Eligibility**: Students of any age are eligible for The Herb Block Scholarship if they are high school graduates, GED holders, or current community college students, who meet the following criteria:

- Are US citizens/nationals, Permanent Resident Aliens, have been granted DACA (Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals) by the US Customs and Immigration Service, or qualify for in-state tuition under the Maryland Dream Act.
- Are a primary resident in Washington, DC, or Montgomery or Prince George's Counties in Maryland, or the Cities of Alexandria or Falls Church, or the Counties of Arlington or Fairfax in Virginia.
- Are attending, or plan to attend, on a full time or part time basis, one of the participating community colleges, and have not yet earned more than 40 credits towards a degree.
- Can demonstrate financial need and, if eligible, apply for financial aid.
  - Participating community colleges:
    - Montgomery College
    - Northern Virginia Community College
    - Prince Georges Community College
    - Community College of the District of Columbia
  - Deadlines (yearly):
    - Fall semester: March 1st – July 7th
    - Winter/Spring semester: March 1st – November 10th
  - [Visit website](#) to apply.

Unigo 10K Scholarship

- **Eligibility**:
  - Be thirteen (13) years of age or older at the time of application.
  - Be legal residents of the fifty (50) United States or the District of Columbia.
  - Be currently enrolled (or enroll no later than the fall of 2025) in an accredited post-secondary institution of higher education.
- Write a 250-word essay in response to the question on the site. Submit essay on [website](#) to apply.

Congressional Black Caucus Foundation

- For anyone wanting to attend college.
- CBC Spouses Education, Preforming Arts and Visual Arts Scholarships:
  - **Eligibility**:
    - Currently enrolled full time in an accredited academic institution
    - GPA of at least a 2.5 or higher on a 4.0 scale
- United Health Foundation Louis Stokes Scholarship:
  - **Eligibility**:
    - U.S. Citizen or Permanent resident.
    - Currently enrolled full time in an accredited academic institution.
    - GPA of at least a 3.0 or higher on a 4.0 scale.
    - Must be pursing undergraduate or graduate degrees in a health related field.
    - Desire a qualifying primary health care profession.
- [Visit website](#) to apply.

Websites for finding other scholarships:

➢ [Federal Student Aid](#) (office of the U.S. Department of Education)

➢ [Scholarship Search Engine](#)

➢ [Scholarship Owl](#)

➢ [Scholarships.com](#)