

Cuesta College Scholarship Workshop



Cuesta College Financial Aid Office

Workshop Agenda

Part I: Scholarships – Tips and Available Resources

Part II: Cuesta Scholarship Application – Overview of requirements and application process.

Part III: Frequently Asked Questions



Scholarship Search



- ***Start searching now!***
 - Early deadlines can be as soon as January or February
 - Cuesta Scholarship deadline: March 2, 2012
- ***Online Scholarship Searches***
 - Check how often the web site is updated (annually, quarterly?)
 - Be aware of Scams! If it costs money, it's usually a scam.
- ***Organize your applications***
 - Create a folder for each scholarship
 - Keep track of application requirements and deadlines

Scholarship Resources

- ***Free Online Scholarship Searches:***

- FastWeb Scholarship Search
- College Board's Fund Finder
- Scholarships.com
- Peterson's Award Database

- ***Institutional Scholarships***

- Check with your school's Financial Aid Office

- ***Local Public Library***

- ***Local Community Organizations***

- Spring 2012 Local Scholarship Flyer
- Local scholarships may have fewer applicants - better chance for you!



Recommendation Letters

- ***Select your references carefully***
 - Use current letters of recommendation. Any recommendation over a year old is usually too old.
 - Select a teacher/counselor/supervisor who:
 - Will write about your accomplishments in a job or academic setting
 - Will not submit a generic letter with no specific examples of your abilities



Recommendation Letters

- ***Things to provide recommendation writer:***
 - Plenty of time! —at least 3 weeks before deadline
 - Stamped and addressed envelopes for required forms (emphasize the application deadline)
 - Summary of extra-curricular activities and resume
 - Copy of your draft scholarship application



Personal Statement

- ***Answer the Scholarship Essay Question***
 - Ask yourself: What is the goal of the scholarship essay?
 - Give concrete examples linked to essay question
 - Try to incorporate your experiences
 - Vague statements or unexplained references to events, conditions or circumstances (i.e. “I had problems and couldn’t find a job.”) are not encouraged.
 - Support your statements of academic achievements with specific examples



Personal Statement

Proofread your application

- Spelling counts and will impact the outcome of your essay score
- Ask a teacher, parent or counselor to provide feedback
- Prepare to write more than one draft
- Always type your application
- Document your achievements
 - Hobbies and extracurricular activities count
 - Provides opportunity to be eligible for a wider variety of scholarships
 - Depth of involvement will distinguish you
 - When stating your activities: Quality is better than Quantity

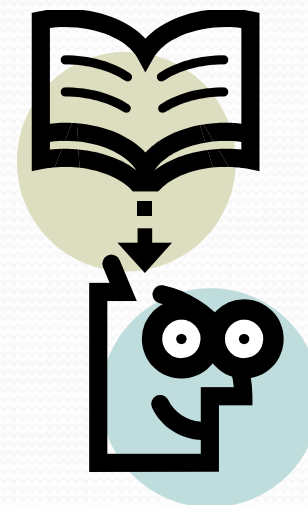


Scholarship Search Engines

- www.fastweb.com – Free scholarship search service
 - http://apps.collegeboard.org/cbsearch_ss/welcome.jsp - College Board Fund Finder
 - www.scholarships.com – Scholarship and college search
 - <http://www.petersons.com/college-search/scholarships.aspx> - College scholarship search and financial aid information
 - www.scholarshipmonkey.com – Scholarship search based on student characteristics
 - <http://www.collegenet.com/mach25/app> - Search scholarships that match your student profile
 - <http://www.scholarshipexperts.com/> - “Fast. Easy. Free”
 - <http://www.scholarsite.com/> - Free and instant access to thousands of scholarships
 - <http://www.free-4u.com/> - The National Data Base of Scholarships
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- www.blackexcel.org – scholarship resource for African-American and first-generation college students.
 - www.collegeedge.com – Helps students to select majors, careers, colleges and scholarships.
 - www.collegenet.com – Offers college search, financial aid assistance, scholarship search, and on-line college applications.
 - www.finaid.org – Tips, questions, and information regarding financial aid.
 - www.princetonreview.com – A variety of college information.
 - www.schoolfinder.com – Offers assistance on identifying interests, colleges, and scholarships.
 - www.usnews.com – Guide to the best college bets for the money, application checklist, and financial assistance.

Cuesta Scholarship Application!

- Deadline March 2, 2012
- FAFSA requirement
- 2 Recommendation Forms
- Personal Statement (500 words)
- Transcripts:
 - Current Cuesta students may print out academic history through my.cuesta.edu
 - High School students must submit HS transcript with Fall 2011 grades
 - Transfer students must submit transcripts from all previous colleges
 - Re-entry students must submit transcripts from their last school of attendance
 - Unofficial Transcripts encouraged
- Documentation for criteria (if applicable)



Cuesta Scholarship Rating

- Each application is reviewed by a committee of Cuesta College faculty, staff and counselors.
- Each application is reviewed three times. Final score is the average of all three scores.
- Final Score is categorized as follows:
 - GPA 35%
 - Recommendation Forms 10%
 - Essay 45%
 - Financial Need 5%
 - Special Circumstances 5%



Cuesta Scholarship Criteria

- Over 200 scholarships available!
- Approximately \$200,000 in scholarship funds for 2012-13 academic year
- Scholarship awards range from \$200 to \$2000
- Criteria vary based on financial need, GPA, major, extra-curricular activities, academic standing, gender, ethnicity, etc.
- Documentation Required for Criteria Verification
 - Veteran Affairs Letter
 - Physical or Learning Disability
 - Extra-curricular activities



Cuesta Scholarship Essay

- Read the prompt carefully
- Provide examples of academic achievements
- Elaborate on your education plan and career goal
- Discuss special circumstances and how these were overcome
- Link criteria selected with scholarship prompt
 - Discuss extra-curricular activities that you qualify for in criteria section
- Please re-read your essay before submitting it
- Remember the goal of the essay – Why should I be selected for this scholarship?
- Typed Only



FAFSA Requirement

- ***All students must submit a FAFSA (Free Application for Federal Student Aid) as part of the Cuesta Scholarship application.***
 - International students/ AB 540 students need to submit the “Income Statement Form” instead of the FAFSA.
- ***Cash for College Events:***
 - February 7 (Tuesday) 5-8pm @ Cuesta College
 - FAFSA Labs (available by appointment at the Financial Aid department)
- ***EFC*** – Expected Family Contribution is used to determine your Financial Need score
- ***FAFSA confirmation page OR Student Aid Report*** (page 1 only)

Frequently Asked Questions

- Do I have to attend Cuesta next fall 2012 in order to get a scholarship?
- Can I submit more than one recommendation form?
- How many scholarships does this application consider me for?
- What if I don't have a 2.5 GPA?
- Can the recommendation form be from a faculty member outside of Cuesta College?
- What if I don't qualify for financial aid, should I still submit my FAFSA?
- If you transfer, can you get your scholarship award at another college?
- When will I get notified if I get a scholarship?
- Does the essay need to be typed?





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