



Scholarships

Seniors

Set Aside Time

Looking for scholarships is like a part time job—dedicate time to it every week. Also, ask yourself if it's a good use of your time (could you potentially make more/save more working or taking classes for college credit?).

Fill out the [FAFSA](#) or [WASFA](#)

- This is a requirement for many scholarships. Application opens October 1.

Should I apply for this scholarship?

- Is this scholarship a good fit for me? Am I the type of person this school or program is trying to attract? Am I the type of person this organization wants to give their money to?
- How big do I think the applicant pool will be? What are my chances of getting this scholarship?

Where to Look

1. Go to the websites of the colleges/universities you want to attend and find out what they offer. The majority—about 67%—of scholarship money earned by Tahoma grads comes from the college/university they plan to attend. Often you need to fill out an additional application to be eligible for these scholarships. Apply early—money may be awarded on a first come, first served basis.
2. Apply for the [PTA Community Partner Scholarships](#). Start by creating a profile on <https://www.goingmerry.com>. Learn more [here](#). Applications usually open at the end of January of senior year.
3. Apply for the Tahoma Schools Foundation Scholarship in winter/early spring of senior year at <https://www.tahomaschoolsfoundation.org/about>.
4. Get discounted tuition at public colleges/universities in the western states with the [WUE scholarship](#). These scholarships can make out-of-state schools as affordable as in-state schools. Make sure your major is eligible. Popular majors such as nursing and engineering are sometimes exempt.
5. Go to the [WashBoard.org](#) to find scholarships that you qualify for. This website can be challenging to navigate, but it provides information about many scholarships **in Washington**. If you don't get any

matches, just search all scholarships on the WashBoard site. Visit this site every 3–4 weeks to see what’s new.

6. Are you planning to enter a high demand field such as STEM, health care, welding, manufacturing, or IT? If your family is considered low to middle income, apply for the [Washington Opportunity Scholarship](#). Many awards are given each year.
7. Check the [Scholarships page](#) of the Future Ready Center website every 2–3 weeks for new scholarships. Check similar pages on websites of high schools nearby—Issaquah, Enumclaw, Mount Si, [Renton](#), Kent, Auburn, etc. because they might have different scholarships.
8. Does your employer or union offer any scholarships or tuition benefits? Does your **parents’** employer, union, or professional organization offer any scholarships?
9. Will you be the first person in your family to graduate from college? You are eligible for scholarships for **first-generation** students. These can be offered from a variety of sources.
10. Is your family considered low income? Do you get free or reduced price lunch? Does your family use SNAP/Basic Food Assistance or TANF benefits? Would your family be considered homeless? Are you in foster care or a dependent of the state? There are many programs to help you pay for college. Many are awarded automatically by colleges/universities when students fill out the FAFSA/WASFA.
 - a. [College Bound Scholarship](#) (you would have signed up in 7th, 8th, or possibly 9th grade)
 - b. [Passport to Careers](#)
11. Search for scholarships that match something specific about you. Some examples:
 - a. Dependent of parent/grandparent who served in the military [example example](#)
 - b. Group you identify with (e.g. ethnic group, LGBTQ, religion, racial identity) [example](#)
 - c. Something you love (e.g. “scholarships for animal lovers”, poetry, outdoors) [example](#)
 - d. Disability
12. Do you know what you want to study in college? You might find a scholarship for that too, but most scholarships will be in high demand fields, which means career fields that need more people. In Washington, these include STEM, health care, some trades (welding and machining are big ones), and technology.
13. Look at big scholarship websites, such as [Niche](#), [Scholarships.com](#), or [Scholarship Monkey](#), [Bold.org](#).
 - a. Most of these are open to hundreds or thousands of students, so you need to determine if you are a good fit for the scholarship.
 - b. Many of these sites have the same scholarships.
 - c. If they ask for your personal information, they may sell it to other organizations.

College in the High School, CTE Dual Credit, and AP

If you have taken classes or exams, be sure to take steps to get credit at the school you attend. These are not scholarships, but can often save you even more money than you earn in scholarships.

Get Organized

Figure out an organizational system that works for you to track deadlines, order transcripts, request letters of recommendation and write quality essays. Here is an example of one you might use as a [Scholarship Application Organizer](#).

Follow Directions & Meet Deadlines

Students are often disqualified from consideration because they did not follow the directions or meet deadlines.

Essay Help

Get feedback from more than one person on your essays. Be sure to include the prompt when asking someone for feedback. You can get help with your essays from the THS Theme Readers. Try to get a draft to readers at least 2-3 weeks before the deadline. You can email them: Alexis Mix amix@tahomasd.us & Rachel Coy rcoy@tahomasd.us

Letters of Recommendation

Find out if letters of recommendation are required. When asking for a letter, pick people who know you well. Provide a copy of your personal data sheet to the person writing your letter (get a copy [here](#)). Give the writer a **minimum** of 2 weeks to complete your letter, and let him/her know the date you need it. Never waste people's time by asking for letters that you may not use or don't actually need. Show your appreciation with a thank you note.

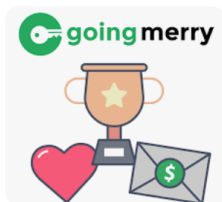
Watch out for Scams

You should not have to pay for a legitimate scholarship. Also, there are so-called scholarship search services that ask you to pay a fee up front and guarantee scholarships. These are most likely for-profit entities who put their profits before your educational needs. Protect your personal information. Some scholarships may ask for income information to determine financial need. That being said, be wary of scholarships that ask for a social security number, tax return, green card, etc. Large institutions—such as universities—will legitimately ask for this information because they have extensive security and comprehensive privacy policies. If a scholarship is asking for this kind of information, you will want to investigate their privacy and security before you proceed.

Freshman, Sophomores, and Juniors

For the majority of scholarships, you will apply during senior year, although there are a few you can apply for before that. What you should be doing now:

- ❑ Earning good grades, taking rigorous classes, getting involved in activities and leadership experiences, and doing community service are some of the factors that will make you an attractive candidate for many scholarships, but these things are not required for all scholarships. There are also scholarships for people with skills like welding or machining, not just for traditional academic subjects.
- ❑ Research. Make a spreadsheet, notebook, or filing system to help you keep track of scholarships you want to apply for during senior year. Most scholarships are due around the same time each year.
- ❑ Check out Raise.me. Starting freshman year, you can start logging your accomplishments and activities such as grades, leadership, jobs, attendance, etc. to see what scholarships you can earn at different colleges and universities.



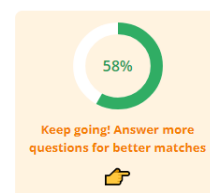
Setting Up Your Profile on Going Merry

Going Merry is a scholarship platform where you set up a profile and it matches you with scholarships that might be a good fit for you. Also—more important—it is where you apply for all of the scholarships offered by the THS PTA and Community—over 50 scholarships for graduating seniors.

Find PROFILE by clicking on the MENU button in the upper left corner <https://www.goingmerry.com/>

- Use a personal email, not your GoTahoma email. Your Tahoma email goes away after graduation, so use a personal email for all scholarship and financial aid applications.
- The more complete your PROFILE is, the more likely you will be matched with scholarships that are a good fit for you. HOWEVER, you may skip FAMILY information. You may not want to share this information, particularly if you are applying for PTA/Community Scholarships, because someone who knows your family might be reading your application.
- Add everything you have done throughout high school under SPORTS, EXTRACURRICULARS, WORK OR VOLUNTEERING, HONORS & AWARDS, SKILLS & LANGUAGES. Be sure to communicate your level of commitment (hours/week, duration of involvement, etc.) and leadership roles. Profile completion does not need to be 100% because there are some sections it makes sense to skip. For example, if you are applying to public colleges/universities in Washington, you don't need to take the SAT or ACT, so you would not fill in Test Scores in the EDUCATION section.
- DOCUMENTS:
 - TRANSCRIPTS: During senior year, you will want to upload an unofficial copy of your transcript. You can order your unofficial transcript through Parchment—click on the blue button on the [transcript page of the high school website](#). You should receive your unofficial transcript within 3 days (except during vacations).
 - RECOMMENDATIONS: Start thinking about 2 people who know you well and can speak to your strengths as a potential college student. Usually students have one recommendation from a core teacher (English, math, science, social studies) and one from someone else—this can be another teacher, counselor, coach, club advisor, employer, volunteer coordinator, etc. Upload these letters during senior year. You may use the green REQUEST DOCUMENT button to ask recommenders to submit a recommendation for you, but read details below first.
 - IMPORTANT INFO ABOUT RECOMMENDATIONS: If you want a recommender to write you an individualized, personalized recommendation, you need to reach out to them BEFORE you request a recommendation using the green button in GoingMerry. You should provide them with a copy of your [Personal Data Sheet](#) to help them write the recommendation. Give them at least 3 weeks to write the recommendation. If you do not follow this process, staff will not provide a personalized recommendation.

Profile Completion



Jump ahead to...

Contact Information	100%
Personal Information	45%
Education	62%
Sports	100%
Extracurriculars	100%
Family	60%
Work or Volunteering	50%
Honors & Awards	0%
Skills & Languages	50%
Documents	100%