

PANTHERS | SENIOR SCHOLARSHIP GUIDE

Find opportunities. Track deadlines. Take the next step.

Scholarships are money awarded to help pay for college or career training that generally does not need to be repaid. Small awards can add up—start early and apply throughout senior year.

1 | Start With These Scholarship Search Websites

- [Sallie Mae Scholarship Search](#) — Sign in or create an account and look for scholarship search resources. Build a profile and review eligibility and deadlines.
- [Niche Scholarship Search](#) — Explore scholarships based on interests, background, achievements, and other eligibility requirements.
- [RaiseMe](#) — Explore college-related micro-scholarship opportunities at participating colleges. Check each college's rules and how awards are applied.
- [Common App Scholarship Matching](#) — Explore scholarship matching and college affordability resources.

2 | Minnesota Scholarships (In-State)

[Minnesota Office of Higher Education](#) — Explore Minnesota financial aid programs, grants, and information about paying for college.

[GSL Counseling Site – College Information](#) — Start here for college planning information and resources shared by the GSL Counseling Office.

- Also check the financial aid website for each Minnesota college you are considering.
- Look for scholarships for Minnesota residents, incoming first-year students, specific majors, leadership, community service, and financial need.

3 | Out-of-State Scholarships

- Use Niche, Sallie Mae, and Common App Scholarship Matching to search beyond Minnesota.
- Visit the official website of each out-of-state college and look for nonresident scholarships, merit awards, departmental scholarships, and first-year student awards.
- Some colleges offer scholarships to attract students from outside their state. Check eligibility, renewal requirements, and deadlines directly with the college.

PANTHER TIP: College-specific scholarships are important. They may not appear on general scholarship search websites, so check every college on your list.

4 | How to Find Scholarships at a College You're Considering

1. Go to the official college website. Use the college's website—not an unfamiliar third-party page—as your starting point.

2. Find the Financial Aid section. Look for “Financial Aid,” “Scholarships,” “Paying for College,” “Student Financial Services,” or “Costs.”

3. Search for incoming first-year student awards. Look for merit-based, need-based, departmental, resident/nonresident, leadership, and program-specific scholarships.

4. Check whether scholarships are automatic. Some colleges consider you when you apply for admission; others require a separate application, FAFSA, essay, or recommendation.

- 5. Check the student portal.** After admission, some colleges provide a scholarship application or matching system through the student account.
- 6. Contact the financial aid office.** Ask what scholarships are available to incoming students and what steps you must complete to be considered.
- 7. Record deadlines and apply.** Scholarship deadlines may be earlier than admission deadlines. Do not assume one application covers every award.

Email template for a college financial aid office

Hello,

I am a senior at Glencoe-Silver Lake High School in Minnesota and am interested in attending your college. What scholarships are available for incoming first-year students, and what do I need to do to be considered?

Thank you!

5 | Keep Track of Your Applications

College / Scholarship	Amount	Deadline	Requirements	Submitted?

6 | Get Your Application Materials Ready

- High school transcript and GPA.
- List of activities, sports, clubs, leadership, volunteering, work experience, and awards.
- Resume or activity list.
- Essay about your goals, experiences, or interests.
- Recommendation letters, if required—ask early.

[Common App Teacher Brag Sheet](#) — Use this resource to help organize accomplishments and experiences for recommendation requests.

[University of Minnesota Morris: How Applications Are Evaluated](#) — Learn how one college evaluates first-year applications.

7 | Scholarship Checklist

- ☐ Choose the colleges you are most interested in attending.
- ☐ Visit each college’s financial aid and scholarship pages.
- ☐ Search Minnesota, national, and college-specific scholarships.
- ☐ Write down deadlines and application requirements.
- ☐ Prepare essays, activity lists, and recommendation requests.
- ☐ Submit applications and check your email regularly.

Important Reminders

- Read the eligibility rules carefully before applying.
- Apply for smaller awards, too—multiple scholarships can add up.
- Reuse and personalize essays only when they fit the new prompt.
- Be cautious of scams. Be wary of guaranteed awards or requests for payment to receive a scholarship.
- Ask the GSL Counseling Office for help identifying resources and organizing your next steps.

You do not have to do everything at once. Start with one college and one scholarship.
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