



## Guidelines for Applying for Private (External) Scholarships

- The following information is regarding private scholarships (scholarships not specifically affiliated with RRCC). RRCC does not endorse any private scholarships or organizations listed on its website. The list was created to share potential opportunities with our students, but we emphasize that students should still take precautions when giving out their information, as one would in any other situation.
- **Never give out your sensitive personal information**, including Social Security numbers, bank information, credit card information, computer logins or passwords. We have pre-screened the donors listed on our website, making all of them aware that they may not request any of this information from our students, to which they have agreed. Always use your best judgment, and if you are asked for any private information by a donor listed on our website, please contact our Scholarship Coordinator, Terri Cedillo, at 303.914.6674 or [terri.cedillo@rrcc.edu](mailto:terri.cedillo@rrcc.edu), to immediately report it.
- FinAid SmartStudent Guide offers one way to confirm if a business' telephone number is registered.  
"Call Directory Assistance to see if the company has a listing. If they don't, they're unlikely to be legit. You can reach Directory Assistance by dialing 1 followed by the area code and 555-1212. Use 1-800-555-1212 to see if they have a toll-free number."
- Many private scholarships abound. Common types of scholarships include the following:
  - The Essay** --the most time-consuming, but usually has the best odds; the type of application typically found when you directly access a donor's website
  - Promotional** --You make a video using a company's product, for example
  - Contests/Drawings** --easy to enter, so odds aren't good; likely they'll use your data to try to sell you something
  - Profile** --You create a profile on a site that allows donors to access your information-
  - Keyword(s)** --any word(s) that you choose may be entered into general search engines, such as Google, and produce results. For example: "Scholarships for Women in Engineering"

Good places to search include professional organizations, especially those related to your field of study (chambers of commerce, and The National Society of Professional Engineers are two examples); government agencies, including workforce centers and public libraries; clubs to which you or your parents/guardians belong (religious, tribal, health, sports, career-related, etc.); you or your parents'/guardians' employers or labor unions; associations related to your descent (Latin American Education Foundation, for example); your high school foundation; local businesses you frequent.

In addition to scouring local resources, check out some scholarship search engines. Some popular search engines include the following: [ScholarshipAmerica.org](http://ScholarshipAmerica.org), [CollegeBoard.org](http://CollegeBoard.org), [Unigo.com](http://Unigo.com), and [Fastweb.com](http://Fastweb.com).



## Tips for Applying for Private (External) Scholarships

- Prior to writing your scholarship essay, clean up your social media. When anyone searches for you, what they find should be professional (or at least not offensive).
- Create a separate e-mail account specifically to receive all scholarship information. This can help you keep your scholarship opportunities organized, and can help you make sure you are in the scholar mindset when you log in.
- Create a scholarship calendar that lists the application deadline dates, the scholarship requirements, the type and amount of each scholarship, and perhaps what the odds are of being awarded. This way you can prioritize where you will apply, and when. This will also serve as a quick reference if you receive a scholarship offer. You can verify that it is one you actually applied for (not a scam).
- Collect recommendation letters and transcripts ahead of time.
- Carefully read through all the application requirements to make sure you are eligible before you invest time in applying.
- Keep your audience in mind when writing your essay.
- Talk about what draws you to your college degree path, as well as what draws you to the college you're applying to attend.
- What are your educational and career goals? Be as specific as you can.
- What past struggles have you overcome? How do experiences from those struggles relate to your education?
- What activities or passions do you pursue? Are they worth mentioning in your essay?
- Note any volunteer work you've done, especially if it relates to your college program.
- What leadership skills do you have? Give examples.
- How do you plan to make a difference in your field, in the community or in the world with the knowledge you will gain?
- Proofread your application, and then have at least two people proofread your application and essay.\*
- Use 12-point font and carefully edit grammar and punctuation.
- Save a copy of your essays for future use.
- Attend an RRCC Private Scholarships session (TBA) to review this information as a group (with other students) and ask any questions you might have, or contact RRCC's Scholarship Coordinator, Terri Cedillo, at 303.914.6674 or [terri.cedillo@rcc.edu](mailto:terri.cedillo@rcc.edu).

**\*Free online proofreading resources:**

<https://www.grammarly.com/proofreading>

<https://proofreadingtool.com/>

<https://www.paperrater.com/>