

# Scholarship Searching Tips

## **Where to Look:**

1. Augsburg University Outside Scholarship Blog
  - a. <http://blogs.augsburg.edu/outsidescholarships/>
2. Your Employer
  - a. Starbucks, Fed Ex, Wells Fargo, Best Buy – all are companies that offer tuition reimbursement for relevant coursework
3. Your Parent's/Spouse's Employer
4. Your Place of Worship
  
5. Local Civic Clubs and Organizations
6. Non-Traditional Status
  - a. [Fastweb.com](http://www.fastweb.com) includes more than 50 awards that have a minimum age restriction of 30 years or older. There are more than 230 awards with a minimum age restriction of 25 years or older.
7. Volunteering or Community Service
  - a. The Phillips Scholarship: <http://www.mnprivatecolleges.org/giving/our-scholarships/phillips-scholarships/application-information>
  - b. For more ideas and scholarship opportunities, visit: <http://www.finaid.org/scholarships/service.phtml>

## **How to Write for Scholarships:**

Successful Scholarship Students...

- Vigorously avoid mistakes on their essays. Use spell check, proofread, and allow others to proofread for errors.
- Visit the Writing Lab at school to have a professional tutor read over your paper for grammatical and content suggestions.
- Market themselves well. Talk yourself up while using relevant, real life examples.

- Stay organized.
- Understand grades alone do not guarantee you anything.
- Do not apply to one or two and wait for the money to roll in.
- Are relevant: expand on the experiences that relate to the purpose of the scholarship.

#### Mistakes to Avoid:

- Not following the directions. Does the organization ask for an official college transcript? Then don't submit an unofficial one you printed online. Essay need to be typed and double spaced in size 12 font? Don't hand write the essay in black ink.
- Not including all required documents.
- Not answering the essay question.
- Turning the in the application late (by even one day!)

#### The Essay:

- The essay serves as a writing sample *and* an interview.
- Understand the purpose of the essay question, but also the organization itself. What do they value? What is their mission statement? How can you tie those components back into your answer?
- Although scholarship essays are personal in nature, keep the tone professional. Don't be afraid to be open and vulnerable about your experiences, but don't overshare.
- Avoid the sob story. You want to inspire the judges, not depress them. You can mention the difficulties that made you who you are today, but the focus should be on how you have learned from your experiences and how you've grown from them as a result.

#### What, How, and Why?

- Most everyone knows *what* they are doing. *"I am studying Social Work so that I can make the world a better place and help people."*

- Some people know how they plan to do what they want to do. *"I plan to graduate from Augsburg University with my degree in Social Work, pursue my MSW from the University of Minnesota, and then work for Big Brothers/Big Sisters of America to be a support to underprivileged children in impoverished neighborhoods".*
- Few people know why they do what they do. Judges don't care as much about what and how you plan to do something. The heart of a person is in the why. *"I believe that children, no matter who they are, what neighborhood they were raised in, and what their family is like, deserve to know that they are loved and supported. It is unacceptable that while some pave their way to college, many children go down the road of gang violence and eventual incarceration and potentially even death, all in order to "fit in". I believe community and social support, particularly among older mentors on a daily basis, is one solution to the problem of gang violence among America's inner-city youth. That is why I plan to study Social Work and eventually work for the Big Brothers/Big Sisters organization. This scholarship would get me one step closer to helping me prepare to solve the program I so clearly see in our inner-cities."*