Most families know about financial aid, which is based on family income and assets. Fewer families are aware of merit scholarships that are awarded without regard to financial need. High-achieving students who receive some financial aid often can supplement it with one or more merit scholarships.

Broadly speaking, there are three categories of merit scholarships: general scholarships, college sponsored scholarships, and National Merit scholarships.

General scholarships typically are sponsored by foundations, corporations, civic organizations, and professional associations, and can be at any college. Awards range from $100 to over $20,000, and typically are not renewable. The College Career Center (CCC) publishes a weekly list of deadlines and application criteria for these general scholarships. See [www.tjhsst.edu/~ccc/scholname.htm](http://www.tjhsst.edu/~ccc/scholname.htm).

College sponsored scholarships can be used only at one college. Typically, they are awarded to incoming freshmen. Often, they are renewable for four years if certain conditions are met, such as maintaining a grade point average above a certain level. Some colleges also have merit scholarships solely for upperclassmen, many of which are sponsored by academic departments within the college.

College sponsored merit scholarships are available at many but not all colleges. Some colleges also have honors programs, which provide academic benefits that can complement the financial benefits of merit scholarships. Honors programs may offer separate courses, seminars, dormitories, and mentors, among other benefits.

Many colleges offer multiple levels of merit scholarships for strong students with similar profiles. For example, Case Western Reserve University provides four levels of merit scholarships for strong students. Sometimes, the application process is designed so that students who apply for one merit scholarship are automatically considered for other similar merit scholarships. In other cases, students must apply separately for each merit scholarship, even if they have similar criteria.

Over one hundred fifty TJ students each year are named National Merit finalists, and are potentially eligible for three types of awards:

- The National Merit Scholarship Corporation awards some $2,500 one-time scholarships.
- Corporations and other organizations sponsor awards in varying amounts, some of which are renewable.
- Many colleges offer $500 to $2,000 scholarships to enrolling finalists. Some colleges offer larger scholarships for finalists.

Throughout this newsletter, we list the college sponsored merit scholarships in a boxed format. These highlight many of the scholarships available, but they are not a complete listing of every scholarship offered. For more information, check the CCC and college web sites.
College sponsored merit scholarship information is available from many sources.

1. **TJ College/Career Center**

   Start with the CCC web site, [www.tjhsst.edu/~ccc/meritscholar.htm](http://www.tjhsst.edu/~ccc/meritscholar.htm). The web site contains some information from the CCC merit scholarship database. For additional information, come to the CCC and ask for the binder with all the database information, and check the file drawer for college sponsored scholarships.

   The CCC database and files contain information on the most generous scholarships and/or scholarships that are most likely to be useful and of interest to many TJ students. For that reason, the database should be only the first of many resources you consult.

2. **College Web Sites**

   For more information about a college’s merit scholarships, search through that college’s web site.

   Sometimes this information is found under “scholarships” or “merit awards.” Sometimes it is under “financial aid,” or “admissions.” Sometimes it is part of the course catalogue or student information booklet, and some colleges put these booklets on their web sites.

   College academic departments (e.g., engineering) may provide information about scholarships for students who intend to major in that subject. In those schools, information on merit scholarships may be located on the web page for those departments.

3. **Admissions Offices and Financial Aid Offices**

   Some college admissions offices and financial aid offices have more information about their merit scholarships than you will be able to find on their web sites. For that reason, you may want to contact the college admissions office where your child has a particular interest, and ask if they offer merit scholarships and where you can find information on them.

4. **Publications**

   For parents and some students, books can be more user-friendly than web sites. Most books and other publications, however, focus primarily on financial aid. Since colleges change their merit scholarship programs regularly, use books only as a starting point and update and supplement them with other sources.

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### University of Southern California

**Trustee Scholars**
- Apply in fall
- Full tuition

**Presidential Scholars**
- Apply in fall
- 1/2 tuition

**Nat’l Merit Finalists**
- Designate USC as first choice college
- 1/2 tuition

**Leadership Scholars**
- TJ nominee
- $10,000

**International Freshman Academic**
- Apply in fall
- International freshmen only
- 1/2 tuition

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### Duke University

**Robertson Scholars**
- TJ Nomination required
- Full tuition
- Interview required for finalists

**Angier Duke Scholars**
- Full tuition, plus summer at Oxford University
- Interview required for finalists

**University Scholars**
- Full tuition
- Interview required for finalists

**Reginaldo Howard Scholars**
- African-Americans
- Full tuition
- Interview required for finalists

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### Boston University

**Trustees Scholars**
- TJ nomination required
- Full tuition and fees
- Early application deadline

**Alexander Graham Bell Scholars**
- Full tuition
- Engineering majors

**University Scholars**
- 1/2 tuition

**Engineering Scholars**
- 1/2 tuition

**Deans’ Scholars**
- Awarded by deans of each school
- $10,000

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### UNC-Chapel Hill

**Robertson Scholars**
- TJ nomination required
- Full tuition, room and board
- Interview required for finalists

**Morehead Scholars**
- TJ nomination required
- Full tuition, room and board, fees plus computer and summer stipends

**Carolina Scholars**
- $15,000 plus mentorship and other academic benefits

**Davie Scholars**
- $12,000

**Thomas Wolfe Writing Scholars**
- Full tuition, room and board
Applying for merit scholarships requires time and advance planning. A few are only available to students who are nominated by the TJ Scholarship Committee before a certain deadline. Some have separate applications and deadlines, which can occur before the early decision or early action deadlines. Many require additional recommendations and/or separate written applications. Some require on-campus interviews for finalists.

1. **Search for Scholarships in Junior Year**

Begin your research for merit scholarships BEFORE your senior year. As you learn more, you may develop an interest in a college about which you previously knew little. Since you do not have unlimited time to spend applying for scholarships, this research also should help you determine which merit scholarships fit your profile.

2. **Prepare Files Before Senior Year**

Organize a file for each scholarship during your junior year (or the summer before senior year) with information about the application procedures for that scholarship. Each scholarship will have different requirements and deadlines.

Begin thinking about which teachers or supervisors you will ask for recommendations, draft required essays, and put together required portfolios. A last-minute essay is unlikely to be as impressive as one that has been revised over several months. Similarly, a teacher who is given plenty of advance notice is more likely to have the time to write a good recommendation.

3. **Apply in Senior Year**

   A. **Update Your Scholarship Files**

   In September of your senior year, check the web site for each scholarship again to make sure that the application procedures have not changed.

   B. **Apply for TJ Nominations**

   Some of the most generous college sponsored scholarships require TJ to nominate a limited number of students. In these cases, the CCC asks interested students to provide information before TJ’s nomination deadline. The TJ Scholarship Committee uses this information to decide which student(s) to nominate. Limited nomination scholarships include but are not limited to the Jefferson Scholarship for UVA, the Belk for Davidson College, College Scholars for William & Mary College, Emory Scholars for Emory College, and the Morehead for the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.

   C. **Follow All Procedural Requirements**

   Most merit scholarships allow TJ to nominate an unlimited number of applicants and/or allow students to nominate themselves. Many require or encourage students to submit extra essays, extra recommendations, and/or other information.

   Sometimes, students also must apply early action, early decision, or regular decision before normal application deadlines if they are seeking a merit scholarship. A few scholarships require students to apply as early as September. Research these deadlines carefully.

   D. **Prepare for College Interviews**

   Occasionally, scholarship finalists are required to visit the campus and be interviewed, or to take qualifying exams. If you have gone this far, it is worth taking the extra time to do a good job.

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### Emory University

- **Emory Scholars**
  - TJ nomination required
  - Up to full tuition plus room and board

### Emory University

- **Emory Scholars**
  - TJ nomination required
  - Up to full tuition plus room and board

### University of Michigan

- **Bell Scholars**
  - Separate applications and deadlines
  - $20,000

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### Washington University in St. Louis

- **Danforth Scholars**
  - Nomination required
  - Full or partial tuition, plus stipends

- **Compton Fellows**
  - Full tuition plus stipend
  - Math and physical sciences

- **Langsdorf Fellows**
  - Full tuition plus stipend
  - Engineering

- **Moog Fellows**
  - Full tuition plus stipend
  - Biology and chemistry

- **Mylonas Scholars**
  - Full tuition plus stipend
  - Humanities

- **Lien Scholars**
  - Full tuition plus stipend
  - Social sciences

- **Dieckmann Scholars**
  - 1/2 tuition
  - All subjects

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### Case Western Reserve
- 45% of students receive merit scholarships
- Many different awards for academic excellence
  - Academic: Squire, Smith, Adelbert and Treuhaft (Full tuition)
  - Other Academic: Trustee ($25,700), Presidential ($20,800), Provost ($15,700)
- Creative Achievement
  - Up to $15,700
- Music/Theatre Arts Awards
  - Up to $19,400
  - Auditions required

### Davidson College
- Over a dozen types of merit awards, with separate criteria and benefits
- Up to full tuition and fees
- Some have early deadlines
- Belk and Erwin
  - Overall achievement
- Boker, Duke, Puckett, Bell
  - Primarily academics
- Bryan and Davidson
  - Scholar-athletes
- Cornwell
  - Writers

### Rice University
- Engineering Scholars
  - $5,000 to full tuition
  - Must apply to the engineering division
- Sarofim International Scholars
  - Outstanding foreign nationals
  - Full tuition
- Odell Lovett Scholars
  - Outstanding foreign nationals
  - Half tuition
- National Merit Scholars
  - $750 to $2,000

### Rice University
- Trustee Distinguished Scholars
  - $9,000—$12,000
  - For “students whose personal talents distinguish them” among admitted applicants
- Century Scholars
  - Students with research aptitude
  - $6,000 for two years, plus mentorships
- Trustee Diversity Scholars
  - $9,000—$12,000
  - “Diverse life experiences and contributions to diverse groups”