Project YANO

Project on Youth & Non-Military Opportunities



# College Financial Aid Resources

A list of resources to help students prepare for, qualify for, and seek funding for higher education. This will facilitate the transition and eliminate barriers for students from high school to college and university as they begin their career paths. Last revised Sep 2026.

## 1. Programs to prepare and help qualify for college:

- **Educational Opportunity Program (EOP)** and **Extended Opportunity Programs and Services** (EOPS is in California community colleges)—assists low income, first generation and historically disadvantaged students by providing support services above and beyond what is provided by the larger college as a whole. *Check with your college/university for EOP or a similar program.*

- **Federal TRIO Programs**—are Federal outreach and student services programs designed to identify and provide services for individuals from disadvantaged backgrounds. TRIO includes eight programs targeted to serve and assist low-income individuals, first-generation college students, and individuals with disabilities. to progress through the academic pipeline from middle school to post baccalaureate programs. TRIO also includes a training program for directors and staff of TRIO projects. http://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ope/trio/index.html
  *Check with your college/university for a similar program.*

- **Educational Talent Search**—a TRIO program that identifies and assists students from disadvantaged backgrounds who have the potential to succeed in higher education. The program provides academic, career, and financial counseling to its participants and encourages them to graduate from high school and continue on to complete their postsecondary education. Help is offered with the college application process.
  http://www2.ed.gov/programs/triotalent/index.html

- **Upward Bound**—a TRIO program that serves high school students from low-income families and families in which neither parent holds a bachelor's degree. The goal of Upward Bound is to increase the rate at which participants complete secondary education and enroll in and graduate from institutions of postsecondary education. https://www2.ed.gov/programs/trioupbound/index.html

- **California Student Opportunity and Access Program (Cal-SOAP)** – provides services and helps elementary through high school students who are educationally disadvantaged pursue higher education. https://www.csac.ca.gov/cal-soap

## 2. Federal/State Financial Aid:

- **Federal Student Aid:** https://studentaid.gov/

- **Federal Pell Grants**—Unlike a loan, these grants do not have to be repaid, except under certain circumstances (See https://studentaid.gov/understand-aid/types/grants#when-you-may-have-to-repay-a-grant). Pell Grants are awarded usually only to undergraduate students who have not earned a bachelor's or a professional degree (in some cases, however, a student enrolled in a post-baccalaureate teacher certification program might receive a Pell Grant). Pell Grants are considered a foundation of federal financial aid, to which aid from other federal and nonfederal sources might be added. The maximum award for the 2026-2027 academic year was $7,395. Pell grants can only be awarded for a total of 12 terms of eligibility. The maximum can change each award year and depends on program funding. The amount you get, though, will depend not only on your financial need, but also on your costs to attend school, your status as a full-time or part-time student, and your plans to attend school for a full academic year or less. Consideration for this federal grant is based on information about you obtained from the FAFSA website (https://studentaid.gov/h/apply-for-aid/fafsa). Note: As of 08/2021, Selective Service (draft) registration is no longer required for federal financial aid . https://studentaid.gov/understand-aid/types/grants/pell

- **Federal Supplemental Educational Opportunity Grants (FSEOG)**—are for undergraduates with exceptional financial need. Just like Pell Grants, FSEOGs don't have to be paid back. You can receive between $100 and $4,000 a year, depending on when you apply & your financial need, the funding at the school you're attending, and the policies of the financial aid office at your school https://studentaid.gov/understand-aid/types/grants/fseog

    - Consideration for this federal grant is based on information about you obtained from the FAFSA website, https://studentaid.gov/h/apply-for-aid/fafsa

- **Cal Grants**—Funded by the State of California and administered by the California Student Aid Commission, https://www.csac.ca.gov/. Cal Grants are one of the smartest ways to get cash funding for college. For starters, it's money you don't have to pay back. And secondly, it's guaranteed. If you're a graduating high school senior, recent high school graduate, or current college student, have at least a 2.0 GPA, meet financial and other requirements and submit two forms (FAFSA and GPA verification form) by March 2. Each of the Cal Grants listed below are for students pursuing an undergraduate associate's or bachelor's degree or a vocational/occupational training program. Note: As of 09/2021 Selective Service (draft) registration is no longer required for Cal Grants. Also note that grades for JROTC do not count toward GPA calculation. Visit www.csac.ca.gov for complete Cal Grant eligibility details and information.

    - **Cal Grant A**: Can be used for tuition and fees at public colleges and some private schools. To get this Cal Grant, you need to be working toward a four-year degree. If you are applying using your high school GPA, you need to have at least a 3.0 but if you’re applying using your college GPA, you must have at least a 2.4.

    - **Cal Grant B**: Provides low-income students with a living allowance of $1,648 in the first year of college and assistance with tuition and fees after that (same as Cal Grant A amounts). For a Cal Grant B you need at least a 2.0 GPA.

    - **Cal Grant C**: Awards help pay for tuition and training costs at occupational or career colleges. Provides up to $1094 for books, tools and equipment. You may also receive up to an additional $2,462 for tuition at a school other than a California Community College. Funding is available for up to two years, depending on the length of your program.

# 3. Non-citizen* / AB 540 Student Resources in California:

*Including undocumented students*

- What is an AB 540 student?
    - In California, you are an AB 540 student and exempt from paying the non-residential rate in enrollment fees, if you meet the criteria listed here: https://www.csac.ca.gov/post/california-nonresident-tuition-exemption
    - California DREAM Act Information & Resources /AB540 https://www.csac.ca.gov/post/resources-california-dream-act-application

      ***Please contact your California college Admissions Office to determine if you are AB 540 eligible.***
- Other scholarships/Databases/College info for non-citizens:
    - Scholarship List without Social Security Number (SSN) requirement https://immigrantsrising.org/resource/list-of-scholarships-and-fellowships/
    - TheDream.US National Scholarship https://www.thedream.us/scholarships/national-scholarship/

# 4. Other general student financial aid resources

- Fastweb: one of the most popular scholarship sites, but beware: they have been known to send military recruitment ads to your email https://www.fastweb.com
- San Diego Foundation Community Scholarship Program https://www.sdfoundation.org/community-impact/impact-areas/education/community scholarship-program
- San Diego PFLAG Scholarships for LGBTQ+ Students https://pflagsdc.org/scholarships/
- College Board Scholarship list: https://bigfuture.collegeboard.org/scholarship-search
- Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA https://studentaid.gov/h/apply-for-aid/fafsa
- A comprehensive source of student financial aid information, advice and tools http://www.finaid.org/
- A free scholarship search platform that matches students to scholarships that they qualify for http://www.scholarships.com
- College Possible. A program of AmeriCorps to mentor low-income and first-generation high school and college students through in- person and virtual 1:1 coaching support http://www.collegepossible.org

- A resource for searching for more colleges, scholarships and degree programs.
  https://www.college-scholarships.com
- Sallie Mae: tips on college financing
  https://www.salliemae.com
- Resources specific to California community college system
  https://icangotocollege.com/
- Research platform to find scholarships and grants
  http://www.supercollege.com
- The Gates Scholarship. a scholarship for outstanding high school students from low-income households
  https://thegatesscholarship.org/scholarship/
- Dell Scholars is a program that supports students with the tools and resources they need to graduate from college and build successful careers
  http://www.dellscholars.org
- MANASD Scholarship Program, for San Diego County Latina residents. For students in a community college, four-year university or graduate program
  https://manasd.org/programs/scholarship
- Free informative resource guide for students, parents, and educators
  http://www.maldef.org/leadership/scholarships/index.html
- $20,000 scholarship for college scholarship graduating during 2026-27 school year
  https://www.coca-colascholarsfoundation.org/
- Scholarship programs to support students with financial fees
  https://www.jkcf.org/our-scholarships
- Student Loan Forgiveness Programs:
  https://www.bankrate.com/loans/student-loans/qualify-for-student-loan-forgiveness-programs

## Selective Service (draft) registration and financial aid [09/11/2024]:

- While draft registration is no longer required for federal financial aid, the FAFSA form may still ask if a student wishes to be registered with Selective Service using the financial aid application form. This question can be left blank without losing eligibility for federal financial aid. Some states, however, may still be requiring SS registration for state aid—so, check your state's student financial aid website.