

**Paying for College: Scholarship Search**  
**9<sup>th</sup> Grade Career Development Advisement Activity #6**  
**Teacher as Advisor Program (TAP)**  
**Estimated Time: 30-45 minutes**

**National Career Development Standard/Competency:**

6. Skills to locate, evaluate, and interpret career information
  - Demonstrate use of a range of resources
9. Skills to make decisions
  - Identify steps to apply for and secure financial assistance for postsecondary education and training
12. Skills in career planning
  - Describe school and community resources to explore educational and occupational choices

**Goal:**

Students will conduct scholarship searches.

**Objectives:**

- Define financial aid terms
- List important components of a scholarship
- Identify interest, skills, and accomplishments for which a scholarship would be awarded
- Conduct a scholarship search on GAcollge411
- Identify and avoid scholarship scams

**Materials:**

- 9<sup>th</sup> Grade Career Development Advisement Activity #6 handout - **Scholarship Scams: Don't fall prey to a con artist**
- Computer with Internet access (It is not necessary, but beneficial, for the instructor and students to have accounts on GAcollge411. Go to [www.GAcollge411.org](http://www.GAcollge411.org) and click on Create an Account.)
- Projector
- Paper
- Writing utensils

**Activity:**

1. *Greet students as they enter the room.*
2. *Tell the class that they will be learning about scholarship searches.*
3. *Ask students if they know anyone who has received a scholarship. What details do they know about the scholarship?*
4. *In groups, allow students a few minutes to write questions they might ask to find more information about a certain scholarship. Ask a volunteer to record answers on the board. A list of items might include:*
  - a. *What is the name of the scholarship?*
  - b. *What are the requirements?*

- c. *How do I apply?*
  - d. *When is the application deadline?*
  - e. *Who is sponsoring the scholarship?*
  - f. *What is the contact information for the school or contact person?*
  - g. *How much is it worth?*
  - h. *Is it renewable?*
  - i. *How many scholarships will be awarded?*
5. *Instruct students to keep these questions in mind as you conduct a scholarship search.*
- a. *Go to [www.GAcollege411.org](http://www.GAcollege411.org).*
  - b. *Click on the green Paying for College tab.*
  - c. *On the left menu, scroll about half way down and click on Scholarships & Grants. Review this page with your students, explaining the difference between scholarships and grants. Remind students that today, the class will be focusing on scholarships, but there are other sources of financial aid, including grants, loans, and work-study programs.*
  - d. *Scroll down and click on Scholarship Search Tool (or Financial Aid Search Tool). Read the instructions aloud to students. Allow students a few minutes to list interests, skills, and accomplishments for which a scholarship would be awarded. Ask volunteers to suggest key words to enter into the search tool. Click on one or more of the matching scholarships to learn about details for that particular scholarship.*
  - e. *When you have searched a few scholarships, hit the Back button until you reach the Scholarships & Grants page again. Scroll to the bottom of the page and click on Scholarship Scams.*
  - f. *Distribute the **Scholarship Scams** handout to students. Read the information together.*

**Evaluation:**

Ask students to rejoin their groups. Instruct students to think about what they learned today. Taking turns in the groups, direct students to finish the following sentence:  
Today I learned...

**Modifications:**

If a computer lab is available, allow students to conduct their own scholarship searches after directions and a demonstration have been given.

Scholarship Scams: Don't fall prey to a con artist  
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Most information about scholarships is available for free on the Internet, from your high school guidance counselor, or the financial aid office of the college you plan to attend. Be careful about spending any money trying to track down sources of college financial aid.

Scholarship search companies may charge hundreds, even thousands of dollars to give you a list of scholarships. That's money better spent paying for college. With a little detective work, you can find financial aid sources yourself.

Your guidance counselor should have information relative to scholarship sources for Georgia students. After talking with your counselor, contact the financial aid office of each college you're interested in to discuss financial aid programs.

You should also attend any free financial aid workshops sponsored by your high school, local colleges and universities, or the Georgia Student Finance Commission (GSFC). Don't confuse free events with events sponsored by companies offering services for a fee.

The Internet can also be a valuable resource tool for free scholarship sources, but beware of sites that ask for a credit card number.

*Remember:* Web sites are not regulated by anyone. A scam artist can set up a great-looking site, rake in money, and then shut down.

## Common Cons

The Federal Trade Commission cautions students to be especially skeptical about scholarship search companies and Web sites that claim:

**"The scholarship is guaranteed or your money back."**

Read the fine print. To get a refund, you may have to receive a letter of rejection from **every** source on your list. That may be impossible to do if a scholarship on your list is no longer offered. Some companies have even been accused of providing fake sources to make sure you can't get a rejection letter. The fine print may state that **all** types of student financial aid are included, so if you get a loan but no scholarships, you can't get your money back.

**"You can't get this information anywhere else."**

Nearly all the information can be found by working with your guidance counselor and college financial aid officer, visiting your high school or public library, or doing your own free online at:

[http://www.gacollege411.com/FinAid/Scholarship\\_Search/default.asp](http://www.gacollege411.com/FinAid/Scholarship_Search/default.asp)

**"I just need your credit card or bank account number to hold this scholarship."**

Never give these numbers to a person or company you're not sure about. Someone with your credit card number can charge something to your card, and someone with your bank account number can make withdrawals — without your knowledge.

