



## Scholarship Opportunities

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With all the recent hype about signing day, Top Select Recruiting Staff wants to remind everyone that there are many other ways to earn financial assistance besides athletic scholarships. Student-athletes can earn scholarships through academics, merit grants and by seeking other creative opportunities. Need-based aid can also help pay the college tuition bills.

### **Academic Scholarships**

Most (but not all) colleges and universities offer academic scholarships to students with qualifying grades and test scores. Each institution determines what the requirements are to earn academic aid at their school. Usually, the higher the grades the greater the financial reward. College coaches are attracted to students who qualify for academic scholarships because this means the coach will not have to use his or her athletic scholarship funds on these players and can reserve that pool of money for other recruits. Applicants must submit their full application before receiving academic scholarships.

### **Merit Grants**

Like academic scholarships, each college and university has their own policy for merit grants and related financial awards. Many schools have merit scholarships that are given out on the basis of leadership and/or motivation. Most colleges seek diversity and many offer financial assistance to students who will help bring ethnic or geographic diversity to their student-body. College coaches can sometimes push for their recruits to receive additional merit funding so prospects should always inquire about these opportunities.

### **Other**

Here is a sample of [eight colleges where students can earn free tuition](http://www.wpri.com/dpp/mobile/local_WPRI_United_States_colleges_offer_free_tuition) ([http://www.wpri.com/dpp/mobile/local\\_WPRI\\_United\\_States\\_colleges\\_offer\\_free\\_tuition](http://www.wpri.com/dpp/mobile/local_WPRI_United_States_colleges_offer_free_tuition)). There are many websites such as [www.finaid.org](http://www.finaid.org) where students can search for independent scholarships. For example, there are scholarships available for left handed applicants and kids who know how to juggle. These scholarships usually only offer a few thousand dollars at best, but in the grand scheme of college bills every little bit helps. A great resource to research how to [find scholarships and college grants](http://www.careersandcolleges.com/) (<http://www.careersandcolleges.com/>) is Careers and Colleges.



## Need-Based Aid

Regardless of athletic, academic, merit or other scholarships, all college applicants should submit the [Free Application for Federal Student Aid](http://www.fafsa.ed.gov/) (FAFSA) (<http://www.fafsa.ed.gov/>) to find out how much federal aid they may qualify for. Even if a family will not qualify for any assistance, they should still fill out the FAFSA to have it on file in case their economic situation should suddenly change. Many of the schools with the highest sticker prices offer the most competitive financial aid plans. For example, at Princeton there are no loans in their financial aid awards and students only receive grant aids that do not have to be repaid. If parents of a [Yale applicant have an income of \\$90,000](http://www.yale.edu/admit/freshmen/financial_aid/index.html) ([http://www.yale.edu/admit/freshmen/financial\\_aid/index.html](http://www.yale.edu/admit/freshmen/financial_aid/index.html)) they will pay less than \$3,000 per year for their son or daughter to attend the Ivy League institution.

Less than one percent of athletes receive a full athletic scholarship. With college tuition costs on the rise do not leave any stone un-turned when exploring opportunities for financial assistance.

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