

**SUU**



# PAYING FOR COLLEGE

2025-2026



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An aerial photograph of a university campus. The image shows several large, multi-story buildings with brick and stone facades. There are numerous green trees scattered throughout the campus, and a parking lot filled with cars is visible in the upper left. The overall scene is bright and clear, suggesting a sunny day.

AN INVESTMENT  
IN KNOWLEDGE  
PAYS THE BEST  
INTEREST

BENJAMIN FRANKLIN

# INTRODUCTION



Our goal at Southern Utah University is to equip you with the tools you need to be successful in college. The Financial Aid and Scholarships Office understands that a part of that toolkit needs to be your education about the financial opportunities available to you. The unfortunate truth is that you will most likely face financial obstacles during your academic career, but having a greater understanding of your resources will only pave the path to success.

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Through this guide we will inform you of all the opportunities available through SUU to make sure that you don't miss any deadlines. Also, we will review ways you can tackle your financial burdens by applying for private scholarships outside of SUU. Private Scholarships are offered from various companies and organizations to help you cover the cost of your education. You just have to be willing to put in the work to apply for them!

I hope we didn't lose you at work, because we have a lot of tips to make this process a lot simpler and effective. Applying for scholarships is an involved process, and one that you should take small steps towards to avoid being overwhelmed.

Before getting started with applying for private scholarships, you should have:

- A commitment to investing your time into yourself and your education.
- Dedication to putting in the work needed for applying.
- Patience—it's a virtue for a reason. These things take time! Persistence.

We hope you are excited about the potential opportunities available to you for your future!

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# SCHOLARSHIP TIPS



## WE PRIORITIZE YOUR FINANCIAL SUCCESS AT SUU!

- The first thing you should do is **create a separate email account**, and get mentally prepared. Having a separate email account will ensure that all of your scholarship materials are collected in one place, and make things easier to manage.
- **Start identifying the scholarships** you want to apply for. This will probably be the most difficult part, but if you can stay patient, you will start to apply for the scholarships that best fit you. Make sure to refer back to this guide as you go through it.
- **Never set aside money to pay for scholarship applications.** There are plenty of free resources available that you can use. If you pay for scholarships, it is most likely a scam.
- **Always look for the "Https://"** and lock before the website address. This indicates that you are on a secure website, but also make sure to look for indications of previous scholarships winners and more information about the organization.
- **Be cautious when giving out personal information that can be used to identify you.** Scholarship providers may ask for certain things, and it is advised that you use your discretion. However, if you are asked to give your social security number or date of birth, proceed with caution. The only exception to this rule may be government backed programs.
- **Make sure that you are in charge, and on top of all scholarships you apply for.** Meaning that you know the deadlines, requirements, and have completed everything you need to be fully considered when applying.
- **Note the types of scholarships you are applying for, and what they can be used towards.** Does the scholarship only pay for tuition, books, or both? Those are important questions to ask, because you want to make sure you can secure as much funding as possible!
- It is a good rule of thumb that the scholarship applications that require you to put in work are the most rewarding. **Less work may mean there is a higher likelihood that it is competitive or a scam.** Be cautious and strategic!

# SUU SCHOLARSHIP OPPORTUNITIES

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## PREPARE

One of the ways we help students to supplement their funding opportunities is by offering additional scholarships outside of your academics.

On November 1st, you will be able to log into your SUU Portal to complete the Departmental and Endowment Scholarship application. This application will go towards the following fall semester. You will find the application labeled as "Scholarships".

Scholarships offered through the Departmental and Endowment Scholarship Application are competitive, but the application does not require you to submit any essays. Departments control departmental scholarships, so it is always a good idea to start building that relationship once you get on campus!

Endowment Scholarships are opportunities offered to qualifying students from university donors. On November 1st, you will be able to log into the application to see which opportunities best fit you. These scholarships are awarded through an ongoing process, and are dependent upon availability. They are also not a guarantee, but a couple of things you can do are:

- Check in with our office once a month throughout the year.
- Contact your department directly.



## THORS'S PLEDGE

Your journey toward success is important, and Southern Utah University is ready to support you every step of the way.

We invite you to apply for the Thor's Pledge Scholarship, which can cover your tuition and student fees. To qualify, you must be eligible for a Pell Grant or have a household income of \$65,000 or less. This scholarship is available on a first-come, first-served basis to Utah residents who are full-time undergraduate students. The scholarship amount varies based on your federal aid and other scholarships, helping you secure the necessary funds for your education. Our pledge is to help you reach your full potential and provide the resources you need to excel in college and beyond.



## T-BIRD PROMISE

Southern Utah University prioritizes the success of students in all aspects of their education. For the upcoming 2025-2026 academic year, we invite you to apply for our T-Bird Promise Scholarship. The aim of this scholarship is to eliminate financial barriers for our underserved student populations to promote access to an equitable education. This need based scholarship can award up to the full tuition for the academic year. Apply by scanning the QR Code below:



# SUU SCHOLARSHIP OPPORTUNITIES

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## DEADLINES

The priority deadline to be considered for the Presidents Scholarship is on December 1st. Make sure to submit all supporting materials by that date to be considered if you are invited.

For any other scholarship, our deadline is March 1st.

If you feel that you have extenuating circumstances, and need additional funding please reach out to us!

## APPLY EARLY FOR SCHOLARSHIPS

Your Admissions Application to SUU is also considered your scholarship application. You will automatically be considered for the highest award you are eligible for based off of your cumulative unweighted GPA, your SAT, or your ACT scores.

Students who meet the criteria for the Presidents Scholarship for full-tuition will be automatically considered within a separate category. The Presidents Scholarship is awarded based on holistic selection criteria including your GPA, ACT or SAT scores, extracurricular activities, and class difficulty in high school.

We recommend that you always apply to SUU early, as we will honor the initially scholarship you are eligible for. However, if you apply later and don't do as well during your senior year you won't be able to be considered off of previous grades.

You can look at the selection criteria for each scholarship at [suu.edu/finaid/scholarships](http://suu.edu/finaid/scholarships).

If you haven't applied, feel free to do so at [suu.edu/apply](http://suu.edu/apply) or scanning the QR code below:



# PRIVATE SCHOLARSHIPS

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## ADOPTING THE L.I.F.E APPROACH

You need to take the right steps to maximize the amount of opportunities that are available to you. The process we urge you to consider is the life approach!

With the Life approach you will be able to tackle scholarship opportunities in a way that makes sense, and saves times. The steps you you want to take are:

1. **L**: Start searching for scholarships locally. Check with your high school counselor to see if there are opportunities through the district or the school that you can gain access to. There may also be opportunities that exist through local business that you should ask about!
2. **I**n the **F**amily: Check with family members or friends for scholarship opportunities offered from the employer or organization that they work for. It may help having someone who is already connected link you to new opportunities.
3. **E**verything else: Lastly, you will want to apply through scholarship banks that offer students scholarships on a competitive and nationwide scale.

We hope this helps to outline a process that is easy to follow for you, but remember that you have to adopt a method that works best for you. If you can maintain the habit of investing in your education, success is sure to follow!



# PRIVATE SCHOLARSHIPS

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## HOW TO FIND PRIVATE SCHOLARSHIPS

Scholarship Banks are repositories that you can search for scholarships nationwide and internationally.

Please remember that the following scholarship banks are not affiliated with Southern Utah University and it is up to your discretion which applications you complete. We are here to assist you through reviewing application materials, structuring your essays, and answering any questions. Never hesitate to reach out if you need additional guidance!

## SCHOLARSHIP BANKS

1. Fastweb.com
2. Cappex.com
3. Chegg.com
4. Scholarships.com
5. Collegenet.com
6. Collegeboard.com
7. Scholarshipmonkey.com
8. Unigo.com

Some of these sites may require you to create an account before looking at the opportunities listed. Make sure that you read all the tips and advice before applying.

It may also be useful for you to organize your scholarships in a way that makes sense to you. We have organized multiple private scholarships that you can apply for on our website. To get to the website scan the QR Code below with your phone camera, or visit [suu.edu/finaid/newstudents](http://suu.edu/finaid/newstudents).



# SCHOLARSHIP ESSAYS

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## HOW TO FORMAT YOUR ESSAYS

Most scholarship providers will require you to submit an essay or personal statement to be considered for their scholarship. You will most likely dread this part, but we urge you to push through it! A lot of scholarship providers will ask very similar questions, and you will be able to reuse your responses.

Here are some examples of essay questions you might get asked:

- How will the scholarship help you with your education?
- Why will the world be a better place with your degree?
- What volunteer/ community service have you participated in?
- How have your experiences influenced your perspective of “X” (politics, life, etc.)?

Your essays will should always make sure to:

- Fully answer the questions that scholarship providers are asking.
- Give an adequate realization of who you are.
- Show confidence in what you have accomplished so far.

Writing the essays are difficult at first, but with practice and patience you will be able to reuse, revise, and recycle your scholarship materials to make the process more effective. All we ask is that you dedicate 30 minutes of your free time once a week to investing into your future!

Essay format should consist of:

- One inch margins
- Direct address to the scholarship provider
- A written signature
- An easy-to-read 12 point font (such as times New Roman), double-spaced

## HOW TO STRUCTURE YOUR PERSONAL STATEMENTS

The personal statements may be requested along with an essay, or as the essay for an application. Make sure that you take the time to fully answer the prompts on these statements, and that you always give your best effort. Procrastination rarely delivers a great essay, so make sure you get a jumpstart as soon as you know what is required!

In addition, you will want to make sure that you get your essays proofread by friends or family. No one wants to give you their money if they see that you are not willing to check your work! Once you get on-campus, you will also have the opportunity to use the Writing Center to help format your essays. For now, check with a trusted sources to see if they can check your work.

Always put your best effort forward when applying for scholarships, and remember that you are competing against other students. Don't be afraid to put yourself out there!

# REFERENCES AND LETTERS OF RECOMMENDATION

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## REACH OUT TO TRUSTED RELATIONSHIPS

Many scholarship providers will ask for references and letters of recommendation. It is important to let those people know that you are pursuing higher education, and you need their help. With this you may want to reach out early on through email or in person, with your resume and experiences as well. Every reference you have listed for a scholarship should be aware of what you are applying for, and what your experience is so they can be prepared to give you a glowing recommendation.

## RECOMMENDATION/REFERENCE REQUEST TEMPLATE

If the process of asking for a recommendation is overwhelming, you can use the following email template:

*Hello Mr./Ms.,*

*I am planning to attend Southern Utah University this fall, and have been working on securing as much funding as possible before the academic year. I wanted to reach out to you since I am applying for outside scholarship opportunities, and many of the applications require a Letter of Recommendation. You have been a great influence on me in “X” time, and it would mean a lot if you would be willing to write a letter on my behalf discussing my work ethic and contributions to “X”. I appreciate your willingness to help in advance, and I have attached my resume to this email.*

*If this is something you are unable to do, I understand, and appreciate your consideration.*

*Thank you, and please let me know if you need more information.*

## REFERENCES ORGANIZER

Use the template below to record your references:

Name	Name	Name
Organization:	Organization:	Organization:
Email:	Email:	Email:
Phone:	Phone:	Phone:
Relationship	Relationship	Relationship

# WORK AND VOLUNTEER EXPERIENCE

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Certain scholarships may request that you list previous places of employment or community service efforts. Let this template be your guide to compiling all of the information in one place. You may end up using this information to include in your essays as well.

Organization/Company: \_\_\_\_\_  
Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
Position: \_\_\_\_\_  
Date Started: \_\_\_\_\_  
Date Ended: \_\_\_\_\_  
Supervisor: \_\_\_\_\_  
Responsibilities: \_\_\_\_\_

Organization/Company: \_\_\_\_\_  
Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
Position: \_\_\_\_\_  
Date Started: \_\_\_\_\_  
Date Ended: \_\_\_\_\_  
Supervisor: \_\_\_\_\_  
Responsibilities: \_\_\_\_\_

Organization/Company: \_\_\_\_\_  
Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
Position: \_\_\_\_\_  
Date Started: \_\_\_\_\_  
Date Ended: \_\_\_\_\_  
Supervisor: \_\_\_\_\_  
Responsibilities: \_\_\_\_\_

Organization/Company: \_\_\_\_\_  
Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
Position: \_\_\_\_\_  
Date Started: \_\_\_\_\_  
Date Ended: \_\_\_\_\_  
Supervisor: \_\_\_\_\_  
Responsibilities: \_\_\_\_\_

# FAFSA OVERVIEW

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Now we should review the options available from Federal Student Aid and how they can best serve you. In order to be eligible for Federal Student Aid you will need to complete the Free Application for Federal Student aid, also known as the FAFSA. The FAFSA application opens up each year by December 1st before you begin college.

When filling out the FAFSA application you will want to make sure that you have any and all financial information for your family and yourself. Typically, the FAFSA will look at your income and demographic information to determine what you are eligible for.

Your eligibility for certain types of aid will depend on a number called the SAI, or Student Aid Index. When you see that number, or hear someone refer to it, you can think of it as a generalized guess from the government of what you and your family can contribute to your education.

The SAI will basically be a benchmark by the government to determine how much financial need you have, and what types of awards you will be granted. When you complete the FAFSA, you will automatically be considered for 3 types of student aid. These include:

1. Federal **Student Loans**
2. **Work-Study Eligibility**
3. **Federal Pell Grant** and State or Institutional Grants that rely on the FAFSA



## COLLEGE FINANCING COURSE

Finances are one of the greatest factors affecting students' ability to pursue college. We understand that funding your dreams can be overwhelming, and the abundance of options can be difficult to navigate through. Fortunately, we have put together a course that is designed to help you prepare for your college journey, and we will be here every step of the way.

The course is a free online, self-paced course that grants you a college credit. Sign up for the course using the QR Code to the right, or visit: <https://www.suu.edu/finaid/newstudents/>



# FAFSA OVERVIEW

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## FEDERAL, STATE, AND INSTITUTIONAL GRANTS

In this section we will review the Pell Grant, and how eligibility is determined. The Federal Pell Grant may be what most people think of when they hear Federal Student Aid or Financial Aid. The Pell Grant is an award that you will automatically be considered for when you complete the FAFSA application. The FAFSA will refer back to the SAI, discussed earlier, to determine if you will be awarded the funding.

The Pell Grant is free funding from that government that is automatically applied once you start classes in college. It may be easier to think of the Pell Grant as a scholarship from the government based on how much money your family makes.

The award is a guaranteed award if you receive it, and it does not have to be repaid. If you are Pell Grant eligible and complete the FAFSA application early, you may potentially qualify for the additional grant opportunities starting at \$400 or more.



## FAFSA DEADLINE AND AWARD OFFER REVIEW

Each year SUU will have a priority deadline of May 1st to complete the FAFSA application.

It is important to note that not everyone's situation will be the same across the board. Different students will have different eligibility for federal aid based on the information reported on the FAFSA. However, you will be able to get an instant notification about your eligibility right after submitting the FAFSA through the FAFSA Submission Summary. This is a breakdown of your complete estimated financial award package before you begin college, and it will help you to be better prepared by reviewing it early.

Instructions on how to apply can be viewed through the following QR code or at <https://www.suu.edu/finaid/newstudents/>.



# OUR FINANCIAL AID STAFF

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## JAYSON MATLOCK

DEPUTY CHIEF DIRECTOR OF FINANCIAL AID  
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PHONE: (435) 865-8016



## DIMITRI RAMIREZ

ADMISSIONS FINANCIAL AID COORDINATOR  
SUU WELCOME CENTER  
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## SCHEDULE AN APPOINTMENT

We know that finances are the number one concern for students deciding on which college to attend. That is why our objective is to help you eliminate any financial barriers that prevent you from truly focusing on your education.

Please know that we are here to review your complete costs of college and understand what your true expectations will be. We can also assist in the process of completing the FAFSA application, applying for scholarships, and discovering new opportunities unique to you.

Over 95% of people that have a financial aid meeting with us have reported that we have been a key influencer in their decision to attend. We welcome you to set up an appointment with us virtually, over the phone, or in person to create a personalized plan just for you.

Feel free to set up an appointment at <https://calendly.com/suufinaid> or scan the QR Code that follows:



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WE LOOK FORWARD TO HELPING YOU ON YOUR JOURNEY!



# PAYING FOR COLLEGE

2025-2026

SOUTHERN UTAH  
UNIVERSITY

## CONTACT US

Southern Utah University  
351 W. University Blvd.  
Cedar City, UT 84720

<https://www.suu.edu/apply/>  
<https://www.suu.edu/financial/newstudents/>