

Financial Aid Cent\$: Information You Need to Know **Scholarship Essays: Master the Basics**



Scholarship season is in full swing! Numerous scholarship opportunities are currently available and may be found on the Financial Aid Office's website at <http://www.hsc.unt.edu/departments/financialaid/>. Most scholarship applications require essays. Topics, length, and format of essays vary and can make the application process daunting. Listed below are tips from <http://www.fastweb.com> to have your essay stand out from the rest.

The following steps will help you write a competitive essay:

Get organized. Begin by brainstorming ideas to the essay topic(s). Create an outline to keep your thoughts in order.

Develop a theme that fits the scholarship. Think about the kind of student the scholarship sponsor is looking for. Highlight elements in your essay that personally describe you and also complement the sponsor's requirements.

Be original and creative. Scholarship judges can read up to hundreds of essay applications. To catch the attention of a scholarship judge, you want to be able to draw in the reader right away.

Show, don't tell. If you are sharing a volunteer experience, for example, be specific. What duties did you perform? How did it change your way of thinking? What affect did it have on your life or the lives of others?

Edit and proofread. Treat your scholarship essay the same as you would any essay or paper for one of your courses. The reward is money instead of a grade. Edit your essay to catch mistakes. Ask your professors, friends and/or family to proofread for spelling and grammatical errors.

If you have questions or need additional support, please schedule an appointment with the Center for Academic Performance by calling the Student Affairs front desk at 817-735-2505. For questions about scholarship opportunities, please contact the Office of Financial Aid at 817-735-2520 or by e-mail at scholarships@hsc.unt.edu.