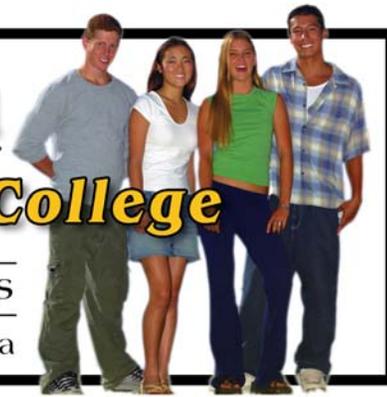


College Connection

Tips to Help You Get Ready for College

Spring 2005 Vol. 1: Issue 2 A Newsletter for High School Juniors

A Publication of Student Loans of North Dakota @ Bank of North Dakota



Time to Research Scholarships & Other Money

Your junior year is a time when many students start to think about life after high school. With so many decisions to make, it's understandable to feel overwhelmed at times. For those who decide to attend a college or university, one of the biggest concerns is usually how to pay for school. While student loans are a fact of life for most, there are other sources of financial aid available that don't have to be paid back.

SCHOLARSHIPS are an excellent way to find additional funds to go to school. A scholarship may be based on academic or athletic ability, employment, hobbies or other types of criteria. It's important to find out what opportunities you qualify for and to do your homework. Because scholarships are like getting free money, the competition can be fierce. Take your time and be original, you may be rewarded for your hard work.

Your high school counselor can be a great source of scholarship information.

Don't forget to check the local library and College Information

Service at Student Loans of North Dakota for information as well. Community resources, such as your parent's employer, civic organizations, local businesses, and corporations are also a good start.

The Internet has many websites that provide free college and scholarship searches, be sure to check them out!

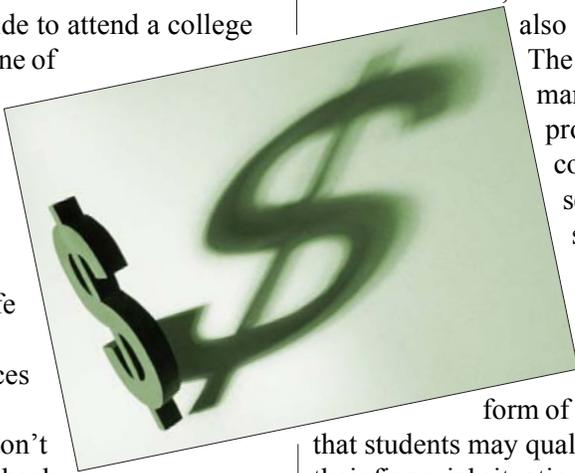
GRANTS

are another form of financial aid that students may qualify for based on their financial situation. This type of

aid is designed to help those with low incomes pursue their higher education goals. Unlike scholarships, grant awards are based solely on financial need.

WORK STUDY is a flexible alternative for earning money while working on campus. Most school jobs try to work around a student's class schedule, so work/study conflicts are kept to a minimum. Because schools are only allocated a certain amount of work study openings, it's important that interested students who qualify for the program accept as soon as possible.

As you can see, students have the ability to reduce the cost of college by researching these alternatives. Now is a great time to consider your options. Good luck!



Juniors

Making Vacation Productive

If you and your family have travel plans, use the time wisely to make casual visits and campus tours along the route. Begin to think about what you like or dislike about the college(s). Do they offer the courses or degree that you're interested in? Do you prefer a large or small campus setting? Is there adequate housing on or near the school? You'll save both time and money by combining your school related activities with your vacation plans.

Tips to Get The Most Out of Your Campus Visit

* Before you visit a campus, check out the school's website. Every college has designed a user-friendly web page to inform and impress prospective students. You'll learn a lot about the college and decide if a visit is necessary.

* Obtain current college costs. Your admissions officer should be able to answer simple financial aid questions about need and merit-based aid. If not, schedule a visit with a financial aid officer. **Student Loans of North Dakota** (SLND) can provide a "College Costs Sheet" upon request. This free information compares the college costs of schools in North and South Dakota, and some schools in Minnesota, Montana and Wyoming. Call SLND at 1-800-554-2717.

* Arrange appointments during the spring and summer with faculty and staff in your areas of academic and extracurricular interest. You might want to sit in on a class and visit with students already attending the school.

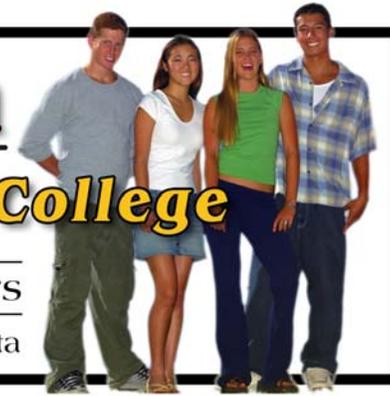
Order a
"College Connection Center CD"
for ND college information at
mystudentloanonline.com
or check out these other cool
Websites to get more info:
campustours.com or collegenet.com

College Connection

Tips to Help You Get Ready for College

Spring 2005 Vol. 1: Issue 2 A Newsletter for High School Seniors

A Publication of Student Loans of North Dakota @ Bank of North Dakota



Tackling the College Financial Aid Process

With only three months left of the school year, many high school seniors think they're on the downslide to graduation. But in the realm of college financial aid, things are just beginning to take off. In order to ensure financial aid is ready for students the moment they step on campus, there are some things high school seniors need to do right now.

1) Apply for a PIN.

Register for a PIN so you can sign your Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) form online. Both the student and a parent should register for a separate PIN. Get your PIN at www.pin.ed.gov.

2) Complete and submit the FAFSA form.

As soon as possible after January 1, complete and submit the FAFSA form. Apply online at www.fafsa.ed.gov. It takes only 7 to 14 days to process the FAFSA when you complete it online.

When filling out the FAFSA, the student and parent will provide financial data and other information. As a result of this, tax forms should be completed, but don't have to be filed, before the FAFSA form is submitted.



Please note that the FAFSA form is a FREE form and it is FREE to apply for federal financial aid. To ensure that you or your parents don't pay to have the FAFSA completed on your behalf, apply online only at www.fafsa.ed.gov.

3) Receive the SAR

After the FAFSA is processed, you will receive a Student Aid Report (SAR), which recaps the information that was submitted on the FAFSA form. Review the SAR to ensure the information is accurate. If you do not receive the SAR in four weeks, contact the Dept. of Education at 1-800-4-FED-AID.

If the student or parent provided an e-mail address when completing the FAFSA, the SAR will be e-mailed to that address. Otherwise, expect to receive the SAR via U.S. Postal Service. If any information on the SAR needs to be updated, the student and parent should submit these changes online at www.fafsa.ed.gov.

Information to have on hand when completing the FAFSA :

- PIN to electronically sign the FAFSA
- U.S. income tax return for both the student and parent (IRS Form 1040, 1040A or 1040EZ)
- W-2 forms and other records of earnings
- Records of stocks, bonds and other investments
- Records of untaxed income
- Current bank statements
- Business and farm records
- Student's driver's license and social security number

Tips for completing the FAFSA:

- Watch for deadlines!
- Watch for scams! FAFSA stands for FREE Application for Federal Student Aid.
- Use your full name, don't use nicknames. For example, if your name is Michael, do not enter Mike.
- Use your parent's mailing address as the student's permanent address.
- The student should enter his/her Social Security Number, not the parents'.
- If you provide an e-mail on the FAFSA, watch for your SAR and other correspondence that will be e-mailed to you. If you choose not to provide an e-mail address, you will receive this information via U.S. Postal Service.
- If you have questions about the FAFSA or paying for college, contact College Information Service at 1-800-554-2717.

Seniors