

2026-2027



**A RESOURCE GUIDE FOR
ALL THINGS
COLLEGE & CAREER**

Learn about the different college systems, financial aid, scholarships, military opportunities, career exploration and more!

Tons of resources to help you make your college and career dreams come true!

HELLO STUDENTS AND FAMILIES!

We hope this guidebook inspires you to begin planning for your future. Deciding what to do after high school can be one of the most important choices you make in your life. It is a decision that needs to be made after carefully considering what is best for you and your situation.

The journey after high school will be different for everyone, and it should be, as everyone has different interests and talents. Always remember that there are many people to help you along the way! Always ask questions.

We have packed this *College & Career Resource Guide* full of important information that will help you on your journey.

So...LOOK AROUND, HELP OUT, BE GOOD, FIND YOURSELF, SMILE, DO SOMETHING, APPRECIATE, LOOK UP, STICK WITH IT!

Contents:

- California Colleges Guidance Initiative (CCGI) and A-G requirements
- UC - University of California
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- College of the Desert and California Community Colleges
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- Middle Class Scholarship, Pell Grants, loans, financial aid calculators
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- CTE (career technical education)
- Resources and a variety of helpful websites



PLANNING TO ATTEND A FOUR-YEAR COLLEGE OR UNIVERSITY AFTER GRADUATION?

One of the most critical components of choosing a college is to be sure you have explored the type of career and college major you wish to pursue. Not all colleges offer the same majors. For example, if you decide you would like to work in engineering, you would want to apply to colleges that offer that major.

California Colleges Guidance Initiative (CCGI) is the key to your college and career planning. CCGI is a free resource for students with tools to help students:

- Discover interests and values **to assist in picking a college major**
- Find careers, colleges, or training to reach your goals
- Learn how to find money to pay for college
- Launch college and financial aid applications
- Track your A-G progress (required college readiness courses)
- Monitor all progress in one place!

**Register or log-in to your account today at
www.californiacolleges.edu**

- Go to californiacolleges.edu
- Click on “Sign in with Google”
- Use your Google log-in information to access your account
 - If you don’t have an account, create one using school & Google info
- Once logged in, explore the website!

Ensure that you take the A–G courses at your high school! A–G is the key!

Work with your counselor to get the appropriate courses each year to stay on track throughout high school.

- For a complete list of the A-G courses offered at your high school, go to the **University California A–G Guide:** <https://hs-articulation.ucop.edu/guide/>
- On the left hand side of the home page, click on **Search Approved A-G Lists**. When you get to that page, type in your school’s name and a list with all of the A–G courses offered at your school will be generated.
- These courses also satisfy the requirements for the CSU campuses and most private and out-of-state schools, but always check the requirements for the schools you are interested in attending.
- **Thinking about going to a California Community College?**

There are 123 of them and all you need is a high school diploma or the equivalent. Be sure to check the college’s website for information about required assessment exams, registration, and orientation. **Do your research!**
Go to: www.cccco.edu



UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA

A-G SUBJECT REQUIREMENTS

To meet minimum admission requirements to the UC system, you must complete 15 year long high school courses with a letter grade of C or better — at least 11 of them prior to your last year of high school.

Keep in mind that taking approved high school (A-G) courses isn't the only way to satisfy these requirements. You also may meet them by completing college courses or earning certain scores on various acceptable exams.

<p>A: History/Social Science, U.S. government, civics, world history, cultures, geography</p>	<p>2 Years of college-preparatory history/social science required, including one year of world history, cultures or historical geography, and one year of U.S. history; or one half year of U.S. history and one half year of civics or American government</p>
<p>B: English</p>	<p>4 Years of college-preparatory English composition and literature required; integrating extensive reading, frequent writing, and practice listening and speaking with different audiences.</p>
<p>C: Mathematics, algebra, geometry, intermediate algebra, or higher level mathematics</p>	<p>3 Years of college-preparatory mathematics (four years are strongly recommended), including elementary algebra, advanced algebra, and two-and-three dimensional geometry.</p>
<p>D: Laboratory Science</p>	<p>2 Years of college-preparatory science, including or integrating topics that provide fundamental knowledge in two of these three subjects: biology, chemistry, or physics. One year of approved interdisciplinary or earth space sciences coursework can meet one year of the requirement. Computer science, engineering, applied science courses can be used in area D as an additional science (i.e. third year and beyond.)</p>
<p>E: Language other than English (international language)</p>	<p>2 Years of college-preparatory coursework required (or through the second level of high school instruction) of the same language other than English (three years recommended.)</p>
<p>F: Visual and Performing Arts, dance, theater, music, visual art</p>	<p>1 Year of college-preparatory visual & performing arts required chosen from one of the following disciplines: dance, music, theater, visual arts (e.g. painting, web/graphic design, film/video, inter/multimedia arts), or interdisciplinary arts.</p>
<p>G: College Preparatory Electives</p>	<p>1 Year of college-preparatory coursework required, chosen from: courses approved specifically in the elective (G) subject area, or courses approved in the A-F subject areas.</p>

THE UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA (UC)

UC Campus Locations: Berkeley, Davis, Irvine, Los Angeles, Merced, Riverside, San Diego, Santa Barbara, Santa Cruz

NEW SUBMISSION DATES FOR 2024-2025!

Apply October 1–December 2 www.universityofcalifornia.edu/apply

- \$80 each application (fee waiver available for up to four campuses)
- 3.0 GPA or higher is required (A-G courses).
- Applications are available August 1, 2024 for the fall 2025 semester. Submission period is October 1–December 2, 2024
- Personal interest questions; NO letters of recommendation (LORs)
 - Choose four out of eight questions to answer. Berkeley **MAY** ask for LORs after initial submission of application.
- For prompts for the personal insight questions and additional resources, go to <https://admission.universityofcalifornia.edu/how-to-apply/applying-as-a-fres-hman/personal-insight-questions.html>

Exam requirement

UC will not consider SAT or ACT test scores when making admissions decisions or awarding scholarships. If you choose to submit test scores as part of your application, they may be used as an alternative method of fulfilling minimum requirements for eligibility or for course placement after you enroll.

What is ELC? (Eligibility in the Local Context)

The ELC program ensures that academically talented and deserving students from all over California have the opportunity to attend a UC school. ELC status adds value to your application and is one of 14 factors considered. ELC students not admitted to any of their campus choices are offered a spot at a UC campus that has space, if minimum UC requirements are met.

How Do I Qualify?

If you rank in the top 9% of students in your California high school class you may be eligible for ELC designation. This is calculated when you apply. You do not need to do anything other than apply to a UC. After submitting the application, you can return to the “My UC Application” web page to see whether or not you’ve been designated as being in the top 9% of your class.

Tuition Costs

Average tuition at a UC campus is about \$14,934. If living on campus, room and board will average about \$20,500 per year. Total cost of attendance averages about \$40,634 if you choose to live on campus.

Fiat lux...let there be light.



THE CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY (CSU)

Explore the 23 campuses of the California State University by location, setting, size, and sports. To find the school that's perfect for you visit calstate.edu and begin your CSU research today!

Admission Materials

Apply October 1 – December 2

Apply for admission electronically at [Cal State Apply](#)

1. Complete application for admission, including the EOP portion
2. Pay the \$70 CSU application fee; fee waiver embedded in application
3. Submit high school and/or college transcripts when notified by the campus

The California State University (CSU) no longer uses ACT or SAT examinations in determining admission eligibility for all CSU campuses. If accepted to a CSU campus, ACT or SAT test scores can be used as one of the measures to place students in the proper mathematics and written communication courses. Visit the CSU Student Success site for further information on course placement. For more information on admission criteria, please visit the [First-Time Freshman Guidance](#) and the [First-Time Freshman Frequently Asked Questions](#) pages. To learn more about the admission requirements, impacted majors, impacted campuses, and eligibility index see [Freshman: Admission Requirements](#).

Admission offices at the 23 campuses use three factors to determine eligibility. Most applicants who are admitted meet the standards in each of the following areas:

- Specific high school courses (referred to as the “A-G” courses)
- Grades in “A-G” courses and test scores
- Graduation from high school

Many CSU campuses have higher standards for particular majors or for students who live outside the local admission area. Because of the number of students who apply, several campuses have higher standards (supplementary admission criteria) for all applicants. Many CSU campuses use local admission policies for students who graduate or transfer from high schools and community colleges that are historically served by a CSU campus in that region. [See CSU Local Admission & Service Areas for each campus here \(PDF\)](#).

CSU Tuition

The cost of attending a CSU campus can vary from year to year. All students pay the basic system-wide tuition based on student level: undergraduate, credential, graduate or doctoral.

In addition, non-resident students pay a per-unit fee, and students enrolled in some graduate business programs have a per-unit fee. These base costs do not include [campus mandatory fees](#) or other expenses like housing. Average tuition at a CSU is about \$7,500. Campus housing will also vary and can range from \$10,000 to \$20,000 per year. For more information on cost of attendance visit [Campus Costs of Attendance](#).

EAP (Early Assessment Program)

The Early Assessment Program (EAP) lets you know if you are ready for college-level work in English and mathematics at the end of your junior year of high school. The early signal gives you the opportunity to improve your skills during your senior year or the summer before attending a CSU or community college. Your school will provide you with your CAASPP results that include your EAP status in mid to late August.

Educational Opportunity Program (EOP)

The Educational Opportunity Program designs, administers, and supports programs that deliver access and retention services to historically low income and educationally disadvantaged students. An EOP student has the potential to perform satisfactorily in the CSU but has not been able to realize this potential because of a disadvantaged economic or educational background. The program provides admission, transitional, academic, and financial assistance to EOP eligible undergraduate students.

EOP Materials

Below is information that you need to gather in order to complete the EOP application. This does not reflect all required information needed for EOP admission. For example, the Parent/Guardian Education Level and Educational Programs Participation questions are in other sections in Cal State Apply but the responses are needed to evaluate your EOP application.

- Parent(s)/Guardian(s) name(s) and occupation(s)
- Parent(s)/Guardian(s) actual/estimated incomes for 2021 and 2022
- Information about participating in any public assistance programs
- Information about participating in publicly funded programs
- Full names & email addresses of two individuals to complete EOP Recommendation Forms

What is the function of EOP?

The primary goal of the CSU Educational Opportunity Program is to improve access of low-income, first generation and historically disadvantaged students with potential for academic success by making higher education a possibility. EOP provides a comprehensive program of support services which include, but are not limited to, recruitment, pre-admission counseling, orientation, summer program, diagnostic testing, financial aid follow-up, special admissions, pre introductory instruction, academic advisement, tutoring, learning skill services, and personal, educational and career counseling.

What type of student does EOP look for?

EOP provides education access and opportunity for low-income and educationally disadvantaged students from California, the majority of whom are first-generation college students. An EOP student may be a special or regularly admissible student who has a low income and has the potential to perform satisfactorily in curricula offered by CSU, but who has not been able to realize his/her potential because of economic, educational or environmental background. Such students may be eligible for admission to a CSU campus through the Educational Opportunity Program.



Vox Veritas Vita... Voice Truth Life

CALIFORNIA PRIVATE COLLEGES & UNIVERSITIES

Private colleges and universities are not always more expensive than CA state schools. They often offer merit scholarships and have more money at their disposal to assist with grants and various types of scholarships. If you are looking for a more personal college experience, be sure to look into private schools when making your college list.

California Schools: The Association of Independent California Colleges and Universities is committed to making college affordable, personal, and attainable.

- All applications are personally reviewed
- Classes are smaller
- Students receive personal attention to help them succeed in college and life

Find all 76 California schools on this website - www.aiccu.edu

Examples of local private colleges & universities:

- University of Redlands - www.redlands.edu
- University of La Verne - www.laverne.edu
- The Claremont Colleges - Pomona College, Scripps, Harvey Mudd, Pitzer, and Claremont McKenna - www.claremont.edu
- Occidental College - www.oxy.edu
- California Baptist University - www.calbaptist.edu
- University of San Diego - www.sandiego.edu
- University of Southern California - www.usc.edu
- California Lutheran University - www.callutheran.edu



WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT OUT-OF-STATE COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES

Going out-of-state for college can be exciting and an education in its own right! You will learn about new places, new people, and more! But you need to be informed on how to access out-of-state colleges and universities. **Most PUBLIC out-of-state colleges and universities charge out-of-state tuition, which is higher than attending college in-state.**

For example, if you want to attend the University of Oregon, it will most likely cost you more than it would for a student from Oregon; just like it would cost a student from outside of California more to attend the University of California.



WESTERN INTERSTATE COMMISSION FOR HIGHER EDUCATION:

WESTERN UNDERGRADUATE EXCHANGE (WUE)

Fortunately, many schools in the West have an agreement to provide a discount to students from other states. **It's called the *Western Undergraduate Exchange or the WUE*.** NOT all schools in the west participate. Please go to <http://www.wiche.edu/wue> to learn about which colleges and universities offer a WUE discount. Each WUE school has different rules about what will qualify to get the tuition discount. Many schools use WUE as a merit scholarship for out-of-state students and some schools only offer WUE to certain majors. For example, Western Oregon University offers WUE but the University of Oregon does not.

States that have WUE schools are: Alaska, Arizona, California, Colorado, Hawaii, Idaho, Montana, Nevada, New Mexico, North Dakota, Oregon, South Dakota, Utah, Washington, and Wyoming.

What About Out-of-State PRIVATE Colleges and Universities?

Private colleges and universities charge the same price to EVERYONE. The way to get a lower cost at a private out-of-state university is to be a great student or to have a special talent. This way you may receive a MERIT scholarship, a music scholarship, an athletic scholarship, etc.

Remember, private schools often have more money for students who need it than public colleges and universities, but you will need good grades, good test scores, leadership, special talents, and so on to access these funds. Don't rule out an out-of-state university because of its cost. Look into what they have to offer GOOD students!

A few examples of private out-of-state colleges and universities include: Notre Dame, Reed College, Luther College, Gonzaga University, Skidmore College, Carnegie Mellon University, and Texas Christian University.

THE COMMON APPLICATION

What is the Common Application?

The Common Application (Common App) is used by more than 1,000 American universities. You will save time by being able to complete information and essays that you can submit to multiple universities. However, bear in mind that approximately two-thirds of universities ask for supplemental information and/or essays. **You can access the Common Application online at: <https://www.commonapp.org>.** Here you can see all the universities that use the Common Application and all their deadlines. Some schools, for example the University of Southern California, exclusively use the Common App.

How does the Common App support students?

According to the Common App website: “The Common App is the most seamless way to manage the application process. We make it simpler by collecting all of your students’ information in one place, eliminating the need to repeat the details of their home, education, activities, and exams for every college on their list.”

The Common App is free to use but each application has a cost associated with submitting the application.

What is the Coalition Application?

This platform is designed to be convenient, straightforward, and easy-to-use. The Coalition Application and its member schools—which include more than 150 institutions, are committed to broadening access and increasing affordability of higher education for students of all backgrounds. Schools that participate in the Coalition graduate at least 70 percent of their students within six years and many have much higher graduation rates.

Examples of schools using the Coalition application are: Duke, the University of Michigan, Yale, Grinnell, and Colby. See all the schools, the application, and more at:

<http://www.coalitionforcollegeaccess.org/>



COALITION for ACCESS,
AFFORDABILITY, and SUCCESS

It is **FREE** to use the Common App and the Coalition App. Both have information about **college application fee waivers** on their websites!

PERSONAL STATEMENTS

Personal statements are just one of the important elements of the college and university application. With that in mind, consider the following advice and information from college admissions officers so you can write an essay of which you are proud!

- The essay is your time to **tell us who you are**, why something is important to you, and why you have continued to do it.
- **What do you want to say about yourself** that is different from your GPA and test scores?
- **Delve into what something means to you**, provide perspective. Describe how this affects the person you have become or how it affects your beliefs. (You could include information about the sport you play, an activity or club, your job, a situation in your life, or how you relate to something in the news.)
- Use **proper English** and **write in complete, thoughtful sentences**. (Don't use words you don't normally use in conversation with your friends).
- Have someone you trust read your essay and provide suggestions on how to make it better. This can help you strengthen **YOUR VOICE**, strength, humor, etc. Make sure it is **NOT boring**, unorganized, or unclear.
- Show your **enthusiasm for learning!** And, expand on whatever you are excited about.
- It's EASY to spot when a student is trying to tell the reader what they "think they want to hear." **BE AUTHENTIC!**
- **Don't try to cover too much material**. Write it, leave it for a few days, and come back to it.
- Devote **EQUAL time** to explaining how a hardship was overcome, as opposed to the hardship itself.
- If writing about someone who influenced you, **make sure the focus is YOU**, not your uncle, etc.
- **Give examples** of actions you've taken related to what you are writing about don't just use adjectives to describe it. SHOW, don't just tell!
- **Triple check** grammar and spelling!

Many websites have good personal statement advice.

Here are a few to check out:

- www.HScounselorweek.com: They regularly have articles about the college admissions process/strategies, personal essays, SAT & ACT, financial aid, scholarships, and more.
- <https://www.collegeessayadvisors.com/blog/> : College Essay Advisors
- <https://www.unigo.com/> Type in "personal statements" in the search box. This has good scholarship information, too.
- <https://www.questbridge.org/> Under "Apply to College" see "Resource Library".
- <https://www.collegeessayguy.com/college-essay-resources> : The College Essay guy provides free resources and webinars.



Why attend COD?

It's affordable! Seniors graduating from a high school located within the Coachella Valley in 2025 can sign up for pLEDGE. The pLEDGE program provides two years of free tuition and fees at COD if a student commits to the following:

- Complete all new student steps and the pLEDGE application
- Complete a Summer Engagement Requirement of either a Summer Bridge EDGE non-credit course or a summer credit course immediately following graduation
- Full-time enrollment during the fall & spring semesters (min. 12 units)
- Maintain good academic standing (2.0 GPA and above)
- Participate in 10 hours of community service (per academic year)
- Attend a career pathway workshop with the COD Career and Workforce Solutions Center (per academic year)
- Submit a FAFSA or California Dream Act application that is received by the COD Financial Aid Office (each year)

More reasons to attend COD:

- COD offers students the opportunity to explore and major in over 40 career and technical fields.
- COD offers Associate Degrees to prepare students for careers in a range of industries and CTE pathways.
- COD offers Associate Degrees to prepare students for transfer.
- COD offers Associate Degrees for Transfer (ADT) in Art for Transfer (AA-T) and Associate in Science for Transfer (AS-T) that are fully transferable to the CSU and are no more than 60 semester units.
- COD offers 15 sports and is a member of the California Community College Athletics Association (CCCAA).
- The Office of Student Life offers a variety of campus clubs and student organizations that serve to engage COD students in social, co-curricular, and special interest activities.
- Counselors help you decide what to take for the University of California, California State University campuses, out of state schools, and privates. If you work hard — anything is possible!
- COD offers MANY certificate programs that lead to a job in two years or less. For example: Turfgrass Management, Construction Management, Automotive Technology, Culinary Arts, and more!
- COD offers programs through PaCE – Partnership and Community Education that include Clinical Medical Assistant, Dental, Pharmacy, and Veterinary Assistant, and more!
- COD offers Early College for High School students looking to take college courses while in high school!

FAFSA, FSA ID, CA Dream Act application & CSS Profile

What is the FAFSA?

It's the **FREE APPLICATION FOR FEDERAL STUDENT AID** and it determines a student's eligibility for need-based financial aid, grants, and student and parent loans.

NEW! AB 469 REQUIRES FAFSA/DREAM ACT FOR CA GRADUATION!

Beginning with the Class of 2023, completion of a financial aid application, via either the FAFSA or the California Dream Act, will be a graduation requirement. We encourage you to complete one of these applications **EVEN IF** you currently do not plan on attending a 4-year college, 2-year college or trade school.

Who needs to complete the FAFSA?

All students who are U.S. citizens or permanent residents who plan to enroll — or are currently enrolled — in postsecondary education. "Postsecondary education" means any form of education beyond high school. That includes two-year and four-year colleges, graduate schools, professional schools (like law, business, or medical school), and just about any program awarding a degree, certificate, or credit, including most vocational and technical schools.

To complete the FAFSA, students and parents will need:

- Social Security Number or Alien Registration Number if not a US Citizen.
- Students' and parents' most recent federal income tax returns, W-2s, and other records of money earned -- **Use returns two years prior to your application.** For example, the Class of 2025 will use the 2023 federal returns.

NOTE: Most students fill out their first FAFSA when they are beginning the college application process. However, **you need to submit a new FAFSA application for each year that you intend to receive financial aid.** So, if you attend a four-year college, you will need to fill out and submit the FAFSA four separate times. This is because the government needs the most up-to-date and accurate financial information to make its calculations.

Before completing the FAFSA each student and one parent will need an FSA ID — Federal Student Aid ID — which consists of a username and password combination that allows you to sign the FAFSA electronically.

You can create your FSA ID and complete the FAFSA at <https://studentaid.gov/>

Complete your FAFSA as early as possible!

You can do this between December 1 and March 2 every year.





THE CALIFORNIA DREAM ACT APPLICATION

<https://dream.csac.ca.gov/>

The California Dream Act allows undocumented and nonresident documented students who meet certain provisions to apply for and receive private scholarships funded through public universities, state-administered financial aid, university grants, community college fee waivers, and Cal Grants. **Financial aid provided through the Dream Act can only be used inside the state of California.**

WHAT YOU NEED TO FILL OUT THE DREAM ACT APPLICATION:

You'll be asked to enter personal identification information such as your name, permanent mailing address, citizenship status, Individual Taxpayer Identification Number (if you have one), Statewide Student Identification number (if you have one), Social Security number (if you have one) or Alien Registration number (if you have one).

When to File:

File your application before March 2 — earlier is always better!

Need help? Go to: <https://dream.csac.ca.gov/>

Get answers to questions about completing the Cal Dream Act application and answers to questions such as: What is AB540? What is DACA? Where can I find financial aid resources for dreamers? What is a Cal Grant?

Additional resources on the Cal Dream Act and support for DACA, undocumented or nonresident students available at <https://immigrantsrising.org/>.

CSS stands for College Scholarship

Service. The CSS Profile is an application distributed by the College Board and is primarily used by private colleges and universities to provide a closer look into the finances of a student and family. It is much more detailed than the FAFSA. Many colleges with early acceptance programs use the CSS

Profile in addition to the FAFSA. There is a small fee to file the CSS Profile but you can qualify for fee waivers. Examples of schools that require the CSS Profile include: Harvey Mudd College, Pitzer College, Santa Clara University, and USC.



Check your college/university website to see if you are required to complete it!

css.collegeboard.org

WHAT IS A CAL GRANT?

FAFSA or Cal Dream Act Application + GPA = possible Cal Grant (FREE \$\$ for college!)

A Cal Grant is money for college that you don't have to pay back. To qualify, you must meet the eligibility and financial requirements as well as any minimum GPA requirements. Cal Grants can be used at any University of California, California State University, or California Community College, as well as qualifying independent and career colleges or technical schools in California.

There are three kinds of Cal Grants (A, B, and C) but you don't have to figure out which one to apply for. Your eligibility will be based on your FAFSA responses, your verified Cal Grant GPA, the type of California colleges you list on your FAFSA, and whether you're a recent high school graduate. To learn more about the qualifications, go to Calgrants.org.

Cal Grant A

- Will help pay for tuition and fees at four-year colleges.
- Award amounts vary by type of college. Cal Grants are up to \$13,752 at a University of California campus, up to \$7,390 at a California State University campus, and up to \$9,220 at independent colleges.
- Has a GPA requirement. If applying using your high school GPA, you must have at least a 3.0 GPA in your A-G courses in 10th & 11th grade years (usually submitted by your high school during your senior year).
- Requires that your course of study leads directly to an associate or bachelor's degree or qualifies you for transfer from a community college to a bachelor's degree program.

Cal Grant B

- Provides a living allowance of up to \$1,648, in addition to tuition and fee assistance after the first year at a two-year or four-year college.
- Pays most first-year students a living allowance only that may be used to pay living expenses, books, supplies, and transportation, as well as tuition and fees.
- When renewed or awarded beyond your first year, you'll receive the living allowance as well as a tuition and fee award.
- Requires at least a 2.0 GPA.

Cal Grant C - Interested in technical, vocational or career education?

- Assists with the costs of a technical or career education.
- Provides up to \$547 for books, tools, equipment, and up to \$2,462 more for tuition and fees if you'll be attending a school other than a California Community College (community colleges don't charge tuition and your fees are waived as a Cal Grant recipient).
- Is available for up to two years
- If you qualify, you'll receive an e-mail or letter notification to complete the online Cal Grant C Supplement in Web Grants for Students by the deadline. Even though a GPA is not required to apply for a Cal Grant C, you are still encouraged to submit because it can only help your chances of receiving an award.

IMPORTANT!

In order to be considered for a Cal Grant, **you must complete the FAFSA or the Cal Dream Act Application between December 1 and March 2 in your senior year.**

Remember, the earlier you submit it, the better!

You must complete a GPA verification form and turn it into your school registrar. It's a very simple form! It gives the school permission to send your A-G grades from 10th and 11th grades to the California Student Aid Commission. They do this electronically.

More information about Cal Grants: www.calgrants.org

WHAT IS A PELL GRANT?

A Pell Grant is money from the federal government that assists students to pay for college. **Grants, unlike loans, do not have to be repaid.** Eligible students receive a specified amount each year under this program. More than one-third of undergraduate students received a Pell Grant in 2019-20.

How much money can I get?

Amounts can change yearly. The maximum Federal Pell Grant award is \$7,395 for the 2024-25 award year (July 1, 2024, to June 30, 2025).

The amount you get, though, will depend on:

- Your Expected Family Contribution,
- The cost of attendance (determined by your school for your specific program),
- Your status as a full-time or part-time student, and
- Your plans to attend school for a full *academic year* or less.

How do I qualify for a Pell Grant?

You are eligible for a Pell Grant if you have financial need. The U.S. Department of Education determines financial need by taking the information supplied when applying for a Pell Grant (for example your family income) and plugging it into a standard formula to produce a number called the Expected Family Contribution (EFC). The EFC is then compared to the expected cost of attending your college (tuition and fees, room and board, books, and supplies) to determine the financial aid for which you're eligible.

To be eligible for a Pell Grant, **you must complete your FAFSA** and also:

- Be an undergraduate student who has not earned a bachelor's degree (with some exceptions for students in post baccalaureate teaching programs)
- Be enrolled or accepted for enrollment as a regular student in an eligible degree or certificate program.
- Have earned a high school diploma or a GED or have completed a high school education in an approved home-school setting.
- Be a U.S. citizen or an eligible non-citizen.

CALIFORNIA'S MIDDLE CLASS SCHOLARSHIP (MCS)

- The Middle Class Scholarship began in the 2014-2015 academic year and provides undergraduate students with family incomes up to \$217,000 a scholarship to attend a UC or a CSU campus to pursue a teaching credential.
- Students must be California residents attending a UC or CSU, a U.S. citizen, permanent resident, or have AB 540 student status.
- All you have to do to apply is complete your FAFSA or Cal Dream Act application on time! Make sure your email address is listed on your FAFSA or Cal Dream Act application!
- Students may receive between 10 to 40 percent of tuition at a UC or CSU.
- If selected for an MCS, you will be notified by the California Student Aid Commission.

Learn more at <http://www.csac.ca.gov/middle-class-scholarship>

COMPARE COLLEGES. CONFIRM YOUR COSTS. CHOOSE CONFIDENTLY!



DecidED provides students and advisors with resources, tools and guidance to compare college costs, financial aid benefits, and other fit factors. Sign up for a free account at <https://decided.org/> today!



STUDENT AND PARENT LOANS FROM THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT

www.studentaid.gov

Almost all students who complete the FAFSA will see student loans included in their financial aid award letter. To be eligible for a federal student loan you must complete the FAFSA. Freshmen are typically limited to borrowing between \$3,500 — \$5,500; the amount goes up as the student progresses through college. You do not have to borrow the full amount offered. Try to avoid loans by working part-time and looking for scholarships but most students with financial need will need to take out a few student loans to make it through college.

The federal **Parent Loan** for Undergraduate Students (PLUS), available through the Direct **Loan** Program, lets **parents** borrow money to cover any costs not already covered by the student's financial aid package, up to the full cost of attendance.

You must begin to pay back student loans when you graduate or drop out of college. If you can graduate with \$25,000 of loan or less, you are doing well. Many people don't think twice about borrowing money for a car. You are borrowing money for your future. The repayment of your loan can also be based on the income you are making after graduation. Repayment of your loan will help you build credit and help fund loans for other students.

There's A LOT to learn about loans. Here are some links to good information:

- **Direct Subsidized Loans and Direct Unsubsidized Loans:**
<https://studentaid.gov/understand-aid/types/loans/subsidized-unsubsidized>
- **Direct PLUS Loans (for graduate and professional students or parents):**
<https://studentaid.gov/understand-aid/types/loans/plus>
- **Federal Perkins Loans:**
<https://studentaid.gov/understand-aid/types/loans/perkins>

Free college for children of veterans: The Post 9/11 GI Bill, which was passed in 2009, can provide valuable education benefits for anyone who served for at least 90 days in the military, reserves or National Guard since Sept. 11, 2001. The GI Bill pays up to the full cost of in-state tuition and fees for public colleges for up to four academic years, or up to \$28,937 per year for private colleges and international schools. To qualify for the maximum benefit, you must serve (or have served) at least 36 months since 9/11.

FINANCIAL AID CALCULATORS

The Financial Aid Calculators are tools to help you figure out what you would have to pay at each college you are interested in.

Colleges and universities are required to have financial aid calculators on their websites; usually within the financial aid page. If you can't find it for a particular school, just type "financial aid calculator" into the website's search box.

The best calculators take into account a student's grades and test scores so that merit awards can be estimated and included with other forms of aid.

Tools and calculators can be found at these links:

- <https://bigfuture.collegeboard.org/pay-for-college/tools-calculators>
- **Savings Plan Designer** (Flat Contribution)
<http://www.finaid.org/calculators/savingsplan.phtml>
- **Expected Family Contribution and Financial Aid Calculator**
<http://www.finaid.org/calculators/finaidestimate.phtml>
- **Loan Calculator:** <http://www.finaid.org/calculators/loanpayments.phtml>

SCHOLARSHIPS!



OneFuture Coachella Valley Regional Scholarship Portal:

<https://onefuturecv.c2nav.com/#/>

The best scholarship for Coachella Valley students with financial need! Hundreds of valley students are annually awarded scholarships for community college and four-year institutions. The application opens in January for graduating seniors and continuing college students. The

scholarship comes with holistic student support services and professional development to help you succeed in college!



Edison International Scholars

<https://www.edison.com/community/edison-scholars>

The Edison Scholars Program recognizes students who want to be makers of tomorrow - the dreamers, inventors, guardians and pioneers - those who dare to be great.

Edison International will award \$50,000 college scholarships to 30 high school seniors to help them follow their dreams in science, technology, engineering or math (STEM) and empower them to change the world.

Edison International Lineworker Scholarship

<https://www.edison.com/community/lineworker-scholarship>

In 2021, Edison International and Southern California Edison launched the Lineworker Scholarship Program, in partnership with IBEW Local 47, to provide opportunities for a diverse range of people to become SCE lineworkers. The program awards scholarships up to \$25,000 per recipient and is funded by Edison International shareholders and IBEW Local 47. The program covers the cost of tuition, tools and support services needed to complete the required training at the Los Angeles Trade-Technical College.

QuestBridge College Match Scholarship Recipients are granted admission to one of QuestBridge's college partners with a full, four-year scholarship worth over \$200,000 each. This scholarship is offered as part of a generous financial aid package provided by the QuestBridge college partner that covers the cost of attendance, including: tuition and fees, room and board, books and supplies, and travel expenses. Opens late summer and is due September 26. <https://www.questbridge.org/>

The Gates Scholarship is a highly selective, full scholarship for exceptional, Pell-eligible, minority, high school seniors. Started in 2018, the scholarship is awarded to 300 top student leaders each year with the intent of promoting their academic excellence through college graduation, and providing them the opportunity to reach their full potential. It opens July 15 and closes September 15. <http://www.thegatesscholarship.org>

The Jackie Robinson Foundation Grant: www.jackierobinson.org/scholarship/

Children of Marines or U.S. Navy Corpsmen: <http://www.mcsf.org/eligibility>

McDonald's Scholarship: www.mcdonalds.com/us/en-us/community/hacer.html

Check out these scholarship search engines where you can create a profile and the program will generate scholarships that you can apply for:

www.studentscholarships.org | www.fastweb.com | www.cappex.com
www.collegeboard.org | <https://www.unigo.com/scholarships>

Scholarships for Minority Students

Indigenous/Native Americans

The American Indian College Fund: www.collegefund.org

American Indian Science and Engineering Society (AISES): <https://www.aises.org/>

Richard M. Milanovich Fellowship Program:

Established in 2021, the Richard M. Milanovich Fellowship is a partnership between the UCLA Native Nations Law & Policy Center Los Angeles CA and the Agua Caliente Band of Cahuilla Indians to prepare the next generation of leaders in Indian Country and to honor and preserve the legacy of service and leadership of the late Chairman Richard M. Milanovich.

<https://law.ucla.edu/news/agua-caliente-band-cahuilla-indians-gift-creates-new-fellowship-native-nations-law-and-policy-center>

African American/Black Students

Congressional Black Caucus Foundation: <https://www.cbcfinc.org/>

Bill H. James Foundation: <https://www.billhamesfoundation.org/scholarships>

Black American Engineering Scholarship: <https://thehelpingproject.org/scholarship/>

Blacks at Microsoft Scholarship:

www.microsoft.com/en-us/diversity/programs/bam-scholarship.aspx

AAPI Students

Asian and Pacific Islander American Scholars:

<https://apiascholars.org/scholarships/>

Groundbreaker Leadership Scholarship:

<http://againstthegrainproductions.com/groundbreaker-leadership-scholarship/>

Asian Pacific Community Fund: www.apcf.org/currently-open-student-scholarships

Hispanic/Latinx Students

Hispanic Scholarship Fund: www.hsf.net | <https://www.hsf.net/scholarship-finder/>

Hispanic Heritage Foundation's Youth Awards: <https://hispanicheritage.org/>

LULAC National Educational Service Centers, Inc.: www.lnesc.org/scholarships/

Debt.com Beca: www.debt.com/es/nuestra-historia/becas-de-estudio/

Scholarship fund for "Dreamers": www.unitedwedream.org | www.thedream.us

Other Minority/Diversity Scholarships

ABA Scholarships: www.buses.org/?/aba-foundation/scholarships/diversity

AMS Minority Scholarships: <https://www.ametsoc.org>

BHW Scholarship for Women in STEM: <https://thebhwwgroup.com/scholarship>

ASA Minority Fellowship Program:

www.asanet.org/diversity-equity-inclusion/minority-fellowship-program/apply

BLM² Scholarship: <https://www.blmsquaredscholarship.org/applicants>

Bridging the Dream Scholarship Program:

www.tmcf.org/students-alumni/scholarship/tmcf-bridging-the-dream-scholarship-program-for-high-school-seniors/

Important pointers regarding scholarships!

Scholarships require time and organization on your part and the more you apply to, the better. Create a resume and/or portfolio that you can modify for different scholarship applications. Each high school will post scholarship information on their websites and you can ask about them in your College & Career Center. Stay positive! You are often competing with students from all over the country. Seniors — make sure you look on the website of every college on your list to find out about scholarships they offer.

THE UNITED STATES SERVICE ACADEMIES



Students who would like to experience a military environment while getting a first-class education, the five service academies — the U.S. Military Academy (Army) in West Point, New York; the U.S. Naval Academy (Navy/Marine Corps) in Annapolis, Maryland; the U.S. Air Force Academy in Colorado Springs, Colorado; the U.S. Coast Guard Academy in New London, Connecticut; and the U.S. Merchant Marine Academy in Kings Point, New York offer an outstanding education and full four-year scholarships. Tuition, books, board, medical, and dental care are fully paid for all 4 years.



The eligibility requirements for joining the armed forces can differ among the branches. Knowing the requirements can help you avoid wasting time and effort. An issue that may make you ineligible for one service may not preclude you in another branch of service. www.military.com

For a lot of people who join directly after high school, the military means being away from home for the very first time. For others, adjusting to the “military way of life” is a complete 180-degree turn from the life they are currently used to. Either way, the more you know about what to expect, the easier it will be to settle in and prepare for success in your new career. This information is a good place to start, and then a recruiter can give you more information about specific U.S. Military Service branches. www.todaysmilitary.com

THE ARMED SERVICES (Military)

All branches of the military offer full and partial scholarships through the reserve officer training corps (ROTC) at many U.S. colleges and universities. www.todaysmilitary.com

The competition to get in is fierce. Admissions criteria include:

- High school academic performance
- Standardized test scores (SAT or ACT)
- Athletics and extracurricular activities
- Leadership experience and community involvement
- A congressional letter of recommendation (not required by the Coast Guard Academy)

Graduates of all four academies receive a bachelor of science degree and are commissioned as officers in their respective Service branch. In all cases, there is a service obligation.

You can learn more about the military and the service academies at www.todaysmilitary.com

If you need a **Congressional letter of recommendation**, contact Congressman Raul Ruiz's office at 760-424-8888

For each branch there are slightly different enlistment requirements:

TO JOIN THE...	YOU MUST:
AIR FORCE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Be between the ages of 17-27 ▪ Have no more than two dependents ▪ Pass the Armed Services Vocational Aptitude test. (Minimum AFQT Score: 50)
ARMY	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Be between the ages of 17-34 ▪ Have no more than two dependents ▪ Pass the Armed Services Vocational Aptitude test. (Minimum AFQT Score: 31)
COAST GUARD	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Be between the ages of 17- 39 ▪ Have no more than two dependents ▪ Pass the Armed Services Vocational Aptitude Battery test. (Minimum AFQT Score: 45) ▪ Have a willingness to serve on or around the water.
MARINES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Be between the ages of 17-29 ▪ Meet exacting physical, mental, and moral standards ▪ Pass the Armed Services Vocational Aptitude Battery test. (Minimum AFQT Score: 32)
NAVY	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Be between the ages of 17-34 ▪ Pass the Armed Services Vocational Aptitude Battery (ASVAB) test. (Minimum AFQT Score: 50)

CAREER AND TECHNICAL EDUCATION

Today's world of work is very different from past generations and there are many high wage - high skill careers that require certifications and associate degrees. In fact, many of today's employers value "stacked" certifications that demonstrate a variety of skills.

Many **California Community Colleges** offer a variety of career and technical education programs and can often be more affordable than a career college, depending upon your course of study. Community colleges offer different programs.

For example, Crafton Hills College, in nearby Yucaipa, offers radiologic technology, the training needed to become an x-ray technician. At Orange Coast College in Costa Mesa, you can earn a certificate in aviation and maintenance technology. Mt. San Antonio College, located near Cal Poly Pomona, offers air traffic control training and courses to become a registered veterinary technician. Explore the career and technical programs offered by California Community Colleges at www.cccco.edu.

If you are interested in **healthcare careers**, check out the CA Health Workforce Initiative (CA-HWI) through the CA Community Colleges. They have an excellent website with pathway information. <https://ca-hwi.org/career-pathways/exploring-health-careers/>

Many students start at community college then transfer to a university to complete their degree. As an example, a student can complete an Associates Degree program in Hospitality at College of the Desert, then transfer to California State University San Bernardino and complete their Bachelor's Degree in Hospitality Management.

Several career colleges in the valley offer a variety of programs including aesthetician-esthetician, barbering, computer support technician, cosmetology, manicurist, medical assisting, massage therapy, pharmacy technician, holistic health practitioner, and more. Visit each school's website to see exactly what is offered.

- Mayfield College in Cathedral City: www.mayfieldcollege.edu
- Elite Cosmetology in Palm Desert: <https://www.eliteschools.edu>
- Milan Institute of Cosmetology in Palm Desert: www.milaninstitute.edu
- Somatherapy Institute, School of Massage in Rancho Mirage: www.somatherapy.com
- RCOE - School of Career Education: www.riversidesce.org
- Center for Employment Training (CET) – www.cetweb.edu
- California Nurses Educational Institute - <https://cnei.edu/>

If you are looking for **automotive technology**, check out **College of the Desert** - <https://www.collegeofthedesert.edu/students/acad-prog/applied-science-business/auto/default.php>

RESOURCES TO HELP YOU WITH ALL THINGS COLLEGE!

(Most sites also have information in Spanish)

- www.collegeboard.org – College Board
- www.icangotocollege.com – CA Community Colleges
- www.californiacolleges.edu – CA Colleges
- <https://www2.calstate.edu> – CSU (Calif State Universities)
- www.universityofcalifornia.edu – UC system
- <https://thecollegesolution.com/> – invaluable site for parents and students
- <https://www.hscounselorweek.com/> – weekly articles about college going process, essays, SAT, ACT, financial aid and more
- <https://www.nacacnet.org/> – National Association for College Admission Counseling; excellent for students & parents
- <https://nces.ed.gov/collegenavigator/> – National Center for Education Statistics; find out a college's retention rate, graduation rate, and more.
- www.KnowHow2go.org
- <https://ajcunet.edu/> – Information about the 29 Jesuit colleges and universities in the U.S.
- <https://www.catholiccollegesonline.org/> – The National Catholic College Admission Association
- www.hillel.org – Hillel's College Guide offers information on Jewish life at colleges and universities around the world
- www.topchristiancolleges.org
- <https://ctcl.org> – CTCL, Colleges That Change Lives. Dedicated to the advancement and support of a student-centered college search process
- <https://www.bestcolleges.com/resources/undocumented-students/college-application-guide/> – A guide to help undocumented students navigate the often complex college application process so they can achieve their educational goals.



FINANCIAL AID SITES

FAFSA and Dream Act

- www.fafsa.gov – The Free Application for Federal Student Aid, English & Spanish
- www.csac.ca.gov – California Student Aid Commission, Cal Grants, CA Dream Act

ACT & SAT

- <https://www.act.org/content/act/en/products-and-services/the-act.html> - ACT
- <https://www.collegeboard.org/> – SAT (www.khanacademy.org – FREE SAT prep)
- www.fairtest.org/university/optional - 850+ colleges & universities that do not use SAT/ACT scores to admit substantial numbers of students into bachelor degree programs

WANT TO PLAY SPORTS IN COLLEGE?

- www.ncaa.org
- www.athleticscholarships.net

Notes:

Notes:

Notes:

Thank you to our partners!



THE EDISON SCHOLARS PROGRAM
& LINEWORKER SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM



Thank you to our partners!



Irene W. & Guy C.

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SO... what's *NEXT*?

THINK BIG!

"In the long run, we shape our lives, and we shape ourselves. The process never ends until we die. And the choices we make are ultimately our own responsibility."

~ Eleanor Roosevelt

"Success comes from knowing that you did your best to become the best that you are capable of becoming."

~ John Wooden

"Education is the most powerful weapon which you can use to change the world."

~ Nelson Mandela

"Our greatest weakness lies in giving up. The most certain way to succeed is always to try just one more time."

~ Thomas Edison

"¡Sí se puede!" ~ Cesar Chavez

Never give up on a dream just because of
the time it will take to accomplish it.
The time will pass anyway.