



**October/November 2011**

**SCHOLARSHIP NEWSLETTER**

To: Seniors and Parents  
From: Guidance

As scholarships are received in our Guidance Office they will be published for your benefit, along with scholarship-related websites. Please take note of the requirements and deadlines for each scholarship. Feel free to ask your counselor or Mrs. Albright if you have any questions.

**Attention senior athletes:**

Make certain that you have registered with the NCAA Eligibility Center. You have been told about this every year in the pre-school athlete parent meeting. In order to play college sports, you **MUST** be registered with the Eligibility Center. <http://www.eligibilitycenter.org>  
The NCAA has informed us that they will **NOT** accept credits earned in the PLATO Lab. If you intend to play college sports, you need to use the virtual school instead.

**Need some help preparing for the SAT or ACT or PERT???**

Try out this website: <http://www.testprepreview.com>

**Some very handy phone numbers and web addresses:**

The Florida Virtual School Help Desk 1-800-374-1430 [info@flvs.net](mailto:info@flvs.net)  
The Office of Student Financial Aid  
(for Bright Futures' questions) 1-888-827-2004 [osfa@fldoe.org](mailto:osfa@fldoe.org)

**Scholarships**

| <b><u>Scholarship</u></b>               | <b><u>Deadline</u></b> | <b><u>Amount</u></b> | <b><u>Requirements</u></b>                                     |
|---|------------------------|----------------------|--|
| *Elks Most Valuable Student Scholarship | 11-2-11                | \$1,000-\$15,000     | Any HS student who is a US citizen.                            |
| **Florida Fund for Minority Teachers    | 11 -30-11              | \$4,000              | Must be of African-American descent or a minority.<br>2.5 GPA. |

|  |         |                               |   |
|--|---------|-------------------------------|---|
| *Florida Retired Educator's Foundation Fund  | 1-21-12 | \$2,750                       | Essay.<br>Top 25% of class.<br>Study to become a teacher in Florida.  |
| *Hollis Fellows Education Scholarship  | 1-15-12 | Three - \$7,500 and 500 books | 3.2 GPA.<br>Pursue Education major.<br>May be used at FSC only.   |
| *Jean R. Conley  | 1/21/12 | \$500                         | Top 25% of graduating class.<br>Must go into education studies.<br>May be used at CF only.                                |
| *Joshua Hollingsworth Scholarship Award  | 2-1-12  | \$10,000                      | Available to students that qualify for the FL Acad. Scholars level of Bright Futures.                                     |
| *Marion County Legal Support Association "Mary Sullivan Scholarship" Award               | 1-6-12  | \$500                         | Three letters of Rec. Financial need.<br>3.0 GPA.<br>Pursue legal field.  |
| *Marion County Retired Educators Association "Betty D. Butler" Scholarship               | 1-21-12 | \$700                         | Essay.<br>Top 25% of class<br>May be used at CF only.   |
| *Marion County Retired Educators Association – Virginia "Pat" Roche Memorial Scholarship | 1-21-12 | \$1,200                       | Essay.<br>Top 25% of class<br>May be used at CF only.   |
| Mary F. Kemble Memorial Scholarship  | 2-19-12 | \$500                         | 3.0GPA<br>Majoring or minoring in instrumental music.<br><a href="http://www.ocalasymphony.com">www.ocalasymphony.com</a> |
| Big Sun Scholarship  | 6-22-12 | \$500                         | <a href="http://www.bigsunathletics.com">www.bigsunathletics.com</a>  |

\* Please see counselor if interested

\*\* Apply online at OSFA website – [www.FloridaStudentFinancialAid.org](http://www.FloridaStudentFinancialAid.org)

## Websites for other Scholarships:

**fastWEB.com** ([www.fastweb.com](http://www.fastweb.com)) - a search service that matches skills, abilities, and interests to a database of more than 400,000 scholarships.

**fedMoney.org** ([www.fedmoney.org](http://www.fedmoney.org)) - a comprehensive online resource on all U.S. Federal Government student financial aid programs.

**Nelli Mae** ([www.nellimae.org](http://www.nellimae.org)) – financial aid opportunities offered by a leading provider of student loan financing and services.

**Scholarship Resource Network Express** ([www.srnexpress.com](http://www.srnexpress.com)) – contains a database of over 8,000 programs with a distribution level of over 150,000 awards for undergraduate and postgraduate students.

**UED.gov/U.S. Department of Education** ([www.ed.gov](http://www.ed.gov)) – information on federal grants, loans, and work-study programs, and links to related resources and state agencies.

**School Soup** ([www.schoolsoup.com](http://www.schoolsoup.com)) – database of scholarships, other financial aid options, and low prices for textbooks and test prep courses.

**Christian Colleges-**([www.christianconnector.com](http://www.christianconnector.com))-**Students** - interested in Christian Colleges

**Scholarship Experts-**([www.scholarshipexperts.com](http://www.scholarshipexperts.com))

**Merit Aid-**([www.meritaid.com](http://www.meritaid.com))-matches students with merit-based scholarships from colleges across the country.

## Scholarships and Financial Aid

The cost of education, like everything else, is going up. If you are thinking of continuing your education after high school at a four-year college, community college, university, or vocational or technical school, you should know about financial aid. Financial aid is funding provided by federal, state, and local governments, along with other organizations, to help a student pay the cost of post secondary education (the education and training beyond high school).

The cost of postsecondary education includes not just tuition and fees, but also room and board, books, supplies, transportation, and other personal expenses. If the cost of an education seems too high, do not be discouraged; financial aid is available for students who need it. Whether you need just a small amount of money to round out the resources you already have, or a large amount, financial aid can help you get the kind of education that is best for you.

A college education can be expensive; however, it may pay off in terms of potential earning power. Before deciding that a college education is too expensive to pursue, look into the many types of financial aid that are available. Information about financial aid may be obtained for your high school guidance counselor and also from the college or university you plan to attend.

## WHAT IS FINANCIAL AID?

Financial Aid is funding to help you pay for the cost of education after high school. How you approach your quest for financial aid depends largely upon your available resources, your academic progress, your career goals, and your activities during high school. There are many funding options including scholarships, grants, loans and work study available from federal, state and local governments, private institutions, organizations and your chosen college.

You should apply even if you think you will not qualify. Many factors could affect your eligibility from year to year, so apply every year. To find out if you qualify for need based financial aid, students should:

- Contact the financial aid office at the colleges that they are considering attending to request information on available aid, application procedures, deadline dates, etc.
- Find out what type of need analysis form that the colleges in which you are interested require for federal and state need-based student financial assistance. Complete need analysis forms needed for your college choices.
- Complete all financial aid applications accurately and on time.
- Submit applications for admission early. Most colleges will not award financial aid until the student has been accepted for admission.
- Complete the FAFSA (Free Application for Federal Student Aid), which can be accessed at [www.fafsa.ed.gov](http://www.fafsa.ed.gov).

## SOURCES OF FINANCIAL AID

Financial aid for education after high school is available from many sources. **Check Them Out!!**

- ✓ *The career field you plan to enter*
- ✓ *Clubs or organizations to which you or your parents belong*
- ✓ *Organizations for any disability or handicap you may have*
- ✓ *Veteran or military organizations to which your parents belong*
- ✓ *Your parents' unions or trade organizations*
- ✓ *Your parents' employers*
- ✓ *Sports in which you have better than average ability*
- ✓ *Your ethnic or religious group*

## ADDITIONAL INFORMATION MAY BE OBTAINED FROM THE FOLLOWING

### [www.FACTS.org](http://www.FACTS.org)

Florida's new statewide student advising website created to give you accurate up-to-date information on academic and financial aid information. The website is your link to applying for Bright Futures, Florida financial aid, and federal financial aid.

### The Internet

Explore the World Wide Web for financial aid information and resource listings. A good place to begin a web search is the home page of the college or university you plan to attend. Another good internet resource is the Financial Aid Information Page (FINAID), located at: [www.finaid.org](http://www.finaid.org).

### Marion County Area Scholarship Directory

This directory lists scholarships available to students in Marion County. It lists information such as the amount of the scholarship, who may apply, deadlines, etc. See your counselor for information from this directory.

### Funding Education Beyond High School: The Guide to Federal Student Aid

Federal Student Aid Information Center, P.O. Box 84, Washington, DC 20044-0084

1-800-433-3243

website: [http://studentaid.ed.gov/students/publications/student\\_guide/index.html](http://studentaid.ed.gov/students/publications/student_guide/index.html)

### Plan Ahead

It is important to begin your financial aid search early. Available financial aid may be lost if deadlines are not met. The guidance staff at your school should be given a minimum of two weeks to provide you with any needed information/forms/references.

## FLORIDA BRIGHT FUTURES SCHOLARSHIP

Bright Futures website: [www.FloridaStudentFinancialAid.org/SSFAD/bf/](http://www.FloridaStudentFinancialAid.org/SSFAD/bf/)  
Office of Student Financial Assistance website: [www.FloridaStudentFinancialAid.org](http://www.FloridaStudentFinancialAid.org)  
Toll-Free: 1-888-827-2004 E-mail: [OSFA@fldoe.org](mailto:OSFA@fldoe.org)



The Florida Bright Futures Scholarship Program has helped more than 550,000 Florida students attend a postsecondary institution. The program offers three levels of scholarship awards: **Florida Academic Scholars Award (FAS)**; **Florida Medallion Scholars Award (FMS)**; **Florida Gold Seal Vocational Scholars Award (GSV)**.

**Your Responsibilities** - It is your job to **know** and **meet** the requirements of the Florida Bright Futures Scholarship Program before high school graduation and throughout your college career.

**The Application** - To apply for a Bright Futures Scholarship, you **must** submit a completed, error free **Initial Student Florida Financial Aid Application** during your last year in high school (after December 1 and prior to graduation). **You must apply during your last year in high school, before graduation,\* or you will forfeit all future eligibility for a Bright Futures Scholarship.** To apply online, visit [www.FloridaStudentFinancialAid.org](http://www.FloridaStudentFinancialAid.org), select "State Grants, Scholarships & Applications" and then select "Apply Here." The application gives the Florida Department of Education (FDOE) permission to evaluate your high school transcript and test scores for eligibility for state scholarships and grants, including a Bright Futures Scholarship. You may apply prior to meeting all requirements.

**Activate your User ID & PIN—Know it, Use it, Be Responsible for your state financial aid!**

After submitting an **Initial Student Florida Financial Aid Application**, you will: create a PIN (Personal Identification Number) online; update your demographic information (on your original application), as necessary; and monitor your Financial Aid Recipient History (award status) online. You are responsible for checking your application and award status. It is also your responsibility to provide your correct name, address, date of birth and social security number, and to inform Bright Futures of any changes.

**NEW** **Note:** In addition, the submission of a **Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA)** IS NOW an annual requirement for Bright Futures eligibility. The FAFSA does not have to indicate financial need; however, must be completed and processed error free prior to a student's first disbursement of the 2011-12 academic year. (The Florida State Programs May 15 deadline does not apply to Bright Futures). You are encouraged to apply as soon as possible. Submission of the FAFSA may help you find other available financial aid as well. Visit the website at [www.fafsa.ed.gov](http://www.fafsa.ed.gov) for online processing.

**Your Transcript Evaluations** - Your high school will automatically submit your transcript electronically to the FDOE for evaluation two times during the year, but you submit only ONE application:

- ◆ Mid-year—after the fall term is completed and semester grades are posted. A mid-year evaluation includes fall coursework completed, spring coursework in progress, community service hours completed and test scores for test dates through January 31.
- ◆ Final—several weeks after you graduate and all grades are posted. A final transcript evaluation includes all coursework and community service hours completed, and test scores for test dates through June 30.

You may lose a mid-year award only if you do not graduate from a Florida public or FDOE-registered private high school. However, if your GPA improves and/or other requirements are met during your final high school semester, you may then qualify for an award or higher award level based on the evaluation of your final high school transcript.

**Notifications**—will be posted online to your Financial Aid Recipient History.

- ◆ Mid-year notifications begin posting in March
- ◆ Final notifications begin posting in August

**Not Sure About College?** - You **should** apply for a Bright Futures Scholarship even if you are considering not going to college, are planning to go out of state, are taking a few years off, or are enlisting in the military. Eligible students have up to three years from high school graduation to begin using the scholarship.

**Note:** Initially eligible students who enlist in the United States Armed Forces immediately after high school graduation (within three years after separation from active duty), or students who receive a Florida Bright Futures Scholarship and discontinue their education to enlist in the United States Armed Forces, commence the remainder of their five-year renewal period upon the date of separation from active duty.

*(continued on next page)*

## **FLORIDA BRIGHT FUTURES SCHOLARSHIP (continued)**

**Make the Grade** - It is your responsibility to earn the necessary Grade Point Average (GPA) in the **required** high school classes. Not all high school courses will qualify you for a Bright Futures Scholarship. Ask your guidance counselor or refer to the Bright Futures website for course information.

**Earn the Score** - To qualify, you **must** earn the minimum required test score (SAT, ACT, or CPT) for the award for which you wish to qualify.

**Graduate** - You may receive early notification of your award status during your last term of high school; however, if you do not graduate,\* you **will not** receive the award!

**Stay Clean** - You **must not** be found guilty of, or plead no contest to, a felony charge.

**Getting Your Money** - The Florida Department of Education will:

- ◆ Begin funding your scholarship during the **fall term** following your high school **graduation**.\* The academic year begins in the fall and ends in the summer. Scholarship recipients are not eligible for funding during the summer term immediately following high school graduation.\* **Summer disbursements are only made if funds are available. Check our website each year for summer funding information.**
- ◆ Send scholarship funds to the eligible Florida postsecondary institution of your choice prior to the beginning of each term. The money will then be applied to your account after the last day of the drop/add period at your postsecondary institution.

**You must:**

- ◆ Be a Florida resident and a U.S. citizen or eligible non-citizen, **as determined by your postsecondary institution.**
- ◆ Pursue an undergraduate degree at an eligible Florida college, or enroll in a postsecondary adult vocational certificate program.
- ◆ Begin using the scholarship within three years of your high school **graduation**.\* **If you enlist directly in the military after graduation,\* your three-year period begins upon the date of separation from active duty.**
- ◆ Enroll for at least **six non-remedial** semester hours (or the equivalent in quarter or clock hours) per term.

**Keep Up the Good Work** - Remember, you must **maintain** the required cumulative GPA and earn the minimum credit hours in order to renew your scholarship each year.

**Why Do We Need Your Social Security Number (SSN)?** - Your SSN is essential for matching your test scores with your student records, and for matching your Bright Futures Scholarship with your college records. However, if you choose to leave your SSN blank on the **Initial Student Florida Financial Aid Application**, the system will generate a pseudo number. Financial assistance will not be denied for failure to disclose your SSN.

**Already Have the Florida Prepaid College Plan?** - You can use both the Prepaid College Plan and the Bright Futures Scholarship. See a financial aid officer at the postsecondary institution you plan to attend for details.

**What is the Academic Top Scholars Award?** - The Academic Top Scholars award, announced by the FDOE before the end of the fall term after all term-one disbursements, is awarded to the Florida Academic Scholar with the highest academic ranking in each county (based on the product of multiplying the Bright Futures GPA and the highest qualifying SAT/ACT test score). The recipient receives a cost per credit hour award established by the Florida Legislature in the General Appropriations Act in addition to the Florida Academic Scholars award. For current year award amounts visit: [www.FloridaStudentFinancialAid.org/SSFAD/bf/awardamt.htm](http://www.FloridaStudentFinancialAid.org/SSFAD/bf/awardamt.htm).

**Accelerated High School Graduation Options** - Students may qualify for a Bright Futures Scholarship using the three-year accelerated high school graduation options. For details, see your high school guidance counselor.

**FACTS.org** - Public high school students should visit [www.FACTS.org](http://www.FACTS.org) to review their academic progress toward meeting Florida Bright Futures Scholarship Program eligibility requirements and State University System course requirements for college admission. Evaluations will be based on current program requirements and the most recent transcript received from a student's school district. Public high school students in grades 9-12 may access their records at [www.FACTS.org](http://www.FACTS.org) by creating their own login ID and password. Private high school students may see their guidance counselors for a copy of their Bright Futures Student Evaluation Report.

*\*To qualify for a Bright Futures Scholarship, you must earn a standard Florida high school diploma from a Florida public high school or a registered Florida Department of Education private high school; however, if you are a home education student, GED recipient, or an out-of-state student due to a parent's military or public service assignment, you may still qualify for a Bright Futures Scholarship (See the "Other Ways to Qualify" section on pages 16-18 for eligibility guidelines). Contact the Bright Futures office or visit their website for specific requirements.*