

Transcript Season 1: Episode 10 – Tips for Finding Scholarships

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Podcast Opener:

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This is Grown Up U, an adulting podcast to help you navigate the twists and turns of adult life. Listen and get life skills you didn't learn in school.

Podcast Script:

Rachel Chaney: Hello, everyone. We're back. Welcome to the Grown-Up U podcast. You may remember our voices.

This is Rachel Chaney. I'm the Yell County family consumer science agent and here with me is Pamela Luker, the Pope County family and consumer science agent.

We've done two episodes so far. We're with the University of Arkansas, System Division of Agriculture Cooperative Extension Service. And we're very excited to be here for today's segment of Grown Up U, which is about tips for finding scholarships.

So maybe you're sitting there thinking, I don't have a clue where to start when looking for scholarships, or maybe you're not sure if you even qualify for a scholarship. Well, we've got the help you need. We've got some tips to help you get started.

And I'm going to pass it over to Pam to go into more detail.

Pamela Luker: Searching for a scholarship can be really challenging sometimes if you don't know where to start, so I'll share with you some information and resources to help you get started.

So first, I do want to encourage you to pursue making scholarship applications right away and to start early during your sophomore and junior years or even earlier. So, the sooner the better that one of you are familiar with the requirements.

Take a course or get volunteer experiences that may even increase your chances of getting certain scholarships. So, I know a lot of people don't think about volunteer work and things like that, that help you with getting a scholarship. So I want you to keep that in mind.

Rachel Chaney: So my question is we're in October now, so what about these seniors that I mean, this is their last year of high school? Is it too late for them to find scholarships?

Pamela Luker: That's actually a really good question. So, no, in fact, there are scholarships that you can apply for all through college as well. So even if you're a college student right now, you can still be looking for scholarships, scholarships.

So, you just have less time to submit scholarship applications for next fall college semester but that doesn't mean it can't be done. It still can be done. So, it's not too late.

Rachel Chaney: OK, so what about those requirements for scholarship? I know certain requirements are needed, and you know what if their grade point isn't in the top 10 percent of their class? What are their options?

Pamela Luker: Well, yeah, they do have options because not all scholarships have those requirements. There are scholarships out there that are through non-profit organizations, private businesses, community groups, college departments or college programs. There are alumni groups, diversity groups, religious organizations, and even a lot more than that.

So, there's a lot of opportunities that you don't have to be the star athlete. You don't have to be the top 10 percent of your class. So, if that's if you don't fit that category, it's OK. There are still other opportunities. So, requirements will vary.

However, scholarships that require some type of essay or documentation of your qualifications are recommended. So, the scholarships that don't have any of these requirements except to share your personal information may actually be a front to collect information and sell it. So, you have to be careful there. They may say in the rules that it's a random drawing and if so, it's highly unlikely that you'll win anything.

But you could be bombarded with hundreds of emails as well. So, one person actually shared that he received so many emails, even when he unsubscribed, that he had to create another email account.

So be careful. Yes, your requirements do vary, but just be a little leery about the ones that don't require any kind of documentation because it can be something you don't want to be involved in.

Rachel Chaney: Yeah, I know you're talking about civic groups, that was actually a scholarship I got when I was in high school and it was something I found out about through the counselor. They had a list of local scholarships from different groups.

And I kind of was able to do one application for all of those groups and it was sent out to all of them.

It kind of course, this kind of depends on what your school does or your community does as far as that goes. But definitely not forget about that local level. And those didn't have any requirements. They just looked at my overall what I've done during my time in school.

And, you know, I talked about some scholarships there and my question for you is, what about what are some scholarships you have for recommendations for scholarships that they should look at? Also, what tips do you have for making sure it's a reliable scholarship?

Pamela Luker: Well, I will actually share with you a list of websites that are considered reliable. However, keep in mind that you're not signing up for those scholarships because, like you said, they're not always reliable. So, I want to help you avoid those.

Some things you can do to avoid the ones that are that reliable is for ones that ask for your personal information. Like I was saying earlier, know if they don't ask for an essay or any other type of requirement, be real cautious of those.

You may even, if you're concerned that they're not reliable, don't be scared to ask your high school counselor or go into someone else, maybe to look at that and make sure that that looks legit.

So those that do have requirements are considered merit based ones and they have a narrow, narrowed down applicant pool that makes them more selective. So, look for ones like that. And, you know, those are probably your best resources where you should start.

So, Rachel was saying, you know, a local civic group. That is absolutely correct. Look for local civic groups, clubs, a school foundation, teacher organizations, local businesses, industries, and even some states have certain scholarships available.

So those are all places you can go that are reliable. Even the colleges that you're interested in attending will also have scholarships. A college recruiting director can share available scholarships to you.

Also, if you have any special skills or talents or areas of interest, there may be scholarships connected to those as well. Now, I know with the Extension Services, Rachel, do you want to kind of touch base on that and what we offer?

Rachel Chaney: Yes, so the Cooperative Extension Service is a great resource to maybe look at if you're looking for scholarships.

First off, we have 4-H scholarships. They are due February 1st, and it's actually an online application that you do. And if you go to our website for <https://4h.uada.edu> under awards and recognition, they have information about the different scholarships that we have. And of course, you can contact your local county Extension office for more information about that.

Now, the big thing with that is you have to be an active member of 4-H, and some may have other requirements as far as things that you've done with 4-H. And if for those of you who don't know for ages, for ages 5 to 19. We have clubs throughout the state and all seventy-five counties, and they do a variety of leadership activities. You actually pick a project that you do certain things in.

And so, I could talk all day about how great of an organization 4-H is and how important it is to our youth and how great it could be for all these scholarships that you're looking to apply for. And maybe you're listen to this as a junior. It's a great time to get started and get those volunteer opportunities and different stuff through our 4-H program.

Some other things that we offer that I know some counties offer individually. Master Gardeners is a volunteer group that has a scholarship through them and may have a requirement that you're interested in gardening and plan to go into a related field to that.

There's Extension Homemaker's Club, another volunteer organization that we have that has a scholarship related to if you plan to go into the family consumer science field, which is things like health, nutrition, family life and financial management.

And then as far as that goes, those are the EHC, 4-H, and Master Gardeners are kind of the main volunteer groups. And I know sometimes they'll offer scholarships in at the county level. And then of course we have the Arkansas 4-H that offer scholarships at the state level.

So, check with the Extension office and like Pam said, checking with those local businesses and industries you can apply for here in the state of Arkansas that are excellent resources.

Pam, do you have anything you want to add to that?

Pamela Luker: No, that's great information. Now, one thing that I never thought about it either. Whenever I was going into college is workplaces, sometimes award scholarships to children of their employees or to their employees themselves. So that's another little tip I have.

But one thing I want you to keep in mind is don't focus on the large, highly competitive national scholarships because the chances of getting those types of scholarships is very low. So, getting several smaller scholarships is usually more doable and those funds can really add up.

And don't forget, you can apply for scholarships throughout your years in college.

Many, though, they require you to renew them every year. And not only do you have to renew them, but you have to keep whatever the requirements to have that scholarship you must maintain them. So, let's say you have to keep a certain grade point average. Remember that if you do not keep that, you could either lose your scholarship or you may not qualify for the next year. So, keep that in mind.

I did promise you that I would share some reliable online sites. you could go to. So some of those sites include the Department of Labor, which is careeronestop.org There's also <https://www.collegeboard.org/>, <https://studentaid.gov/>, <https://www.fastweb.com/>, and <https://www.scholarships.com/>.

So those are several reliable online sites that will help you get started. But I just wanted to give you guys a place to start. And that way you know where to go from here and just know it's not too late. If you have not applied yet, you still can apply and try to get your school funding.

Rachel Chaney: And I will say one thing, as someone who has served on a scholarship board or I'm helping to select people, some tips for your application, make sure that you spell check and grammar. I know that seems like common sense, but it's very important to have someone look over your document and make sure.

Also, sometimes I've seen people will maybe add some things that they've done that maybe doesn't seem realistic or whatever. Or maybe so I just say be honest on your scholarship, especially when you're doing these local ones, because depending on where you are, these people might know you. So, you don't want to put anything on there that can get you in trouble.

And then as someone who went through college and everything like that. Apply, apply, apply!

You know, we talked about that some don't have requirements, even if some do have requirements, but you still think you fit that requirement, that you still think you could maybe apply and get it. It never hurts to send an application and you might not get it, but at least you tried. So especially when you're going to college, it can be very expensive. So, get those scholarships to help offset that cost and just apply. And it never hurts to try.

Pamela Luker: Well, thank you for joining me today, Rachel, and I hope this helps someone out there to help find scholarships if you don't know where to start. Hopefully this will give you give you a little place. Also, don't forget to utilize your high school counselor or college...

Rachel Chaney: Their adviser may also be someone to talk with to. Alright. Well, this has been a great thing, and I think it's a very important topic, and we hope that you've enjoyed this lesson of tips for finding scholarships and we will have a new episode out every Wednesday.

So next week's topic is it's not all about the grades, how volunteering and leadership affect scholarship. So that's a great Segway from this topic into that. So now that you found the scholarships to apply for, they can help you with maybe getting that application done.

So, thank you again and have a wonderful day!

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