

Financial Aid Night 2020

- Seniors should be searching Naviance for scholarship opportunities. Click on the *colleges* tab and then scroll down to find the section entitled *scholarships & money*. Click on *scholarship list* in order to see the full list of active scholarships.
- There are filters on the pull-down list, which allows you to browse by category. At this point, you should just look at all of them to see if you qualify.
- There's also a tool where you can click a box so it only shows scholarships that have been added or updated since your last visit. This tool can be particularly helpful if you look at the scholarship list regularly.
- Several scholarships exist for Drake students only and some of these are based on where you live, what you want to pursue as a career, your academic/extra-curricular involvements, etc.
- Some scholarships require a nomination so see me by the stated deadline if you want to be considered as our school's nominee for a scholarship you find on Naviance.
- There are over 30 local scholarships that will eventually be active on Naviance, as well as over a 100 national scholarships so check often.
- In the spring, I'll make classroom visits to each senior English class to remind you of some local scholarship opportunities and will send home a newsletter highlighting local scholarships next semester.
- Scholarship research can take a lot of time and effort so a team approach is best. **Although the student needs to be the one completing the scholarship application, parents/guardians can help do some of the leg-work of researching scholarships, looking up deadlines and other requirements to help their son/daughter stay organized.**
- There are a handful of scholarships for juniors, sophomores and freshmen on Naviance so use the "sort by category" tool to research those opportunities.

- Remember to look on the website for each college on your list in order to see what scholarships they offer. **Some may require a separate application that has an earlier deadline than the admission deadline.**
- Chapman University example: a family didn't complete the FAFSA initially as they thought they wouldn't be eligible for aid but after being convinced to do so, Chapman offered \$20K in institutional aid which then allowed the student to enroll as it was now affordable.
- USC has a December 1st application deadline for students who want to be considered for their merit scholarships. The regular deadline is January 15, but if you wait until then to apply, you will NOT be eligible for their merit scholarships. A couple of years ago, one of our seniors missed the December 1 deadline and didn't receive any aid. Another senior did meet the earlier deadline and was awarded \$35K!
- The district automatically uploaded your Cal Grant GPA info to the California Student Aid Commission unless you opted out. The only other requirement to be eligible for a Cal Grant, the free money from the state of California for students attending a California college or university, is to complete the Free Application for Student Aid (FAFSA) by March 2.
- If you think you'll want to take out student loans, the best type are offered through the federal government so that's another reason why everyone should complete the FAFSA.
- Once you have your acceptances and have received your financial aid award letters, consider using a spreadsheet to keep track of the different costs and awards. <http://www.tamdistrict.org/Page/7921>
- Diversify your college applications and take a portfolio approach – have a private school and state school on your list as the private school may be able to offer more aid than the state school.
- You'll get more financial aid where you are a superstar applicant so have some financial safety schools on your list – meaning your academic/testing profile is above their accepted averages so you may receive more merit aid.
- Junior families should start using the Net Price Calculator tool now to get a sense of expected college costs. If you have a CSU, UC, out of state

public, and private school on your potential list, try the NPC for one of each to get a sense of how much different schools can offer.

- Juniors should start having conversations about financial aid now.
- Applying for financial aid is complicated but super important. Pay attention to all communications from your colleges re: financial aid and contact me with any questions. As with college applications, financial aid deadlines are **EXTREMELY IMPORTANT!**