



How Do I Pay For College? The Truth About Tuition

The truth is somebody has to pay for college. Higher education isn't free. But it doesn't have to be all on you. Saving your money always helps, but there are many other ways to get funds for college. Your guidance counselor can help you plan your college future. Meanwhile, here are some truths to get you started.

FACT: College is Expensive

Here's something that's also true: Most students receive some kind of financial aid to help pay for the cost of their education. A few students even get all their costs paid.

FACT: The U.S. Government awards \$80 billion each year in grants, low-interest loans and work study assistance.

The U.S. Department of Education should be your first source to access financial aid. You can access this aid by completing the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) at www.fafsa.ed.gov.

Aid also comes from scholarships from the state of Arkansas, colleges & universities, employers, individuals, private companies, nonprofits, religious groups and professional organizations.

FACT: Financial Assistance will not pay for a tattoo or a tricked-out moon base.

However, financial aid can definitely pay for a lot of things. There are five basic costs associated with going to college. Financial aid may be used for:

- Tuition and fees
- Room and board
- Books and supplies
- Personal expenses
- Travel

FACT: There are more scholarships available than you probably think

There are thousands of scholarships available in Arkansas, both public and private. And they're like gifts; you don't have to repay them. Here are some tools to help find your scholarship.

- [Arkansas Department of Higher Education](#)
- [Federal Student Aid Scholarship Search](#)
- [Fund My Future](#)
- [Arkansas Colleges & Universities Financial Aid/Scholarship Information](#)

FACT: Grants don't have to be repaid either, but they are usually based on financial need.

Most often, grant aid comes from federal and state governments and individual colleges. Available federal grants include:

- Pell Grant** – A federal grant awarded to undergraduate students.
- ACG** – The Academic Competitiveness Grant for college freshmen and sophomores who are eligible for Pell grants and who took "rigorous" classes in high school.
- FSEOG** – The Federal Supplemental Educational Opportunity Grant is awarded to undergraduate students with exceptional financial need.
- SMART Grant** – The national Science and Mathematics Access to Retain Talent Grant is awarded to juniors and seniors who are eligible for Pell Grants and are majoring in mathematics, technology, engineering, a foreign language critical to national security or physical, life or computer sciences. Students must also have at least a 3.0 grade point average to be eligible.
- TEACH Grant** – The Teacher Education Assistance for College and Higher Education Grant is for students who plan to teach in schools that serve low-income students.

Interested in getting a grant? Here are some tools to help you find yours:

- [Arkansas Department of Higher Education](#)
- [Federal Student Aid](#)
- [Free Application for Federal Student Aid \(FAFSA\)](#)

FACT: A college education doesn't just fall out of the sky.

It takes a little bit of work on your end. And a little common sense to help you use the financial aid wisely. Here are a few tips to get started:

- Check the colleges you're considering for merit-or non-merit-based scholarships to academically talented students.
- Check with the [Arkansas Department of Higher Education](#) to find out if you're eligible for state assistance based on need and/or merit.
- Stick close to home. Most Arkansas colleges and universities offer lower tuition to In-state residents.
- Go to a lower-cost community college for one or two years, then transfer to a four- year school.
- Live at home. You could save thousands of dollars.

Other Student Financial Aid Resources:

[Arkansas ETV Program /Arkansas Department of Human Services](#)

[Arkansas Single Parent Scholarship Fund](#)

[Arkansas Student Loan Authority](#)

[Careers and Colleges](#)

[College Quest](#)

[College NET](#)

[FinAid](#)

[Financial Aid Resource Center](#)

[GIFT College Investing Plan](#)

[High-Tech Scholarship/Arkansas Department of Workforce Education](#)

[Ralph D. Norman Scholarship/Learning Disabilities Association of Arkansas](#)

[Student Loan Guarantee Foundation of Arkansas](#)

[Technical Careers Student Loan Forgiveness Program/Arkansas Department of Workforce Education](#)

[The Sallie Mae Fund Scholarships](#)