

For Undocumented Students: Questions and Answers About Paying for College

If you're an undocumented student, you probably have questions about college costs. Here are answers to some common questions undocumented students have about paying for college.

Do colleges offer financial aid or scholarships to undocumented students?

Yes, some do. Private colleges often have special funds available. To apply for this financial aid, you may have to fill out the CSS/Financial Aid PROFILE or the college's own forms. Check with the admission or financial aid office at each college you are interested in to find out its requirements.

Am I eligible for scholarships?

Yes, you just need to find ones that you qualify for. Start by talking to your high school counselor and checking out the Scholarship Resources page on the Mexican American Legal Defense and Educational Fund (MALDEF) website.

There are many scholarship opportunities, and some private scholarship organizations allow undocumented students to apply. There are even a few scholarships specifically meant for undocumented students. Be sure to look into local scholarships offered by community groups, such as the Kiwanis, that might be open to all students living in the local community.

Can I get federal financial aid?

No. You can't get federal financial aid unless you're a U.S. citizen or eligible noncitizen. This means you should not fill out the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA).

Can I get a Pell Grant?

No. Pell Grants are a type of federal financial aid.

Can I get financial aid from my state?

It depends on where you live. Some states offer financial aid to undocumented students and some don't. The rules often change, so be sure to get the latest information. The Repository of Resources for Undocumented Students (.pdf/1MB) has information about policies in several states.

Do I pay the in-state or out-of-state rate at a public college in my home state?

It depends on where you live. Some public colleges may offer you in-state tuition rates based on proof of residency in the state. Others may treat you as an out-of-state or international student and require you to pay the higher rate.

How else can I cut down on costs?

You may be able to save money on tuition by earning college credit before starting college. Check with the colleges you're considering to see if they award credit for qualifying scores on AP® or CLEP® exams or for successfully completing International Baccalaureate (IB) courses and earning qualifying scores on IB exams. Find out more about the AP Program and CLEP.

Where else can I find information about paying for college?

Here are some websites and downloads with helpful information:

- Repository of Resources for Undocumented Students (.pdf/1MB)
- Resources for Undocumented Students from the Minnesota Office of Higher Education
- MALDEF's Scholarship Resources page
- DreamActivist's DACA Scholarship page
- Paying for College on ab540.com
- Choose Your Future from Chicago Public Schools

OTHER TOPICS IN GET STARTED

- Know Yourself
- Outside the Classroom
- Inside the Classroom
- Building a Support Network
- For Parents
- For Veterans

Start a college search: Which location are you interested in?

Select region or state

Find colleges

EXPERT Q&A

Can undocumented students get financial aid?



Chio Flores, Director, Office of Financial Aid & Scholarships, Washington State University

RELATED RESOURCES

- Repository of Resources for Undocumented Students
- Students Speak: Undocumented and Applying to College
- 6 Things Undocumented Students Need to Know About College
- Learn About the AP Program
- How to Apply for a Scholarship
- Para Los Padres

Recommended

STUDENT STORY

SCHOLARSHIPS START
HERE

Repository of Resources for Undocumented Students

General Resources

Category	Name of Resource	Author/Contact Information	Audience
Admission	Keeping the Dream Alive: Resource Guide for Undocumented Students	Lideres Initiative – National Council of La Raza http://lideres.nclr.org/section/resources/keeping_the_dream_alive_resource_guide_for_undocumented_students	Students and Educators
Financial Aid			
By Nonprofits	Davis-Putter Scholarship Fund	Davis-Putter Scholarship Fund http://www.davisputter.org/apply.html	Students Involved in Advocacy
By Nonprofits	A. Patrick Charnon Memorial Scholarship	The Center for Education Solutions http://www.cesresources.org/charnon.html	Students
By Nonprofits	Que Lleva Café Scholarship	Chicano Organizing & Research in Education (CORE) http://www.ca-core.org Email: information@ca-core.org	Students
By Nonprofits	La Unidad Latina Foundation Scholarships	La Unidad Latina Foundation http://www.scholarships4students.com/la_unidad_latina_foundation_scholarship.htm	Students
By Nonprofits	Consejo de Federaciones Mexicanas en Norteamérica	Consejo de Federaciones Mexicanas en Norteamérica http://www.cofem.org/cofemspanish/home_sp.html	Students
By Nonprofits	Geneseo Migrant Center Scholarships	Geneseo Migrant Center http://www.migrant.net/migrant/scholarships.htm	Migrant Students
By Corporations	Western Union Foundation's Family Scholarship Program	Western Union Foundation http://corporate.westernunion.com/scholarship.html	Students Born Outside the U.S.
By Corporations	Beca Univision	Univision http://vidayfamilia.univision.com/es-el-momento/educate/noticias/article/2011-12-16/becas-univision-hispanos	First generation students who have graduated from high school in the U.S. (includes undocumented)

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General Lists	Scholarship List/Lista de Becas. 2009-2010 (Last updated 2/9/10)	MALDEF http://maldef.org/leadership/scholarships/	Students and Educators
General Lists	Scholarships for Undocumented Students	Get Ready for College www.getreadyforcollege.org	Students
	Selected Funding Opportunities Open to Non-U.S. Citizens	Fellowships Connection – University of Notre Dame http://www.nd.edu/~fellows/NonUSCitOpps.html	
	Scholarship Opportunities (That Don't Require a Social Security Number)	Latinos Progresando http://www.latinospro.org/index.php/components/com_spgm/spgm/gal/Annuai_Fundraiser_2009/modules/mod_jflanguageselection/templates/components/com_joomfish/images/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=83&Itemid=104&lang=en	
Search Engine	Fondo Futuro: The Bilingual Portal for Student Financing & Assistance	Fondo Futuro http://fondofuturo.com	Students
Search Engine	Latino College Dollars	The Tomás Rivera Policy Institute http://www.latinocollegedollars.org	Students
Search Engine	Scholarship List <i>Note:</i> List last updated April 7, 2006	Futuros Educational Services http://futuros-california.org/resources.html	Students
	Ayuda Financiera del Estudiante en Español	FinAid – The Smart Student Guide to Financial Aid http://www.finaid.org/otheraid/spanish.phtml	Students and Parents

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General Resources

Category	Name of Resource	Author/Contact Information	Audience
Student Organizations	Students for Fair Consideration	S4FC http://www.s4fc.org/	Students
Other Resources	FAQ en Español: Que Es el Dream Act?	United We Dream	Students and Parents
	Living in the United States: A Guide for Immigrant Youth (2007)	Immigrant Legal Resource Center http://www.ilrc.org/files/youth_handbook_english_0.pdf	Students and Educators
	No federal requirement that school administrators inquire about students' immigration status or report those who are undocumented, DHS confirms	National Immigration Law Center http://www.nilc.org/immigrationpolicy/DREAM/Dream009.htm	Educators