



BRONX COMMUNITY COLLEGE

TRANSFER TALK

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Transfer Planning and Scholarships: An Introduction

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The Transfer Planning timeline (detailed on the last page of this newsletter as well as on the Transfer Planning website) recommends that you start researching scholarships prior to reaching 30 credits. This recommendation is in the context of transfer planning; you can research scholarships at any point in your career at BCC. Be mindful that sooner is always better than later.

What is a Scholarship?

A scholarship is a monetary award given to a student to assist in funding their education. Unlike a loan, which accumulates interest, scholarships are not paid back.

Scholarships come from an assortment of sources including businesses, charities, churches, non-profit organizations, schools, government agencies and unions. Some organizations that offer scholarships consider them an investment and may have additional requirements beyond the application. Some may be contingent on entering a specific career, while others expect some sort of participation in an activity.

Merit scholarships are the most common, but not all scholarships are tailored for the overachiever. Who you are can be the basis for a scholarship. For example, the Point Foundation offers a scholarship for LGBTQ students. Similarly, there are many scholarships based on ethnicity. Athletic scholarships are also a possibility: universities budget a certain amount of money to attract athletes for a wide-range of sports.

One of the most common ways to get a scholarship is to apply for an individual-based program that offers scholarships that direct applicants into specific career paths. One example is The National Health Service Corps (<http://nhsc.hrsa.gov/scholarships/>), which gives scholarships for future health care workers in exchange for two years of clinical practice in areas where there's a shortage of workers.

Finding Scholarships

The most challenging aspect of the scholarship process is finding them. Most students suppose that writing the essay is difficult, and can be at the outset, but you will find that essays can be recycled for later applications because similar questions are asked repeatedly.

The best way to start looking is to go to the library or bookstore and pick up an annual scholarship book. Two of the best books are *The Ultimate Scholarship Book: Billions of Dollars in Scholarships, Grants and Prizes* by Gen Tanabe and Kelly Tanabe and *Scholarship Handbook* by The College Board. Going through these books is very time consuming, but have the potential to cultivate many opportunities.

The next best option is within your respective academic department: visit the department and speak with your professors. Ask them if they know of any scholarships you can apply for.

Regarding the web, the CUNY portal scholarship (<http://www2.cuny.edu/financial-aid/scholarships/>) and the BCC scholarship (<http://www.bcc.cuny.edu/Scholarship/>) websites are highly recommended. Also, visit the scholarship websites of schools you are interested in transferring to. Sites such as Fastweb are saturated and may not yield many possibilities.

One of the best ways to use the web is with a very strategic word search using your specific identifiers. Take into consideration your major, career/educational aspirations, community service, activities, and ethnic background. Using a search engine like Google, enter your identifiers with the word scholarship. One example would be a search for "African-American nursing scholarship." This search yielded a scholarship from the National Black Nurses Association (<http://www.nbna.org>).

Online Scams

Use caution when searching for scholarships online because scams are in abundance. The typical scams involve application fees, "guarantees," fees for publicly available money, and requests for an unusual amount of personal information. Completing scholarship applications should not cost you any money beyond stamps and printing.

The next issue of Transfer Talk will look at resume writing for scholarships. The third installment will look at writing essays.



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