



The UNIVERSITY of
WEST ALABAMA

Know Your Financial Aid Options

Unless you stumbled into a truckload of cash or won the lottery, chances are, paying for college may be a bit of a challenge.

In addition to whatever support you may be receiving from family – or from the fruits of your own labor – you may benefit from investigating one or more of the other financial options available to you:

- The **federal government** offers a number of options for qualified students, including aid for serving in the military or for spouses and children of veterans, the Education Award for community service for those who serve in AmeriCorps, and Educational and Training vouchers for current and former foster care youth. Scholarship and loan repayment options are also available through the Department of Health and Human Services Indian Health Service, the National Institutes of Health and the National Health Service Corps. In all, the Federal government provides grants, work-study funds, and low-interest loans totaling more than \$150 billion per year.
- Even if you don't qualify for federal support, you may qualify for financial aid or student loans in **the state where you live**.
- The **financial aid office** at your college or university is also a great source of information about possible scholarships or work-study opportunities for students in your major.
- Scholarships or grants from **nonprofit or private organizations** can also be a great source of supplemental financing. Many scholarships go unclaimed each year because they don't receive applicants or because the criteria is so specific. Consider the American Fire Sprinkler Association Scholarship, which awards \$20,000 to select students who submit an essay on automatic fire sprinklers. Are you a peanut butter aficionado? Check out the Jif "Most Creative Sandwich Contest" with a \$25,000 payout. Creativity goes a long way when it comes to up-for-grabs cash you can put towards your educational goals!

Regardless of your source (or sources) of financial aid, be sure you fill out all the paperwork, read through all of the criteria, and hit all the deadlines. For more insight to what UWA can do to help you make your college dreams a reality, visit http://www.uwa.edu/Financial_Aid.aspx.