

Explore Personal, Family and Community Leads

In the blockbuster movie *Jerry Maguire*, a wide receiver played by Cuba Gooding, Jr. demands that his sports agent, played by Tom Cruise, repeatedly shout out four now famous words: "Show me the money!"

And in the spirit of that famous line, it's about time that we showed *you* the money by turning your personal, family, and community affiliations into hot scholarship leads. To do this, it will be helpful to get out the trusty *Personal Scholarship Profile Questionnaire* that you completed in an earlier action step.

Now comes the fun part: Using this questionnaire as a starting point, we're about to track down scholarship leads for each of the characteristics that define your personal scholarship profile. So without further adieu, let's show you the money!

Find Family Affiliations

When you completed your questionnaire, I asked you, among other things, a bunch of questions about your parents and grandparents. That was because affiliations that your family may have with certain companies, groups, and organizations—including military and fraternal—can make you eligible for more scholarship dough.

So your mission, if you choose to accept it, is to go methodically one-by-one through the organizations affiliated with you and your family



ATTENTION STUDENTS AND PARENTS: This article is designed to work together with Ben Kaplan's *Scholarship Starter Kit* CD. If you haven't received a CD, contact your college planner or counselor, or let us know at www.ScholarshipCoach.com/needkit

and contact each group. You'll want to ask them if they offer their own scholarship program, or if they know of any other scholarship programs that match someone with your characteristics.

As you do this, pay special attention to your parents' employers. A lot of companies sponsor scholarship programs for children of employees. This is especially true of large companies that employ more than 500 people, or subsidiaries of these companies in both the U.S. and Canada.

Companies that offer such scholarships include Hershey Foods, Bank of America, Allstate, Nike, General Motors, Sprint, and Dunkin' Donuts, to name a few. And don't neglect to investigate lesser-known companies that have less-familiar brands—there's plenty of scholarship gold here, too.

Additionally, if you happen to have an employer yourself, your company may offer tuition reimbursement benefits that are similar to a scholarship and can help pay for your school.

Furthermore, if your parents and grandparents are members of any job-related, community-related, or military-related organizations

(such as unions, credit unions, civic groups, professional associations, and particular branches of the military), investigate possible scholarships from those organizations—many of which have scholarship benefits for the offspring of members.

Did you remember to ask your parents and grandparents about all of their potential affiliations? If not, now is the time.

Better yet, enlist the help of your parents and grandparents in looking for affiliation-based scholarships. Ask them to check with all of the organizations they belong to about the existence of scholarship programs.

As you embark on this process, keep in mind that while the national organization may have a scholarship program, the local chapters of that same organization may have their own programs. So you've got to contact such organizations on both the national and local levels.

Locating programs with specific, very limited applicant pools is as good as it gets—it's like money in the bank. In fact, when it comes to such scholarship programs you could be the only applicant!

Canvas Your Community

A good place to start your local scholarship search is with a variety of prominent community groups. This includes service organizations, veterans associations, religious groups, and fraternal lodges—all entities that frequently sponsor scholarship programs.

I'm talking about organizations like the American Legion, Elks Club, Daughters of the American Revolution, Optimist International, Kiwanis International, Rotary Club, Veterans of Foreign Wars, and many more.

For each of these groups, approach the local chapter in your city, state, or region. And even if there isn't a local chapter in your town, you may be eligible to participate in the scholarship program of local chapters in nearby communities.

What if you can't locate the local chapter of a particular group? Try asking for assistance from the organization's national headquarters.

As the second phase in your community search, target businesses in your area with the highest profile or strongest community presence (especially with young people). Start out by calling your local Chamber of Commerce; it may be aware of businesses in your area that sponsor scholarship programs.

Frequent scholarship providers include radio and television stations, newspapers, supermarkets, car dealerships, and department stores. Banks, credit unions, and other financial institutions in your community are also frequent scholarship providers. Ask to speak to the manager and inquire whether the institution is sponsoring any scholarship contests.

A good place to start your local scholarship search is with a variety of prominent community groups. This includes service organizations, veterans associations, religious groups, and fraternal lodges—all entities that frequently sponsor scholarship programs.

Banks, in particular, present a unique opportunity for scholarship seekers. Because they often hold the scholarship funds for other community groups and businesses, bank personnel may know of various scholarship programs that are available in your community. Speak to the manager of the bank, and inquire who at the bank might be aware of funds and trust accounts set up for particular community scholarships.

An additional source of local scholarship funds that has sprung up in recent years is Dollars for Scholars, a coast-to-coast network of community-based, volunteer-operated scholarship foundations. A primary goal of the program is to raise scholarship money for local students and coordinate the application for and distribution of local scholarships through a central source. In a recent calendar year, Dollars for Scholars chapters nationwide awarded nearly \$29 million in scholarship funds to local students.

The Dollars for Scholars program is managed on the national level by the Scholarship America foundation. With nearly 1,200 chapters located in 40 states—and more opening every year—there very well could be a Dollars for Scholars chapter in your hometown.

Finally, one important point to

note for students attending (or considering attending) college outside of their home area: You should search for local scholarships in both the community in which your parents reside as well as the community in which you attend college. By having this dual residence, you've immediately *doubled* the community-based scholarships you're eligible to win!

Target Related Groups

We can broaden the reach of our scholarship net by seeking out a wide range of organizations, associations, foundations, societies, and other potential scholarship providers that are in some way related to your background, personal characteristics, interests, skills, and goals.

What if you have asthma and want to find a scholarship for students with the medical condition? What if you're interested in modern dance and want to know if scholarships exist for such performers? The strategies outlined below will help you track down highly-specialized scholarships that are looking for a recipient just like you.

To begin, we are going to once again use your completed *Personal Scholarship Profile Questionnaire* and try to find organizations that match your unique personal characteristics. You will then be able to contact these

groups, inquire about scholarship opportunities they offer, and then track down any additional scholarship leads they mention to you.

First, we need to go over how to find organizations that match your interests, background, and credentials. You can start by examining several printed resources found at most public or college libraries—most notably, the *Encyclopedia of Associations*, a mammoth multi-volume directory.

The *Encyclopedia of Associations* (published by Gale Research) is divided into a variety of categories according to the type of organization (such as commercial, educational, or cultural). Go to the keyword menu and index to locate organizations and associations related to your interests and background—groups such as the Dance Educators of America, the National Society of Black Engineers, or even the National Ice Carving Association.

To supplement your community scholarship search, you can also look up organizations and associations in your home area by using the guide's geographic index.

Once you start using the *Encyclopedia of Associations*, you'll notice that each organization is described,

and its major programs, publications, and membership are noted. Additionally, many listings contain an "awards" section that details major scholarship, grant, and fellowship programs that the organization administers. Don't rely on the information listed in the awards section, however, since it can be dated and not always relevant to you.

Some libraries may also subscribe to "Associations Unlimited," an electronic database drawn from the print version. Searching electronically for relevant groups can save you some time.

Two other print resources found in most libraries, *Foundation Grants to Individuals* and *The Foundation Directory* (both published by The Foundation Center) may prove useful to you in tracking down foundations linked to your personal characteristics.

The *Foundation Grants to Individuals* directory identifies foundations that make annual grants of at least \$2,000 to individuals (only a portion of which are scholarships), while *The Foundation Directory* is a broader work that lists all types of foundations.

Additionally, several websites (such as the Scholarly Societies

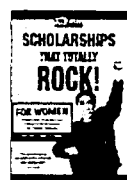
Project, Associations on the Net, and Foundation Finder) allow you to search for associations, organizations, and foundations based on keywords that you enter.

Once you have employed these resources to locate organizations, the real contact work begins: Not only should you contact these groups directly and inquire about any scholarships they sponsor, but you should also ask individuals at the organizations whether they know of any other groups in their area of interest that may offer scholarship awards.

All of this legwork can take some time, but it's well worth it: Because these organizations stockpile information about a particular field, they often have specialized knowledge about scholarship opportunities in that specific field that others are unlikely to possess.

Most students don't bother to check in with such organizations, but that's even better for you. Taking this one extra step often makes all the difference in the world.

The author of this article, Ben Kaplan, is the publisher of ScholarshipCoach.com and the winner of more than two dozen scholarships worth \$90,000—enough to cover virtually the entire cost of his Harvard education.



For more scholarships related to your personal interests, see Ben Kaplan's *Scholarships That Totally Rock* CD-ROM series. This series includes guides for medicine, engineering, and more. www.ScholarshipCoach.com/products/totallyrock

Family Affiliation Follow-up Form

Ask your parents, grandparents, and other family members about any affiliations they may have or have had with the following groups. After you have asked, check off each box below:

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Employers | <input type="checkbox"/> The military and armed forces |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Job-related unions or associations | <input type="checkbox"/> Church and religious groups |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Colleges, universities, and alumni groups | <input type="checkbox"/> Civic and service organizations and clubs |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Banks and credit unions | <input type="checkbox"/> Historical and honorary societies |

After asking your family about any of the above affiliations they may have, list below the names of any groups and organizations you turn up—along with the information you'll need in order to contact them. Then, your job is to contact each group and ask them if they have a scholarship program or know of any other award programs that match someone with your characteristics.

1. Organization Name & Contact Info: ☐ I have inquired about scholarship possibilities

2. Organization Name & Contact Info: ☐ I have inquired about scholarship possibilities

3. Organization Name & Contact Info: ☐ I have inquired about scholarship possibilities

4. Organization Name & Contact Info: ☐ I have inquired about scholarship possibilities

5. Organization Name & Contact Info: ☐ I have inquired about scholarship possibilities

Canvas Your Community Follow-up Form

This form is designed to help you track down local scholarships in your community.

PART I: COMMUNITY GROUP CHECKLIST

Check for scholarships offered by the following community groups:

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> American Legion | <input type="checkbox"/> Lions Club |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Boy Scouts/Girl Scouts of America | <input type="checkbox"/> National Honor Society |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Daughters of the American Revolution | <input type="checkbox"/> Odd Fellows and Rebekah Lodges |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Daughters of the Confederacy | <input type="checkbox"/> Optimist International |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Dollars for Scholars/Scholarship America | <input type="checkbox"/> Rotary Club |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Elks Club | <input type="checkbox"/> Sons of the American Revolution |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 4-H Club | <input type="checkbox"/> Soroptimist International |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Key Club | <input type="checkbox"/> Unions |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Kiwanis International | <input type="checkbox"/> Veterans of Foreign Wars |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Knights of Columbus | <input type="checkbox"/> YMCA/YWCA |

PART II: COMMUNITY GROUP QUESTIONS

1. Do the national headquarters of these groups sponsor separate scholarship programs from their local chapters?
2. Are there any students in your area who have won scholarships from these groups in the past?
3. If your community does not have a local chapter of a particular group listed above, are there chapters in neighboring communities?
4. Have you located any Dollars for Scholars chapters in your area by searching for them on the web (at www.scholarshipamerica.org/dfs/find_chap.php)?

PART III: LOCAL BUSINESS CHECKLIST

Many community businesses, such as radio and television stations, newspapers, department stores, supermarkets, car dealerships, banks, and credit unions offer scholarships to local students. In each category below, enter the names of businesses in your area that could be good scholarship leads.

☐ **Radio and Television Stations:**☐ _____
☐ _____
☐ _____☐ **Newspapers:**☐ _____
☐ _____
☐ _____☐ **Department Stores, Supermarkets, and Car Dealerships:**☐ _____
☐ _____
☐ _____☐ **Banks and Credit Unions:**☐ _____
☐ _____
☐ _____**PART IV: LOCAL BUSINESS QUESTIONS**

1. Does your local bank or credit union manage scholarship funds for other community groups and businesses? It's a good idea to speak to the manager of the bank, and inquire who at the bank might be aware of funds and trust accounts set up for community scholarships.
2. Is your local Chamber of Commerce aware of any businesses in your area that sponsor (or might be interested in sponsoring) scholarships?
3. Have you checked in with other high-profile businesses in your community or state, including Fortune 500 Companies (such as Intel or Nike) and other large corporations?

Related Organization Follow-up Form

This form is designed to help you track down scholarships from associations, foundations, and other groups uniquely related to your interests, talents, background, and skills.

PART I: PERSONAL CHARACTERISTICS AND BACKGROUND

List below the unique aspects of your characteristics and background for which you want to search for a related organization and scholarship. For example, if you have asthma, write "ASTHMA" in the space below.

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

PART II: RESOURCES FOR IDENTIFYING RELATED ORGANIZATIONS

The following resources list organizations and associations by name and subject, and also provide contact information for each listing.

<u>RESOURCE</u>	<u>LOCATION</u>
1. <i>Encyclopedia of Associations</i>	Public or college library
2. <i>Foundation Grants to Individuals</i>	Public or college library
3. <i>The Foundation Directory</i>	Public or college library
4. Scholarly Societies Project	www.scholarly-societies.org
5. Associations on the Net	www.ipl.org/ref/AON
6. The Foundation Center's "Foundation Finder" and "Grant Maker" search tools	www.fdncenter.org/funders/grantmaker/index.html

PART III: CONTACT RELATED ORGANIZATIONS

After identifying related organizations that apply to your unique characteristics by using the resources mentioned in Part II, list below each organization along with their contact information. Note whether or not they have a scholarship at this time that fits your criteria—even if they don't now, they might in the future.

RELATED ORGANIZATIONS

- | | |
|----------------------------------|--|
| 1. _____
Contact Information: | <input type="checkbox"/> Do they offer a scholarship that fits me? |
| 2. _____
Contact Information: | <input type="checkbox"/> Do they offer a scholarship that fits me? |
| 3. _____
Contact Information: | <input type="checkbox"/> Do they offer a scholarship that fits me? |
| 4. _____
Contact Information: | <input type="checkbox"/> Do they offer a scholarship that fits me? |
| 5. _____
Contact Information: | <input type="checkbox"/> Do they offer a scholarship that fits me? |
| 6. _____
Contact Information: | <input type="checkbox"/> Do they offer a scholarship that fits me? |
| 7. _____
Contact Information: | <input type="checkbox"/> Do they offer a scholarship that fits me? |
| 8. _____
Contact Information: | <input type="checkbox"/> Do they offer a scholarship that fits me? |
| 9. _____
Contact Information: | <input type="checkbox"/> Do they offer a scholarship that fits me? |