



January 2025

Happy New Year! We hope you took winter break to recharge so you can focus on the second half of the school year. **If you're a high school senior**, make it a priority to complete the 2025-2026 FAFSA, attend one of our FAFSA completion workshops and apply for the featured scholarships below! **If you're not a senior**, keep reading for ways to prepare for life after high school.

Be sure to pass along this information to your parent(s)/guardian(s) and reach out to your [College Now advisor](#) for any questions or additional details. College Now is dedicated to supporting YOU as you embark on your path toward a successful career.

FAFSA UPDATES



The 2025-2026 Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) is open!

Attention seniors! Have you filled out the 2025-2026 Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) yet? The FAFSA is completely free and is your ticket to accessing grants (money you don't need to pay back!), work-study funds and loans for your college or career journey.

If you need help completing the FAFSA, our experts are here to assist! Attend one of our in-person FAFSA workshops below or schedule a **free virtual appointment with a College Now advisor** [here](#).

Complete your FAFSA at an in-person workshop!

Need help with your FAFSA? Join one of our FREE in-person workshops for step-by-step guidance from our experts!

Secure your spot by registering below!

Thursday, January 23

Lakewood Public Library

[Register here](#)

Saturday, February 1

Saint Ignatius High School

[Register here](#)

Saturday, February 8

Cleveland Central Catholic

[Register here](#)

Thursday, February 13

Lakewood Public Library

[Register here](#)

SCHOLARSHIP SPOTLIGHT

Scholarships are incredible sources of financial assistance for college students. Unlike loans, scholarship funds are free money. That means you don't have to pay them back over time -- an assurance that can

vastly reduce financial stress and help you focus more on your studies.

Check out the opportunities below!

College Now Traditional Scholarship

Application deadline: March 7, 2025

Our Traditional Student Scholarship provides students with scholarship dollars and mentoring throughout their college journey. This is a last-dollar scholarship that covers the remainder of tuition after other forms of financial aid have been applied.

To be eligible for the scholarship, students must:

- Attend a [College Now-served high school](#)
- Have a cumulative weighted GPA of at least a 2.5 through their first semester of their senior year
- Have a minimum ACT composite score of 18 or a combined verbal and math SAT score of 960
- File the 2025-2026 FAFSA/ FAFSA Submission Summary
- Qualify for the Federal Pell Grant
- Show ambition by working with your College Now advisor
- Submit required documents by the deadline

[Apply here!](#)

College Now Scholarship for a New Generation

Application deadline: March 7, 2025

This scholarship is awarded to outstanding graduating high school seniors in Northeast Ohio who are immigrants or first-generation U.S. citizens entering a four-year accredited college or university. The scholarship is supported by The John Sullivan Wilson Family Fund of the Cleveland Foundation.

To be eligible for the scholarship, students must:

- Have a cumulative weighted GPA of at least a 2.5
- Have a minimum ACT composite score of 18 or combined verbal and math SAT score of 960
- File the 2025-2026 FAFSA
- Qualify for the Federal Pell Grant
- Show ambition by being responsive and turning in required documents by the deadline

Apply here!

CLEVELAND Foundation

Cleveland Foundation Scholarships

Application deadline: March 12, 2025

College Now manages more than 60 Cleveland Foundation scholarships varying in criteria and scope, and there is something for nearly everyone. Complete the application below by March 7 and you'll be considered for dozens of scholarships!

To be eligible for the scholarship, students must:

- Be enrolled or intending to enroll at an accredited public or private not-for-profit institution, or a Pell Grant eligible vocational or trade school
- Demonstrate a minimum 2.0 GPA or equivalent GED score
- Must be a U.S. citizen or eligible non-citizen

Apply here!

COLLEGE ENTRANCE EXAM TEST PREP



Upcoming Test Dates

Start off the new year by registering for the ACT and/or SAT exams! Even though some colleges/universities do not require entrance exam scores, we recommend that high school students take at least two entrance exams

before submitting college applications. Scoring well can increase your chances of earning scholarships!

ACT

February 8, 2025

- Late registration deadline:
January 24, 2025

[Register for the ACT here](#)

SAT

March 8, 2025

- Registration deadline:
February 21, 2025

[Register for the SAT here](#)



Get paid to prep for the ACT and SAT through College Now's *impact!* program!

College Now's *impact!* program provides students with SAT, ACT and PSAT test preparation and guides them through college and career research and exploration. Each session is in-person and attendance throughout the entire program is required to participate.

This program is open to all high school students in Northeast Ohio, and any high school student can participate at any location!

The best part? Students who complete an *impact!* session are eligible to receive a stipend and will be able to participate in college exposure opportunities!

While some sessions have already started, we have a few spots open at select locations.

[Register here!](#)

COLLEGE READINESS WEBINARS

**Scholarship Secrets: Finding
and Winning Free Money**

**Mastering FAFSA: Your
Key to Financial Aid**

Webinar

Tuesday, January 28
6 - 7:30 p.m.

Learn more about finding and earning scholarships to fund your education. Scholarships can provide crucial financial support throughout your college journey.

[Register here](#)

Tuesday, February 11
6 - 7:30 p.m.

Start the new year with a clear understanding of the FAFSA process and how to secure financial aid for college. Early FAFSA submission can increase your chances of receiving aid.

[Register here](#)

Unable to make these webinars? See our [future events](#).

STUDENT CHECKLIST

What should you do now to support your future?

Get a head start making those new year resolutions by completing the items on the check list below!

Freshmen

- If available, use your school's college & career planning tool to explore different careers.
- Review first semester grades and evaluate your cumulative GPA.

Sophomores

- Register for AP exams.
- Review first semester grades and evaluate your cumulative GPA.
- Continue to participate in extracurricular activities. Serve in leadership positions in the activities you enjoy most.
- Continue exploring interests and participate in career exploration.
- Investigate summer opportunities such as a summer job, internship, volunteer opportunity, summer camp or opportunity on a college campus.
- Start visiting some colleges and include large, medium and small campuses in your search.
- Review the course catalog for the next year and work with your counselor to set your junior schedule. Be sure to enroll in challenging courses.
- Use your college and career planning tool or another source to begin researching colleges. Develop a list of at least five schools that interest you.

Juniors

- Work with your school counselor to set your senior year class schedule and ensure you are on track to graduate. Be sure to enroll in challenging courses.
- Register for an ACT/SAT test prep program such as impact or a bootcamp with College Now.
- Register for the [SAT](#) or [ACT](#) national test date. Ask your counselor if you qualify for a fee waiver.
- Learn about and register for CCP (College Credit Plus) courses.
- Research colleges or other options for post-high school, such as training programs and apprenticeships. Ask your College Now advisor for assistance.
- Continue to explore different career options and goals. Set up a job shadowing opportunity.
- Work on and polish your resume.
- Explore summer opportunities on college campuses.

Seniors

- Check on your FAFSA status and confirm that it has been successfully processed. Errors can potentially slow down the financial aid process and reduce awards.
- Attend a FAFSA completion workshop with College Now if you need assistance filling out the FAFSA.
- Participate in a [college affordability webinar](#) hosted by College Now with a parent or guardian to learn about financial aid.
- Contact admissions offices to confirm that they have received your complete set of application materials.
- Schedule admissions interviews, if applicable.
- Continue to apply for scholarships.

*See you next month! In the meantime, reach out to your
College Now [advisor](#)!*



Contact us

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