

# COLLEGE BOUND

## *College Selection*

Students should develop educational and financial profiles to be used in the college selection process. An educational profile considers the academic, social/cultural, and physical environment of institutions under review. The financial profile examines total college costs in relation to financial aid, scholarships, and level of family income.

Narrow the preliminary list of college alternatives and then visit campuses.

Make a final decision based on the student's and family's evaluation of colleges as related to the student's profiles.

Magnolia Heights' role in the selection process is to assist individuals in determining which institutions provide an academic program of study, collegiate environment, and scholarship package compatible with the student's educational goals.

## *Application*

Create a folder for each college to which the student applies and keep copies of all correspondence.

Most universities and colleges provide online application and traditional hard copy application by mail.

Parents and students need to become familiar with all application documents including: admissions, ACT, housing, immunization, scholarships, FAFSA, and others listed in the institution's catalog or webpage.

Deadlines for admission and scholarships vary from college to college so it is critical for students to adhere to published dates.

Please note.....consideration for institutional scholarships is contingent on the student completing the application process.

ACT scores must be sent from ACT (if not previously provided) [www.actstudent.org](http://www.actstudent.org) Some universities may require the Writing Test in addition to the basic ACT for admission.

Click on "Send your scores." Use "Helpful Code Lookups" if necessary to find an individual college's ACT code.

Official high school transcripts must be submitted as part of the application process and again following graduation. It is the student's responsibility to notify the counseling office so that transcripts can be sent.

It is suggested that students check with the college's admission office to verify receipt of required documents.

## *Scholarships*

Most scholarships are awarded based on merit, leadership, financial need, performance, or a combination of these factors.

----Merit scholarships rely heavily on ACT scores and grade point averages.

----Financial need scholarships are based on the family's level of income.

----Performance scholarships include athletics and performing arts.

----Leadership scholarships reflect the student's involvement in clubs, organizations, community, church, and extracurricular activities.

Students are strongly encouraged to pursue scholarship opportunities, especially those which match the student's particular academic ability, personal interest, and background. Preparing a *student resume* will prove to be very helpful in this process.

Start the scholarship search process by browsing the institution's website to become familiar with specific scholarships and to determine those for which the student is eligible.

Next, review the application process. When in doubt, email or telephone the college for clarification!

Determine if the scholarship is renewable and what are the qualifications for renewal i.e. GPA, income level, etc.

Feel free to utilize reputable, free scholarship search sites such as:

[www.fastweb.com](http://www.fastweb.com) and [www.finaid.org](http://www.finaid.org)

Student loans are also available for eligible students with payback following graduation. Consult the financial aid officer at the appropriate college for details.

*MTAG & MESG (Mississippi Tuition Assistance Grant and Mississippi Eminent Scholars Grant)*

This program is designed for students who do not receive full federal grants known as PELL.

[www.mississippi.edu](http://www.mississippi.edu) Click on “Rise Up”, then “Financial Aid”, followed by “Apply for State Aid”, then “Undergraduate Programs”----good resource for state financial aid which includes a listing of scholarships, grants, apprenticeships, internships, and loans. Students should review each category closely for possible sources of other aid from the state of Mississippi.

Requirements for MTAG----- 15 ACT and 2.5 GPA

Awards may be up to \$500 per year for freshmen and sophomores and \$1,000 per year for juniors and seniors.

Requirements for MESG----- 29 ACT and 3.5 GPA

Awards may be up to \$2,500 per year.

Applications are available online and must be renewed annually. September 15<sup>th</sup> is the deadline each year for MTAG and MESG. This deadline begins with freshmen year of college.

***FAFSA (Free Application For Student Aid)***

[www.fafsa.ed.gov](http://www.fafsa.ed.gov) This website includes: worksheet, PIN information, finding school codes, and application deadlines.

Some colleges require filing FAFSA in order to be considered for scholarships both initially and also for renewal. FAFSA is filed electronically after Jan. 1<sup>st</sup> of each year.

Parents and students will need personal identification numbers (PIN).....

[www.pin.ed.gov](http://www.pin.ed.gov) You will receive PIN in 1-3 days electronically or 7-10 days by mail. It is best to have your PIN before filing FAFSA.

Information needed for filing FAFSA includes:

Social Security numbers

Drivers License number

Last year's W-2's

Last year's Federal Income Tax Return (parents and student)

Most recent bank records and investment information

[www.fafsa4caster.ed.gov](http://www.fafsa4caster.ed.gov) This is an electronic tool designed to help students and their families plan for college by providing an early estimate of federal student financial assistance.

## ***MISCELLANEOUS INFORMATION***

Parents and students should check scholarship opportunities through employers, clubs, organizations, and external agencies and businesses.

Some scholarship applications, as well as admission applications, require recommendations from faculty or others. Ask early, and give all needed information to the person who is writing the recommendation.

Utilize services of recruiters from respective colleges.

Students and parents need to check for institutional laptop computer requirements and budget accordingly if required.

Students who plan to play sports at a Division I or Division II college/university need to register at [www.eligibilitycenter.org](http://www.eligibilitycenter.org) as a high school student. This site explains the rules and process of meeting eligibility requirements.

### ***Helpful web sites to visit:***

[www.collegeboard.com](http://www.collegeboard.com) .....great site for topics including: College Board tests, find a college, apply for college, pay for college, and CSS/Financial Aid Profile. The CSS Profile is used by some colleges for institutional scholarship funds. The Profile may be completed beginning Oct. 1<sup>st</sup> of each year and usually has an early deadline for many colleges.

[www.collegesavingsmississippi.com](http://www.collegesavingsmississippi.com) .....parents can explore tuition pre-payment options.

[www.studentaid.ed.gov](http://www.studentaid.ed.gov) .....resource provided by federal government for help in preparing for and funding college.

## ***CONTACT INFORMATION***

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