GETTING SOME GREEN!

HOW TO WRITE A WINNING SCHOLARSHIP APPLICATION
2 HOW TO EAT AN ELEPHANT?

- Search for scholarships
- Find ones that match your:
  - Interests or abilities
  - Location
  - Demographics
  - Other qualifications
- Collect: basic info about yourself, list of accomplishments and service, transcripts & most recent tax info
- Read through apps or FAQs first!
3 APPROACH IT LIKE A JOB

• A short term job
• Could be highest paying hourly job ever!
• Set aside time each day until finished
• Privacy is very helpful
• Write out some bullet points beforehand
• Have someone check your work
• Pat yourself on the back after SUBMIT!
7 BASIC PARTS OF A SCHOLARSHIP APPLICATION

1. Demographics
2. Yes/No questions
3. If/Then questions
4. Essay
5. Reference letter(s)
6. Acceptance
7. Thank you notes
5 DEMOGRAPHICS

• You know you best
• Answer honestly
• Examples:
  • Name
  • Address
  • Year graduated from high school or GED
  • College program or career you are pursuing
  • May qualify you for some scholarships
YES/NO QUESTIONS

- Answer honestly
- Answer as many as you can
- These definitely can qualify you for cons -

Examples:
- Are you related to a veteran?
- Are you a single mother?
7 IF/THEN QUESTIONS

- Some scholarships will ask questions like:
  - Do you have relatives who have been incarcerated or have you been incarcerated?
    - If Yes, continue with the next question.
    - If No, skip to question #4.

- These are specific qualifying questions.

- Again, answer honestly – donors check
THE ESSAY – BREAKING IT DOWN

1. Make sure it fits the donor’s theme
2. Answer the underlying question
3. Tell your story – share a slice of life
4. Show some passion in your writing
5. Be specific
6. Have a thesis statement – a clear point
7. Avoid the sob story
8. Show positive energy
9. Find someone to read your essay(s)
10. An hour or two can win you $100’s or $1,000’s!
# I – ESSAY FITS THE DONOR’S THEME

- What is the theme?
- Usually determined by the purpose of the award
- Why the organization is giving away $
- If you write a conflicting message (and/or don’t list your service projects), you may be eliminated.
- Example: The donor awards $ based on community service, but you write only about the work you have done at your retail job.
#2 – ESSAY ANSWERS
UNDERLYING QUESTION

- It’s a springboard to answer the real question
- You are competing! Set yourself apart!
- Example:
  - Q: Why do you want to study business?
  - REAL Q: Why do you want to study business, and why are you the BEST future business person we should help with our hard-earned money?
#3 – ESSAY SHARES A SLICE OF LIFE

- If you are explaining why you deserve to win....
- It’s also important to reveal something about yourself
- Just one aspect of your life
- Example: If writing about your community service involvement, write succinctly about one related experience
- Can refer to an attached list, or insert a list at the bottom of paragraph
#4 – ESSAY SHOWS YOUR PASSION

- Choose a topic for which you are genuinely enthusiastic
- Don’t pick a subject you’d have to fake interest in
- Start with “one true sentence” (Ernest Hemingway)
- The rest of the sentences will flow
- Convey your excitement or passion!
#5 – ESSAY IS SPECIFIC

- Don’t use general statements

**Example:**
- Don’t write “Education is the key to success.”
- Write: Some slice of your life that shows how education has impacted your life. If you want to study to be an astronaut, talk about how your father bought you a model rocket for a gift when you were five years old.
#6 – ESSAY HAS A THESIS STATEMENT

- Have a clear point
- Can you write it in a single sentence?
- **Examples:**
  - Essay on Independence = “Growing up in the country taught me to be independent.”
  - Essay on health care for the elderly = “Training family caregivers is essential to improving the lives of the elderly and avoiding burnout for the caregiver.”
#7 – ESSAY BUILDS ON YOUR ACCOMPLISHMENTS

• Impress the “judges” – you’re the best!
• The essay supplements the list
• Don’t just “parrot” back the application
• Focus on a specific accomplishment

Example: List shows that you were a stage manager for a play; your essay explains that you also had to build and design the sets in just one week. Shows the significance of your achievement.
#8 — ESSAY AVOIDS A SOB STORY

- Rarely win scholarships – want solutions
- Example - Don’t write: “I deserve $ because of the suffering I’ve been through. Here’s the list…. Join the crowd.
- Write: What have you accomplished despite these hardships? Have you overcome challenges? That makes you stand out!
#9 – ESSAY SHOWS POSITIVE ENERGY!

- “If you can’t say anything nice, don’t say anything at all.”
- Everyone likes an uplifting story
- With your entire future ahead of you, describe your enthusiasm and zest for life!
- If you ACT enthusiastic, you will BE enthusiastic!
- Makes donor excited about giving money to help you pursue your passion for changing the world.
“Behind every good writer is an even better editor.”

Don’t need a professional, just someone who can read your work and provide useful and constructive (how to fix it) feedback.

But, don’t lose your “voice” in the editing.
YOU CAN’T WIN IF YOU DON’T PLAY!

- Most scholarship applications include at least one essay
  - Don’t skip it
  - Or else, you’ll get bounced out for sure

- Use these 10 tips and…
  - You might win hundreds, if not thousands of dollars for college!

- Take a break if you are getting burned out – but come back, finish and submit!!
REFERENCE LETTERS

• The SCC Foundation application lets you request reference letters via email
  • You can check back on your account to see if they have been sent (save your username and password!)
  • One letter is REQUIRED
  • Two or more letters would be BETTER
ACCEPTANCE OF AWARD(S)

- Within a few weeks after deadline, check back on your SCC email account (save your user name and password!)
  - The SCC Foundation or Next Gen will send you a notification of award
- Go to the SCCF scholarship website, log in, and follow steps to accept.
THANK YOU – NOTES & RECEPTION!

- REQUIRED step to accept your award(s)!
- Scholarships will not be loaded onto your college account until you have written and submitted your online thank you note
- Best way to thank your donor is IN PERSON at the required Donor/Recipient Reception.
23 SOURCES & REFERENCES

• How to Write a Winning Scholarship Essay by Jen & Kelly Tenabe
  – www.supercollege.com
  http://www.supercollege.com/guide/guide.cfm?t_id=2&g_id=21&step=1

• Scholarships & other aid
  • http://www.scciowa.edu/admissions/costaid/scholar/index.aspx
  • www.fastweb.com
  • http://www.scciowa.edu/foundation/supportscc/scholarsgrants/index.aspx
  • http://www.finaid.org/scholarships/

• FAFSA – https://fafsa.ed.gov/
• Staying at SCC another semester?
  • Apply by September 1st for Spring term award(s)

• Returning in Fall
  • Apply by April 1st for full-year award(s)

• https://www.scciowa.edu/foundation/sccf_scholarships.aspx
TRANSFER SCHOLARSHIPS

- After you graduate from SCC

- https://www.scciowa.edu/alumni/sccaa/index.aspx
LET'S TRY AN ESSAY USING SCCF APPLICATION:

• My career goal is:
  • What is motivating you to go into your field of choice?

• Here's how a Foundation scholarship will assist me in meeting my life's goals:

• High school and/or college curricular/extra-curricular/community activities in which I have participated (provide a list or statement):
QUESTIONS?

Val Giannettino  
Executive Director, SCC Foundation  
Southeastern Community College  
Room 114D  
1500 W. Agency Road  
West Burlington, IA 52655  
(319) 208-5065  
vgiannettino@scciowa.edu or foundation@scciowa.edu