SCHOLARSHIP APPLICATION TIPS ** BEGIN EARLY

(from “My Future” – Page 139/140 – as provided by Ms. Artsis 2015)

1. MAKE A LIST OF ALL AVAILABLE SCHOLARSHIPS
   After you have identified the colleges/universities you will be applying to, make a list of all the scholarships and awards that you appear to be qualified for. Much of this information is available on the college/university website. It is also important to have your parents ask at their place of employment whether scholarships are available for children of employees. In addition, check at your high school guidance department for school-specific and local community awards.

2. MEET THE APPLICATION DEADLINES
   Once you have verified scholarship application deadlines with the colleges/universities you are applying to, ensure that your application and all supporting materials are at the school before the deadline.

3. NEATNESS MATTERS
   Your completed scholarship application makes a statement about you. A carefully prepared application with no spelling or grammatical errors creates an impression that you are a quality person. A disorganized, sloppy or error-filled application gives a message to the scholarship committee that you may not be the kind of person they are looking for. Completing a scholarship application (especially where essays are a part of the application) can be a major undertaking. Schedule your time to complete the application as though you were working on a major assignment for one of your courses. Ask teachers and your parents to proof your application for spelling and grammar as well as content.

4. AVOID EMAILING OR FAXING YOUR APPLICATION
   Unless the college/university (or organization) specifically states that you are required to email or fax your application, then don’t do it. Applications sent by fax can end up being received in less than perfect condition. In addition, faxed applications do not always reach the right person on time. The exception to this general rule is when the application form is online and you are expected to complete it online.
   When possible, send your application in a manner that allows you to track the delivery (unless the college/university has a specified program on their website where you are expected to submit your application).

5. SCHOLARSHIP SEARCH WEBSITES
   There are various companies on the internet that share scholarship search functions to provide a list of scholarships for your particular interest, abilities, and other unique information about you. Consult with your school counselor or academic advisor for their recommendations on the sites that could be most helpful to you.

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6. **FOCUS ON QUALITY RATHER THAN QUANTITY**

   In writing scholarship application essays, some students focus on listing every little thing they have every accomplished or every activity they have ever been involved in. This is generally a mistake. It is usually more important to identify a few activities and accomplishments and discuss specific ways you were involved and affected. In addition, discuss what you learned from your involvement and how this will make you a better student (and person) in the college/university program you are applying to. Providing specific examples to illustrate anything you are writing about in your essay makes your content more believable (and shows you as a more genuine person). Be positive!

7. **HELP YOUR REFERENCES**

   The people (often principals, counsellors, and teachers) who are writing reference letters on your behalf are generally very busy and appreciate your help. Sometimes, they might not even know you as well as you think they do. You can help them by giving them a one-page outline of your major accomplishments in high school and in the community.

8. **HELP YOURSELF**

   Hopefully, you are reading these tips at least a year or two before you graduate from high school. By keeping an ongoing file of activities, accomplishments, awards, etc., it will then be easier for you to complete scholarship applications once you are in your last year of high school. If there is something about an application you don’t understand, contact the appropriate person who is listed as a contact on the scholarship application form (by email or telephone).

9. **KEEP A HARD COPY**

   Applications can get lost. If you follow tip #4, you have a way of tracking the delivery of your application and also, if necessary, proving that it was received by the deadline date. By having a copy of your application, you are prepared for the worst case scenario of your application form being misplaced or lost. In addition, as you are preparing your application, save your work often and print a hard copy often. Stating that your hard drive crashed or you had computer problems will not excuse you from missing a scholarship application deadline.

10. **KNOW WHAT THEY ARE LOOKING FOR**

    Read the criteria for the award carefully and ask yourself, “What are they looking for?” Always attempt to answer this question as you are completing your application. Some college/university websites provide details of former recipients of major scholarships. Read these descriptions and look for clues that can help you understand what should be highlighted in your application and essay. If possible, talk to former scholarship winners from your high school and ask them for tips. Whenever you have an opportunity to talk to anyone from the college/university (especially high school liaison representatives) ask them for tips. Don’t hesitate to contact the university awards office and ask what they are looking for in any scholarships you are applying to.

    Knowing what they want can help you be more successful.