

ONLY HIGH-ACHIEVING STUDENTS AND TOP ATHLETES GET SCHOLARSHIPS

FACT: A wide range of scholarships are available to Washington students. Although scholarships are competitive, many awards are targeted to students based on their interests, desired campus or major, or background. Students should create an account on theWashBoard.org to be matched to scholarships in Washington.



FAMILIES SHOULDN'T COMPLETE FINANCIAL AID FORMS UNTIL AFTER THEY FILE THEIR TAXES

FACT: Many financial aid funds are distributed on a first-come, first-served basis, so families should file the FAFSA (Free Application for Federal Student Aid) or WASFA (Washington Application for State Financial Aid) early—as close to October 1 as possible—with their tax information from the previous year. Families can make corrections to their forms later. File the FAFSA at www.fafsa.gov or the WASFA at www.readysetgrad.org/WASFA. For a list of events with free assistance to complete your FAFSA or WASFA, visit bit.do/CGW.

5 Financial Aid Myths



ALL STUDENTS GRADUATE FROM COLLEGE WITH THOUSANDS OF DOLLARS IN HIGH-INTEREST LOANS

FACT: Of Washington State bachelor's degree recipients in the class of 2015, only 58% borrowed for college attendance. For those who did, the average student loan debt upon graduation was \$24,600. Federal Direct Stafford and Perkins loans are low-interest sources that should be carefully reviewed by students and families in need of additional assistance after other grants, scholarships, and work-study have been considered.

COLLEGE ISN'T AN OPTION ANYMORE BECAUSE THE COSTS ARE TOO HIGH

FACT: Washington is a top state nationally for students receiving undergraduate need-based financial aid. In 2015-16, 148,000 students with financial need received \$1.8 billion in financial assistance. This does not include students receiving scholarships and loans without need-based aid.



STUDENTS WHO WORK ARE LESS LIKELY TO GET GOOD GRADES

FACT: Research has shown students who work less than 20 hours per week will often have higher GPAs than students who don't work. Federal and state work-study programs provide students with valuable experiences and networking opportunities while providing funds to help cover educational expenses. Students can apply for both the Washington State Work Study and Federal Work Study programs by completing the FAFSA.



FACT: Continuing your education after high school is a necessity in today's economy, and there are lots of affordable ways to pay for it. For more on financial aid and college readiness, visit www.readysetgrad.org.

