

Continued from previous page

- Lori Dec, AFSA Scholarship Pro grams
- Thomas Murphy, Executive Director, Konieg Education Foundation
- Lisa Portenga, Scholarship Coordinator, The Fremont Area Foundation

Exploding Five Scholarship Myths

By Benjamin Kaplan
Source: www.fastweb.com

Hold your ears and take cover. Because in this article, we are going to explode five widespread myths about winning college scholarships — myths that have, unfortunately, prevented many deserving students from winning money for college. By learning the truth behind these myths, you'll gain a better understanding of the essential "rules" of the college scholarships game.

MYTH #1: Only students with high academic achievement win merit scholarships.

The Real Story: Scholarships are awarded to students with all sorts of talents and interests. In fact, many of the best scholarship programs are designed for students who devote time and energy in such diverse fields as music and the arts, foreign languages, community service, science, leadership, writing and oratory, to name just a few. Typically, these programs are entirely "grade blind" — meaning that grades are not used as a judging criteria. Furthermore, many scholarships that do take into account grade-point averages (GPAs) only use such quantitative measures as preliminary cutoff points. For instance, some scholarship contests specify that applicants have a minimum 2.0 GPA. Once you've cleared this minimum bar, grades don't impact your

chances of winning. Finally, even when GPA is used as an evaluation factor, it's only one aspect of your application. Scholarship programs aren't myopic: They want to recognize students with all sorts of achievements and backgrounds. They realize that applicants have much more to offer than simply the grades that appear on their transcripts.

MYTH #2: Scholarship applicants should seek to compile the longest list of extracurricular activities.

The Real Story: As is the case in many other aspects of life, winning scholarships is about quality, not quantity. Some people think that to win these awards you must have devoted your entire high school career to participating in extracurricular activities. On the contrary, most scholarship winners distinguish themselves by the devotion they have demonstrated to a particular activity or activities, rather than by the sheer quantity of their involvement. Winning scholarships isn't about having the longest list of extracurriculars; instead, it's about communicating who you are and what you care about through the activities you participate in and enjoy.

MYTH #3: Scholarship contests are conducted on a level playing field.

The Real Story: Each scholarship contest has its own biases. This is not to say that scholarship judging is unfair. Rather, it's just that each scholarship program is looking for students with particular qualities. The subjective process of valuing certain qualities over other ones tilts the playing field far from level. In this way, the ideal application you submit for one scholarship contest may, in fact, place you out of the money when submitted to another. Because of these biases,

it's essential to define each scholarship's "ideal applicant" and to emphasize personal attributes consistent with this definition.

MYTH #4: Applying for scholarships is just like applying to college.

The Real Story: Actually, scholarship contests demand a modified approach from the college admissions process because scholarship contests are characterized by substantially more head-to-head competition. While college admissions officers compare students primarily to a standard, scholarship contests directly compare students to one another. Because of this more competitive environment, students who devise creative techniques to stand out from the crowd have a distinct advantage. In this way, a good scholarship application (which distinguishes you from everyone else) will likely be a good college application — but the reverse is not necessarily true.

MYTH #5: The track record you've already accumulated determines whether you'll win scholarships.

The Real Story: What you do after you decide to apply for scholarships is just as important as the record you have already accumulated. This holds true regardless of how much time you have until a particular scholarship application is due. Content strategies, for instance, increase your chances of winning by adding depth and breadth to your existing record. Likewise, packaging strategies help make your application stand out from the crowd by creating a cohesive message that highlights talents, communicates passions, and emphasizes potential. So don't fall into the trap of thinking that your die has already been cast. What you do now will make all the difference in the world.

CONTACT US

Center for Women and Returning Adults
Indiana University–Purdue University
Fort Wayne
Walb Student Union, Room G25
2101 E. Coliseum Blvd.
Fort Wayne, IN 46805-1499

260-481-6029
Fax: 260-481-6045
E-mail: newmanr@ipfw.edu
Web site: www.ipfw.edu/cwra/



Rapport

Spring 2003

IPFW Center for Women and Returning Adults

STAFF HIGHLIGHT: LINDA RUFFOLO



Linda Ruffolo, executive director of development at IPFW, was presented the Helene Foellinger Award on Dec. 8, 2002. The Fort Wayne *Journal Gazette* featured an article with this caption

above Ruffolo's picture: "City activist cited as women's role model" in the Dec. 8, 2002 issue. The article, written by Carin Chappelow, highlighted the honor of being presented an award of this caliber. One of the reasons Ruffolo was given the award was to recognize her involvement in the Study Connections tutoring program in Fort Wayne.

When Chappelow asked Ruffolo a few questions about her life of volunteerism in the Summit City, Ruffolo's response was typical of the way she works with others. She said, "I don't think I've done anything to be compared to these women (referring to previous winners). The article, though well written, does not do justice to Ruffolo, as we know her at IPFW.

A portion of the question-and-answer session is reprinted here:

Question: What was the attraction of volunteering for Study Connections?

Answer: The opportunity to work one-on-one with students again, especially if they had speech and/or hearing problems. I was a speech pathologist in my "first life" and loved it. I worked in schools and also was the assistant director of a college speech clinic. We trained students for the field and did the difficult cases for their learning experience. I loved and missed the interaction, where I could really make a difference with a person who had needs.

Question: What volunteer experience has impacted your life the most and in what ways?

Answer: Working with children in the Study Connections program perhaps had the greatest personal reward; however, it was not unlike my "real" job where I was working in the field of speech pathology. Probably the volunteer job that had its "greatest impact" was the first one I held in Fort Wayne, which was afternoon social chairman for the Newcomers Club. That first volunteer job was what caused me to love Fort Wayne and to continue to volunteer for over 25 organizations, which gave me leadership opportunities, great joy, and many great friends. Indirectly, many volunteer positions led me to a part-time position that I liked at the McMillen Center for Health Education in the early 1990s and to my current position as executive director for development at IPFW, a job I thoroughly enjoy. I love the campus setting and the opportunity to raise money and awareness of a university I believe to be a great asset in the city I am proud to call home for 30 years.

Question: Would you suggest to people to experience volunteering in the community and why?

Answer: Yes, indeed — it clearly broadens your scope of understanding the real make-up of our community, and the reward of doing things that need to be done without monetary remuneration is very rewarding. I enjoy knowing many kinds of people, and volunteering for various causes enables that!

Question: Where do think our community would be without volunteers?

Answer: Many jobs would not get done; many people would miss the opportunity to know and work with people from different places.

STUDENT TALK

By Bev Goff



I moved to Fort Wayne, Ind., several years ago from Raleigh, N.C.

At that time, I was approaching my 50th birthday. I found myself at an important crossroad, and I began thinking about the regrets I had about my life. Being new in town presented me with the opportunity to start fresh — no interference from family or friends. The timing was perfect for me to address my major regret in life. As a people pleaser, devoted mother, and wife, I had always placed myself at the bottom of my priority list. Realizing this, I became aware that my major regret was that of not completing college.

Most returning adult students marvel at how well they do upon returning to school.

Prior to coming to Fort Wayne, I had attended several junior colleges, and to be honest, I had never found them to be very stimulating or challenging. In my quest to begin the process of choosing a college, it became apparent to me that I had some fear and apprehension about the task I was beginning to take on.

I jumped in headfirst and paid a visit to Ivy Tech and then to IPFW. The admissions office at IPFW greeted me in such a warm manner. My fears and anxieties of returning to school were dealt with understanding and

Continued on next page

UPCOMING EVENTS

Women's History Month March 2003

Come and visit the display case in Walb Student Union, which features issues related to women.

Students With Families Pizza Dinner

Friday, March 28, 2003, 6–8 p.m.

Stars Orientation

Fall 2003: Thursday, Aug. 21, 2003
Fall Classes Begin: Monday, Aug. 25, 2003

Spring 2004: Thursday, Jan. 8, 2004
Spring Classes Begin: Monday, Jan. 12, 2003

Inside Rapport...

Staff Highlight: Jennifer Bosk	2	Helpful Scholarship Hints	3
CWRA Scholarships	3	Upcoming Events	4



A Publication of the Center for Women and Returning Adults at Indiana University–Purdue University Fort Wayne.

Continued from previous page

encouragement from the staff. Returning to school may have been the hardest decision to make, but for me, the end result impacted my life in a positive manner.

I signed up for 12 credit hours of classes in my first semester. I experienced quite a bit of stress the first couple of weeks, and I learned how to balance my class load and personal life. I was fortunate that I had excellent organizational skills, but needed to learn time management skills and the ability to say no to demands other than school.

My fear of failing propelled me into studying constantly; consequently, my first report card reflected this time and energy. Receiving all A's and one B on my report card was probably the greatest feeling I had ever experienced, other than giving birth to my three children. As a younger student, I worked hard but never received high grades. Unfortunately, my self-image was measured in my mind by how well I did or did not do

STAFF HIGHLIGHT: JENNIFER BOSK



For the past six years I have had the honor of serving as the director of IPFW's Alumni Relations. I'm responsible for keeping our 35,000+ graduates connected to their alma mater through events,

services, newsletters, etc. In addition, I assist with asking our alumni to donate to IPFW to help students — just like someone did when the alumni themselves were students. It's a super job and my Purdue bachelor's in communication and my IU master's in liberal studies (both earned at IPFW) have served me well. In addition, I teach COM 250/JOUR C200 for the journalism program during the week. On Saturday mornings I teach for IPFW's weekend college.

I'm like so many of you. I started at IPFW as an 18 year old and finished when I was 36. In between those years I married, had three children, and got a divorce. I took off my wedding ring in the CM building one day before my magazine writing class.

While my love died in my personal relationship, my love of learning never faltered. My proudest moment was Commencement...I had done it! Those days as a college student were a struggle: I had started my own business, I received no child

support, I worked hard to get a scholarship, and at night I fell asleep on top of my books. My children gained so much from my earning my degree. First: Because I needed quiet to study, they had to study with me instead of watching TV. As a result, all made honor roll throughout those years. Second: My children saw my love of learning and embraced it also. Today the oldest is working on a master's in education while he teaches fifth grade; my second child is working on a doctorate in biochemistry; and the baby will graduate in May with a bachelor's in early childhood education.

During a break in one of my evening classes, a group of returning students and I began discussing the experience of going back to school. We were all in agreement on how education had impacted us in such a positive way. The process of going back to school has profoundly changed the manner in which we think, speak, and feel about ourselves. Life is like a big puzzle and I feel the more education I receive, the pieces of the puzzle seem to just fall into place for me and are becoming easier to solve. Knowledge is a gift to give to yourself, and it can never be taken from you. Each of us creates our own barriers in life that prevent us from growing and changing. A barrier that holds many people back is fear. We are held prisoners in our own lives and learning how to break free of your fear is extremely liberating. Through my journey of self-exploration I have become an authentic and liberated person.

Relations office, and the Center for Women and Returning Adults and ask for applications. Go online to search for money. Approach your local Kiwanis, Lions Club, church, the Women's Bureau, and more.

• **Make friends with other students — no matter what age they are.** Each person brings a unique perspective to the class. Learn from them. Open your mind. There is a reason you are meeting that person at that particular time. Let them into your life.

"Get a mentor, and learn, ask, question."

The following is the best advice I received when "the going got tough":

- **Living well is the best revenge.**
- **Sure you can put off your studies.** In five years you can be you. Or in five years you can be you with a degree. Get it?
- **Get a mentor, and learn, ask, question.** Then take the advice! During struggling times, it's hard to see through all the fog. Let someone help guide you.
- **Apply for every scholarship you can.** Drop in Financial Aid, the Alumni

• **Yes, it's hard...but someone has it harder.** Put up a picture of Christopher Reeve. When your alarm goes off so you can study in the early morning hours, and you're tempted to roll over and forget it, think what Christopher Reeve would give to be able to get up out of bed all by himself. How lucky you are to have the "option" to get up and study!

• **When the day comes to repay all the kindness and help you received along the way, pay it forward!** Give to another struggling student. It does a heart good!

If ever there is any help I can give you, please feel free to contact me in my office in Kettler 142. I want to continue paying it forward, too!

CWRA SCHOLARSHIPS

Scholarships are available at the Center for Women and Returning Adults! In front of the office on the window area the latest scholarships are posted for students' convenience.

Two of the many scholarship applications available in the Center for Women and Returning Adults are the following:

Jeannette Rankin Foundation

Web site: www.rankinfoundation.org

Applicant Criteria:

- Must be a female, at least 35 years of age as of April 1, 2003.
- Must be a U.S. citizen.
- Must be pursuing a technical/vocational degree, an associate degree, or a first bachelor degree.
- The JRF grants are not open to students who already have a degree at the bachelor level or above.
- Must be enrolled or accepted in an accredited school for the fall 2003 term.
- Before applying, please contact your school's admissions office to get the name of the agency that provides accreditation for your school. You will need this information to complete the application.
- Must have limited financial means. The guidelines below are used to assess an applicant's financial need.
- Because JRF awards are highly competitive, only students who fall within these income guidelines will be eligible for consideration. These guidelines are based on the current Lower Living Standard.

If you have more than 6 in your household, you may add \$6,200 for each additional member.

Household Size	Household Income
1	\$11,160
2	\$18,290
3	\$25,110
4	\$30,990
5	\$36,570
6	\$42,770

Grahame and Thelma Somerville Scholarship

This scholarship was established to fulfill the need for continued education for people classified as non-traditional students.

Non-traditional students are defined as those who did NOT begin their college careers immediately upon the completion of their high school career, but rather they graduated from high school or received their GED and delayed the entrance into college.

The fund is designed to give preference to non-traditional students who wish to further their education and/or training as a way of enhancing their employment skills.

Qualified recipients include adult students who wish to re-enter the job market, advance in their current field, or enter the job market for the first time after hardship circumstances, such as divorce, health complications involving family members, loss of employment, or other obstacles (barriers) and live within 50 miles of Fort Wayne.

PERSISTENCE

Nothing in the world can take the place of persistence.

Talent will not; nothing is more common than unsuccessful men with talent.

Genius will not; unrewarded genius is almost a proverb.

Education will not; the world is full of educated derelicts.

Persistence and determination alone are omnipotent. The slogan "press on" has solved, and always will solve, the problems of the human race.

—President Calvin Coolidge

HELPFUL SCHOLARSHIP HINTS

Writing the Scholarship Essay

By Kay Peterson, Ph.D.

Source: www.fastweb.com

The personal essay. It's the hardest part of your scholarship application. But it's also the part of the application where the "real you" can shine through. Make a hit with these tips from scholarship providers:

- **Think before you write.** Brainstorm to generate some good ideas and then create an outline to help you get going.
- **Be original.** The judges may be asked to review hundreds of essays. It's your job to make your essay stand out from the rest. So be creative in your answers.
- **Show, don't tell.** Use stories, examples, and anecdotes to individualize your essay and demonstrate the point you want to make. By using specifics, you'll avoid vagueness and generalities and make a stronger impression.
- **Develop a theme.** Don't simply list all your achievements. Decide on a theme you want to convey that sums up the impression you want to make. Write about experiences that develop that theme.
- **Know your audience.** Personal essays are not "one size fits all." Write a new essay for each application — one that fits the interests and requirements of that scholarship organization. You're asking to be selected as the representative for that group. The essay is your chance to show how you are the ideal representative.
- **Submit an essay that is neat and readable.** Make sure your essay is neatly typed, and that there is a lot of white space on the page. Double space the essay, and provide adequate margins (1"–1 1/2") on all sides.
- **Make sure your essay is well written.** Proofread carefully, check spelling and grammar, and share your essay with friends or teachers. Another pair of eyes can catch errors you might miss.

Visit *The Winner's Circle Scholarship Handbook* for more expert advice. www.fastweb.com

Special thanks to the scholarship specialists who contributed these tips:

- Colleen Blevins, TROA Scholarship Fund
- Kathy Borunda, Corporate Development, Society of Hispanic Professional Engineers Foundation
- Bob Caudell, The American Legion
- Patti Cohen, Program Manager, Coca-Cola Scholars Foundation

Continued on the next page