

# Scholarships are well worth pursuing

**W**hat would a full ride scholarship mean for you and your student?

Each year, more than \$50 billion in grants and scholarship money is awarded by the U.S. Department of Education, the nation's colleges and universities, and by private sources, including individuals, foundations, corporations, nonprofit groups, service clubs and other organizations.

Many local families have been given the gift of a free education through scholarships. A Traverse City West graduate is attending University of Michigan as an engineering student with enough national and local scholarships to cover all college costs, a new computer and money left over to help with personal and travel expenses. Tristan Boomer, a 2016 St. Francis graduate, won a full ride between ROTC and college scholarships at Washington University St. Louis. A Traverse City Central graduate is attending Central Michigan College with a full scholarship — only needing to cover some personal expenses.

There are millions of scholarships available each year, and you can start applying for them in elementary school and continue on through col-

lege and graduate school. One of the biggest mistakes that many students make is that they only apply for scholarships their senior year — and stop applying once they graduate from high school. There are literally thousands of scholarships for students in college and even for graduate students. Some of these awards are only open to students who are already in college. Your financial aid office and the department for your major are two of the best sources for these awards.

There are two types of scholarships: need-based and merit-based. As the name suggests, need-based scholarships are based on your financial need and parents' income. But merit-based scholarships are based on other factors — such as academic achievement, or on a combination of academics and a special talent, trait, extracurricular achievements or interest. Financial need and parents' income are not factors for merit-based scholarships.

Many scholarships are geared toward particular groups of people. For example, there are scholarships for women, high school seniors, redheads or those passionate about coffee. And some are available because of where you or your parent



**VICKI BEAM**

Local columnist

work, or because you come from a certain background (for instance, there are scholarships for military families).

A scholarship might cover the entire cost of your tuition, or it might be a one-time award of a few hundred dollars. Either way, it's worth applying for, because it'll help reduce the cost of your education. Each year there is close to \$100 million in unclaimed scholarship money in the U.S., often because there aren't enough qualified applicants.

For the outstanding athletes in the area, keep in mind that more than half of athletic scholarships awarded are designated to one of four sports — football, basketball, soccer, track and field.

Most scholarships that are renewable — which means that you win them

for more than one year — have requirements for you to retain the award. These can be requirements such as that you continue to attend the same college, maintain a certain GPA or keep the same major. When you win a scholarship, ask the organization what you need to do to maintain your award.

Keep in mind that many colleges require you to report the scholarships that you win — and then adjust your financial aid package. For example, if you win a \$5,000 scholarship, the college may decrease your financial aid package by that amount. From your perspective, this probably seems unfair and you may wonder why you should even bother to apply. If your college has this kind of policy, you can ask them to decrease your loan amount instead of grants. In this way, your total financial aid received remains the same, but you will owe less money.

You may not have a 4.0 GPA. There are many scholarships based on other criteria. There are, for example, scholarships based on leadership, public service, art, athletics, theater and dance. Providers may seek the students who best fit their selection criteria, which may include other factors like character, motivation,

leadership or involvement in activities.

Most students cringe at the thought of applying for scholarships because they have to write an essay for each one. There are some scholarships that don't require essays, especially ones for art, music or other types of awards that require a portfolio or project instead. But most scholarships do require an essay. Essays are the best way for scholarship judges to get to know you beyond your grades, test scores and other data that you provide on your application form.

When you're writing a scholarship essay, let your personal voice come through. Include lots of details that help reveal who you are. It's usually a good idea to focus on a problem and how you solved it or overcame adversity.

Students who volunteer enjoy a huge advantage with scholarship sponsors because most scholarship sponsors are looking for a long-time commitment to volunteering. This preference for volunteering makes sense — many scholarship providers are nonprofits committed to helping others.

Applying for scholarships is a numbers game. Luck is a factor even for the most accomplished

students. Don't ignore the small scholarships. Some scholarships worth \$1,000 or less may only have 15 or 20 students applying.

High school guidance counselors are the best source of information on local scholarships. Also check bulletin boards at libraries and outside financial aid offices. Local scholarships are easier to win than regional and national ones — and because of the giving nature of our area there are many to apply to.

The Grand Traverse Regional Community Foundation gives away more than \$150,000 each year. The 2017 applications are available right now for regional scholarships. The TCAPS scholarship pool opens on Feb. 6. Visit [www.gtrcf.org](http://www.gtrcf.org) for more details — keep in mind the deadlines are March 1 for regional scholarships and March 6 for the TCAPS scholarship pool.

**Vicki L. Beam is a college planner and owner of Michigan College Planning located in Traverse City. She encourages questions and comments about future columns. Contact Michigan College Planning at 231-947-0203, by email at [vicki@michigancollegeplanning.com](mailto:vicki@michigancollegeplanning.com) and at [www.michigancollegeplanning.com](http://www.michigancollegeplanning.com).**



Roger Buchner, left, feeds a part through a machine at Hayes Manufacturing as fellow machinist Maggie McDade looks on.

## HAYES

*Fife Lake company drives forward*

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train in the 2013 movie "The Lone Ranger."

But most of their products serve inside mobile off-road machinery.

The company has wrestled business away from competitors through careful study, planning and sales work. Some potential customers aren't shy about laying out their needs for the Fife Lake company. One current customer took pains to explain what services and pricing Hayes would need to offer to get their business.

"They told us what we had to do," Lawson said. Hayes did those things —

and grabbed the customer away from a large competitor.

The technique of visual management plays a key role throughout the Hayes operation. Lawson said the concept involves keeping everything organized and visible. The front office features a trio of huge whiteboards covered with color-coded markers constantly updated to display orders, production status and shipping tasks that need to be completed. The boards allow everyone to see at a glance what needs to be done when. Visual management ideas also motivated management to eliminate tool drawers on the manufacturing floor. Every tool now is kept on an organized surface, instantly visible and accessible.

Visual management, said Lawson, allows workers to spend more time doing their jobs and less time hunting for information or



Color-coded whiteboards at Hayes Manufacturing help managers and employees track orders and schedules.

hardware.

Northwestern Michigan College instructors use Hayes as an example of how to efficiently operate a business, Miller said.

The company employs 38 people including the five owners. It just added a second shift on a trial basis.

Hayes weathers economic bumps by maintaining

a diversified client base that includes makers of machinery for a wide variety of industries including oil and gas, agriculture and construction.

"If we have one industry go down, we might see a little dip," said Lawson.

But not too large a dip, because Hayes' other clients in other industries take up the slack.

## EDUCATION

# Culinary schools struggle with enrollment decline

MONTPELIER, Vt. (AP) — With enrollment in culinary institutes in decline and programs across the country closing their doors, schools such as the New England Culinary Institute in Montpelier, Vermont, which graduated celebrity chef Alton Brown, and the Culinary Institute of Charleston, South Carolina, are committed to staying relevant and in demand.

"We're constantly looking for new ways and opportunities to grow our school," said Michael Carmel, head of culinary arts in Charleston. "It's not necessarily a numbers game, but a quality game. We need to stay current with trends and have to be able to offer our students opportunities."

The reasons for the challenges facing the industry are varied, Carmel and others say. Tuitions can be relatively expensive, while federal financial aid for these "career colleges" has tightened since 2014. Graduates with a high debt load often move into low-paying restaurant jobs.

In addition, there is an abundance of restaurant positions that provide on-the-job training for those looking to get into the business without accruing debt. Carmel said younger students aren't necessarily seeking the high stress factor and long hours of restaurant work, instead placing a high value on a regular schedule, benefits and quality of life issues like time with family.

Despite the challenges, schools like the New England Culinary Institute, where enrollment has fallen from about 800 in 1999 to around 300 today, are consolidating, cutting expenses where possible and adjusting curriculum to attract students. The school is also expanding instruction about the business side of the industry.

"Even our founding chef

has always said a chef is a businessman," said Philip Stevens, spokesman for the Institute.

New England's school, which co-founder and former president Fran Voigt recently announced was facing imminent sale but remains optimistic of remaining in Vermont, two years ago partnered with the United States Coast Guard and Sandals Resorts to teach new cooking techniques, another way to expand its reach.

Carmel's program is also taking steps to attract more students. The Culinary Institute of Charleston, which has seen enrollment fall by 25 percent over the past three years, has begun reaching into high schools to offer college-credit programs, and partnering with local restaurants and the Metro Chamber of Commerce to assist with student tuition.

He hopes those steps will halt the enrollment decline, adding: "We believe it will level out within the next few years."

Other schools have not been as fortunate, with many well respected culinary programs shutting their doors. Le Cordon Bleu was founded in the 1800s in Paris. With that school, which Julia Child attended, will remain open, the last of the 16 Cordon Bleu programs across the U.S. have ceased new enrollment and are closing.

In Minnesota alone, three of the five major culinary schools have announced they are shutting down. Southern New Hampshire University's culinary program announced earlier this month that the culinary program will likely be eliminated, noting that enrollments have dropped by more than a third and applications are down 29 percent over the last four years. A final decision is expected in February.