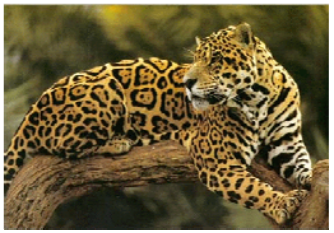
Attack the Financial Aid Process …



Be fierce and powerful like the Jaguar –

Knowledge is Power – Know the Terms and Timelines

Scholarship timeline:
Scholarship deadlines typically range between October and March of the year preceding the one for which the funds will be needed.

Scholarship definitions:
A scholarship is 'free money' given to cover educational costs for undergraduate and graduate students (also referred to as student gift aid, fellowships and grants). Money that does not have to be paid back to the funding source!

Scholarships and grants: gift aid that is used to pay educational costs

Need-based scholarships: gift aid based on demonstrated financial need as defined by the federal government; the difference between the cost of attending a college or university and the estimated family contribution or EFC

Merit based scholarships: financial aid based on academic major, career goals, grades, test scores, athletic ability, hobbies, talents, place or residence, etc.

Prizes: money awarded through competitions or contests

Internships or fellowships: monetary stipends may be offered in the form of hourly wages

Financial Aid Forms:

The Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA). Filed online in January of the student's senior year. Required by colleges to be considered for federal aid. **Phone number: 1.800.4.FED AID or 1.800.433.3243**
Website: www.fafsa.ed.gov

Workshops and filing assistance will be available through CollegeGoal Maryland and your high school. Dates and details will be available in your College/Career Information Center and on the school web site:
www.montgomeryschoolsmd.org/schools/northwesths/

The CSS Profile: The **Profile** is a College Board online application that collects information used by certain colleges and scholarship programs to award institutional aid funds. Students can file the **Profile** as early as October 1 of their senior year. There is a cost associated with filing. For **Profile** cost, application and additional information visit www.collegeboard.com and select "CSS/PROFILE" under "Pay for College."

Assistance with the FAFSA:
Montgomery College Educational Opportunity Center (240) 567-5644
College Goal Maryland @ CollegeGoalSundayMD.org

Financial Aid Questions?
● Email studentaid@ed.gov ● www.studentaid.ed.gov

Financial Aid Web Sites:

The following web site tools may be helpful in determining how much financial aid you may be eligible for:

The FAFSA4caster:
www.FederalStudentAid.ed.gov

CollegeBoard Calculator:
www.collegeboard.com
Select "Pay for College' ■ Select the "Calculators" tool

Maryland State Higher Education Commission *1.800.974.1024*
& the Financial Aid Estimator:
http://www.mhec.state.md.us
Select "Student Financial Aid Assistance" ■ Select "College Aid Calculator"

Scholarship Web Sites:

www.fastweb.com
www.collegenet.com
www.scholarships.com
www.studentjobs.gov
www.hsf.net (Hispanic scholarships)
www.finaid.org/scholarships

Still need for help working your way through the jungle of college and financial aid?

Get Connected & Stay Connected with Family Connection at NW

Family Connection website:
http://connection.naviance.com/northwest

Explore Family Connection as a guest – or to make sure you are registered visit the College/Career Information Center or your counselor.

Scholarship & Financial Aid Tips & Guidelines:

Apply early and meet the specified deadline.

Be honest when completing your scholarship and financial aid applications. Reflect your true grades, experiences, family finances and other requested information.

Be selective when looking for scholarships. Only apply if you meet the scholarships minimum requirements.

Seek the advice of others. Talk to students who have already won scholarships.

Carefully follow the directions. Only include the information requested. If an essay is required that specifies a word limit, do not exceed that limit.

Proofread your application. Review the entire application. Ask a parent, teacher or friend to read the application. Do not rely on 'spell check!'

Keep copies of everything you send (electronically and hard copy)! If your application is misplaced, having copies will make it easier to resubmit your information quickly.

Use Family Connection to track your scholarship application transcripts if submitted through Northwest High School. If you are responsible for submitting additional documents as part of the financial aid or scholarship application, send those documents USPS registered mail for receipt and tracking purposes.

Read! Carefully read instructions. Make sure you do not omit information requested.

Scholarship Success Highlights:

Check your email regularly! Scholarship information is sent to you from your College/Career Information Center via email! Keep your Family Connection email account current.

Request your recommendations early and help your recommenders by completing the Self-Evaluation form!

Read! Read! Read! Organizations offering scholarships and college admissions committees may require or ask for an interview. Being well read and knowledgeable on current events will make you feel more at ease.

Freshman:

- Work with your counselor to select courses that reflect a challenging course curriculum. Both college and scholarship committees look closely at high school transcripts, looking at the progression of courses as well as grades.
- Get involved in extra-curricular activities both in the community and in school. Volunteer!

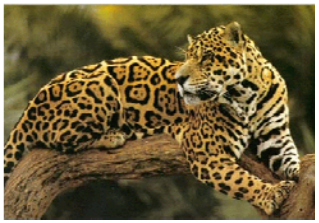
Sophomores:

- Continue to pursue a progressive and challenging course curriculum.
- Register for the PSAT. Early scholarship applications may ask for early college test scores! Taking the PSAT will give you an indication of your strengths and weaknesses on college tests.

Juniors:

- Continue to pursue a progressively challenging course curriculum.
- Register for the PSAT. This is the year your PSAT scores could qualify you for National Merit Scholarships!
- Begin your college search and continue to look for scholarships specific to your eligibility.
- Participate in the high school college visits held in the College/Career Information Center. You can not only learn about the college admissions process and campus life but you can also learn about scholarship opportunities offered and how to apply.
- Prep for your college tests. Talk to your counselor about which test best suits you. Register for a spring test.

Seniors:

- Continue to pursue a progressively challenging course curriculum.
- Use Family Connection to search for colleges and scholarships.
- Apply for all scholarships you qualify for!
- Attend the fall Financial Aid Workshop at your high school.
- Complete the FAFSA
- Review your college and financial aid offers. Have a conversation with your parents on the best options for your post-secondary education.
- Follow-up with scholarship applications!
- By **May 1** make your final college decisions. Notify schools and submit any required documents or deposits.
- **Submit your scholarship offers and acceptances to the College/Career Information Center. Forms and deadlines will be available on the school web site!**

All for One and One for All
Northwest High School
13501 Richter Farm Road
Germantown, MD 20874
CEEB Code: 210-589
Home of the Jaguars