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# SCHOLARSHIP SCAMS TIP SHEET

## 10 SCAM WARNING SIGNS

Knowing the warning signs can keep you from being a scholarship scam victim.

1. **FEES:** You shouldn't have to pay to search for or apply for scholarships.
2. **CREDIT CARD OR BANK ACCOUNT INFORMATION NEEDED:** You should never have to give credit card or bank account information to award providers.
3. **SCHOLARSHIP GUARANTEE:** No one can guarantee that you'll win a scholarship because on one can control judges' decision. Also, be wary of "high success rates" – they usually do not refer to actual award winners.
4. **NO WORK INVOLVED:** You can't avoid putting in time to fill out a scholarship application.
5. **NO CONTACT INFORMATION:** Legitimate sponsors should provide contact information upon request. If the sponsor does not supply a valid e-mail address, phone number and mailing address (not a PO box) upon request that could be a sign of a scam.
6. **UNSOLICITED SCHOLARSHIPS:** if you are called to receive an award for which you never applied, be alert –it's mostly likely a scam.
7. **PRESSURE TACTICS:** Don't allow yourself to be pressured into applying for a scholarship, especially if the sponsor is asking for money.
8. **CLAIMS OF "EXCLUSIVE" SCHOLARSHIPS:** Sponsors don't make their scholarships available through only one service.
9. **SPONSOR GOES OUT OF THEIR WAY TO SOUND "OFFICIAL":** Scammers sometimes use official-sounding words like "national," "education" or "federal" or they display an official-looking seal to fool you into thinking they are legit. Check with your school if you question a scholarship provider's legitimacy.
10. **YOUR QUESTIONS AREN'T ANSWERED DIRECTLY:** if you can't get a straight answer from a sponsor regarding their application, what will be done with your information or other questions proceed with caution. Suspect a Scam?

If you think you may be dealing with a scammer, follow the direction below:

1. Save all forms you receive from the suspected company. Keep copies of written details about offers and any correspondence such as e-mails or other paperwork. Make sure all materials are dated.
2. Take notes! Record the date, time phone number and the person's name with whom you spoke with either on the phone or at a seminar. Also include a detailed account of your conversation.
3. Report the suspected scammer to any of the following organizations:

**- FEDERAL TRADE COMMISSION (FTC)**

Fill out an online complaint form or call toll-free: Ph: 877-FTC-HELP (1-877-382-4357) Web: [www.ftc.gov/scholarshipscams](http://www.ftc.gov/scholarshipscams)

**-NATIONAL FRAUD INFORMATION CENTER (NFIC)**

Fill out an online complaint form or call toll-free: Ph: 800-876-7060  
Web: [www.fraud.org](http://www.fraud.org)

**-BETTER BUSINESS BUREAU (BBB)**

Be sure to have the address of the company about whom you are filing the complaint.  
Ph: 703-276-0100  
Web: [www.bbb.org](http://www.bbb.org)

**UNITED STATE POSTAL INSPECTION SERVICE (USPIS)**

Ph: 800-654-8896  
Web: [www.usps.gov/postalinspectors/fraud/welcome.htm](http://www.usps.gov/postalinspectors/fraud/welcome.htm)



**REMEMBER:** Applying for financial aid should never cost more than a postage stamp!