



GAfutures:

Learn Here, Earn Here

GEORGIA COLLEGE AND CAREER GUIDE

TABLE OF CONTENTS

SECTION ONE

THE COLLEGE AND CAREER GUIDE

GEORGIA MATCH 8

Areas of Interest and Your Career Options..... 10

College and University Options..... 12

Careers in Strategically Important Industries in GA..... 16

Opportunities for Military Service..... 18

SECTION TWO

INVEST IN YOUR GEORGIA FUTURE

Financial Aid at a Glance..... 22

SmartTalk (Don't Get Scammed!) 23

Federal Financial Aid Programs..... 24

HOPE and Other State Financial Aid Programs..... 26

GAfutures Scholarship Search 29

Earn College Credits with Dual Enrollment..... 30

How to Submit Your FAFSA 32

SECTION THREE

TOOLS, TIPS AND RESOURCES

Plan&Pay4CollegeGA 38

High School Checklists..... 40

Glossary: Financial Aid from A-Z..... 44

E-Resources..... 50

Introduction from the President

Welcome to your GAfutures College and Career Guide. We're glad that you're considering brightening your future in our exceptional state.

All of us are different with our own unique ambitions and pathways. Maybe you're hoping to enroll in one of the state's four-year colleges or universities. Maybe a technical college is the best option that fits your career goals. Or, maybe you're looking to serve your state and country and are seeking military-funded educational options.

However you envision your future, the Georgia Student Finance Commission is here to help you achieve your goals. This guide will introduce you to college and career opportunities in Georgia, and the financial aid options available to you. Use the guide to be more informed, prepared and confident to pursue your postsecondary aspirations. Get started today by creating your student account at **GAfutures.org**.

Whether you're a student, parent, counselor, working adult or casual reader of this guide, this guide includes information that will help you on your journey to success.

We look forward to having you learn here and earn here in the great state of Georgia!

Happy exploring!

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Lynne Riley". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Lynne" and last name "Riley" clearly distinguishable.

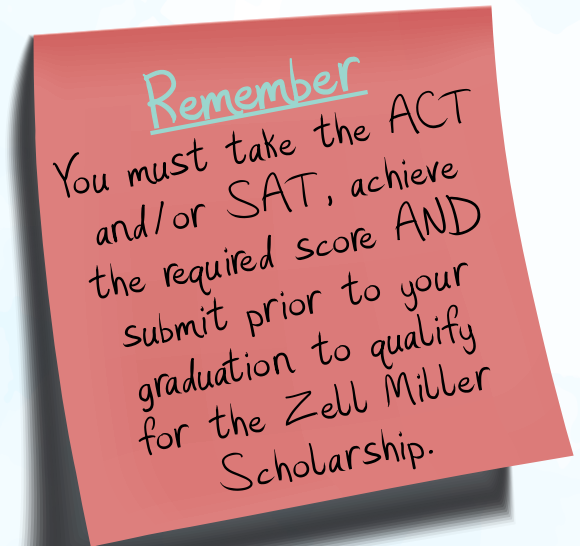
Lynne Riley
President
Georgia Student Finance Commission

Before you begin exploring... Create your GAfutures Account

GSFC has designed a Student Dashboard that is accessible via your GAfutures student account. The Student Dashboard allows you to quickly review the status of your various interactions with GSFC including the following:

- **GSFAPP**
- **FAFSA**
- **ACT and/or SAT Scores**
- **GEORGIA MATCH**
- **Selective Service Registration**
- **Plan&Pay4CollegeGA**

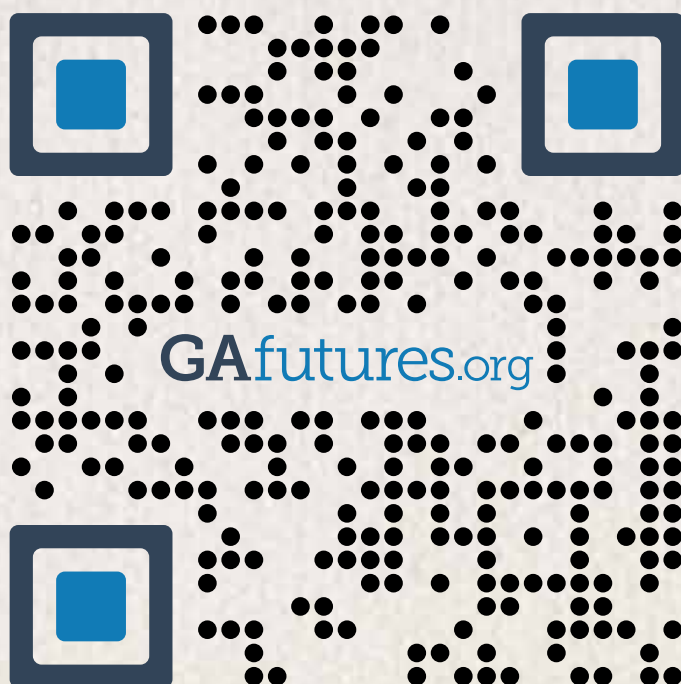
To view your information, make sure you have created a student GAfutures account using your full name, date of birth, social security number, and high school name. You can contact GSFC via GAfutures for any questions regarding your Student Dashboard by emailing gsfc@gsfc.org.



GAfutures.org

Explore. Plan. Succeed.

NOTES

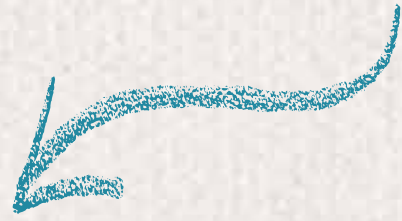


SECTION ONE:

THE COLLEGE AND CAREER GUIDE

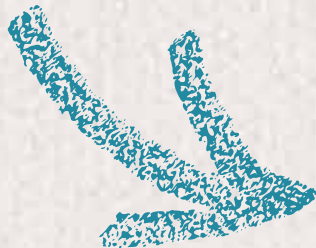
IN THIS SECTION, YOU'LL FIND:

HOW TO MATCH AREAS
OF INTEREST WITH
CAREER OPTIONS



COLLEGES AND
UNIVERSITIES IN
THE STATE OF
GEORGIA

OPPORTUNITIES TO
JOIN THE GEORGIA
WORKFORCE



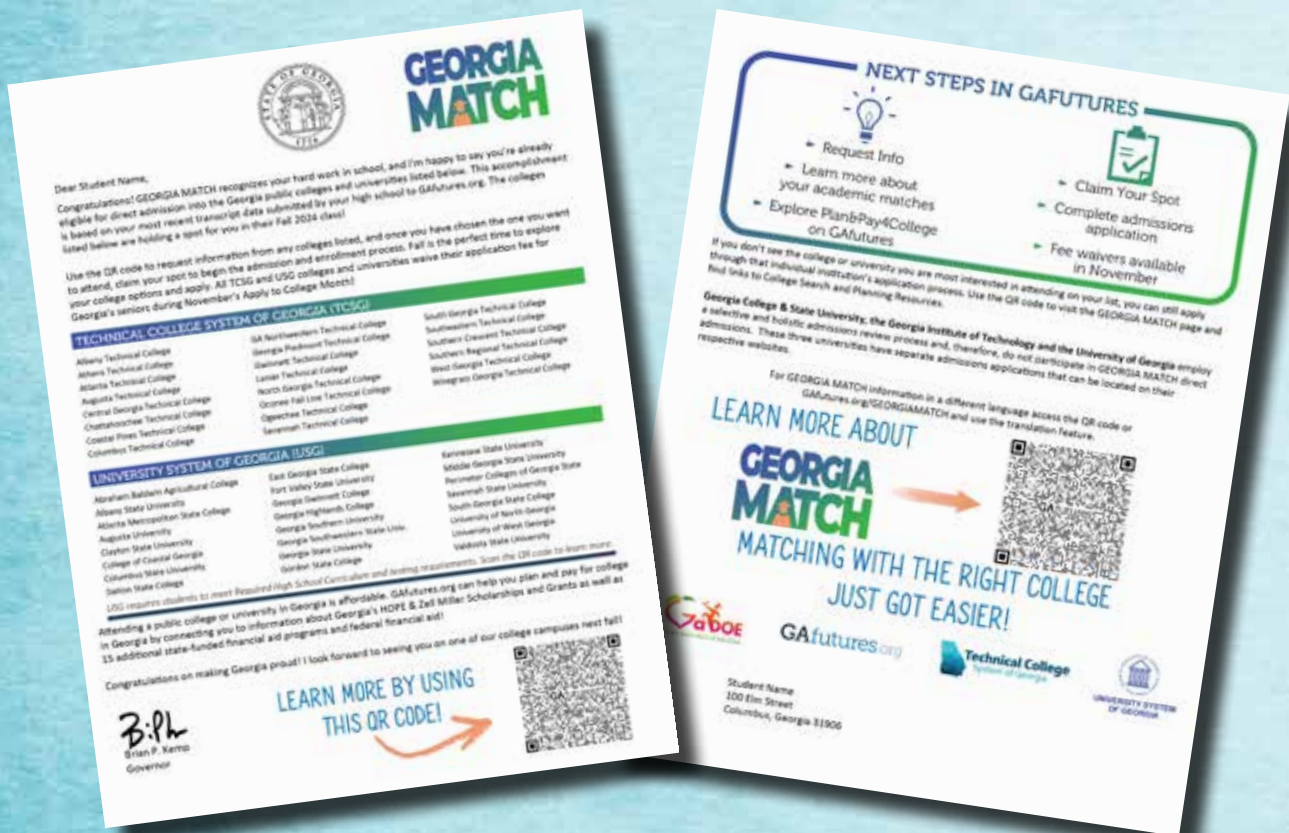
EDUCATIONAL
BENEFITS FOR
MILITARY SERVICE
MEMBERS

GEORGIA MATCH

GEORGIA MATCH
is the most
comprehensive direct
admission program
in the country!

GEORGIA MATCH identifies up to 45 Georgia public colleges and universities that are your academic match based on your HOPE GPA.

Seniors your **GEORGIA MATCH** letter will be mailed to you the first week of October and will be available on your Student Dashboard in your GAfutures account.



Colleges and universities are holding a spot for you!
All seniors need to do is
CLAIM YOUR SPOT!

Do you already **have a college plan?**

- **Awesome!** The letter can serve as a great Plan B or make you aware of additional opportunities.

Are you **still deciding on a college plan?**

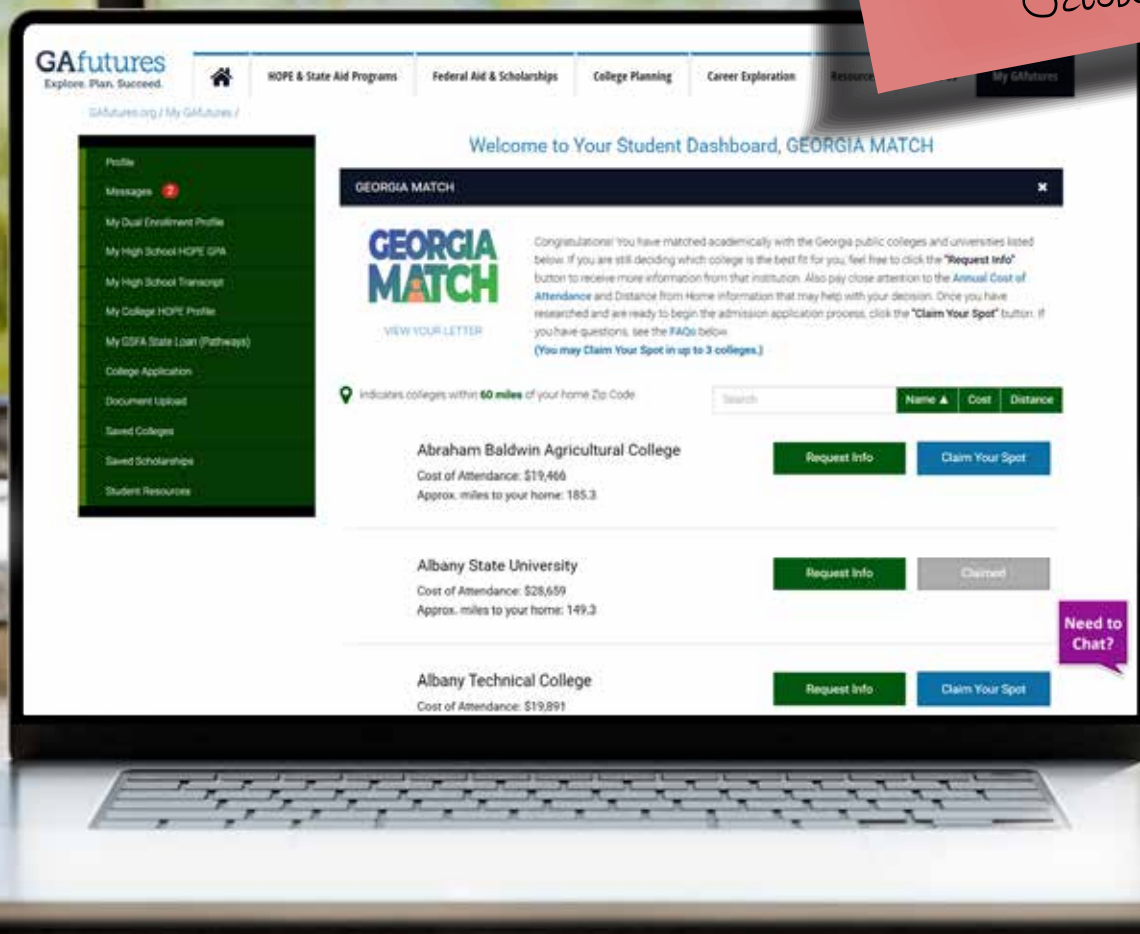
- **Perfect!** The letter contains a list of colleges that are an academic match. This is a great starting point... now find which one is the right fit.

Didn't know that **you could go to college?**

- **College is possible!!!** The colleges on your letter are holding a spot for you... and GSFC can help you find ways to pay!

Seniors

The GEORGIA MATCH section of your Student Dashboard will be available the first of October



AREAS OF INTEREST AND YOUR CAREER OPTIONS

You know what they say: when you do something you love, it doesn't feel like work! The best way to find a fulfilling and long-lasting career choice is to select a field based on your skills and interests. Take a look at the information on these two pages to identify some possible career opportunities based on specific areas of study.

Programs marked with an asterisk (*) indicate a tuition-free certificate or diploma program at a Technical College System of Georgia (TCSG) college, for prospective students eligible for the HOPE Career Grant. (visit www.tcsg.org)

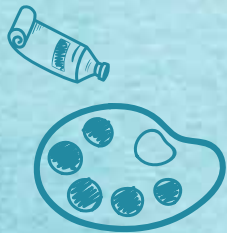
Area of Study _____ Career Options _____

English/Language Arts



- Copywriting
- *Early Childhood Care & Education**
- Education
- Grant Writing
- Journalism
- Law
- Public Relations
- Technical Writing

Fine Arts



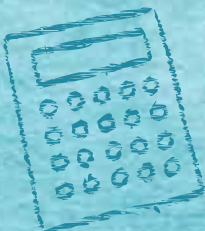
- Advertising
- Animation
- Broadcasting
- Cinematography
- Graphic Arts
- Interior Design
- *Movie Production/ Set Design**
- Social Media
- Theater
- Website Design

Health Care Sciences



- Clinical Laboratory Technician
- *Health Science**
- Nurse
- Pharmacist
- *Practical Nursing**
- Speech-language Pathologist
- Surgical Technologist

Math



- Accounting
- Aeronautics
- *Computer Programming**
- *Computer Technology**
- Financial Planning
- Insurance
- Statistics
- Teaching

Modern Language



- Foreign Service
- Government
- Interpreting
- Translating
- Travel Agency

Exercise Science



- Athletic Trainer
- Chiropractor
- Dance Instructor
- Fitness Specialist
- Occupational Therapist
- Physical Therapist
- Sports Management

Science



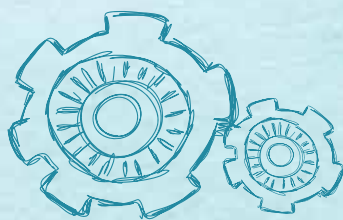
- *Certified Engineer Assistant**
- Chemistry
- Environmental Science
- Forensic Science
- *Health Science**
- Medical Research
- Medicine
- Meteorology
- Occupational Therapy
- Pharmacology
- Veterinary Science

Social Sciences



- Anthropology
- City Planning
- Criminal Justice
- Government
- Human Resources
- Law Enforcement and Criminal Justice*
- Psychology
- Social Work

Technical Education



- *Automotive Technology**
- *Aviation Technology**
- *Commercial Truck Driving**
- *Construction**
- *Diesel Equipment Technology**
- *Electrical Line Worker**
- *Industrial Maintenance**
- *Logistics / Transportation**
- Manufacturing
- Mechanic
- *Precision Manufacturing**
- *Welding & Joining**

See page 11 for a complete list of TCSG and University System of Georgia (USG) colleges and universities. See pages 14 and 25 for additional details on the HOPE Career Grant and eligibility information.

COLLEGE AND UNIVERSITY OPTIONS

With so many colleges and universities out there, it's important to find the one that fits your personality, educational preferences, career goals and personal criteria. When considering a Georgia college or university, you might ask yourself questions like:

- Is a technical or four-year college the best fit for me?
- Do I want a campus in the heart of the city, or is a small town more my speed?
- Am I seeking a research-focused institution or a more broad education?

Luckily, there are lots of great options to choose from in the state of Georgia! Take a look at the list of colleges and universities on the opposite page to start your search. Note that these colleges are eligible for state aid programs. You can also use our interactive webpages to find the best college for you by visiting GAfutures.org/college-planning/college-search. Search by location, size, type and more to help you narrow down your top choices. You can also search by the schools in Georgia specifically eligible for GSFC-administered financial aid programs.

The screenshot shows the GAfutures website's College Search page. At the top is the GSFC (Georgia Student Finance Commission) header with links for 'Create an Account', 'Sign In', and 'Help'. Below this is a navigation bar with tabs for 'HOPE & State Aid Programs', 'Federal Aid & Scholarships', 'College Planning' (which is active), 'Career Exploration', 'Resources', 'About Us', and 'My GAfutures'. The main heading is 'College Search'. Below the heading is a search bar with the placeholder 'Search by keyword.' and a magnifying glass icon. To the left of the search bar is a vertical list of filter categories: 'College Type', 'Location', 'Housing & Transportation', 'Admissions', 'Academic Opportunities', 'Student Life', and 'Tuition Cost and Financial Aid'. At the bottom of this list is a 'Search All' button. To the right of the search bar is a text block stating: 'We have over 6,800 colleges for you to choose from! Use the tabs on the left to select categories that will narrow down the search to find the right ones for you. By navigating to each tab, you can continue to make selections to focus your search for the colleges which best fit your interests. Unsure how to begin your search? Click here for a Quick Guide to College Search.' Below this text is a large banner image featuring a collage of college scenes: a building with yellow blossoms, a street lamp, a modern building at night, and a large cathedral. Overlaid on the banner is the text 'Find the college that is perfect for you!' and a smaller instruction: 'Choose a category on the left to help narrow down the possibilities.'

Georgia Colleges

University System of Georgia (USG)

Abraham Baldwin Agricultural College
Albany State University
Atlanta Metropolitan State College
Augusta University
Clayton State University
College of Coastal Georgia
Columbus State University
Dalton State College
East Georgia State College
Fort Valley State University
Georgia College & State University
Georgia Gwinnett College
Georgia Highlands College
Georgia Institute of Technology
Georgia Southern University
Georgia Southwestern State University
Georgia State University
Gordon State College
Kennesaw State University
Middle Georgia State University
Savannah State University
South Georgia State College
University of Georgia
University of North Georgia
University of West Georgia
Valdosta State University

Technical College System of Georgia (TCSG)

Albany Technical College
Athens Technical College
Atlanta Technical College
Augusta Technical College
Central Georgia Technical College
Chattahoochee Technical College
Coastal Pines Technical College
Columbus Technical College
Georgia Northwestern Technical College
Georgia Piedmont Technical College
Gwinnett Technical College
Lanier Technical College
North Georgia Technical College

Oconee Fall Line Technical College
Ogeechee Technical College
Savannah Technical College
South Georgia Technical College
Southeastern Technical College
Southern Crescent Technical College
Southern Regional Technical College
West Georgia Technical College
Wiregrass Georgia Technical College

Independent Colleges

Agnes Scott College
American Intercontinental University - Atlanta
Andrew College
Berry College
Brenau University
Brewton-Parker College
Clark Atlanta University
Covenant College
DeVry University
Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University
Emmanuel College
Emory University
Georgia Military College
LaGrange College
Life University
Mercer University
Morehouse College
Oglethorpe University
Paine College
Piedmont University
Point University
Reinhardt University
Saint Leo University
Savannah College of Art and Design
Shorter University
South University
Spelman College
Thomas University
Toccoa Falls College
Truett-McConnell University
Wesleyan College
Young Harris College

COLLEGE AND UNIVERSITY OPTIONS cont.

01

Review the application process. Each school may have different deadlines and require additional applications. Be sure to set calendar reminders in advance of when applications are due.

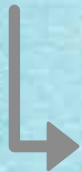


02

Decide if you are going to apply for Early Decision or Early Action Admissions. Most of these applications are due between October 1 and November 1; you'll want to mark these deadlines as well.

03

Budget and plan for application fees. Check with your desired college to see if they give application fee waivers during the month of November to coincide with Apply to College month.

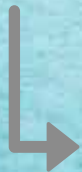


04

Provide teachers, school administrators, counselors and mentors any recommendation forms as early as possible. Be sure to provide mailing instructions, and make sure your portions of the forms are filled out completely and accurately.

05

Draft your college essay(s) and have your parent, teacher, counselor, colleague or other trusted peer review and provide feedback. You will probably go through several rounds of edits to make sure it's the best it can be.



06

Make sure you stay on top of deadlines and all the necessary paperwork is sent to your top choices. This includes official transcript(s), official test scores, letter(s) of recommendation and all financial aid applications. (Reminder, for most high schools, you can sign in to your GAFutures account and send your transcript to HOPE-eligible colleges in Georgia.)

07

After applying to a college, contact the admissions office to confirm your information has been received and they have everything they need from you.

Award Recipient Testimonials

"The Zell Miller Scholarship relieved a great deal of my stress as it relates to financing my college education. It proved instrumental in allowing me to acquire an affordable, high-quality undergraduate education."

- Lauren Rose, Georgia State University
Zell Miller Scholarship Recipient



"Planning your schedule and time management is very important. College is when you find the real you, so come prepared and ready to work."

- Ronnie Faison, Mercer University
REACH Scholar, HOPE Scholarship
and Georgia Tuition Equalization Grant Recipient



CAREERS IN STRATEGICALLY IMPORTANT INDUSTRIES IN GEORGIA

In the thriving and growing state of Georgia, there are career opportunities in a variety of fields around every corner – some of which include underserved, growing or emerging industries. GSFC offers financial aid programs for individuals looking to join the workforce in these areas, providing Georgians an opportunity to step into roles that are at the forefront of the state’s developing business and economic landscape.

HOPE Career Grant

The HOPE Career Grant is available to HOPE Grant-qualified students who enroll in select majors specifically aligned with industries in which there are more jobs available in Georgia than there are skilled workers to fill them. These industries have been identified as strategically important to the state’s economic growth. Eligible HOPE Grant institutions include all TCSG colleges, Atlanta Metropolitan State College, Columbus State University, Dalton State College and Middle Georgia State University. See pages eight and nine for tuition-free certificate or diploma programs available at TCSG colleges; look for programs marked with an asterisk (*).

- Automotive Technology
- Aviation Technology
- Certified Engineer Assistant
- Commercial Truck Driving
- Computer Programming
- Computer Technology
- Construction Technology
- Diesel Equipment Technology
- Early Childhood Care and Education
- Electrical Lineman Technology
- Health Science
- Industrial Maintenance
- Law Enforcement and Criminal Justice
- Logistics/Transportation Technology
- Movie Production Set Design
- Practical Nursing
- Precision Manufacturing
- Welding and Joining Technology



"I did not think that I would be able to make it this far, but it goes to show that when you work hard and are proactive when opportunities are presented, that it is indeed possible.

Thanks to the many awards I've received, I have not had to pay out of pocket yet for my education and I am so very grateful."

*-Jacquelyn Mallard, Wiregrass Georgia Technical School.
Zell Miller Scholarship, HOPE Career Grant,
Zell Miller Grant Recipient*



OPPORTUNITIES FOR MILITARY SERVICE

Serving your country is one of the greatest ways to give back to your nation. GSFC offers financial aid programs for individuals interested in serving in the Georgia Army National Guard or other branch of the military. Continue reading below if this is an option you'd like to explore, and visit GAfutures.org to review detailed eligibility requirements and award amounts.

The Georgia HERO Scholarship Program

The Georgia HERO (Helping Educate Reservists and their Offspring) Scholarship Program was created to provide financial aid to qualifying Georgia National Guard or United States Military Reservists, their spouses, and dependent children who seek a postsecondary education.

Georgia Military College (GMC) State Service Scholarship Loan

The Georgia Military College (GMC) State Service Scholarship Program was created to provide outstanding students with a full two-year scholarship program, thereby strengthening Georgia's Army National Guard with their membership.

For this service cancelable loan to be forgiven, recipients agree to serve in the Georgia Army National Guard for four years to complete service repayment (two years while attending GMC and two years after graduation).

Georgia National Guard (GNG) Service Cancelable Loan (SCL)

The Georgia National Guard (GNG) Service Cancelable Loan (SCL) was established as an incentive for qualified men and women to join the Georgia Army National Guard and to retain skilled, productive citizens within the state. It is a student financial aid program that provides loans to be used toward the cost of tuition in an undergraduate or graduate program at an eligible postsecondary institution.

Recipients agree to serve in the Georgia Army National Guard for two years following the last term of enrollment for which the student received GNG SCL funds.

University of North Georgia Military Scholarship Program

The University of North Georgia (UNG) Military Scholarship Program is a service cancelable program that provides full scholarships to enable outstanding Georgia students interested in pursuing a military career to attend the University of North Georgia, one of the nation's most prestigious senior military colleges.

Recipients agree to enlist in the Georgia Army National Guard, participate in the Corps of Cadets at the University of North Georgia while serving as soldiers in the National Guard, earn a bachelor's degree and become part-time officers – second lieutenants – in the Georgia Army National Guard in one of 18 career fields.

University of North Georgia ROTC Grant and ROTC Grant for Future Officers

The University of North Georgia (UNG) ROTC Grant and ROTC Grant for Future Officers provide assistance to Georgia residents seeking undergraduate degrees and participating in the Reserve Officers' Training Corps as full-time students at UNG.

Georgia residents in good standing with the Corps of Cadets will receive the University of North Georgia ROTC Grant each semester. Military service is not required. Recipients who choose to become an Army officer, and sign an agreement to do so, will receive a more substantial ROTC Grant for Future Officers.



The United States Armed Forces offers additional education benefits for service members and their dependents. Visit

[MilitaryOneSource.mil/education-employment](https://www.militaryonesource.mil/education-employment) to explore additional options that may help you fund your education when you join the military.

What is a service cancelable loan?
A service cancelable loan is a loan awarded to the recipient in exchange for their service in a particular field (in this case, the military). If the service requirement is not met, the loan must be repaid in full.

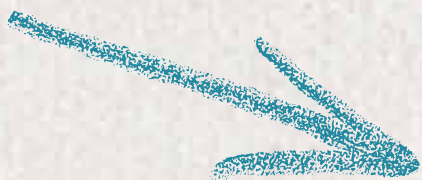
SECTION TWO:



INVEST IN
YOUR
GEORGIA FUTURE

IN THIS SECTION, YOU'LL FIND:

FEDERAL AND STATE
FINANCIAL AID PROGRAMS,
ELIGIBILITY AND
REPAYMENT INFORMATION



STEPS TO
SUBMITTING YOUR
FAFSA

TIPS FOR FINDING
FINANCIAL AID AND
AVOIDING SCAMS

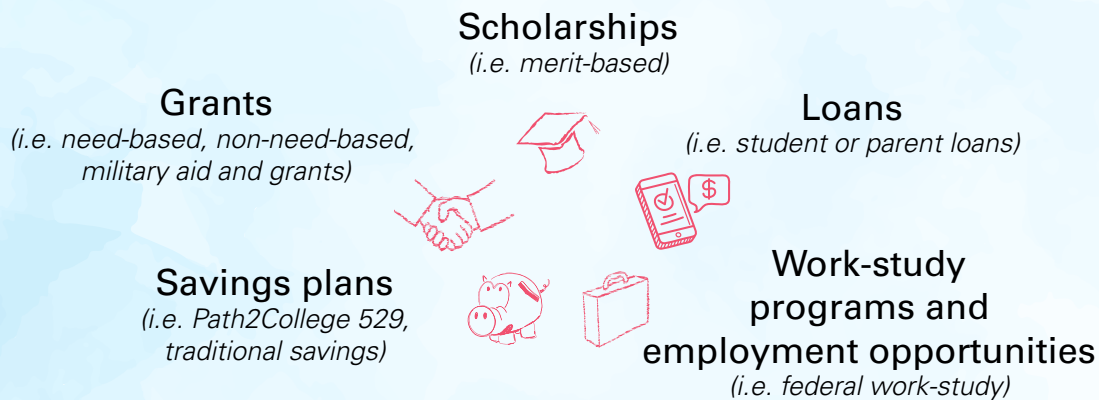


EXPLORE YOUR
GAFUTURES DASHBOARD
TO HELP YOU STAY
ON TRACK TOWARDS
COLLEGE ENROLLMENT

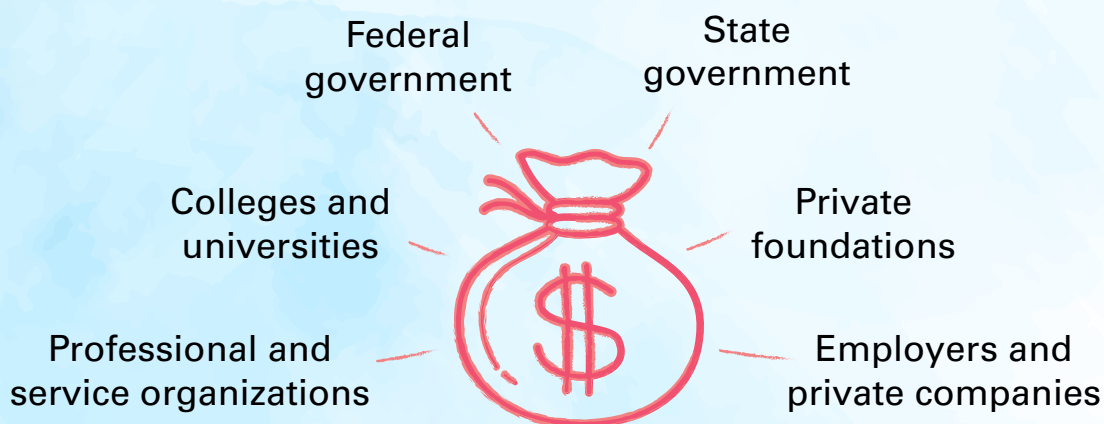
FINANCIAL AID AT A GLANCE

Financial aid is defined as any money used to help pay for college – that includes two- or four-year universities, technical colleges or career schools. Financial aid can cover tuition and fees, room and board, books and supplies, transportation and other college-related expenses.

Financial aid comes in different forms and types...



...and from a number of different sources:



Many of these types of financial aid will be explained in this guide.
Keep reading to learn more!

SMART TALK (DON'T GET SCAMMED!)

Don't fall for misleading offers about paying an organization to help you complete the FAFSA (or any scholarship applications), determine your repayment options or service your plan, or search for scholarships or other financial aid.

Be very leery if you start hearing any of these hooks, and be aware of the truth:

The "Bait"	The Truth
"We'll do all the work."	You must apply yourself.
"The scholarship is guaranteed or your money back."	No one can guarantee you will receive a scholarship.
"I just need your credit card or bank account number to hold this scholarship."	You should never be required to provide this information to legitimate providers.
"This scholarship will cost some money."	You should never pay a fee for someone to give you free money for college.
"You can't get this information anywhere else."	You have access to the same information about financial aid options that they would.
You've been told you've been selected as a finalist for a scholarship you have never applied for.	If you didn't apply for it, you can't get it.

More Tips to Protect Yourself from Scammers

- Never give out personal information to strangers.
- Get everything in writing before responding.
- If you are unfamiliar with the organization, ask how they got your information.
- Do not be pressured into signing anything or paying fees immediately.
- Keep good records of any correspondence you have with any company that approaches you regarding scholarship opportunities or loan repayment services.
- Report it! Visit [fraud.org](https://www.fraud.org) to submit an online form or call **202-835-3323**.

FEDERAL FINANCIAL AID PROGRAMS

The federal government offers financial aid programs which include grants and work-study awards that do not need to be repaid, as well as various loans that do require repayment. Review the basic eligibility requirements and various federal financial aid programs below. For detailed information and annual award amounts, visit studentaid.gov.

Basic Eligibility Requirements

In order to determine eligibility for federal and some state financial aid programs, students must:

- Demonstrate financial need or exhibit academic merit, depending on the type of financial aid.
- Have a high school diploma, General Education Development (GED) diploma or High School Equivalency (HSE) diploma.
- Be enrolled in, or accepted to, an institution participating in federal financial aid programs.
- Be a U.S. citizen, permanent resident or eligible non-citizen.
- Have a valid social security number.
- Maintain satisfactory academic progress.
- Not be in default or owe a refund on any federal or state student grant or federal or state student loan.

Program	Type of Aid	General Eligibility/Requirements
Pell Grant	Grant	Undergraduate student with financial need.
Federal Supplemental Educational Opportunity Grant	Grant	Undergraduate student with exceptional financial need. Federal Pell Grant recipients receive priority.
TEACH Grant	Grant	Undergraduate, post-baccalaureate or graduate student enrolled in coursework necessary to begin a career in teaching. Must agree to serve as a full-time teacher in a high-need field in a public or private elementary or secondary school that serves low-income students.
Federal Work-study	Work-study	Full-time or part-time undergraduate or graduate student.
Direct Stafford Loan	Loan	Undergraduate, graduate or professional student enrolled at least half time.
Direct PLUS Loan	Loan	Graduate student or parent of dependent undergraduate student enrolled at least half time. Credit approval required.

Repayment Options for Federal Aid Loans

If you receive loans from the federal government to help pay for your education, it's good to start looking ahead to know your repayment options ahead of time so you can plan your personal finances accordingly. Below is a basic list of the various types of repayment plans available – all of these differ in:

- Eligible Borrow (**Who** is borrowing the funds)
- Monthly Payment and Time Frame (**How** and **When** the funds are begin repaid)
- Eligible Loans (**Which** loans are included in the repayment)

Types of Repayment Plans - to make your payments more affordable, the various repayment plans can give you more time to repay your loans or can be based on your income.

Basic Repayment Plans

- Standard
- Graduated
- Extended Income-Contingent (ICR)

Income-Driven Repayment Plans

- Saving on a Valuable Education (SAVE)
**this plan is fully replacing the REPAYE program as of 2024.*
- Pay as you Earn (PAYE)
- Income-Based (IBR)
- Income-Contingent (ICR)



HOPE AND OTHER STATE FINANCIAL AID PROGRAMS

The state of Georgia has a number of financial aid programs that provide students with different ways to pay for their education beyond high school; GSFC administers over 20 of these programs. For detailed information and award amounts, visit GAfutures.org.

Program	Type of Aid	General Eligibility/Requirements
HOPE Scholarship	Merit-based scholarship	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Must be a high school graduate seeking a college degree. – Minimum 3.0 HOPE GPA as calculated by GSFC in core curriculum courses (English, math, science, foreign language, social science). – If enrolled in college-level coursework: Minimum 3.0 postsecondary GPA. – Eligible institutions: University System of Georgia (USG), Technical College System of Georgia (TCSG) and approved private institutions in the state of Georgia.
Zell Miller Scholarship	Merit-based scholarship	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Must be a high school graduate seeking a college degree. – (1a) Total test score of 1200 SAT on a single national administration or composite test score of 25 ACT on a single national or state/district administration and (1b) minimum 3.7 HOPE GPA as calculated by GSFC in core curriculum courses, OR (2) graduate as valedictorian or salutatorian. – If enrolled in college-level coursework: Minimum 3.3 postsecondary cumulative GPA. – Eligible institutions: USG, TCSG and approved private institutions in the state of Georgia.
REACH Georgia Scholarship Program	Scholarship	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – REACH Scholars are selected in middle school and sign a contract along with their parent/guardian to maintain a 2.5 HOPE-Calculated GPA, remain crime, drug, and behavior issue free, and meet with a volunteer mentor and academic coach until they graduate from high school. Visit GAfutures.org for the complete list of eligibility requirements.
HOPE Grant	Grant	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Must be enrolled in a certificate or diploma program at a participating USG or TCSG college. – If enrolled in certificate or diploma coursework: no initial GPA requirement. Must maintain a 2.0 HOPE GPA at the 30 and 60 semester hour check points. – Must not have exceeded the maximum award limits for any HOPE or Zell Miller program.
Georgia Tuition Equalization Grant Program (GTEG)	Grant	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Must be seeking a college degree at an eligible private college in Georgia.

"The grant not only gives me the peace of mind that my tuition and related fees will not be a concern, but also provides even more motivation to continue to perform well academically."

- Kyle Runner, Southern Regional Technical College
Zell Miller Grant Recipient



HOPE Career Grant	Grant	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Must be enrolled in specific high-demand certificate or diploma programs at a participating USG or TCSG college. - Must be eligible for, and receiving, HOPE or Zell Miller Grant funding. - Must not have exceeded the maximum award limits for any HOPE or Zell Miller program.
Georgia College Completion Grant	Grant	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Enrolled at an eligible postsecondary institution and is experiencing a financial aid gap with their cost of education. - Must have completed at least eighty (80) percent of credit requirements for graduation from their enrolled certificate, diploma or undergraduate major or program of study. - Awards are based on program requirements and available allocated funds at the eligible institutions- University System of Georgia (USG), Technical College System of Georgia (TCSG) or eligible Private non-profit postsecondary institutions in Georgia.
Zell Miller Grant	Grant	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Must be enrolled in a certificate or diploma program at a participating USG or TCSG college. - Minimum 3.5 cumulative calculated HOPE GPA at the end of each term required to maintain eligibility. - Must not have exceeded the maximum award limits for any HOPE or Zell Miller program.
Georgia Public Safety Memorial Grant	Grant	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Must be a dependent child of a Georgia Public Safety Officer permanently disabled or killed in the line of duty. - Must be enrolled in a Georgia public or private college, university or technical college as a full-time undergraduate student seeking a college degree or technical certificate/ diploma.
Inclusive Postsecondary Education Grant Program (IPSE)	Grant	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Must be enrolled in an approved IPSE program at an approved USG or TCSG Institution. - Assists students with qualifying intellectual and developmental disabilities. - Can assist with tuition, mandatory fees or program fees.

NOTES

Another great way to fund your postsecondary endeavors is to save money! It's never too late or too early to start saving for college. Georgia's Path2College 529 Plan is another way to help pay for your education beyond high school. Parents or guardians, grandparents or other family members can start a 529 plan with only \$25 and 15 minutes. Visit **Path2College529.com** and find out more about the plan benefits, how it works, the tax advantages and how the funds can be used.



Path2College
529 Plan
Save for the future. Today.®

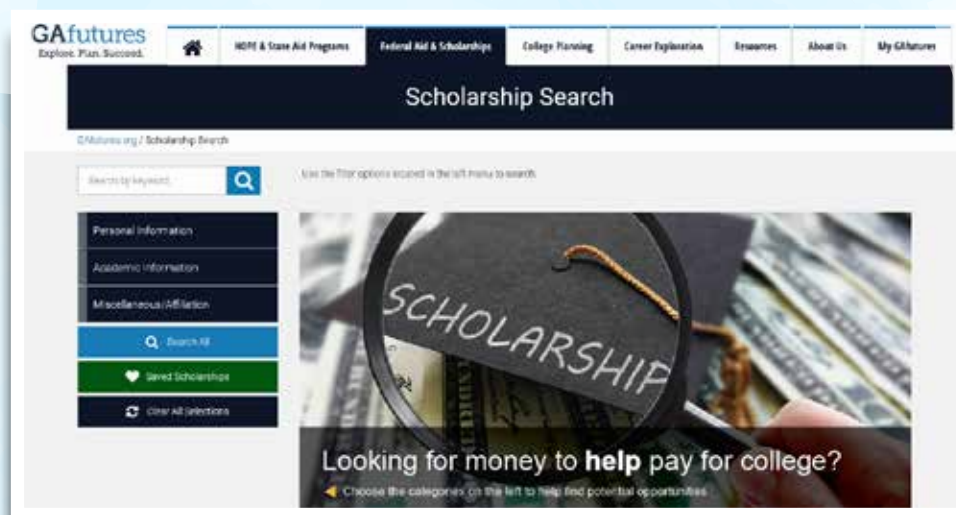
GAfutures SCHOLARSHIP SEARCH

There are thousands of scholarships out there to help students pay for college – you just have to be willing to spend the time doing your research and putting together strong scholarship applications. The more time you invest in your search, the more you increase your chances of receiving a scholarship award.

Check out these helpful scholarship search tips:

- **Start your search early.** Many scholarships have an application process and competition can be tough.
- **Don't stop at one, two or three scholarship applications.** You increase your chances of receiving money for college by applying for multiple scholarships. Plus, smaller scholarships add up when it comes to paying for college.
- **Be creative!** Consider your family, lineage or culture, hobbies, career interests, medical history or your college major. You might even find scholarships with surprising eligibility requirements, such as being vegetarian, lefthanded or a comic book fan.
- **Seek various places and resources for scholarships.** Options may include your high school or postsecondary institution of choice, or free websites and tools such as our GAfutures scholarship search or Fastweb. Check with your employer to see if they offer educational or tuition benefits that you may be eligible for! If you're not working yet, consider applying for jobs where you can earn scholarships for college.
- **Look for scholarships even after you're in college.** Some schools have institution or program-specific scholarships for current students.
- **Do not pay anyone to help you find or apply for scholarships!** (More information on scams on page 19.)

Look for local and national scholarships with our search tool to find additional sources of financial aid. Visit GAfutures.org/scholarship-search to begin your search!



EARN COLLEGE CREDITS WITH DUAL ENROLLMENT

Dual Enrollment allows high school students (10th-12th grade) to earn college credits while working on their high school diploma. If you think you're up to the challenge, there are some great benefits to taking college-level classes, including getting a taste of the college experience for an easier transition, taking classes that may not be offered at your high school, building confidence and increasing your educational and career opportunities. The State of Georgia provides 30 free college credit hours to every eligible student through the dual enrollment program.

Eligibility

To participate in dual enrollment, a student must:

- Be enrolled in and attending a participating eligible public or private high school in Georgia or an eligible participating home study program in Georgia.
- Be approved by the participating high school or home study program at which he or she is enrolled.
- Complete the Student Participation Agreement (SPA) along with their parent/guardian as part of the application process.
- Have completed the admission process and been accepted and approved by the participating college or university.

All postsecondary coursework must be completed prior to high school graduation or home study completion in order to receive dual enrollment credit and funding.

10th Graders

- Eligible students may enroll in approved Career, Technical and Agricultural Education (CTAE) courses listed on the Course Directory at a participating TCSG institution only.
- Eligible students who have a minimum SAT score of 1200 or minimum ACT composite score of 26 in a single national test administration, may enroll in any approved courses listed on the Course Directory at a TCSG, USG or private eligible participating postsecondary institution.

Note: GSFC must have the required test score(s) on file prior to the student completing the dual enrollment funding application and the high school or home study approving courses.

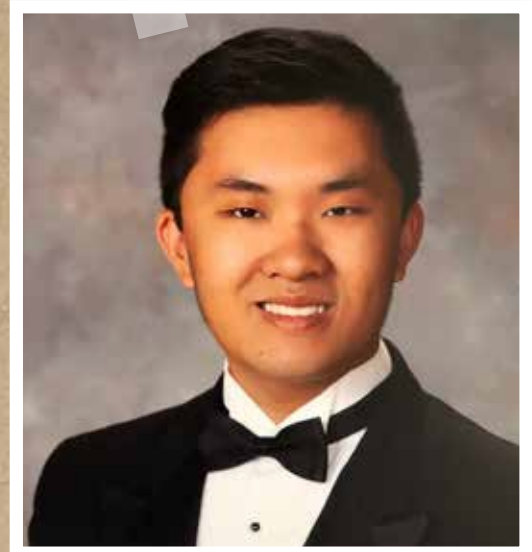
11th and 12th Graders

- Eligible students may take any approved dual enrollment courses listed on the Course Directory, at an eligible participating postsecondary institution (USG, TCSG or private).

For complete eligibility, application and program information, visit GAfutures.org/hope-state-aid-programs/scholarships-grants/dual-enrollment.

"My teachers said it was a good opportunity to do college course work without having to pay for it and getting exposure to college was helpful. The college courses were harder than my high school classes; but had me better prepared and gave my GPA a slight boost."

- Tommy Doan, Georgia Southern University
Zell Miller Grant Recipient,
Dual Enrollment Participant



"My mother is responsible for four children, including my twin brother and myself. I was glad that all my hard work throughout high school had paid off."

- Ariana Hatcher, The Women's College of Brenau University
Dual Enrollment Program Participant



HOW TO SUBMIT YOUR FAFSA

The first step in your search for financial aid – federal and state – is to complete the Free Application for Federal Student Aid, or FAFSA. Submitting a FAFSA is **FREE** – do not pay anyone to complete the FAFSA for you!

Before you get started, make sure you have the following information:

- Your social security number
- Your driver's license number
- Your (or your parent's/contributor's) tax records and W-2 forms
- Record of your (or your parent's/contributor's) assets
- Your (or your parent's/contributor's) bank statements, stocks, bonds and other investment records
- Undocumented parents need FSA ID

If you are a dependent applicant and need to know which parent's information to use, visit the Federal Student Aid website at studentaid.gov and search for "Who is my parent?"

1. Create an FSA ID.

Submitting your FAFSA starts with creating your FSA ID. This is your electronic passport that will allow you to electronically sign your FAFSA. Your contributor(s) will also need an FSA ID.

Take the following steps to get started:

- a. Go to [FAFSA.gov](https://fafsa.gov) and click the link to create an FSA ID.
- b. Create a username and password, and enter your email address.
- c. Enter your name, date of birth, social security number, contact information and challenge questions and answers.
- d. Review your information and read and accept the terms and conditions.
- e. Confirm your email address using the secure code, which will be sent to the email address you entered when you created your FSA ID. Once you verify your email address, you can use it instead of your username to log in to complete your FAFSA.

You can use your FSA ID to sign a FAFSA right away. Once the Social Security Administration verifies your information in one to three days, or if you have linked your PIN to your FSA ID, you will be able to use your FSA ID to access your application. **Remember:** Your information will be saved for next year, and you'll need to fill out a FAFSA every school year to be eligible for federal funds.

For additional help, visit studentaid.gov/fsa-id/create-account/launch.

2. Enter personal information.

Make sure everything you enter is exactly how it appears on official government documents.

3. Enter financial information.

The IRS FUTURE Act Direct Data Exchange can transfer tax data to your application automatically.

4. Choose up to 20 schools.

Be sure to include any school you are planning to attend, whether or not you've applied or been accepted yet. You will get an estimate of your financial aid eligibility.

5. All FAFSA participants, including students and designated contributors, must consent before the application is processed.

6. Submit your form and double-check your information.

You'll receive a Student Aid Report (SAR) from the schools that received your information, so check it to make sure there are no mistakes. Make sure you receive a confirmation page indicating your FAFSA has been submitted. Be sure to print and maintain a copy of your confirmation page.



The FAFSA may not be the only application you have to submit in order to receive financial aid. Visit **GAfutures.org** to complete the Georgia Student Finance Application (GSFAPP) to apply for HOPE/Zell Miller scholarships/grants and the HOPE Career Grant. You may also need to complete other institutional applications. Be sure to contact your school(s) of interest or visit their website(s) to find out what other forms or applications are required.

Need help?

Find an FSA ID or FAFSA completion event!

Each year, GSFC hosts FREE events across the state to help students and their families complete the FAFSA. Visit **GAfutures.org** for more information.



SECTION THREE:



TOOLS, TIPS AND RESOURCES

IN THIS SECTION, YOU'LL FIND:

HELPFUL INFORMATION ON
COMPARING AWARD OFFERS



REPAYMENT INFORMATION
FOR FINANCIAL AID



HIGH SCHOOL CHECKLISTS
BY GRADE



GLOSSARY OF COMMON
STUDENT FINANCIAL AID
TERMS

COMPARE AWARD OFFERS

You've done all the hard work to get your financial aid applications submitted, and you're starting to receive award offers. Great job! But the hard work isn't finished yet. You'll need to carefully review your offers to see which is the best option for you.

How Your Financial Aid Award is Calculated

The former Expected Family Contribution (EFC) will now be replaced with the **Student Aid Index (SAI)** for the new FAFSA available in December of 2023

The need analysis formula is:

Cost of attendance (COA) minus Student Aid Index (SAI) and other financial assistance equals eligibility for need-based financial aid

Students and families will see a different measure of their ability to pay for college and will also experience a change in the methodology used to determine aid. The new formula removes the number of family members in college from the calculation and allows a minimum SAI of negative \$1,500 to give financial aid administrators more insight when making determinations for students with especially challenging situations.

Comparing Award Offers

The award letters you receive may look slightly different, but they all basically include the same information, such as how much it will cost to attend the school for the year, the amount of financial aid the school is providing, the amount your family is expected to contribute and any additional need you'll have to fund through other sources.



Accepting Student Financial Aid

The best offer usually involves the most free money (scholarships and grants), then earned money (work-study), then minimal borrowed money (federal student loans). As you evaluate your award package, consider the type of aid it is and if, and how, you will have to pay it back. Talk it over with your family and choose the offer that works best for you and your family's financial situation.

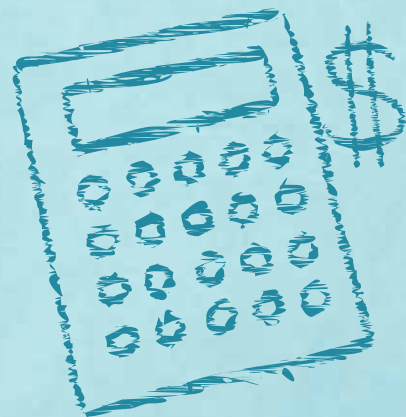
The Best Order to Accept Aid

- 1. Scholarships and Grants:** Make sure you understand any conditions (GPA, service, etc.) that make this type of aid truly free.
- 2. Work-study:** While you don't have to pay this type of aid back, you do have to work for it. Consider your class schedule and study time.
- 3. Federal Student Loans:** You will have to pay this money back with interest. Consider a subsidized loan first – the interest doesn't start accruing until you leave school.
- 4. State Government or College Loans:** You will have to pay this money back with interest. The terms can be different than federal student loans. Read the fine print!
- 5. Private Loans:** You will have to pay this money back with interest, usually higher interest rates and less favorable terms. Read the fine print!

Source: Federal Student Aid, studentaid.gov

The Net Price Calculator

is a tool students and their families can use to estimate the cost of attendance for a particular college. Most schools have a Net Price Calculator on their website for prospective students. You can also visit GAfutures.org/resources/net-price-calculators to read more about this tool.



The Consumer Financial Protection Bureau has a great online comparison tool to help you determine which offer best fits your financial needs. Check it out at ConsumerFinance.gov.

Plan&Pay4CollegeGA

The Plan&Pay4CollegeGA tool is in the College planning section of GAfutures.org is designed to help students and families comparison shop among Georgia's public and private postsecondary institutions that participate in Georgia state aid programs. This tool will generate an **ESTIMATE** based on current Annual Cost of Attendance and financial aid award amounts.

Colleges and universities in this tool are HOPE eligible and in the University System of Georgia, Technical College System of Georgia or are a Private University here in Georgia.

Hover over the ? question marks for additional assistance with answering the question

Question 1

Select up to 3 Georgia colleges from the HOPE eligible colleges list below: • ?

AGNES SCOTT COLLEGE

ATHENS TECHNICAL COLLEGE

AUGUSTA UNIVERSITY

Question 2

Which of the following Georgia scholarships do you think you will qualify for? • ?

☐ HOPE Scholarship

☒ Zell Miller Scholarship

☐ Neither

Question 3

Which of the following Georgia grants do you think you will qualify for? • ?

☐ HOPE Grant

☒ Zell Miller Grant

☐ Neither

☒ HOPE Career Grant •

Practical Nursing

Question 4

Do you think you will qualify for the need-based federal Pell Grant? • ?

☐ No Pell (\$0)

☐ Median Pell (\$4,974)

☒ Maximum Pell (\$7,395)

Submit

Clear

Sample Estimate*

	AGNES SCOTT COLLEGE	ATHENS TECHNICAL COLLEGE	AUGUSTA UNIVERSITY
Tuition & Mandatory Fees	\$50,854	\$3,390	\$8,414
Books & Supplies/ Living Expenses (Food & Housing)	\$18,918	\$13,714	\$18,538
Annual Cost of Attendance	\$69,772	\$17,104	\$26,952
HOPE & Zell Miller Scholarship	\$5,970	\$0	\$9,084
HOPE & Zell Miller Grant	\$0	\$3,210	\$0
HOPE Career Grant	\$0	\$1,000	\$0
Tuition Equalization Grant (TEG)	\$1,100	\$0	\$0
Average Institutional Aid	\$29,243	\$0	\$0
Other Scholarships & Grants	TBD	TBD	TBD
Pell Grant	\$7,395	\$7,395	\$7,395
Remaining Estimated Cost after Scholarships & Grants	\$26,064	\$5,499	\$10,473
Estimated Subsidized loan	\$3,500	\$3,500	\$3,500
Estimated Unsubsidized loan	\$2,000	\$2,000	\$2,000
Work Study	TBD	TBD	TBD
Total Remaining Estimated Cost	\$20,564	(\$1)	\$4,973

**Your exact award package can only be determined by the individual college's financial aid office, but this tool will provide you with a good estimate that can be used for planning purposes.*

Print or convert your Interactive Report to a PDF to review with your parents or college counselor

Use the "Understanding Your Plan&Pay4CollegeGA Interactive Report" section below your report to understand each row and check out the links to additional detailed information.

Plan&Pay4 CollegeGA

9th Grade Student Checklist

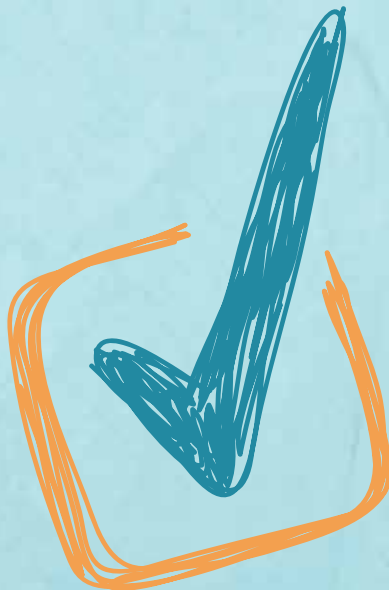
- ☐ Create a GAFutures account at GAFutures.org. GAFutures is a great resource to help you explore and plan for college and your career.
- ☐ Review your **Plan&Pay4CollegeGA 9th grade** letter found on your GAFutures Dashboard.
- ☐ Start thinking about what careers you may be interested in and choose your classes accordingly. Check out the Career Exploration section of GAFutures to help you determine your interests and career paths here in Georgia.
- ☐ Be sure to introduce yourself to your school counselor. Make an appointment to discuss your classes and ask questions about education options after high school.
- ☐ Ask your counselor or teachers what Advanced Placement courses are available, whether you are eligible and how to enroll.
- ☐ Keep track of your extracurricular activities (volunteering, sports, band, etc.), awards and recognition.
- ☐ Create a schedule that includes good study habits and commit to it. Your HOPE GPA* begins calculating as soon as you set foot into high school.
- ☐ Discuss financial aid and college saving options with your family.
- ☐ Participate in school-or community-based activities that interest you.
- ☐ Talk to your counselor about dual enrollment (you may be eligible in the 10th grade) and your education opportunities after high school – college, military, career.
- ☐ Check your HOPE GPA through your GAFutures account beginning in 10th grade to see if you are on track to be eligible for the HOPE or Zell Miller Scholarship.*

*High schools must provide transcript data to GSFC in order for a student's HOPE GPA to be available through their GAFutures account.

Visit the College Planning section of **GAFutures** for additional information on preparing for college.

10th Grade Student Checklist

- ☐ Have you created a GAFutures account yet? Review your account each semester for new information.
- ☐ Review your **Plan&Pay4CollegeGA 10th grade** letter found on your GAFutures Dashboard.
- ☐ Research careers that fit your interests and match them up with college majors.
- ☐ Use the [GAFutures College Search tool](#) to start researching colleges and create a list of top choices.
- ☐ Attend PROBE College Fairs or other college prep events at your school or in your area.
- ☐ Discuss your classes, dual enrollment, graduation, college entrance and academic rigor requirements with your school counselor and parents.
- ☐ Check your HOPE GPA to see if you're on track to be eligible for the HOPE or Zell Miller Scholarship.
- ☐ Take time to learn about the different options for standardized tests that many colleges require for admission. Consider taking the PSAT/NMSQT to help you prepare for the real thing.
- ☐ Look into skilled trade careers and the HOPE Career Grant.
- ☐ Think about how to spend your summer: work, volunteer or take a college-level course through dual enrollment.
- ☐ Ask you counselor about the GEORGIA MATCH letter you will receive when you are a senior and how your grades are an important part of how many colleges will be on that letter.



11th Grade Student Checklist

- ☐ Regularly review your GAfutures Dashboard. Start your year by looking over the **Plan&Pay4CollegeGA 11th grade** letter and check your HOPE GPA.
- ☐ Meet with your school counselor to make sure you are on track to graduate and meet all necessary requirements for graduation, academic rigor and college admissions and investigate dual enrollment options.
- ☐ Continue to explore career options, how much education you'll need and the earning potential.
- ☐ Continue to research colleges and what you should look for to make sure you find a good fit. Talk to your parents about your choices, and ask them to help you clarify goals and priorities.
- ☐ Learn more about GEORGIA MATCH. It is a simple way for you to know in the fall of your senior year where you are eligible for admission (to be admitted to college), based on your high school calculated HOPE grade point average (GPA) through 11th grade. Your GEORGIA MATCH colleges will be on your **GAfutures Student Dashboard** in October of your senior year. GEORGIA MATCH works with public and private accredited high schools in Georgia.
- ☐ Go to a PROBE College Fair. If your school has a financial aid night, be sure to attend.
- ☐ Review your family's financial situation and make sure you're planning for the cost of college appropriately. Visit the College Money Matters section and net price calculators on **GAfutures.org** for suggestions. The comparison tool at **consumerfinance.gov** is another helpful resource to compare college costs and financial aid offers.
- ☐ Consider opening a 529 College Saving Plan – it's never too late to begin saving for college.
- ☐ Take the PSAT/NMSQT to qualify for scholarships and programs associated with the National Merit Scholarship Program.
- ☐ Register for and take exams like the SAT and the ACT for college admission. Check for free test prep classes in your area.
- ☐ Start drafting essays to use for scholarships and college admissions applications.
- ☐ Search for scholarships you may be eligible for to help pay for college on GAfutures, as well as through your school counselor, community, family and friends. Ask your parents if their employer offers scholarships for the children of employees.
- ☐ Schedule campus visits or contact colleges you are interested in attending to request information about financial aid, admission requirements, applications and deadlines.

12th Grade Student Checklist

Fall Checklist

- ☐ Sign into your student GAfutures account to review your status for the following: GSFAPP, ACT and/or SAT Score, Selective Service Registration and HOPE calculated GPA.
- ☐ Review your **Plan&Pay4CollegeGA 12th grade** letter found on your GAfutures Dashboard.
- ☐ Meet with your school counselor to make sure you're on track to fulfill all graduation, admissions and academic rigor requirements.
- ☐ If you haven't done so, take the necessary admissions tests – SAT, ACT or Accuplacer. Be sure to have your test scores send to GSFC (SAT-0472 or ACT-2225) by the deadline of high school graduation for the Zell Miller Scholarship Eligibility.
- ☐ November is Georgia Apply to College month where many colleges in Georgia will waive application fees. Ask your school counselor about College Application events at your high school or in your area.
- ☐ Your GEORGIA MATCH letter will be available October 1st and will also be in your **Student Dashboard**.
- ☐ Ask your teachers and counselors to submit required documents (letters of recommendation) to your preferred colleges.
- ☐ Submit a request through your My GAfutures account for your high school to send your official transcript to any college you've applied to.
- ☐ The FAFSA will be available in December, begin this process now by creating an FSA ID for yourself, your parents, and any contributor to your FAFSA.
- ☐ Find out if your college requires the CSS/PROFILE, a supplemental financial aid form, in addition to the FAFSA.
- ☐ Stay involved in after-school activities and work hard all year. Your grades can still impact financial aid and scholarship eligibility.

Spring Checklist

- ☐ Complete any additional scholarship applications. In addition to submitting the FAFSA, be sure to submit the GSFAPP to qualify for state aid like the HOPE Scholarship.
- ☐ Review your family's financial situation and make sure you're planning for the cost of college appropriately. Visit the College Money Matters section and net price calculators on **GAfutures.org** for suggestions. The comparison tool at **consumerfinance.gov** is another helpful resource to compare college costs and financial aid offers.
- ☐ If you have questions about the aid being offered, contact that college's financial aid office.
- ☐ When you decide which college to attend, submit any required financial deposits, and confirm housing plans, freshman orientation dates and course registration. Also, notify the other colleges you were accepted to and withdraw your application.

GLOSSARY

ACT: National college admissions examination that consists of subject area tests in English, mathematics, science and reading as well as a writing test.

Admissions Counselor: College or university employee who advises students during the admissions process.

AGI (Adjusted Gross Income): Most financial aid forms require parents or students to state their taxable AGI based on income minus maximum allowable adjustments.

Alternative Loans: These private student loans from banks or other lending institutions are not federally supported nor guaranteed. Students must be enrolled to apply for these loans.

AP: Advanced Placement classes let high school students study college-level subjects for advanced placement and/or credit upon entering college.

Associate Degree: Generally awarded after 60 credit hours, usually two years of study.

ASVAB (Armed Services Vocational Aptitude Battery): Used by all branches of the military to determine how qualified you are to enlist, as well as your qualification for certain military jobs and your signing bonus.

Bachelor's Degree: Generally awarded after a minimum of 120 credit hours, usually four to five years of study.

Capitalized Interest: Unpaid interest added to the original amount of a loan. Capitalized interest increases the size of a loan, because the borrower is paying interest on their interest.

Certificate: (1) Given in a non-degree program, usually in a vocational or technical area to prepare for a specific occupation. Certificate programs generally last six to 12 months. (2) Given in specialized areas to people who have completed master's, doctorate or professional degrees.

COA (Cost of Attendance): Total cost of attending a college or university including tuition, room and board, books, lab fees, transportation and basic living expenses.

CSS Profile: College Scholarship Service Profile is a financial aid form many colleges and universities use to determine how much non-federal financial aid a student may be eligible for.

Community College: Sometimes called junior college, technical college or two-year college. Students can take classes and then transfer to a four-year school, or they can earn certificates, diplomas or associate degrees.

Credit Hour: Units of value given to classes. Some classes may be worth two or three credits, while others are worth four credits. Credits vary by class and by school. Many schools base tuition costs on the number of credit hours taken. Some charge a specific dollar amount per credit hour.

Diploma: Given in a non-degree program, usually a vocational or technical field, to prepare for a job. Diploma programs are generally nine to 18 months long. This diploma is not the same as the diploma you receive when you graduate from high school.

Deferment: An approved pause in repaying a student loan. For example, students may seek a deferment on undergraduate loan payments while in graduate school.

Department of Education: Government agency that administers several federal student financial aid programs.

Direct Loan Program: The U.S. Department of Education's loan program.

Doctorate: Degree that usually takes three or more years after a master's to complete.

Dual Enrollment: Program with courses that satisfy high school graduation requirements and earn college credit hours.

Early Action Admissions: If you apply to a college under the Early Action Admissions plan and receive an acceptance letter, you do not have to commit until the school's regular admissions reply date.

Early Decision Admissions: If you apply to a college under the Early Decision Admissions plan and receive an acceptance letter, you must commit at that time to attend that school.

FAA (Financial Aid Administrator): College or university employee involved in the administration of financial aid. Also known as financial aid advisors, officers or counselors.

FAF (Financial Aid Form): Generic term used for any financial aid form.

FAFSA (Free Application for Federal Student Aid): Filling out a FAFSA is the first step in the financial aid process. To be eligible to receive federal financial aid, a student must complete a FAFSA.

FDSLP (Federal Direct Student Loan Program): Through this program, student loans are provided directly to the student from the federal government, rather than through commercial lenders.

Federal School Code (also, Title IV Institution Code): Each college, campus or program has a six-character institution code. You must include the code related to each of your college applications when filling out a FAFSA. These codes are available by contacting the school or checking an online listing.

FSA ID: Provides access to Federal Student Aid's online systems and can serve as your legal signature. You must have an FSA ID to complete the FAFSA.

FSEOG (Federal Supplemental Educational Opportunity Grant): Federal government program provides need-based grants to low-income college students with the most need, and is administered through the school's financial aid office.

Federal Work-Study Program: Federally funded, need-based program administered by each school. This program allows students to work on campus in exchange for a portion of their tuition.

Financial Aid Counselor: College or university employee who is involved in the administration of financial aid.

Full Time: For GSFC purposes, 12 quarter hours or 12 semester hours are considered full-time enrollment. Full-time status may vary by school.

General Educational Development (GED): Classes that can lead to a high school equivalency diploma for adults who did not earn one. Recipients must pass four tests that assess their knowledge of language arts, social studies, science and math to earn the diploma.

Grant: Money given to students for their education. Often based on need, grants may come from federal or state programs, or sometimes from private charitable organizations. A grant does not have to be repaid.

Graduate Student: Student who has earned a bachelor's degree and is working toward a master's, doctorate or professional degree.

GSFAPP (Georgia Student Finance Application): The application used to apply for HOPE/Zell Miller Scholarships/Grants and the HOPE Career Grant.

HOPE GPA: Your HOPE GPA determines if you are academically eligible for the HOPE or Zell Miller Scholarship. It includes only grades earned in core subjects – English, math, science, social studies and foreign language. You can check your HOPE GPA beginning in 10th grade through your My GAfutures account.

Independent Student: Self-supporting students not financially dependent on their parents.

Institutional Aid: Student financial aid administered by the college or proprietary trade school.

Interest: Charge for a loan, usually a percentage of the amount borrowed.

Internship/Practicum: Program that provides an opportunity to earn academic credits through a planned work experience, usually to learn about a specific career area.

IRS Data Retrieval Tool: Allows applicants who have already filed their federal income tax returns to prefill answers to some questions on their FAFSA by transferring data.

ISIR (Institutional Student Information Record): Form contains data results from the FAFSA and is submitted to schools electronically. The ISIR is made available to colleges the student selects on the FAFSA as well as servicers and state agencies that award need-based aid.

Learning Support Courses: Classes you must take and pay for to get ready for college-level work in basic subjects. These classes do not count toward your degree.

Major: Primary academic field of study in college.

Master's Degree: Degree that takes at least a year after the bachelor's to complete.

Master Promissory Note (MPN): Legally binding contract between a borrower and lender. It establishes the conditions a student or parent borrows money under and the terms the money must be repaid. The MPN is good for 10 years if the student doesn't change schools.

Merit-based: Financial aid based on academic, athletic or some other type of achievement.

Minor: Secondary academic field of study in college.

National Merit Scholarship Program: Students who do well on the PSAT/NMSQT in their junior year may qualify for National Merit Scholarships. Some students receive full scholarships.

National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) Eligibility Center: Certifies the initial academic eligibility and amateur status of all college-bound student athletes who wish to compete in NCAA Division I or II athletics.

Need-based: Need-based financial aid is reserved for low-income students.

NSLDS (National Student Loan Data System): U.S. Department of Education database allows students to access their Title IV student loan and grant information.

Pell Grant: Federal program provides need-based educational grants for low-income students. Pell Grants do not have to be repaid.

PLUS: Federal loans that graduate or professional degree students and parents of dependent undergraduate students can use to help pay education expenses. The U.S. Department of Education makes Direct PLUS Loans to eligible borrowers through schools participating in the Direct Loan Program.

Promissory Note: Legal document in which the borrower promises to repay a loan and any accrued interest and fees to the lender. It also explains the terms and conditions of a loan.

Postsecondary: "After high school." Postsecondary education can be received at a college, university, community and technical college, or proprietary school.

PSAT/NMSQT (Preliminary SAT/National Merit Scholarship Qualifying Test): Students hoping to receive a National Merit Scholarship must take and pass this test.

ROTC (Reserve Officers Training Corps): In this program, the military pays a student's tuition or other expenses. The student takes part in summer training while in college, and commits to military service after college.

SAI: The Student Aid Index (SAI) is a replacement for Expected Family Contribution (EFC) and is a calculation of the amount of need-based financial aid a student is eligible to receive.

SAR (Student Aid Report): Summarizes the information entered on your FAFSA form and shows the amount of your Expected Family Contribution.

SAT: The SAT is a standardized test widely used for college admission in the United States. It consists of three subject areas: mathematics, critical reading and writing.

Scholarships: Funds are given to or earned by students for tuition. There are numerous public and private sources for scholarships. Some are given based on need; some on merit or skill. Others have very specific stipulations on who can receive the scholarship.

School Counselor: Someone who works in an elementary, middle or high school and provides academic, career, college access and personal/social support to K-12 students.

Study Abroad: Arrangement that allows students to complete part of their degree program through educational activities outside the United States.

Subsidized Loan: Direct Subsidized Loans are available to undergraduate students with financial need. The U.S. Department of Education pays the interest on a Direct Subsidized Loan during specified periods of time.

Transcript: Cumulative academic record that lists courses taken, grades received and credits or credit hours received.

Tuition: Amount schools charge for instruction.

Undergraduate: College student who has not yet earned a degree.

Unsubsidized Loan: Direct Unsubsidized Loans are available to both undergraduate and graduate students; there is no requirement to demonstrate need. The borrower is responsible for paying the interest on a Direct Unsubsidized Loan during all periods. Unpaid interest that accrues will be added to the principal balance of a loan.

Waiver: Arrangement under which a school does not charge specific costs if a student meets certain qualifications.

Work-study: Program allows students to defray part of their tuition and school expenses by working part-time on campus.

E-RESOURCES

Take advantage of the many free online resources dedicated to help getting into college easier.

- **GAfutures.org**: The premier resource to help Georgians of all ages explore colleges, careers and financial aid options.
- **GAtracs.org**: GAtracs makes course transfer information available to all Georgia citizens through an online web portal.
- **GSFC.org**: GSFC works to promote and increase access to higher education through state financial aid programs and services.
- **Path2College529.com**: Learn more about Georgia's official college savings plan.
- **Pathways2GSFA.org**: Make payments to loans serviced by GSFC and learn more about how to manage your student loans.
- **BetterMakeRoom.org**: Bringing together students in a space where they can create, connect and make a commitment to their futures.
- **Cappex.com**: Research schools, get scholarships and understand where you fit – at any stage of your college journey.
- **CollegeBoard.org**: A mission-driven organization representing over 6,000 of the world's leading colleges, schools and other educational organizations.
- **ed.gov**: Website for the U.S. Department of Education.
- **FAFSA.gov**: Use the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) form to apply for financial aid for college or graduate school.
- **ImFirst.org**: I'm First! provides students who lack a family history of higher education with inspiration, information and support on the road to and through college.
- **MappingYourFuture.org**: Helping students, families and schools navigate the higher education and student loan processes through trusted resources.
- **March2Success.com**: March2Success provides an online study program to help students prepare for standardized tests, improve schoolwork and review materials.
- **studentaid.gov**: Federal Student Aid is the largest provider of student financial aid in the nation.
- **ThinkCollege.net**: A national organization dedicated to developing, expanding and improving inclusive higher education options for people with intellectual disability.



NOTES

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View this guide
electronically at
GAfutures.org

