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Scholarship America®

**Dollars for
SCHOLARS®**

Scholarships may be taxable? Say it isn't so!


Every dollar should count toward a student's education and career training. That is why Scholarship America is leading a national effort to educate communities and Congress about the need to make scholarships and grants tax-free beyond tuition, fees, books and supplies. We have a college completion crisis in America, and our tax laws are not helping students access the full support they need to stay in college and succeed.

Students put in a great deal of work to apply and successfully secure scholarships, yet they may not receive all the benefits intended of their award. [Read more >>](#)




Savingforcollege.com

Tax Treatment of Scholarships A Brief History




1954

Internal Revenue Code:
Scholarships, Grants, Fellowships are entirely tax-free for degree candidates, through an income exclusion for tuition and fees, room and board, textbooks, equipment, travel and research




1980

The Tax Treatment Extension Act:
Portions that are fee for services (teaching and research) are taxable




1984

The Deficit Reduction Act:
Tuition waivers for college employees (faculty and staff), spouses and dependents are tax-free




1986

The Tax Reform Act:
Portions that are for living expenses, travel and research are now taxable, as are fees for teaching and research services



1988

The Technical and Miscellaneous Revenue Act:
Restored tax-free status for tuition waivers for graduate student teaching and research assistantships



2001

The Economic Growth and Tax Relief Reconciliation Act: Added exception to fee for services rules for certain government health professions scholarships

Students Susceptible to Being Taxed on their Scholarships & Grants

Students who receive a "full-ride" scholarship could have a tax liability because the portion of the scholarship used for college living expenses is currently taxable. Students who work throughout the year could also surpass the tax filing threshold, and have a tax liability.

According to [Balancing Work and Learning](#), *The Georgetown University Center on Education and the Workforce* report released in August 2018, college students are working while enrolled regardless of their income status. About 14 million students work and attend college, and just under half with jobs report having the job is a necessity. In 2015, the average *annual* work earnings of an enrolled undergraduate student working a 29-hour work week were \$16,000 - this is well above the income threshold above which a tax return must be filed. Students who receive a mix of scholarships and federal, state or institutional grants could also be impacted and pay tax on the portions of those funds used for college living expenses. Finally, graduate students, who

often work more, or students pursuing fellowships or professional degrees could face tax liability on their scholarships and paid fellowships.



Stay tuned as we raise awareness with Congress.

We will be working to raise awareness and educate members of Congress about this issue. Please contact Despina Costopoulos Emerson, Scholarship America Engagement Director, at dcostopoulos@scholarshipamerica.org for further information, or to become involved in the national policy and educational effort. For policy questions, contact Kalwis Lo, Scholarship America's Policy Director, at klo@scholarshipamerica.org.

Resources

To help you through the thick of your scholarship season, you will find the following Webinars and PowerPoint's in the redesigned [Affiliate Resources](#).

- Getting Students to Apply
- Tracking Students Throughout the Scholarship Season
- Report, Remind, Review: Tools & Tasks for Selection Success
- How to Make Online Scoring Work for You

Upcoming Events

- **February 28:** [Hear From Your Peers Webinar](#) at 7pm Central / 8pm Eastern / 5pm Pacific
- **March 18:** [Student Volunteer Award Program](#) opens. Encourage your students to update volunteer activities in their student profile. Eligible students will be identified and invited to apply.
- **March 30:** [Matching Grant Applications](#) Due
- **March 31:** Dollars for Scholars Annual Affiliation Fee and Financial Report Due
- **May 15:** [Dreams to Success and Partner Summit](#) in Washington D.C.
- **June 30:** [Affiliate Award Nominations](#) Due



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