



College Planning & Financial Aid Resources for Illinois Servicemembers, Veterans and Their Families

Making Informed College Choices

General Information Websites

- **U.S. Department of Education (ED)**
 - ed.gov
 - studentaid.gov
- **U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA)**
 - va.gov
- **Illinois Department of Veterans' Affairs (IDVA)**
 - www2.illinois.gov/veterans
- **Illinois Student Assistance Commission (ISAC)**
 - isac.org

Free Federal Resources for Making Informed College Choices

- **U.S. Department of Education (ED)**
 - College Scorecard – search for a college that is a good fit for you and find out more about a college's affordability
 - collegescorecard.ed.gov
 - College Navigator -- search for and compare colleges on all sorts of criteria
 - nces.ed.gov/collegenavigator
 - College Affordability and Transparency Center – for information about tuition and net prices at postsecondary institutions, including calculators to estimate how much colleges cost after scholarships and grants
 - collegecost.ed.gov
- **U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA)**
 - School Decision Resources
 - va.gov/education/choosing-a-school
- **U.S. Department of Labor/Employment and Training Administration (USDOL/ETA)**
 - My Next Move for Veterans -- specialized tool for veterans that provides targeted services for students, career explorers, and new job seekers
 - mynextmove.org/vets
 - Occupational Information Network (O*NET) -- the nation's primary source of occupational information
 - onetcenter.org/overview
 - Military Crosswalk Search -- search codes or titles from the Military Occupational Classification (MOC)
 - onetonline.org/crosswalk/MOC
 - Veterans Programs – provides assistance identifying occupational, training, transition and benefit resources
 - veterans.gov
 - dol.gov/veterans/findajob
 - Career One Stop – provides assistance finding training programs, colleges, and universities in your local area
 - careeronestop.org/FindTraining/find-training

<p>Free State Resources for Making Informed College Choices</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Illinois Student Assistance Commission (ISAC) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Offers guidance to students and parents on planning and paying for college <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • isac.org/students – Student Portal provides tools to help students and families make college choices <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • studentportal.isac.org • Illinois Department of Veterans’ Affairs (IDVA) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • www2.illinois.gov/veterans/services%20benefits/Pages/education.aspx#GIBill • Illinois Department of Employment Security (IDES) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – The Illinois Career Information System offers a variety of career exploration tools to help students choose a career path and explore education and training <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ides.illinois.gov • ides.illinois.gov/jobs-workforce/veterans.html • ilcis.intocareers.org/default.aspx • Illinois Community College Board <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – www2.iccb.org/students • Illinois Board of Higher Education <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – ibhe.org
<p>Other Free Resources for Making Informed College Choices</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The College Board <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – www.collegeboard.org • ACT <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – www.act.org • Mapping Your Future <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – mappingyourfuture.org

	Financing College
<p>U.S. Department of Education (ED) Federal Student Aid (FSA) General Resources</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ED’s gateway to information about college planning and financial aid <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – studentaid.gov/resources • Students must complete and submit the Free Application for Federal Student (FAFSA) to apply for ED’s federal student aid <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – studentaid.gov/h/apply-for-aid/fafsa • Students and parents will need an FSA ID to electronically sign the FAFSA and other financial aid documents <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – studentaid.gov/fsa-id/create-account/launch – studentaid.gov/fsa-id/sign-in/landing • A FAFSA demo site is available to increase your understanding of the FAFSA before applying <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – fafsademotest.ed.gov • To learn more about the federal student loan programs <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – studentaid.gov/understand-aid/types/loans • Call center staff is available to answer questions <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – 1-800-4FED-AID/ (1-800-433-3243) – 1-800-730-8913 (for hearing impaired, TTY calls only)
<p>State of Illinois General Resources</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Illinois Student Assistance Commission -- offers scholarship and grant programs, loan repayment programs, outreach services, and free interactive tools for college and financial aid planning. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – isac.org/students – isac.org/students/during-college/types-of-financial-aid – studentportal.isac.org – Student Services Contact Information <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1-800-899-ISAC (4722) • E-mail: isac.studentservices@illinois.gov • Illinois Department of Public Health (IDPH) Center for Rural Health -- administers scholarship programs for students in health professions. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – dph.illinois.gov/topics-services/life-stages-populations/rural-underserved-populations • Illinois Department of Employment Security – the agency’s Career Information System includes an Education section that provides an extensive, searchable list of Illinois scholarships, as well as other tips on paying for college <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – portal.ilcis.intocareers.org <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • _Navigate to the “Learn About Schools” area and the Financial Aid section(s)
<p>Other General Resources</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Colleges, universities and other higher education institutions also offer financial assistance to their students <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – The financial aid office is the best place to find out about financial aid programs, options and application procedures – Institutional applications and early deadlines are typical

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Private sources of financial aid include community organizations, associations, religious groups, employers, local chamber of commerce, etc. • Online Scholarship Searches <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – There are many scholarship search services available <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • While many are legitimate and offer valuable information, others may be fraudulent and charge a lot of money for little information • View with caution any service that requires a fee • Pay close attention to eligibility requirements and application deadlines • Some good places to start <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – collegegreenlight.com – careeronestop.org/toolkit/training/find-scholarships.aspx – bigfuture.collegeboard.org/scholarship-search – petersons.com/scholarship-search.aspx – unigo.com/scholarships • Other Resources <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – FinAid website is a comprehensive source of student financial aid information, advice and tools and includes pages that focus on military student aid <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • finaid.org/military – National Association of Student Financial Aid Administrators (NASFAA) includes information on college preparation and financial aid <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • nasfaa.org/students_parents_counselors – Mapping Your Future provides a collection of resources about planning and paying for college and managing your money <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • mappingyourfuture.org/Resources – MoneyGeek provides information about paying for college <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • moneygeek.com/financial-planning/paying-for-college – Center for Online Education provides information about the online learning experience and resources on financial aid <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • onlinecolleges.net/resources
<p>Federal Resources for Military Families</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA), va.gov <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – VA education programs va.gov/education – Information about transferring Post-9/11 GI Bill to spouse or dependent children va.gov/education/transfer-post-9-11-gi-bill-benefits – Survivors and Dependents Assistance Program va.gov/education/survivor-dependent-benefits ebenefits.va.gov/ebenefits/homepage • U.S. Department of Defense (DOD) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Today's Military is a resource for learning about military service and its benefits <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • todaysmilitary.com/education-training/paying-college • National Resource Directory (NRD) provides information on education resources • nrd.gov – Military OneSource provides information on education benefits -- <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • militaryonesource.mil/education-employment/for-children-youth/child-higher-education

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • U.S. Department of Education (ED) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Provides an overview of programs available to military families <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • studentaid.gov/understand-aid/types/military – Iraq and Afghanistan Service Grant or Additional Pell Grant Funds <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • studentaid.gov/understand-aid/types/grants/iraq-afghanistan-service – Servicemembers Civil Relief Act <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • justice.gov/sites/default/files/crt/legacy/2011/03/23/scratext.pdf • Tax Credits for Higher Education Expenses <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • studentaid.gov/resources/tax-benefits • irs.gov/newsroom/tax-benefits-for-education-information-center • irs.gov/help/ita/am-i-eligible-to-claim-an-education-credit
<p>State of Illinois Resources for Military Families</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Illinois Department of Veterans' Affairs (IDVA), <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • www2.illinois.gov/veterans/Pages – Deceased, Disabled, and MIA/POW Veterans' Dependents Scholarship Program <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • www2.illinois.gov/veterans/services%20benefits/education/Pages/MIA%20POW-Scholarship – Application -- studentportal.isac.org/student – Navigate to the Program Applications & Status Checks page <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Questions may be directed to 217-782-3564 – Deceased, Disabled, and MIA/POW Veterans' Dependents Educational Scholarship Opportunity Grant - Children of Veterans Tuition Waiver – Application available at: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • www2.illinois.gov/veterans/services%20benefits/education/Pages/Educational-Opportunities-for-Children • Criteria/application available from University of Illinois Financial Aid Office • osfa.illinois.edu/types-of-aid/children-of-veterans-tuition-waiver – Veteran Services Offices are located throughout the state <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • www2.illinois.gov/veterans/Pages/ServiceOffices.aspx • Illinois Student Assistance Commission (ISAC), isac.org <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Military Service page <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • isac.org/students/during-college/military-service/index – Illinois Veteran Grant <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • isac.org/students/during-college/types-of-financial-aid/grants/IVG-program – Illinois National Guard Grant <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • isac.org/students/during-college/types-of-financial-aid/grants/ING-grant-program • Illinois Department of Employment Security (IDES) Career Information System <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – ilcis.intocareers.org <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Navigate to the "Learn About Schools" area and the Financial Aid section(s) • Illinois Joining Forces (IJF) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – A statewide public-private network of military and veteran serving organizations working together to improve services for service members, veterans and their families <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • illinoisjoiningforces.org

Resources from Specific Military Organizations

- **Reserve Officers' Training Corps (ROTC) Scholarships** are awarded on the basis of merit
 - Army ROTC scholarships -- goarmy.com/rotc
 - Air Force ROTC scholarships -- afrotc.com
 - Navy ROTC scholarships -- nrotc.navy.mil
 - Marine Officer NROTC Program -- marines.com/becoming-a-marine/officer
- **Veteran Service Organizations** offer scholarships primarily to active-duty military, veterans, and/or their families:
 - American Legion
 - legion.org/scholarships
 - AMVETS
 - amvets.org/scholarships
 - Paralyzed Veterans of America
 - pva.org/find-support/scholarship-program
 - Veterans of Foreign Wars, Department of Illinois
 - vfwil.org
 - There are also many smaller veteran service organizations around the country that may also offer scholarships
 - Check with your local organization or try a scholarship search
- **Fisher House Foundation Scholarships for Military Children**
 - Program details are posted on the website
 - militaryscholar.org/sfmc
- **American Patriot Scholarship**
 - Applications are accepted beginning in early November each year
 - Deadline to submit applications is March 1 each year
 - moaa.org/Content/Benefits-and-Discounts/Education-Assistance/Scholarships-and-Grants/American-Patriot-Scholarship
- **Marine Corps Scholarship Foundation**
 - Need-Based Scholarships
 - Heroes Tribute Scholarship Program for Children of the Fallen
 - Heroes Tribute Scholarship Program for Children of the Fallen
 - New applications are available annually January 1 – March 1
 - mcsf.org/scholarship
- **Navy/Marine Corps Relief Society Education Assistance**
 - Applications typically become available in November and are due May 1 prior to the year for which assistance is requested
 - nmcrs.org/pages/education-loans-and-scholarships
- **Other Resources**
 - Military.com connects servicemembers, military families and veterans to benefit information, not a U.S. government site
 - military.com/benefits/spouse-family
 - Military OneSource from the Department of Defense is a gateway to trusted resources and confidential help, and also offers practical information and resources for pursuing education goals and achieving career aspirations.
 - militaryonesource.mil/education-employment

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Student Veterans of America’s (SVA) provides military veterans with resources, support, and advocacy needed to succeed in higher education <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • studentveterans.org • studentveterans.org/programs/scholarships – Student Veterans of America-Illinois (SVA-IL) is committed to improving veteran educational outcomes across the state of Illinois. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • svaillinois.org – The Patriot Education Fund provides financial and educational assistance to enlisted military veterans and their dependents, focusing on those individuals and families who display financial need <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • patrioteducationfund.org • Other College Planning and Financial Aid Resources <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – FinAid website is a comprehensive source of student financial aid information and includes pages that focus on military student aid and aid for veterans and dependents <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • finaid.org/military • finaid.org/military/veterans.phtml – MoneyGeek provides consumer information on several financial topics and has a page devoted to resources uniquely available to veterans <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • moneygeek.com/financial-planning/paying-for-college/#paying-for-college-as-a-veteran – Center for Online Education provides information about the online learning experience and resources on topics ranging from financial aid to study skills, including a guide for servicemembers and their families. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • onlinecolleges.net/resources
<p>Avoiding Financial Aid Fraud</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Resources <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Federal Student Aid and Identity Theft <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • studentaid.gov/sites/default/files/student-aid-and-identity-theft.pdf – Don’t Get Scammed On Your Way To College Info Sheet <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • studentaid.gov/sites/default/files/dont-get-scammed.pdf – Federal Trade Commission <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • consumer.ftc.gov/articles/how-avoid-scholarship-and-financial-aid-scams • To report financial aid fraud, contact: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Federal Trade Commission <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • reportfraud.ftc.gov/#/ – U.S. Department of Education Office of Inspector General Fraud Hotline at: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ed.gov/misused • 1-800-MIS-USED (1-800-647-8733)