

HIGHER EDUCATION / COLLEGE SCHOLARSHIP
INFORMATION FROM
FOSTER AND ADOPTIVE FAMILY SERVICES (FAFS)

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Posted on the NJ Adoption Resource Clearing House www.njarch.org,
A Program of Children's Aid and Family Services, Inc. www.cafsnj.org

To contact NJ ARCH call 877-4ARCHNJ

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What can you tell me about the scholarship opportunities available through Foster and Adoptive Family Services (FAFS)?

FAFS offers two scholarship programs to foster and adoptive youth throughout New Jersey. The first is the New Jersey Foster Care (NJFC) Scholars Program. This is a program that receives Federal and State funding, which FAFS is contracted to Administer. The second is the FAFS Private Scholarships and Grants program.

How to I know if I am eligible for the NJFC Scholars Program?

The first thing you should know is that the program does change from year to year, so in order to make sure that you have the most up to date eligibility criteria, you should call a FAFS scholarship representative when ready to complete an application (1.800.222.0047). The current criterion makes eligible anyone who:

- Is or was in a Division of Youth and Family Services (DYFS) paid placement for 9 months or more following their 16th birthday
- Is or was in a DYFS paid placement for 18 months or more following their 14th birthday
- Is or was in a Transitional Living program for youth or supportive housing for 3 months or more (*the facility or program must receive payment pursuant to the New Jersey Homeless Youth Act or the Federal Runaway and Homeless Youth Act*)
- Adopted through DYFS after the age of 12 and be in a subsidized adoption at the time of application
- Adopted through DYFS after the age of 16

Additionally students must: be in possession of their High School Diploma or GED, be between the ages of 16-22 and have been granted admission to a post secondary institution.

What does the NJFC Scholars Program pay for?

There are two funding sources for the NJFC Scholars Program, Federal funding and State funding.

The Federal funding is limited to \$5,000 per academic year and covers tuition, fees, room and board (on or off campus), books and supplies, public transportation, special equipment, computers and child care costs. *Tuition is always the first priority!* Other supports can only be granted if there is funding remaining after tuition is covered.

State Funding covers only tuition and fees at a New Jersey public school, when a student attends full time. There is no dollar amount limit for this funding.

How do I know if I will be eligible for the Federal or the State program?

An individual may be eligible for the Federal Program, the State Program, or both. Eligibility is based on placement history. Individuals are notified of their eligibility after their completed application has been collected by the staff at FAFS and reviewed by the State of New Jersey's Adolescent Service Unit at DYFS.

What schools can I attend with the NJFC Scholars Program?

The NJFC scholars program works with any school that is accredited to receive Federal financial aid. It is important to remember, though, that if you are only eligible for the state program you will be limited to attending a NJ public school.

What are the FAFS Private Scholarships and Grants?

Each year FAFS offers Academic Scholarships and Opportunity Grants. These scholarships and grants are funded by individual donors who wish to sponsor a young person who is or was in foster care in NJ, or who was adopted from the NJ DYFS system. In addition, applicants must be in their senior year of high school. Unlike the NJFC Scholars Program, the private scholarships and grants do not have age restrictions on the placements or adoption dates. These applications are typically released in January with a deadline in late March. Each application has different requirements and offers a different award amount. To receive a copy of the application brochure, or to get on the mailing list call a FAFS scholarship representative(1.800.222.0047).

I have read about all of your programs and I don't think I qualify or I need more assistance. Do you have any more resources that might help me?

There are definitely other resources available if you do not believe you, or the young person you assisting qualifies for either of our programs.

The first thing anyone interested in pursuing a post-secondary education should do is complete the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA). The FAFSA form can be complicated. In order to make sure that it is completed correctly the first time, here is a link with some helpful tips for foster youth filing out the FAFSA:

www.collegegoalsundayusa.org/support/FosterYouthFAFSATipSheet.PDF

Even if you were adopted it is important that you use the tip sheet. New legislation passed in 2008 changed the definition of an “independent” student for financial aid purposes. As of the Fall of 2009, anyone who was a ward of the state/court after the age of 13, even if they were later adopted, is defined as an independent. This will enable these young people to qualify for more financial aid than they would have in the past.

If you were adopted, but you aren't eligible for any of the programs offered through FAFS, you may be eligible for a scholarship through the Dave Thomas Foundation. Dave Thomas, the founder of Wendy's, was adopted and so his foundation does a lot of work with adoption on a national level. For more information on that foundation go to www.davethomasfoundation.org

Other scholarship opportunities can be found at:

www.finaid.com

www.fastweb.com

www.financialaid4you.com

www.blackstudents.com

If I want to reach a FAFS scholarship representative what can I do?

Our contact information is as follows:

Mailing Address-	Foster and Adoptive Family Services P.O. Box 518, 4301 Route 1 South Monmouth Junction, NJ 08852
Phone Number -	1.800.222.0047
Email -	Scholarships@fafsonline.org

Our office hours are Monday-Friday 9am to 5pm. I look forward to hearing from you!