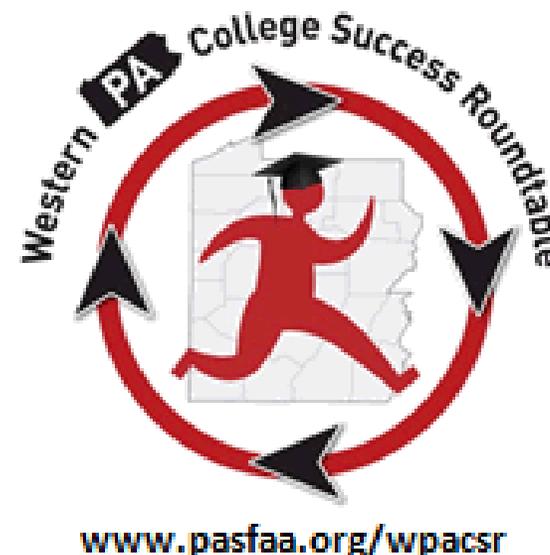


Smarter Borrowing for Your Students: 10 Strategies to Implement During College Advising

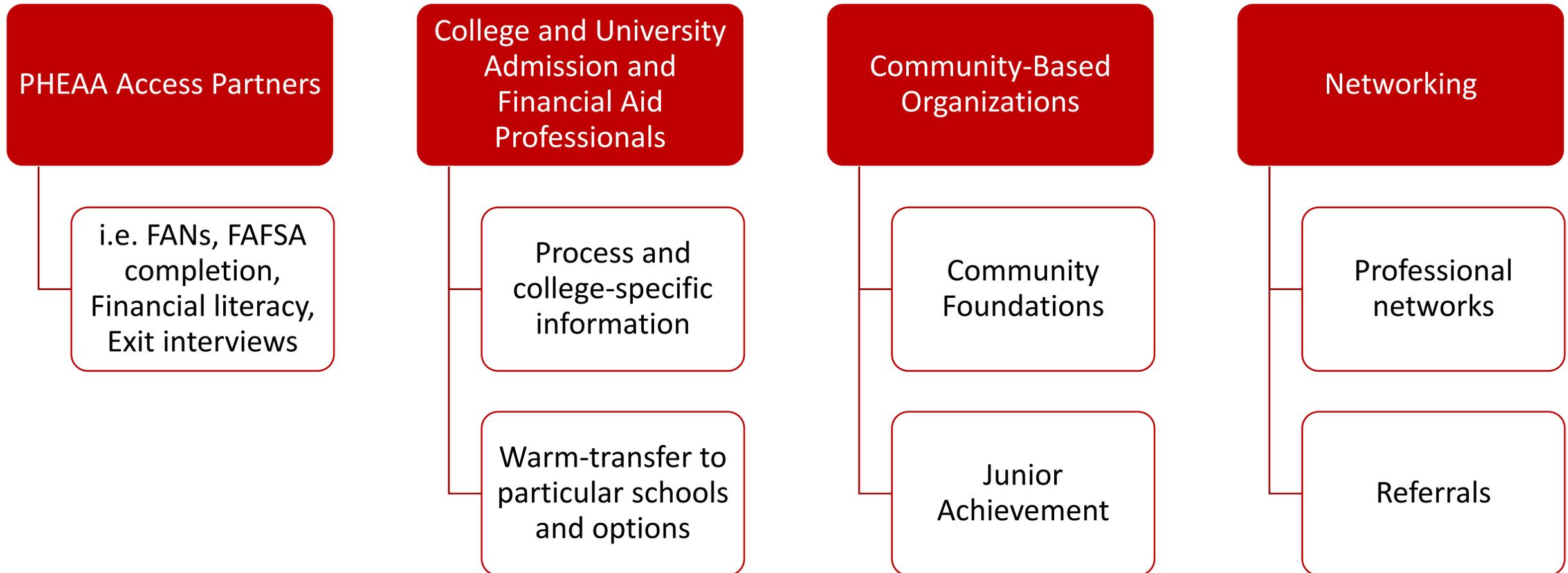


Tara Verrico, Director of Financial Aid, Geneva College

Laura Papcunik, Higher Education Access Partner, PHEAA

Dr. Kim McCurdy, Account Executive, PA Forward, PHEAA

Strategy 1: Take Advantage of Professional Experts



Strategy 2:
Utilize
Online
Advising
Tools

www.mysmartborrowing.org

www.educationplanner.org

www.collegecost.ed.gov

www.bigfuture.collegeboard.org

www.studentaid.gov

www.mynextmove.org

Program Toolkits and Curriculums

The screenshot displays the PHEAA website interface. At the top, a dark blue navigation bar contains links for "Students & Families", "Schools & Partners", "Contact Us", "About Us", and "Careers". Below this, the PHEAA logo is positioned on the left, followed by a horizontal menu with "Grants", "Student Loans", "Funding Opportunities", "College Planning", and "Tools & Resources". A search icon and a "Sign In" button are located on the right side of the header.

The main content area is divided into two columns. The left column features several resource links, each with a right-pointing double arrow: "Online Ordering", "EducationPlanner", "MySmartBorrowing", "You Can Deal With It", "In-School Budget Calculator", and "How to Sign Your PHEAA Form". The right column is titled "Financial Aid Resources" and includes sub-sections: "Counselor & Partner Resources" (with sub-links for "FAFSA Toolkit", "Financial Aid Night Toolkit", and "PHEAA Podcast"), "Parent & Student Resources", "Foster Care to College", "PA Forward Student Loans Toolkit", "Financial Aid Webinars" (with a sub-link for "Past Webinar Events"), and "PHEEA Account Access".

Below the main content, a browser address bar shows the URL "ncan.org/page/k12_resources". A secondary navigation bar contains the "NATIONAL COLLEGE ATTAINMENT NETWORK" logo, links for "SIGN IN", "JOIN NCAN", "DONATE", "SUBSCRIBE TO NEWS", and social media icons for Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, YouTube, and Instagram.

At the bottom, a dark grey navigation bar lists "ABOUT", "MEMBERSHIP", "RESOURCES", "FAFSA", "POLICY & ADVOCACY", "EVENTS & TRAINING", and "NEWS". The footer features a large banner image of a graduation ceremony with the text "High Schools Can Change Students' Postsecondary Pathways" overlaid in white.

FAFSA® Toolkit

This toolkit is designed to assist in providing information on completing the Free Application for Federal Student Aid with FAFSA awareness.

FAFSA RESOURCES

Get training and resources to help students and families complete the

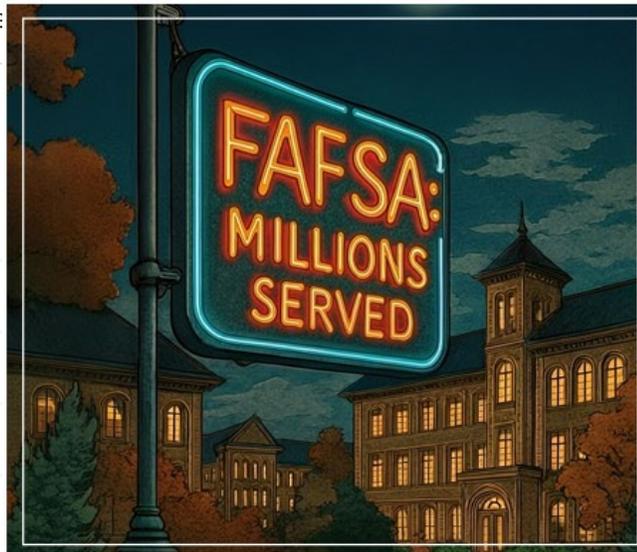
Select the links below and check your downloads folder.

[Wizard to Determine Who Counts as a Parent for the FAFSA](#)



FAFSA Event (for schools to post) – Theme

Your countdown to college has started, but have you started your FAFSA? Attend PHEAA's free FAFSA completion event [DATE], [TIME] at [INCLUDE LOCATION/ VIRTUAL LINK]. Search for and follow PHEAA on Twitter or Facebook. #Collegebound



File the FAFSA® for **free** at StudentAid.gov/fafsa

Be sure to get your StudentAid.gov account (formerly FSA ID) created prior to completing the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA).

Get started at StudentAid.gov today!



SAMPLE UNIVERSITY RESOURCES DEPENDENT STUDENT AID OFFER EXAMPLE

Student Name
Student Address
Student City, State, Zip
Student ID

Estimated Annual Cost of Attendance (COA) 2023-2024 Award Year

Costs Payable to the University		Other Estimated Costs	
Tuition	\$15,915	Books & Supplies	\$820
Activity & Tech Fee	\$1,615	Transportation	\$1,735
Housing	\$6,510	Miscellaneous Expenses	\$921
Meals	\$4,000		
Total Costs	\$28,040	Total Costs	\$3,476
Total Estimated Cost of Attendance		\$31,516	

Scholarships and Grants (refer to renewal eligibility on your student portal)

Aid Type	Fall 2023	Spring 2024	Annual
Federal Pell Grant	\$3,248	\$3,247	\$6,495
Federal Supplemental Educational Opportunity Grant	\$300	\$300	\$600
State Grant	\$450	\$450	\$900
Merit Based Scholarship	\$5,500	\$5,500	\$11,000
Institutional Scholarship	\$1,500	\$1,500	\$3,000
Total Scholarships & Grants	\$10,998	\$10,997	\$21,995

Your estimated net cost (cost of attendance less scholarships and grants):
This is based on your zero (0) Expected Family Contribution (EFC) and
anticipated full-time (12+ credits, preferably 15 credits) enrollment.

\$9,521

Loans & Work-Study (Self-Help Aid)

Aid Type	Fall 2023	Spring 2023	Annual
Federal Work-Study*	\$1,500	\$1,500	\$3,000
Federal Direct Subsidized Loan**	\$1,750	\$1,750	\$3,500
Federal Direct Unsubsidized Loan**	\$1,000	\$1,000	\$2,000
Total Aid Offered	\$4,250	\$4,250	\$8,500

*Federal work-study funds are contingent upon finding employment. Earnings are paid out bi-weekly.

**Federal loans are funds that can be applied toward your cost of attendance and must be repaid. You must accept or decline your loan eligibility by logging into your student portal.

Estimated outstanding costs not covered by scholarships,
grants, loans and work-study:

\$1,021

Other Financing Options

Outside Scholarships

Scholarships are available from many sources including high schools, places of worship, civic groups, and parents' employers. We recommend that you check with your high school guidance counselor, the reference section of your library, and organizations in your hometown. Receipt of outside scholarships could affect your eligibility for certain aid types.

Payment Plan

Sample University offers a 3-Pay tuition payment plan for those students who need to spread their tuition and fees across the semester.

Private Student Loan

Contingent upon application approval from a bank, credit union, non-profit or state-based education finance organizations or online lender.

Federal Parent PLUS Loan

Contingent upon parent application approval. Parent must not have adverse credit history. Must be repaid by parent.

For more information on these additional funding options please visit:
www.financialaid.edu

Next Steps

- Accept or Decline all aid offered in the finances section of your student portal.
- Provide required documents for verification if applicable.
- Check important financial aid deadlines listed on your student portal.

Sample University is committed to helping you navigate the financial aid process. Please contact our helpful, experienced staff in the Office of Student Financial Aid and Scholarships for help understanding your Financial Aid Offer.

We look forward to serving you at Sample University and wish you the best in your academic endeavors. Please visit www.sample.edu/admitted for other important next steps.

Strategy 3: Help to Understand Award Offers

- Cost of Attendance:
 - Direct Expenses = costs paid to institution
 - Indirect Expenses = costs paid to “others”
- Types of Aid
 - Gift Aid = FREE MONEY!
 - Loans = repayment
 - Self help = Work- Study
- Net Costs

Strategy 4: Help Plan for Program Duration

Financial Aid is a Journey: Multi-Year Planning

Program Length & pathway

Financial Aid Over Time

Indirect or Unforeseen Costs

Program-Specific Requirements

Loan Strategy & Debt Awareness

Family & Life Changes



Example: *Katey Casey*

Year 1–2: KC's Smart Start

Completes gen-ed courses at community college
Lives at home, works part-time at SBUX
Uses state grants to cover most of tuition costs; pays the gap and books out-of-pocket
Declines loans because she pays out-of-pocket

Year 3: KC's Transfer Twist

Transfers out-of-state for a strong BSN program
Receives a generous transfer scholarship
Learns too late: state grant does not transfer
Takes out loans to cover higher tuition gap
Transfers SBUX job; pays for off-campus housing out-of-pocket

Year 4: Reality Check for KC

Some community college credits didn't transfer
Needs an extra semester she didn't budget for
Clinical nursing rotations begin = can't keep working at SBUX
Tries overnight shifts elsewhere = exhaustion + falling grades
Fails progress = loses scholarship

KC's Final Lesson:

What works early may not work later.

Multi-year planning helps students avoid lost aid, extra debt, and burnout.

Strategy 5: Encourage Family Conversations

Why Family Conversations Matter

- Students may not have visibility into their family's income or financial obligations
- Money talk is awkward but necessary
- Aid decisions may affect the whole household
- Students need permission to ask
- Families need guidance not pressure
- Start early. Plan smarter. Stress less.





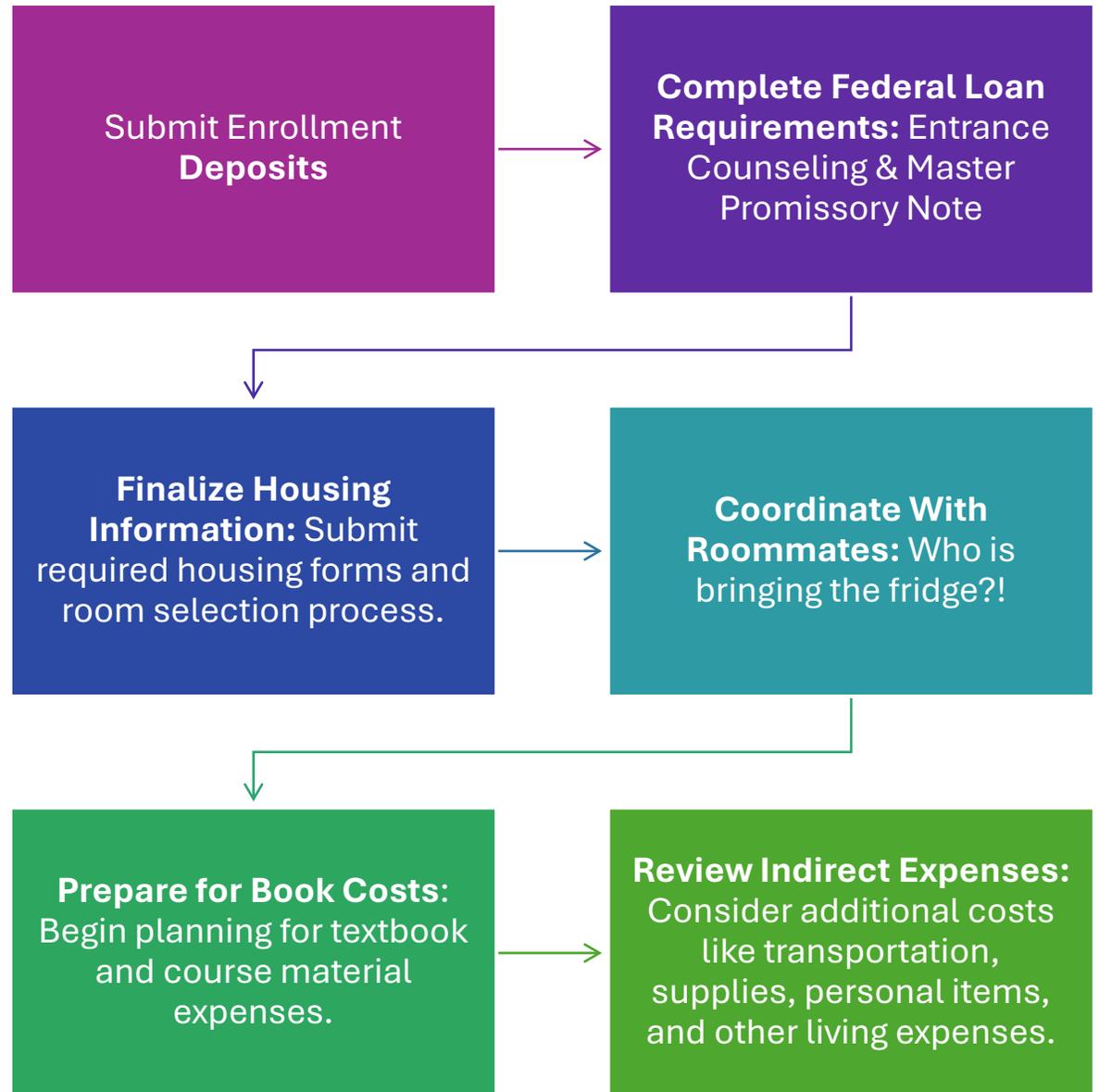
Strategy 6: Encourage Continued Engagement with Postsecondary Institution During the Summer

Summer Melt

- Confusion about financial aid steps
- Anxiety about leaving home
- Family pressure or changing circumstances
- Missed deadlines (housing, orientation, immunizations, bills)
- Feeling disconnected from the college after graduation
- Loss of the support system
- Your role becomes a bridge for crossing that weird, unstructured summer gap



Strategy 7: Focus on the Details for Enrollment



StudentAid.gov

 An official website of the United States government.

[Help Center](#)

[FAFSA Form](#)

[English](#) | [Español](#)

Federal **StudentAid**

[FAFSA® Form](#) ▾

[Grants and Loans](#) ▾

[Loan Repayment](#) ▾

[Loan Forgiveness](#) ▾



[Log In](#) | [Create Account](#)

Manage and Repay Your Federal Student Loans

[Get Repayment Tips](#)

[View Your Loans](#)

POPULAR TOPICS

[Use Loan Simulator To Compare Repayment Plans >](#)

[Find Your Student Loan Servicer >](#)

[Apply for a Direct Consolidation Loan >](#)

[Apply for an Income-Driven Repayment Plan >](#)

[Fill Out a FAFSA® Form >](#)



Strategy 8: Standards of Academic Progress

- Federal Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP)
- PA State Grant progress & deadline
- Institution Scholarship & Grant Renewal
- Academic Probation/Suspension Policies
- Program Requirements (Education, Nursing, etc.)



Strategy 9: Funding the Gap



**How do students meet the gap between
financial aid and college costs?**

Net Price Calculator

- Every institution, by law, must provide families with a net price calculator on their website to estimate net costs
- Net price Calculator – find the prices (collegecost.ed.gov)
- Estimated data provided by each institution:
- Total cost of attendance (COA)
 - Direct Costs – tuition, fees, housing and meals, which are provided on the bill you receive
 - Indirect Costs – transportation, books and supplies, personal care, etc. Indirect costs do not show up on your bill
 - Estimated merit and need based grant aid
 - Estimated net price (COA minus grant aid)
- Calculators don't always include institutional scholarships.

Cost of Attendance	
Tuition	\$15,000
Fees	\$2,000
Housing	\$13,000
Meals	\$2,500
Books	\$1,000
Personal	\$1,000
Misc.	\$2,000
Total	\$36,500

Direct Costs Billed

Sample Offers



Congratulations on your admission to Dream University!

Please review the financial aid offer information listed below and contact us with any questions.

Estimated Annual Cost of Attendance:

Tuition & Fees	\$18,000
Housing & Meals	\$13,500
Total Billed Costs	\$31,500

The total estimated Cost of Attendance is \$35,500. This includes \$4,000 of non-billed expenses such as books, supplies, transportation and other living expenses.

FINANCIAL AID OFFER	FALL	SPRING	TOTAL
Federal Supplemental Opportunity Grant (SEOG)	\$1,500	\$1,500	\$3,000
Federal Pell Grant	\$3,172	\$3,172	\$6,344
Pennsylvania State Grant	\$1,844	\$1,844	\$3,688
Dream Grant	\$1,000	\$1,000	\$2,000
Dream Scholarship	\$3,000	\$3,000	\$6,000
Total Scholarships & Grants			\$21,032
Federal Direct Subsidized Loan	\$1,750	\$1,750	\$3,500
Federal Direct Unsubsidized Loan	\$1,000	\$1,000	\$2,000
Total Educational Loans			\$5,500
Federal Work Study*	\$1,200	\$1,200	\$2,400

* Federal Work Study offers are not credited to the student's bill.



Menu

Sample Award Letter

FINANCIAL AID	FALL	SPRING	TOTAL
Grants and Scholarships			
Federal Supplemental Opportunity Grant (SEOG)	\$1,500	\$1,500	\$3,000
Federal Pell Grant	\$3,172	\$3,172	\$6,344
Pennsylvania State Grant	\$1,844	\$1,844	\$3,688
Dream Grant	\$1,000	\$1,000	\$2,000
Dream Scholarship	\$3,000	\$3,000	\$6,000
Loans			
Federal Direct Subsidized Loan	\$1,750	\$1,750	\$3,500
Federal Direct Unsubsidized Loan	\$1,000	\$1,000	\$2,000
Total Financial Aid			\$26,532

TOTAL ESTIMATED BALANCE

\$6,000

Estimated monthly payment option.

\$500

12 Monthly Payments

SCHEDULE

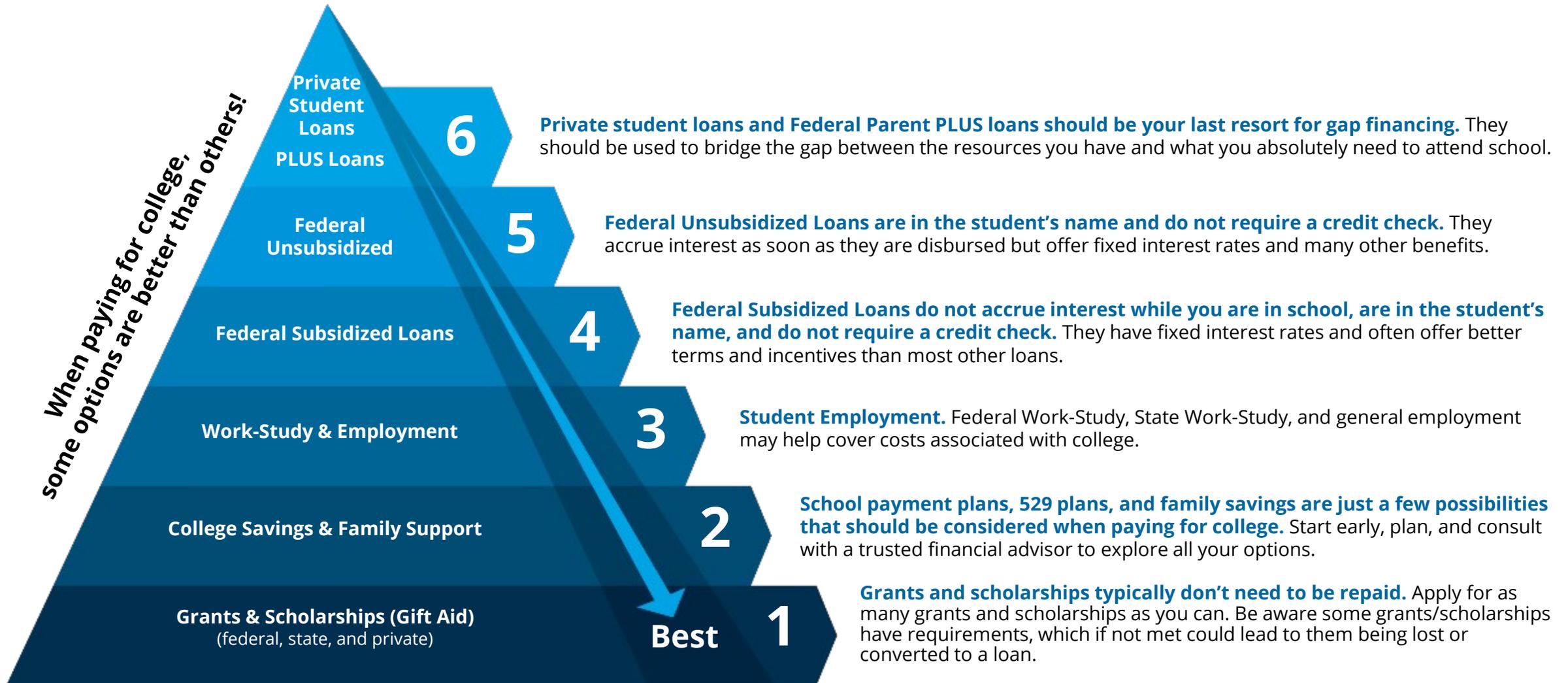
PAYMENT METHODS

ESTIMATED COST OF ATTENDANCE	FALL	SPRING	TOTAL
Direct Costs			
Tuition	\$7,500	\$7,500	\$15,000
Fees	\$3,172	\$3,172	\$6,344
Room/Housing	\$1,844	\$1,844	\$3,688
Meals/Meal Plans	\$1,000	\$1,000	\$2,000
Indirect Costs			
Books/Supplies	\$600	\$1,600	\$3,500
Transportation	\$1,000	\$1,000	\$2,000
Other Costs			
Total Estimated Cost of Attendance			\$32,532

Resources

- ▶ How to accept your financial aid offers.
- ▶ Work Study
- ▶ Payment Plans
- ▶ Private Student Loans

Paying Your Remaining Out-of-Pocket



Federal Direct Loan Program

www.studentaid.gov

Awarded to **all** eligible undergraduate students, regardless of **need**

- **In student's name** as the borrower
- No collateral or credit check
- No repayments required while attending and 6 months grace period
- Several repayment options
- Must complete a FAFSA annually
- First time borrowers must sign a Master Promissory Note and complete Entrance counseling
- Additional amounts for independent students or if a federal PLUS loan is denied for a dependent student
- 2 loan components based on FAFSA
 - Subsidized – government pays interest while attending and during grace period
 - Unsubsidized – student is responsible for interest; accrues in school and during grace period
- Fixed interest rates – 6.39% and origination fee of 1.075% (2025-26 academic year)

Federal Parent PLUS Loans

www.studentaid.gov

- Parent or guardian is the borrower (biological, adoptive, and stepparent)
- Annual FAFSA required by the student
- Borrow up to \$20,000/year per dependent with an aggregate limit of \$65,000
- Repayment begins 60 days after disbursement
 - Parent may choose to defer payments while student is enrolled (6 month grace period)
 - Interest accrues and is the parent's responsibility
- Interest rate – 8.94% and origination fee – 4.228% (2025-26 academic year)
- No minimum credit score required, debt to income ratio, or income requirements
 - No substantial adverse credit; very lenient review

Private Student Loans

- Offered by private lenders, financial institutions, and states
- Available to both student and their parents or guardians
 - Student borrowers that don't meet the credit requirements may need a co-signer
- A credit check is required, and lenders may also require proof of income or other proof of ability to repay
- Fees, interest rates, loan amounts, and repayment provisions vary by lender
- Generally, student repayment may be deferred until education is completed
- Can borrow up to cost of attendance minus other financial aid

Compare loans before making your choice and be sure to read the fine print!

PA Forward and Keystone Student loans Undergraduate & Graduate

- Low cost, fixed interest rates
- Zero fees
- Borrow up to 100% certified cost of attendance including tuition, fees, housing, meals, books, etc. (Subject to aggregate loan limits)
 - Loans taken for a less than half time academic period may borrow up to \$5,000
- Low minimum loan amount: \$1,500
- 0.50% interest rate reduction for graduating
- 0.25% interest rate reduction for enrolling in Direct Debit
- 0.25% interest rate reduction for Commonwealth of PA employees
- No SAP required
- Cover past due balances up to 365 days
- No pre-payment penalty
- Multiple repayment plans
- Co-signer release option

Visit PHEAA.org/PAForward today!

Borrowing Guideline

**Don't borrow more for
your education than
your starting salary!**

Keep your loan payment
<12% of gross earnings.



Personal Borrowing Options

Personal loans – from a bank or lender

- Unique criteria based on product and borrower

Credit cards

- Normally higher interest rates and uses up limits

Equity Loans

- From mortgage lender or bank
- Uses equity value in your home

401k/Retirement loans

- Understand the pros and cons
- Speak to your human resources department or advisor

Family support

- Understand repayment agreements

Ways to Pay

Mix & Match

- Federal & State Grants
 - Institutional Scholarships & Grants
 - Private Scholarships
 - Job/work-study
 - Tuition Payment Plans
 - 529 College Saving Plans
 - Family Savings
 - Federal Direct Student Loans
 - Federal Direct PLUS Loans
 - Private Student Loans
 - PA Forward Student Loans
 - Keystone Student Loans
 - Institutional Loans
 - ROTC/Military
 - Employers' tuition reimbursement programs
- Be Cautious with the Following:**
- Credit Cards
 - Home Equity Loan
 - 401K withdrawals or loans (talk to a Financial Advisor)



Strategy 10: Rinse and Repeat Financial Aid beyond first year

File the FAFSA –every year beginning October 1st and meet deadlines



Scholarship searches can continue beyond Freshman year



If you have unsubsidized loans (federal or private), remember interest is accruing



Continue to re-calculate your expenses and projected borrowing amounts



If you have excess funds, pay down loan principal

Additional planning beyond first year

1

Prepare for housing for the following year

2

Make sure you're taking enough credits to graduate on time

- Reflect on your classes and grades
- Meet with Academic Advisor to plan future courses

3

Develop a plan for the summer

- Will you work or have an internship?
- Are you taking any summer classes?

4

Update your academic and personal resume with volunteering, work study position, references, etc.

5

Set new goals

- What did you like or dislike during the Freshman year?

Get Social With PHEAA



PHEAA
American Education Services

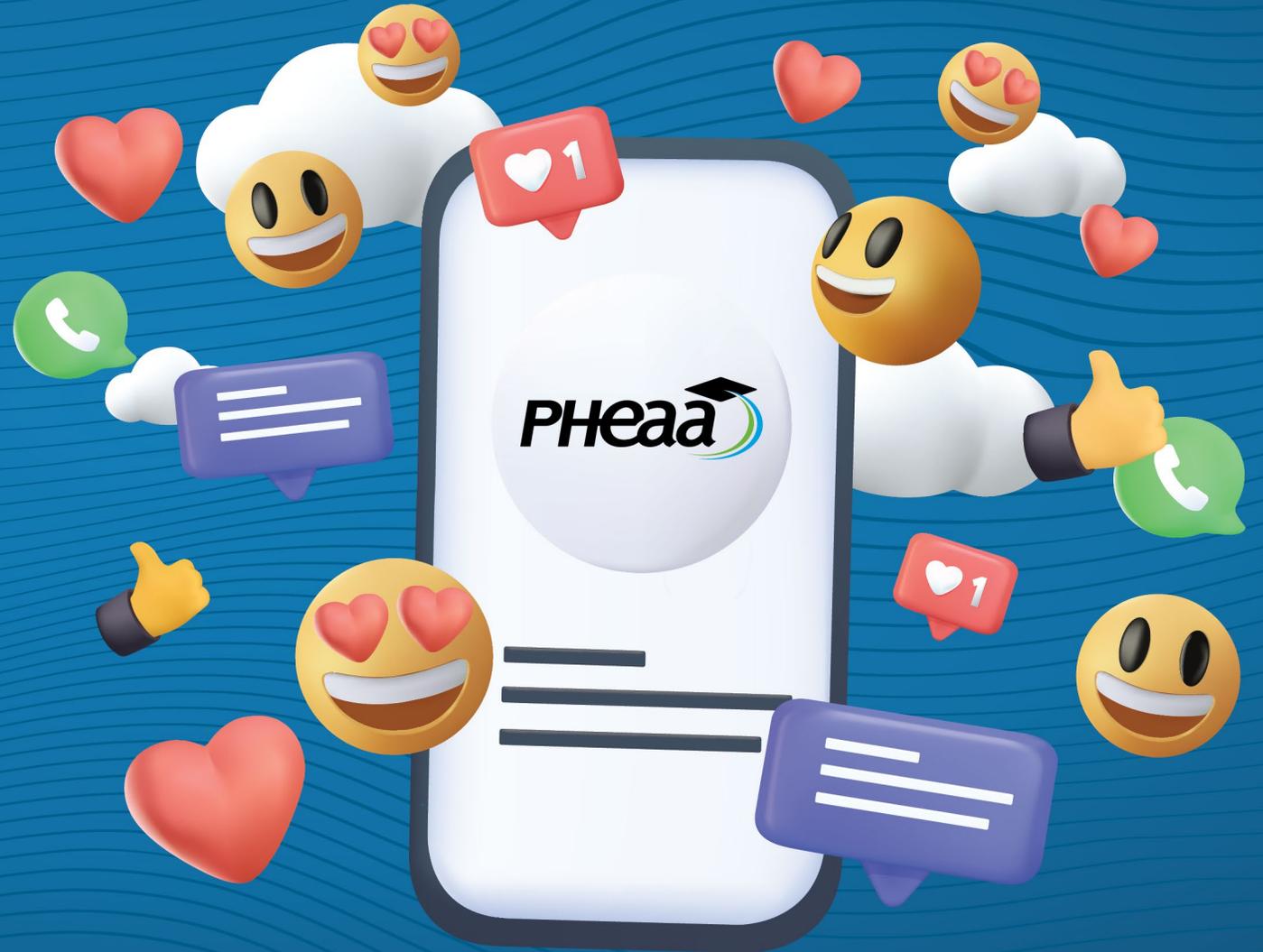


@PHEAAaid
@aesSuccessorg



PHEAA

AND find PHEAA at
**Instagram, YouTube, Spotify,
Pandora, and new Podcasts**



Contact Us

Tara Verrico, Director of Financial Aid, Geneva College
tmverric@geneva.edu

Laura Papcunik, Higher Education Access Partner,
PHEAA
Laura.Papcunik@pheaa.org

Dr. Kim McCurdy, Account Executive, PA Forward,
PHEAA
Kimberly.McCurdy@pheaa.org