

Getting an Education

Finding Alternatives in Your Community

While the military offers some money for college, there are many catches that may not be apparent on the surface. If you are considering joining the military as a way to get money for college, you should first consult college access professionals and organizations in your community. College admission officers, high school guidance counselors, financial aid staff at individual colleges, and community-based groups that promote college access are part of a network that can help you to finance further schooling.

Several national organizations and directories provide free information to young people who need money for college. Below are some of these:

Choices: Multimedia Youth-Oriented Computer Program

The Project on Youth and Non-Military Opportunities (Project YANO) produces Choices, "an interactive, multimedia computer program that uses text, music, graphics and animation to help young people address important questions facing them as they reach their late teens and are ready to leave high school: questions such as how to get job training, whether to go to college and how to pay for college." To order this software, send \$5.00 to the AFSC National Youth and Militarism Program. It is also available for downloading from the Web at: <http://www.afsc.org/youthmil/html/issues/alternatives/choices.htm> (It's a big file, so you may prefer to get the disks from us.) Choices is available for Windows 3.x and 95 only; there is no Mac version.

The US Department of Education's Student Financial Assistance Programs

Look or call here for help in every stage of the financial aid process.

Federal Student Aid Information Center

(800)4-FED-AID

Monday-Friday, 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. (Eastern Standard Time)

<http://www.fafsa.ed.gov>

This center can answer questions about the different federal grant and loan programs. In addition, they produce several helpful booklets which are available free of charge.

Funding Your Education is for those not yet enrolled in school beyond high school. It provides an introduction to student financial aid programs and how to apply for them.

http://www.ed.gov/prog_info/SFA/FYE/FYE01

Finding Out About Financial Aid is the most comprehensive resource on financial aid from the U.S. Department of Education. It is designed mostly for students already enrolled in higher education.

Updated each year, this guide tells you about programs such as grants and loans and how to apply for them. <http://www.ed.gov/offices/OSFAP/Students/student.html>

Project EASI (Easy Access for Students and Institutions)

Project EASI is a collaborative effort between schools, lenders, state agencies, the US Department of Education, and others. Project EASI can assist you and your family in planning for postsecondary education, choosing from among alternatives, and financing these choices (from application to repayment).

<http://easi.ed.gov>

College Is Possible

This is a campaign to educate about the realities of college attendance. US colleges and universities have prepared the Web site as a guide to the books, Web sites, and other resources that admissions and financial aid professionals consider most helpful. The site includes information on preparing for college, choosing the right college, and paying for college.

<http://www.collegeispossible.com>

FastWEB

FastWEB is a searchable database on the World Wide Web with information on more than 400,000 private sector scholarships, fellowships, grants, and loans.

<http://www.fastweb.com>

CollegenET

While it is largely a service for applying to colleges online, you can also search information about specific colleges, scholarships, and financial aid, career searches, and information on college fairs in different cities around the country.

<http://www.collegenet.com>

The Fund for Education and Training (FEAT)

FEAT provides low-interest loans to young men who have not registered for the draft for reasons of conscience. Priority is given to those who have no other sources of aid, either in the financial aid program of their school, from other agencies, or from their family. A modest list of alternative sources of aid for nonregistrants is available from FEAT. FEAT also stands ready to help persons who are denied job training.

1830 Connecticut Ave NW, Washington, DC 20009-5732

phone: 202-483-1242; fax: 202-483-1246

<http://www.nisbco.org>

States also provide large amounts of financial aid. The "**Directory of State Higher Education Agencies**" provides a listing of state higher education agencies and governing boards.

<http://www.ed.gov/offices/OPE/agencies.html>

Demythologizing Military College Offers

The AFSC National Youth and Militarism program distributes several resources that address the shortcomings of and myths about military college access and aid programs. All are available from our office and some are on the Web (addresses listed).

(1) "GI Bill...No Sure Bet": Information about the New GI Bill (Montgomery GI Bill)

(2) "Is JROTC a Wise Use of Class Time?": Relationship between the JROTC program and college readiness

(3) "Do You Know Enough to Enlist?": Questions to ask and practices to follow if you are considering enlistment

Also check your local library, workplaces or unions of your parents or relatives, your place of worship (church, temple, synagogue, etc.), organizations in your field of interest, or area nonprofit agencies, foundations, or community organizations for other scholarship opportunities.