

SOLEBURY.EDU

COLLEGE COUNSELING NEWSLETTER



DePauw University

A SNEAK PEEK
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A Penny for your Thoughts *Financial Aid*

What exactly *is* financial aid? Financial aid is money that helps students pay for college. It can be funds that students pay back, work for, or receive as a gift. The four most common forms of financial aid are loans, grants, work-study, and scholarships.

Students can receive aid through the federal government. Nearly all colleges require that you submit the **Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA)**. This form is available online at <http://www.fafsa.gov>. The 2026-2027 application is expected to be available on October 1, 2025. Even if you do not think that you will be eligible for need-based aid, we would still encourage you to apply. The FAFSA is free! It will also allow colleges to consider you for aid in case there are any changes to your financial circumstances, and it will open up to the doors to several low-interest loans.

Most schools have a priority deadline for applying for financial aid through FAFSA. Typically this has been somewhere around February 1-15, but that may change with the earlier filing capability. Check with the individual admissions offices. States will also have a filing deadline to be considered for state funding, but typically this is much later than colleges. *Our recommendation is to apply as early as possible.*

Fill out the form completely, and estimate if necessary! It is better to meet the deadline and make changes later than to miss the deadline and potentially miss out on financial aid. If the form is incomplete, that will also delay the processing of the FAFSA. However, the ability to populate the form with last year's tax information should minimize the need to estimate.

Before filling out the FAFSA, students and parents must first create an FSA ID, which will allow you to fill out the form, save your progress along the way and do follow-up with any federal loans.

In an effort to simplify the process, the changes to the FAFSA two years ago include:

- The number of questions on the FAFSA has decreased from over 100 to fewer than 40.
- Students can list up to 20 schools on their FAFSA, up from 10 in prior years.
- The need analysis formula removes the number of family members in college from the calculation, among other things.
- Child support received will be included in assets and not as untaxed income.
- Families who own a small business/farm that also serves as primary residence will now have assets of that business/farm considered in their need analysis calculation.

Some schools may also require that you fill out either their own financial aid supplement or the **College Scholarship Services (CSS) Profile**. This is done in addition to FAFSA. This may be particularly important if you are applying Early Action or Early Decision, given that the FAFSA may not be ready in October again this year. Use the college's form. It will not only speed up processing, but it will save you money. There is a non-refundable application fee for the Profile, as well as a fee for each school to which you send the information. The CSS Profile will likewise use 2024 tax year information. Note that you can only fill out the Profile online [here](#).

Looking for an estimate of your tuition? All colleges should have Net Price Calculators on their websites. [Here](#) is a good place to start. If you need help finding a school's calculator, please reach out to us and we'll be happy to help!

A Dime A Dozen *Scholarships*

We are compiling a list of several independent scholarship opportunities, which is in no way exhaustive. There are thousands of scholarships for which you may be eligible. The process takes time, but can be absolutely worth it. And some scholarships are renewable all four years!

If you do your own scholarship search, DO NOT PAY FOR IT! There are plenty of free scholarship search engines online, such as [fastweb.com](#), [scholarships.com](#) or [collegeboard.org](#), and free scholarship apps such as [Going Merry](#) or [Scholly](#). No search that you pay for will give you better results than free searches of this type. Local organizations and businesses will often have their own scholarships as well, with fewer students applying, so it can be beneficial to do a search within your town/county.

While most colleges will automatically consider you for merit scholarships when you apply for admission, you should also check with the schools to which you apply to see if there are any special scholarships, or any forms, nominations or interviews required for consideration for their standard scholarships. They may also have endowed scholarships for upperclass students who meet certain criteria.

College Visits

Here & There

This month, we are going through the lists of colleges that you are following on SCOIR and will be reaching out to several of them to see if they can visit Solebury this fall. Most visits will be on campus, although some of the colleges may opt to visit online due to their location or the lack of a regional counselor.

We will be adding these college visits to SCOIR, and will share information about registration and expectations in the next newsletter. We also plan to continue offering transportation to area college fairs, and a fall college tour weekend, so look for notices about that as we get closer to the dates.

Visiting colleges is super helpful! If you're near a campus this summer, we'd encourage you to stop by for a tour, information session, or informal visit. Even if it's not on your preliminary list, it may help you narrow that search down by type of institution, location, and more!

Upcoming Test Dates*

ACT | September 6

We will provide transportation to the September 6th ACT, held at Council Rock South. Later test dates include October 18 and December 13.

Register [here](#).

SAT | August 23

Registration is open to all students for all dates in the 2025-2026 testing year. The next test date is September 13. We will not provide transportation on this date.

We will provide transportation for boarders to Central Bucks High School East in Doylestown, PA for the September 13 and October 3 test dates. Boarders must sign up for transportation through Scoir.

Register [here](#).

*Solebury does not register students for these tests.



Spotlight: Indiana Colleges

PHL - IND

Speaking of college visits, Erin recently traveled with the Independent Colleges of Indiana (ICI) to seven of the 29 independent colleges in the state. She enjoyed the slower pace, fried pork tenderloin, and that good ol' Midwest hospitality! Here are some highlights from some of the colleges she visited:

Marian University, Indianapolis

Situated in the suburbs of Indianapolis, Marian University's president shares that "Marian is where you go if you want to develop as a whole person". Their Osteopathic Medical School is thriving, and business students will often complete up to 3 internships before graduating!

Wabash College, Crawfordsville

An all-mens liberal arts college, Wabash is 100% residential. A division 3 school with strong athletics (particularly football and wrestling), Wabash students follow the Gentleman's Rule. The alumni connections and school-wide traditions are strong at Wabash.

Depauw University, Greencastle

A liberal-arts gem, Depauw is a fully residential college of about 1,900. The first-year seminar is robust, many students are a part of Greek life and 90% study abroad. Depauw hosts world leaders through the Ubben Lecture Series. And there's an adorable inn on campus!

Rose-Hulman Institute of Technology, Terre Haute

There's a college where engineers play football! At a school of 2,250, the return on investment is strong, as are the post-grad connections. Rose-Hulman has a racing team, has 1 of 5 optical engineering programs, and international computer science students spend a year in Germany.

University of Evansville, Evansville

University of Evansville owns a castle in England, where 60% of students study abroad. Known for their D1 sports, archaeology program, and sports media and management, UE is small and mighty. A school of about 2,100, UE was recognized as an Ashoka Changemaker Campus.

Our Two Cents

The Cost of College

The financial aid process can be tedious and time-consuming. But with the help of scholarships and need-based aid, colleges that seem unaffordable can be within your reach.

Loans vary, and there is a difference between a subsidized federal loan and a private loan. Ultimately, you may or may not want to take out loans. That is a decision that you should discuss with your family. Keep in mind, though, that college is an investment, and higher average salaries usually correspond with higher degrees.

And just as we will be asking of your admissions decisions, we are also interested in knowing your scholarship decisions. Please let us know if you are awarded any college-based or independent scholarships, by providing a copy of your scholarship award letters.

We hope summer is bringing you the very best combination of peace and productivity!

Important Dates

August 1 - Registration deadline for September 6th ACT

August 8 - Registration deadline for August 23rd SAT

August 29 - Registration deadline for September 13th SAT

October 1 - The 2026-2027 FAFSA is expected to be available

November (date TBD) - Financial Aid Night, hosted by Salve Regina University's Financial Aid Office*

**Some of the topics will include:*

- *How to apply for financial aid*
- *Different types and sources of aid*
- *The Student Aid Index*
- *Financial Aid philosophies*
- *Examples of different financial aid packages*
- *Helpful websites for your financial aid search*

This event is designed for parents, but if any students want to attend, they are welcome.

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Our handbook!

