

10 STEPS TO HELP YOU GET INTO COLLEGE

1 CHALLENGING COURSES

Take challenging courses (including Advanced Placement [AP], International Baccalaureate [IB] and dual credit and honors if offered.)

2 SCHOOL COUNSELORS

Stay in contact with your school counselor about resources for college. Be persistent!

3 VOLUNTEER AND SERVICE

Colleges often want to see that a student is well-rounded. Volunteer and get involved in extracurricular activities.

4 LETTERS OF RECOMMENDATION

Develop relationships with teachers, coaches, mentors or other adults, as they will provide recommendation letters when applicable.

5 BEST FIT

Thoroughly research colleges and majors to find the right fit for you and your future career goals.

6 COLLEGE FAIRS

Talk to your school counselor about any college fairs or universities visiting your high school or offering virtual fairs.

7 APPLICATION REVIEW

Some applications can be disqualified simply because students do not submit all the required documents. Be sure to complete all parts of your application, including essays.

8 FEE WAIVERS

Seek college application and testing fee waivers from organizations and colleges.

- National Association of College Admissions Counselors

Fee Waivers: nacacnet.org/studentinfo/feewaiver/pages/default.aspx.

- College Board: SAT fee waivers are available to students from low-income backgrounds. Go to the following website for more information: collegeboard.com/feewaivers

- Check out The Common Black College Application. For \$20 students can apply to 67 member HBCUs, and specify their top four choices. commonblackcollegeapp.com/

9 ORGANIZATION

Create folders (virtual or hard copy) for each college application and/or create a college application spreadsheet.

10 SCHOLARSHIPS

Research scholarships and other funding opportunities.

- Consider scholarships from non-profit organizations and large corporations.

- Some colleges offer institutional scholarships. Be sure to check their websites for deadline and eligibility information.

WHY GO TO COLLEGE?

- U.S. workers with bachelor's degrees earn 84 percent more than those with no more than a high school diploma. (Source: Georgetown University Center on Education and the Workforce)
- 3 years after graduation HBCU students earn \$10,000 more than students with a high school diploma.
- In college, you will likely find mentors, friendships, relationships and supportive professors that will last a lifetime. In fact, Black HBCU graduates are more likely than Black non-HBCU graduates to report they had a professor who cared about them as people. (Source: UNCF HBCU Effect, Gallup-USA Funds Report 2015)



HELPFUL LINKS

UNCF Scholarships and Opportunities:
Opportunities.UNCF.org

UNCF Empower Me Tour:
UNCF.org/emt

UNCF College Prep Timeline:
UNCF.org/CollegePrep

UNCF College Toolkit:
uncf.org/collegetoolkit

ACT: actstudent.org/college

College Board:
bigfuture.collegeboard.org

Federal Student Aid:
<https://studentaid.gov/>

Fastweb: fastweb.com

The Posse Foundation:
possefoundation.org

Form Your Future: formyourfuture.org

College Navigator:
nces.ed.gov/collegenavigator

Better Make Room:
bettermakeroom.org/reachhigher/



For a complete list of UNCF-member HBCU schools, please visit UNCF.org/member-colleges

For HBCU tips, tools and scholarship information, please visit UNCF.org/HBCUResourceGuide

COLLEGE READINESS CHECKLIST ✓

- Ensure you have taken all necessary courses to graduate on time.
- Sign up to take subject college placement exams, if necessary.
- Take the ACT/SAT (if required); seek waiver if eligible via your high school and/or through ACT or SAT websites.
- Set up appointment(s) with your school counselor to discuss college choices and potential majors.
- Research colleges and majors. Set up tours and visits if able to do so. You may also consider virtual visits as well.
- Complete the FAFSA (studentaid.gov/h/apply-for-aid/fafsa) as soon as possible as certain funding is allocated on a first-come first-serve basis. It is posted annually starting Oct. 1. Many states and colleges have specific deadlines for applying for state and institutional aid. You can find your state's deadline at studentaid.gov/apply-for-aid/fafsa/fafsa-deadlines and check with your college about other deadlines.
- Search for scholarships and financial aid.
- Request high school transcripts to be sent to colleges.
- Request letters of recommendation for scholarships and college applications. Try to do this at least one month in advance.
- Draft college essays. Have at least one person review the draft.
- Complete and send off applications. Start early in the process and submit before the deadline. Apply by the fall of your senior year, if possible, but be sure to check the college/university websites for key deadlines. Learn more about [Early Action and Early Decision applications](#).
- Avoid the [summer melt](#). Stay on top of important information colleges may request, such as forms related to on-campus housing, immunizations, financial aid and new student orientations.

HOW UNCF CAN HELP YOU PREPARE FOR COLLEGE

- To apply for a UNCF scholarship, you must visit the online application system at Opportunities.UNCF.org.
- Many UNCF scholarships require applicants to apply for Federal Student Aid; it is recommended that applicants complete the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) as soon as possible as funds are allocated on a first-come first-serve basis.
- The eligibility criteria and dates for scholarships and programs vary, so students should use UNCF's online portal to narrow down the programs that best suit them.
- Outreach
 - One of the largest UNCF outreach programs is the UNCF Empower Me Tour (EMT). The free, fun tour engages young people through college readiness, career success and financial literacy messaging. The target audience is students grades 9-12, college students, alumni, college administrators, parents, educators and the community at-large.
 - For EMT dates and locations please visit empowermetour.org.
- UNCF also hosts monthly community webinars about our 400 programs—scholarships, internships, fellowships and career opportunities posted annually. Visit UNCF.org/CollegeWebinars to join our e-community and to be notified about our community webinar series.

