Students must apply for the Bright Futures Scholarship Program by submitting the Florida Financial Aid Application (FFAA) no later than August 31 after high school graduation. If you do not apply for the scholarship by the deadline, you cannot receive the scholarship!

- To apply visit [http://www.floridastudentfinancialaid.org/SSFAD/bf/bfmain.htm](http://www.floridastudentfinancialaid.org/SSFAD/bf/bfmain.htm), under Applicant Quick Links, select Student Application (for new applicants) before it’s too late.
- Monitor your Financial Aid Recipient History (FARH) screen for your state program updates.
- For assistance, contact Customer Service at 888-827-2004 or email OSFA@fldoe.org.
For those of you attending college for the first time this fall semester, your head must be filled with questions and thoughts about what to expect. College is an exciting place but it can be complete chaos if you are not prepared. Don't worry- we have your back! Complete this checklist and to get a jump start on the right path.

- Open a savings account and start saving. Check out Long Game Savings at www.longgame.co for a fun and unique way to start saving.

- Research your college. Find out more about different activities and clubs they are known for and student organizations offered on campus.

- Register for classes. Between orientation or just an appointment with an advisor, make sure you register for classes by the deadline.

- Handle all financial aid matters before the start of your first class. It's easy to forget about or simply avoid but this is one way that you can really get messed up.

- Go shopping! Get all of the things you'll need for your classes, your dorm room, or your new wardrobe. Look into your upcoming booklist and research affordable options.

- Research college majors. Whether you're pretty sure what your path is or you have no idea, do some research. Look up course list, graduation rate, job expectancy, income level, etc. Narrow it down to a few that interest you and have them ready to talk to an advisor about.

- Use your brain; don't give it too much of a break. The work load will be tougher in college. Prepare this summer by reading, writing, building your resume, and learning new skills.

- Last but not least, enjoy the last summer! Do things you've never done in your hometown and enjoy being young.
To be considered for federal student aid for the 2018-2019 award year, you can complete a Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) between October 1, 2017, and June 30, 2019—just don’t let these myths keep you from completing a FAFSA.

**Myth 1:** “The FAFSA form takes forever to fill out, and it’s really hard to do.”

**Reality:** If you’ve got 30 minutes to spare, you’re good. Because that’s about how long it takes to fill out the FAFSA form: It’s also not nearly as hard as you might think.

**Myth 2:** “My parents make too much money, so I won’t qualify for aid.”

**Reality:** There is no income cut-off to qualify for federal student aid. Many factors—such as the size of your family and your year in school—are taken into account. And remember: when you fill out the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) form, you’re also automatically applying for funds from your state, and possible from your school as well. In fact, some schools won’t even consider you for any of their scholarships (including academic scholarships) until you’ve submitted a FAFSA form. Don’t make assumptions about what you’ll get—fill out the FAFSA form and find out.

**Myth 3:** “I can’t file my FAFSA form because I haven’t applied to any schools.”

**Reality:** Actually, you CAN complete your FAFSA form before submitting any college or career school applications. You’ll need to list at least one school on your FAFSA form, but go ahead and add every school you’re considering, because some schools have early deadlines to apply for their limited funds. Then later you can add or delete schools on your FAFSA form.

For more information and to fill out the FAFSA form, visit [fafsa.gov](https://fafsa.gov). For assistance, call 1-800-433-3243.
Study abroad policies vary across U.S. colleges/universities. Locate the study abroad office at the postsecondary institution you are interested in attending or do some research on their website to learn more about the study abroad opportunities available. Be sure to pursue answers to questions such as:

- Which programs are available to students from my school?
- Are there other students on campus I can talk with about their study abroad experiences?
- How might my financial aid work with study abroad?
- What is the application process like?

These questions will start you on the right path to making that study abroad dream a reality.

For more information on study abroad, visit https://www.iesabroad.org/study-abroad/how-to-study-abroad.