

Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Incorporated ®

Essay Writing and Letters of Recommendation Webinar

Sunday, July 31, 2022 | 4:00 pm - 6:00 pm (ET)

(For High School Students & Parents)



Register Here:
[https://akaessaywriting.eventbrite.](https://akaessaywriting.eventbrite)



Welcome

Essay Writing & Letters of Recommendation Webinar

- ❖ Thank you for joining us.
- ❖ The webinar will be recorded.
- ❖ Photos may be taken for reporting.
- ❖ Lines will be muted to minimize noise.
- ❖ Use the chat for comments or questions.
- ❖ Have paper and pen handy for exercises.

Webinar Objectives



The objectives of this webinar are to:

- Expose students to strategies to:
 - Write effective essays
 - Obtain compelling letters of recommendations
- Share relevant COVID-19 impacts.

Let's Make This an Interactive Discussion!

AGENDA



- ❖ AKA Overview
- ❖ Speaker Introduction
- ❖ Presentation
- ❖ Closing Remarks/Wrap-up
- ❖ Survey
- ❖ Give-a-ways



Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Incorporated®



- ❖ International Greek-letter non-profit service organization.
- ❖ Established by African-American Women.
- ❖ Founded January 15, 1908, on the campus of Howard University (an HBCU).
- ❖ Nearly 320,000 members and 1000 chapters world-wide.
- ❖ Under the leadership of Danette Anthony Reed,
International President and CEO of Alpha Kappa Alpha
Sorority, Incorporated®



Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Incorporated®



- ❖ Dedicated to implementing international programs of service
- ❖ 2022-2026 Program Theme: *"Soaring to Greater Heights of Service & Sisterhood"*
- ❖ We address community needs through **five** program initiatives:
 - ❖ Initiative 1: Empower Our Families
 - ❖ Initiative 2: Build Our Economic Wealth
 - ❖ Initiative 3: Enhance Our Environment
 - ❖ Initiative 4: Advocate for Social Justice
 - ❖ Initiative 5: Uplift Our Local Community

Initiative 2: Build Our Economic Wealth



Supporting Women Entrepreneurs will focus efforts to promote, celebrate, enhance, reach, raise visibility and offer access for greater revenue-generating opportunities.

Initiative 5: Uplift Our Local Community



Promoting service through chapter collaboration by combining resources to assist local high school students through the college and career planning process.

AKA Collaborating Chapters (10)

Lead by: Dr. Christie Murray (Psi Psi Omega Chapter)

- ❖ Alpha Phi Omega (Danville, VA)
- ❖ Beta Nu Omega (Montgomery, AL)
- ❖ Delta Omicron Omega (Orlando, FL)
- ❖ Gamma Delta Omega (Portsmouth, VA)
- ❖ Lambda Omega Omega (Monmouth & Ocean Counties, NJ)
- ❖ Nu Rho Omega (Hinesville, GA)
- ❖ Nu Zeta Omega (Charles County, MD)
- ❖ Phi Nu Omega (Alexandria, VA)
- ❖ Psi Psi Omega (Stafford and Fauquier Counties, VA)
- ❖ Psi Theta Omega (Orlando, FL)

Speaker Introduction



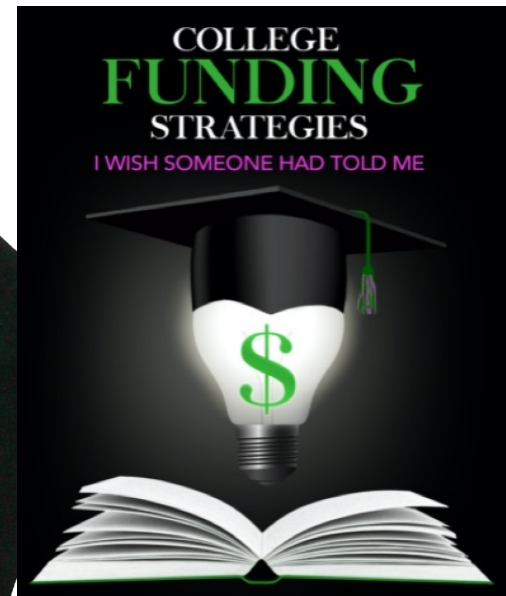
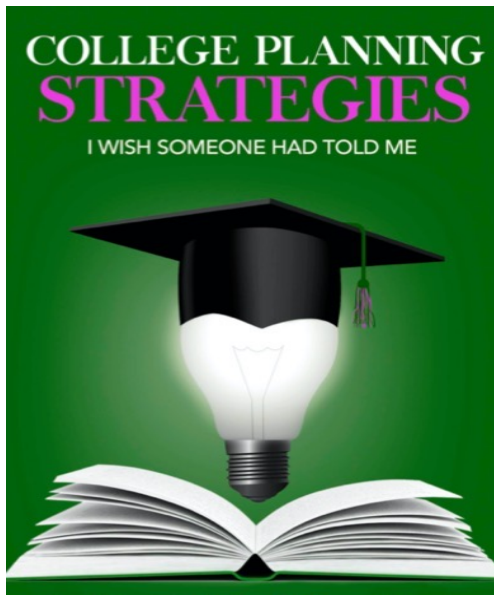
Speaker Introduction

Dr. Christie Murray

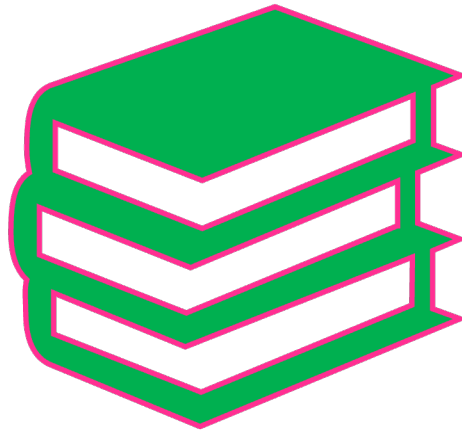
**Woman Entrepreneur
CEO, Invest N Others LLC**

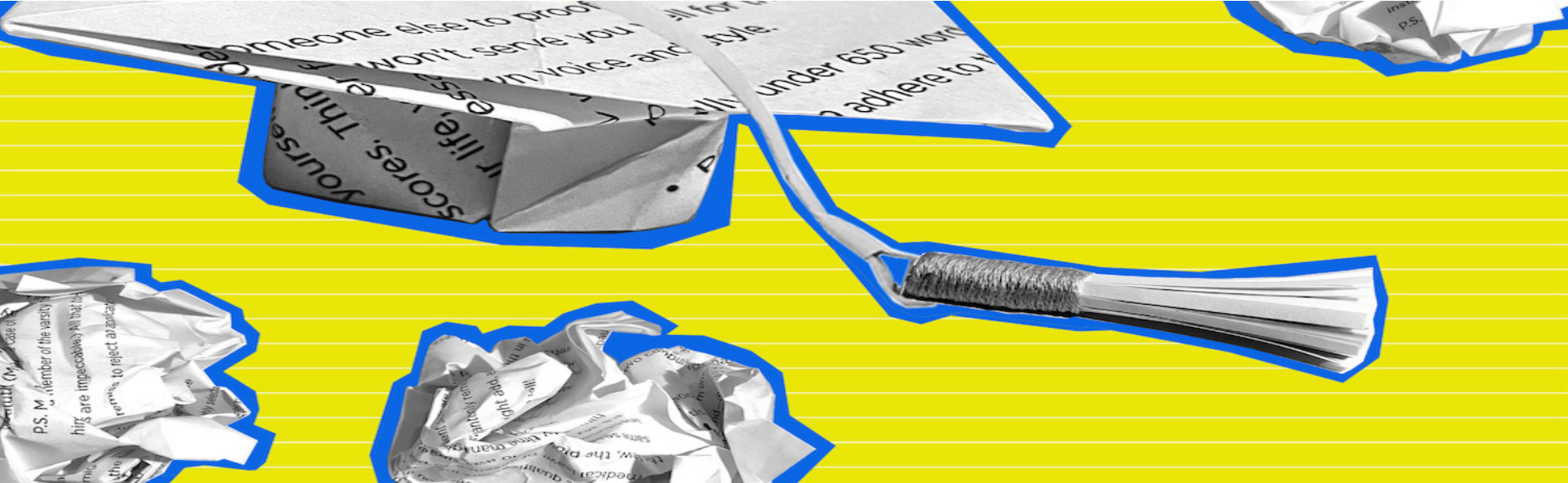


**AKA, Psi Psi Omega Chapter (Stafford and
Fauquier Counties, VA)
Vice President**



Essay Writing and Letters of Recommendation





Introduction

- ❖ Essays and letters of recommendation (LOR) may be required for:
 - ❖ College applications
 - ❖ Scholarship applications
- ❖ Used to learn more about you than what's on the application.
- ❖ Could be important deciding factors in application packages.
- ❖ Some students dread writing essays or asking for LORs.
 - ❖ Lack writing skills
 - ❖ Self-focused
 - ❖ Time consuming

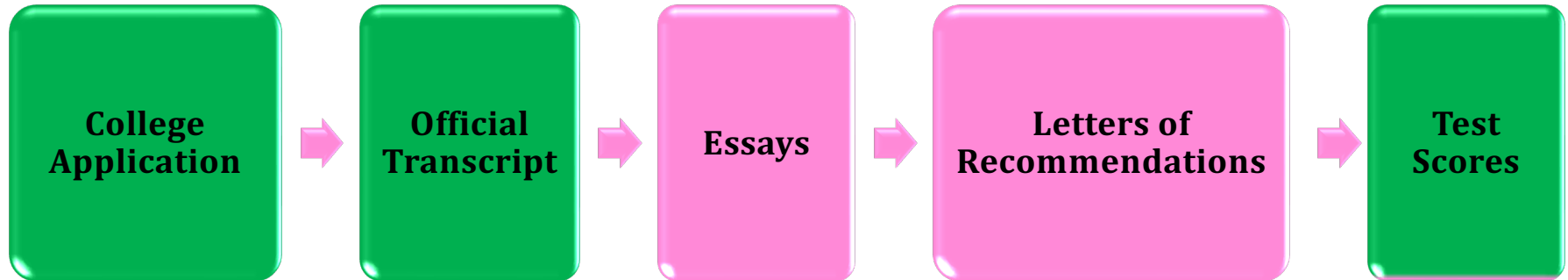
Focus on the Opportunities

- ❖ Differentiate yourself from others
- ❖ Tell your story
- ❖ Highlight yourself
 - ❖ Academic performance
 - ❖ Leadership
 - ❖ Talents
 - ❖ Personality
 - ❖ Uniqueness



Application Packages

College Application



++ Scholarship Application

- ❖ Financial Documents
- ❖ College Acceptance/Verification

Essays and Letters of Recommendations Usages

College Admissions

Why are you a good
candidate for
admissions?

Scholarships

Why should you be
awarded a scholarship?

Essay Writing



Essay Writing Prompts

- ❖ College or scholarship provider may provide a prompt.
- ❖ You may get to pick a topic or prompt.
- ❖ Write on various prompts and save them all.
- ❖ Ten common essay prompts:

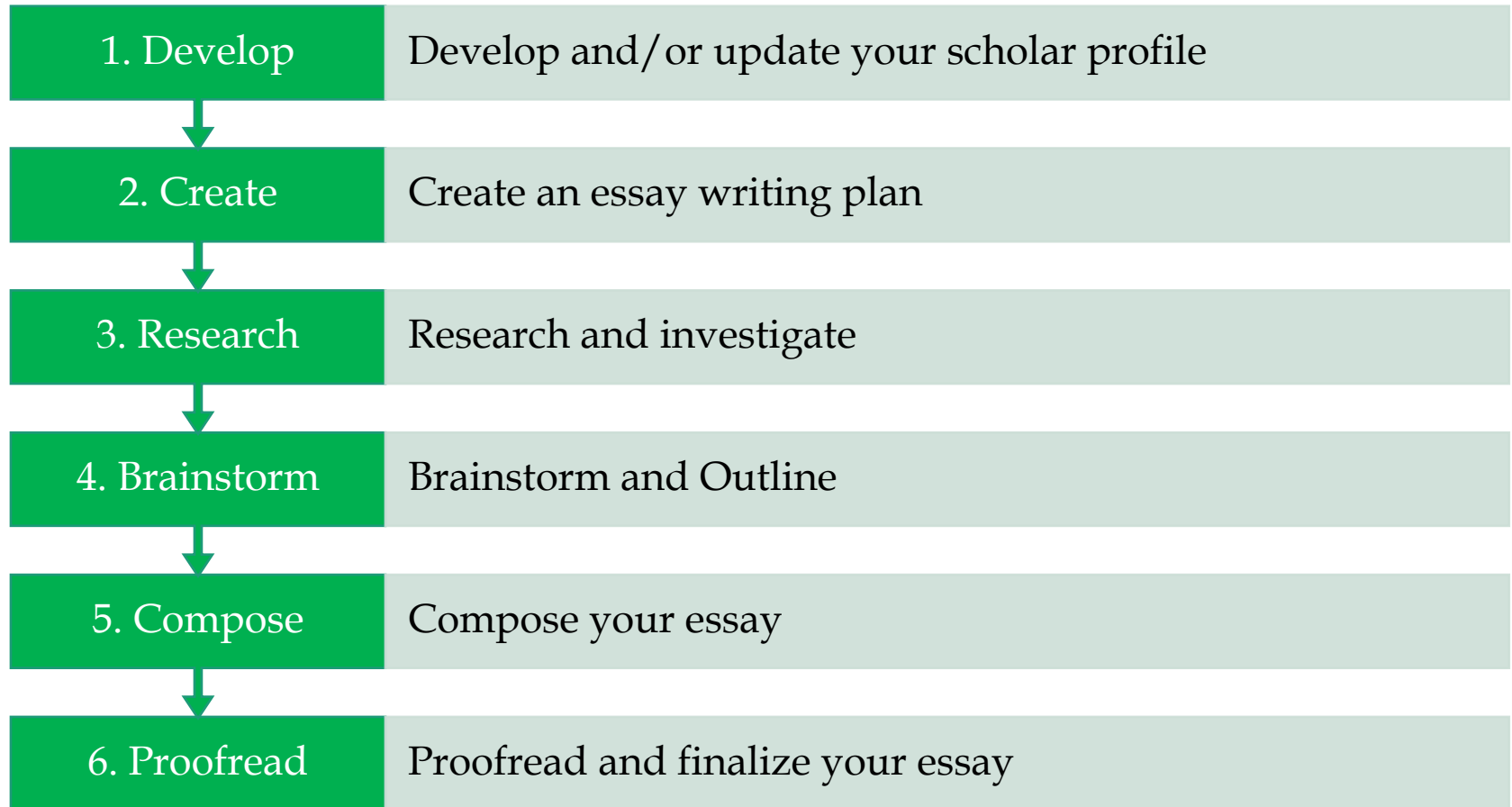
Career/Major	Contribution
Challenges	Creativity
Change	Financial need
Character	Leadership
Community Service	Personal Statement

Essay Scenario

- ❖ Write a 500 word essay (typed).
- ❖ Tell us about a challenge you faced and how you overcame it.

What's the prompt or topic (one word)?

Essay Writing Steps



1. Develop a Scholar Profile

Market and Differentiate Yourself

Template 6: Scholar Profile

- ❖ Professional picture
- ❖ Name, address, contact no., email
- ❖ Objective (college/major)
- ❖ Educational summary
- ❖ Honors and awards
- ❖ Employment experience
- ❖ Extra-curricular activities
- ❖ Community service activities
- ❖ Relevant coursework
- ❖ Interests/hobbies



Use it for:

- ✓ College applications
- ✓ Scholarship apps
- ✓ Essay writing
- ✓ Letters of recommendations

Close your gaps

Sample Scholar Profile

Template 6: Scholar Profile



John Doe
12345 College Bound Drive
City, State Zip Code
Home: (123) 456-789; Mobile: (123) 911-4111
Email: john.doe@yahoo.com

Objective: To attend XX university and obtain a degree in XX.

Education: **High School:** XX High School, City, State (Graduation: 06/13/20XX)
Current GPA: 3.6; Rank: 29/283
ACT Scores: Composite: 24; English (24); Math (30); Reading (21); Science (20)
College Plan: Hampton University (Accepted on 1/20/20XX)
Enrollment Date: Fall 2018
Intended Degree/Major: Bachelor of XX in XX

Honors and Awards:

- Honor Roll, (20XX - Present)
- National Honor Society Induction, 20XX
- Top Alternate Current/Direct Current Student, (20XX-20XX)

Employment Experience:

- Cashier, McDonalds, City, VA (20XX-20XX)
- Walmart Cashier, City, VA (20XX)

Student Organizations/Extracurricular Activities:

- Student Government Association Class Representative, (20XX-Present)
- National Honor Society, (20XX-Present)
- Future Business Leaders of America Member, (20XX-20XX)

Community Service Activities:

- Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Incorporated, Adopt a Highway Project, (20XX)
- Volunteered at Galleria Mall on Summer Family Nights, (20XX)
- Volunteered at the XX Community Center, (20XX)

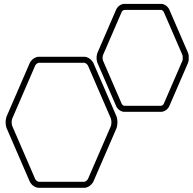
Relevant Courses:

- Algebra II
- Graphics Design I
- Oceanography

Interests/Hobbies:

- Cooking
- Reading

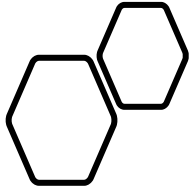
Template: <https://www.investnothers.com/college-planning-book-templates>



2. Create an Essay Writing Plan



- ❖ Get organized and have a plan
- ❖ Make a list of the essays you need to write
- ❖ Document the due date
- ❖ Complete your essay early
- ❖ Identify the type of essay prompt
- ❖ Read the instructions
- ❖ Decide on a writing approach
 - ❖ Personal
 - ❖ Funny
 - ❖ Emotional
 - ❖ Factual
- ❖ Prepare to focus on You



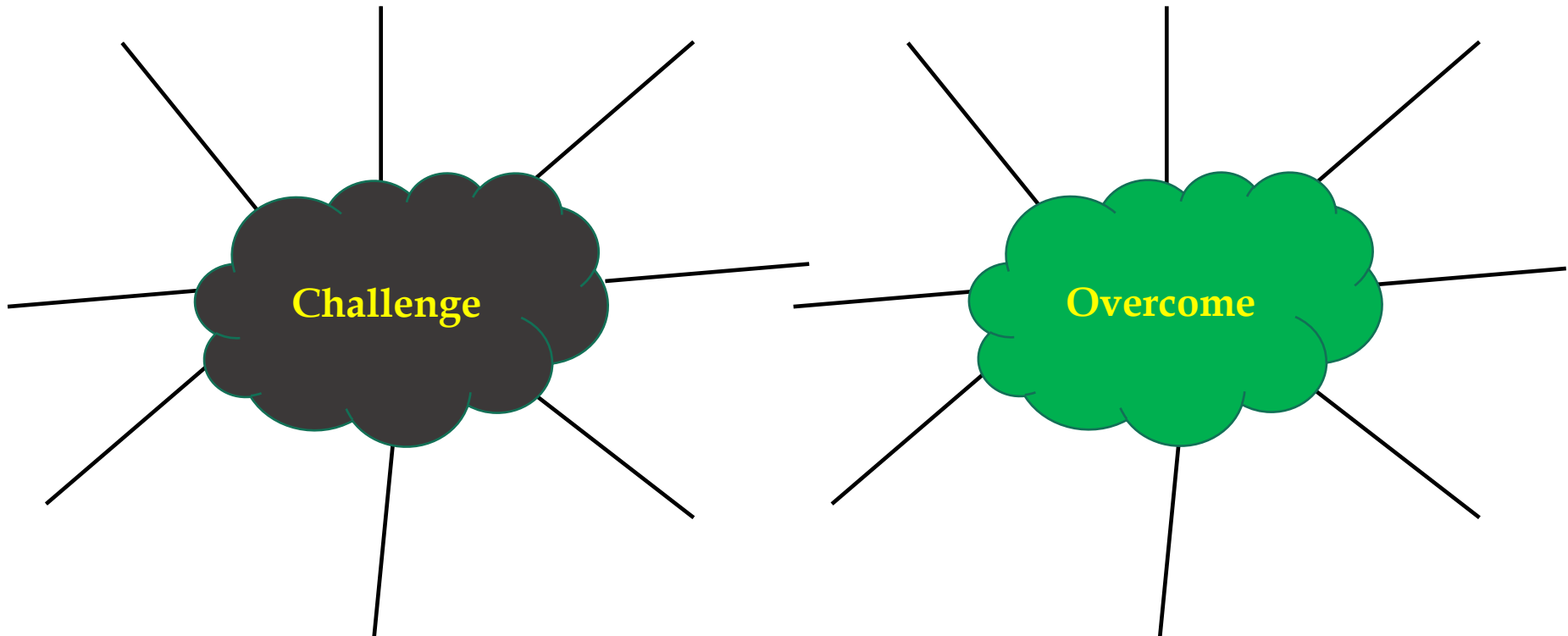
3. Do Your Research or Investigate

- ❖ Do your research or investigate:
 - ❖ Topic
 - ❖ College or scholarship provider
 - ❖ Mission
 - ❖ Facts
 - ❖ Statistics
 - ❖ Areas of focus and concerns
 - ❖ Alignment with your interests
- ❖ Make a connection between you and them



4. Brainstorm and Draft an Outline

- ❖ Work to determine your writing design and approach
- ❖ Brainstorm ideas:
 - ❖ No judgement or second guessing
 - ❖ Spend 30 seconds throwing out ideas
 - ❖ Circle your top 2-3 ideas and build on them



Essay Outline

	Key Points
I. Introduction Paragraph	
a.	
b.	
c.	
II. Body Paragraph (Main Point #1)	
a.	
b.	
c.	
III. Body Paragraph #2 (Main Point #2)	
a.	
b.	
c.	
IV. Body Paragraph #3 (Main Point #3)	
a.	
b.	
c.	
V. Conclusion Paragraph	
a.	
b.	
c.	

5. Draft Your Essay



Organize

Organize thoughts into manageable sections



Address

Address the specific essay topic or question.



Demonstrate

Demonstrate knowledge or share evidence.



Share

Share how you will make a difference.



Avoid

Avoid plagiarism. Use quotes or paraphrase.



Stay

Stay within your word count/characters.

Essay Writing Guidance

Introduction Paragraph

Attention getter – grab reader's attention (first sentence).

Thesis sentence addressing prompt with three main points (last sentence).


Body Paragraph (Main Point #1)

Body Paragraph #2 (Main Point #2)

Body Paragraph #3 (Main Point #3)

Conclusion Paragraph

*Summarize and surprise the reader with connecting details
Highlight thesis sentence with three main points*



Share about you
Provide
evidence

5. Draft Your Essay



Attention Getter ---> Hook Your Reader :

- ❖ Share a confession.
- ❖ Share a fun fact.
- ❖ Share something shocking or surprising and draw audience in.
- ❖ Raise a question that leaves the audience interest.
- ❖ Give a sense of where the essay is heading but don't share it all.
- ❖ Leave the reader wanting to keep reading.

Example 1: I've been pooped on many times but that didn't deter me from wanting to be a vegetarian.

Example 2: Here's a secret no one in my family knows. I shot my sister in the thumb with a be-be gun. After trying to stop the swelling and bleeding before my parents could find out, I realized I wanted to be a doctor.

Exercise:

Can you come up with ONE hook (a sentence)? (1 minute)



Don't lie or
exaggerate!!

5. Draft Your Essay

Show Vulnerability

- Reveal something you might be **judged** on
- **Mistake** you'd like to take back
- **Conflict** within yourself
- **Love** or **passion**
- The **world** you come from
- Something that **impacted** your life
- Lessons learned
- Testimony

Illuminate /Visual Story-teller

- Give insight with a “**so what**” moment
- Highlight personal **quality or talent**
- Bring your **story to life**
- Be **creative**
- **Critical thinking** skills
- Attention to **detail**

Use all five senses

- Visual
- Feel
- Smell
- Listen
- Sounds
- Taste
- Drink

Hate Writing? Use Text Dictation



Translate into
Text

**Your words
will appear on
the document.**

- ❖ Google Docs in Chrome browser is a great tool.

Tools ----> Voice Typing

- ❖ Test it out before using it on an important paper.
- ❖ Be prepared to edit your paragraphs and wording.

6. Proofread and Finalize Your Essay



- ❖ Never submit an essay you have not proofread
- ❖ Read your paper out loud
- ❖ Proof-read your paper:
 - ❖ Clarity
 - ❖ Complete sentences
 - ❖ Sentence structure
 - ❖ Alignment (introduction, body, conclusion)
- ❖ Find trusted individual(s) to proofread and critique your writing (i.e. teacher).

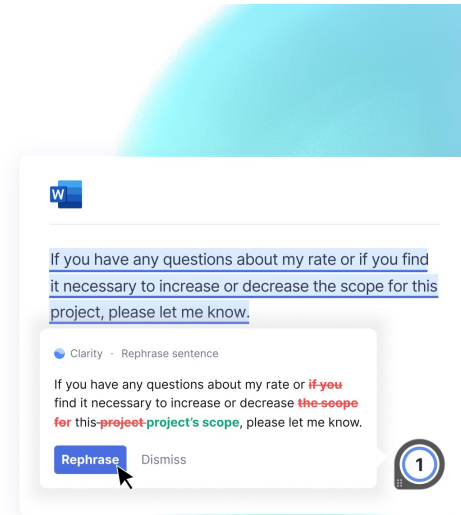
Essay Writing Editors (free)



Great Writing, Simplified

Compose bold, clear, mistake-free writing with Grammarly's new AI-powered desktop app.

Get Grammarly It's free



- ❖ EasyBib: <https://www.easybib.com/grammar-and-plagiarism/>
- ❖ Grammar Lookup: <https://www.grammarlookup.com/free-essay-checker/>
- ❖ Grammarly: <https://www.grammarly.com/?affiliateNetwork=sas&affiliateID=87067>

Essay Writing Conclusion

- ❖ Save all essay prompts.
- ❖ Re-use your writings.
- ❖ Keep notes on your phone.
- ❖ Add ideas as you think of them.
- ❖ Allow others to get to know you differer
- ❖ Don't run from essays!



Letter of
Recommendation



Letters of Recommendation

- ❖ Make a list of recommenders:
 - ❖ Teachers
 - ❖ School Counselors
 - ❖ Coaches
 - ❖ Community Leaders
- ❖ Provide a Scholar Profile with your recommendation request.
- ❖ Request multiple copies and ask for generic letters that can be reused.
- ❖ Provide recommenders with submission instructions.
- ❖ Set recommenders deadlines 1-2 weeks before your deadline.
- ❖ Follow-up to make sure letters are received by the deadline.



Letters of Recommendation

Exercise

1. Name 1-2 teachers who could write you a LOR.



2. Describe two adjectives that describe you in that class.

Up Your Ask!
Help People to Help You.

Offer to Pre-Draft Your Letter of Recommendation

_____ [Month Day, Year]

To _____ [Scholarship Entity Selection Committee]:

I, _____ [First Name and Last Name], with _____ [Organization], I am writing this letter to express my support for _____ [Scholar First and Last Name] and _____ [his or her] application for the _____ [Name of Scholarship]. _____ [He or She] plans to attend _____ [College or University] to major in _____ [College major]. _____ [He or She] demonstrated exceptional _____ [academic achievement]. _____ [Scholar Name] currently has a _____ [grade point average] at _____ [XX High School]. _____ [He or she] pursues academic excellence and welcomes challenges.

I have known _____ [Scholar First Name], for _____ [no. of years] (or since 20XX). _____ [He or She] _____ [studied, worked or volunteered] with _____ [Organization Name] from _____ to _____ [Month 20XX to Month 20XX]. _____ [Scholar First Name] is extremely hard working and displays sound judgement required for a leader. _____ [He or she] an individual who strong character and carries _____ [himself or herself] in a polite, respectable, and professional manner.

_____ [He or she] impressed me with _____ [his or her] ability to _____, _____, and _____ [solve problems, communicate effectively, and think critically]. _____'s [Scholar First Name] creativity and innovative mindset exceeded my expectations. _____ [He or she] was extremely _____ [proactive], _____ [professional] and _____ [results-driven].

Without reservation, I strongly recommend _____ [Scholar First Name] as a candidate for your scholarship. Please afford _____ [him or her] the opportunity to continue to excel academically in college. If you have questions, please do not hesitate to contact me at: _____ [Phone Number] or _____ [email address].

Best Regards,

[Your Signature]
Name
Title

Template: <https://www.investnothers.com/college-planning-book-templates>

Letters of Recommendation

Exercise



Need a Volunteer

Practice How to Ask for a
Letter of Recommendation.

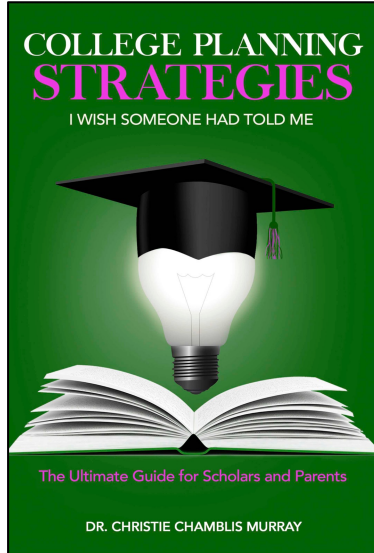
Conclusion

- ❖ Use your time wisely.
- ❖ Get organized:
 - ❖ Create folders for college planning & funding documents.
 - ❖ Save account/login information in a central place.
 - ❖ Create a separate email address for college efforts.
- ❖ Don't run from essays.
- ❖ Up your ask.
- ❖ Don't waste people's time!!!!
- ❖ Say thank you, OFTEN.

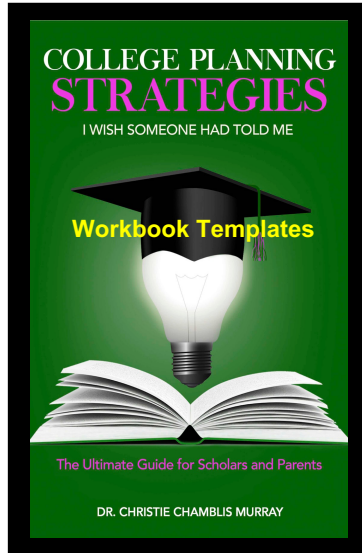
Templates Available

“College Planning Strategies I Wish Someone Had Told Me”

Workbook Templates



Book



Workbook

Template 1. Where Are You Now Assessment

Template 2. College Plan

Template 3. Scholar Profile

Template 4. College Selection Factors Level of Importance Spreadsheet

Template 5. College Requirements Spreadsheet

Template 6. Scholarship Tracking Spreadsheet

Template 7. Scholar-Athlete Profile

Template 8. NCAA Division I/II Course Calculation Worksheets

Template 9. College Admissions Letter of Recommendation

Template 10. College Planning Checklists (By Grade Level)

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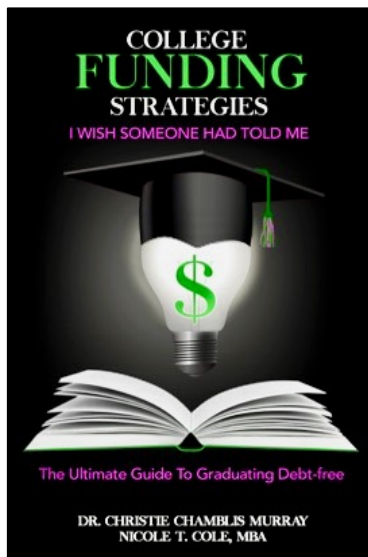


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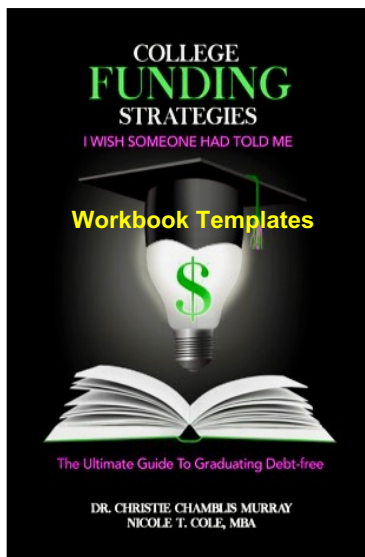
Templates Available

“College Funding Strategies I Wish Someone Had Told Me”

Workbook Templates



Book



Workbook

Template 1. Funding Situation Assessment

Template 2. Calculate Your EFC

Template 3. Customize Your Funding Approach

Template 4. Scholar Financial Aid Checklist

Template 5. Sample Award Letter

Template 6. Scholar Profile

Template 7. Sample Letter of Recommendation

Template 8. Scholarship Essay Prompt

Template 9. Funding/Scholarship Tracking Spreadsheet

Template 10. Timeline Checklists by Funding Stages

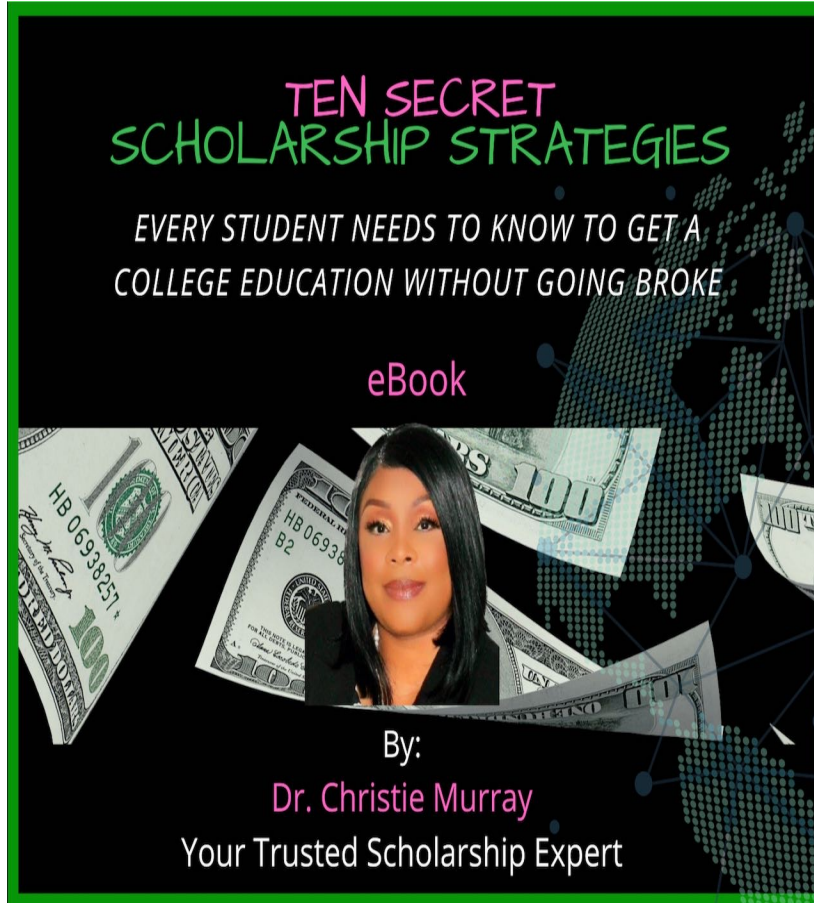
Template 11. College Funding Plan

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<https://www.investnothers.com/college-funding-book-templates>

Scholarship eBook for Download (Free)



https://collegeplanningandfunding.clickfunnels.com/squeeze-page1654538363075?mc_cid=fa0085f7bc&mc_eid=2d1b068269

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For more resources:

www.InvestNothers.com

Closing Remarks

Complete the Survey Monkey Evaluation

We appreciate your feedback!

- ❖ Evaluation Link: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/CDB7JSX>
- ❖ Click the survey link in the chat function or scan the QR code.
- ❖ Tell us about your needs or future topics
- ❖ Email will also be sent to participants with the:
 - ❖ Evaluation Survey Monkey link
 - ❖ Student slides
 - ❖ Upcoming events



Upcoming Events

Virtual Youth College Excellence Summit - Aug 13 - 14th

On-the-spot Scholarships Awarded!



Educate, Equip, & Empower



2022
(FREE) VIRTUAL
YOUTH COLLEGE
EXCELLENCE SUMMIT (2-
DAYS)

AUGUST 13, 2022 (10 AM - 2 :30 PM ET)

AUGUST 14, 2022 (3 PM - 6 PM ET)

Finish your summer by getting the top college admissions and funding strategies to get accepted into college and graduate debt-free. Students attending both days will have opportunities to win on-the-spot scholarships and other give-a-ways.

HOSTED BY:



Dr. Christie Murray, CEO
National Speaker, Author
College Admissions & Funding Expert

REGISTER AT:



<https://www.edexinc.com/event-details/2022-yces>

Register at: <https://www.edexinc.com/event-details/2022-yces>

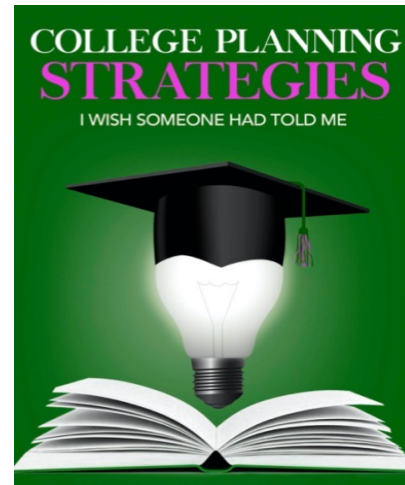
Student Give-a-ways (6)

Sponsored by:
Phi Nu Omega Chapter

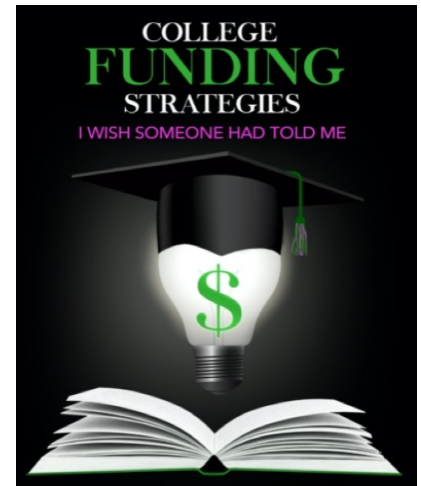
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AKA Collaboration Webinar Recordings



- ❖ 2021 Virtual HBCU College Fair: https://youtu.be/tEy_y8QUMcw
- ❖ 2022 College Admissions and Funding Webinar: <https://youtu.be/-2IgF3ulMFA>
- ❖ 2022 SAT Prep Webinar: <https://youtu.be/fLj4jPwhTT4>
- ❖ 2022 ACT Prep Webinar: <https://youtu.be/18Y8JefrRxs>
- ❖ 2022 HBCU and PWI College Admissions Panel: <https://youtu.be/XbIvbyF-9TQ>

Questions



(Unmute Your Line or Submit a Chat Question)

Thank You!

