Accessing College as an Undocumented Student

In Oregon

ECMC is committed to the success of all students, regardless of their immigration status. In this changing economy, skills and qualifications that are obtained through education beyond high school are becoming more important to earning a family-wage job. We've gathered some resources to help guide you through the process of accessing and succeeding in college as an undocumented student in Oregon.

According to the Migration Policy Institute, approximately 6,000 undocumented students (ages 3-17) reside in Oregon.

In-State Tuition Equity

Oregon students who meet the following criteria pay in-state tuition at Oregon public universities:

• Studied in the United States for at least five years

• Attended an Oregon high school for at least three years

• Graduated from an Oregon high school (or received an equivalent certification)

• Showed intention to become a U.S. citizen or lawful permanent resident

To receive in-state tuition, you should complete the undergraduate student admissions process and answer the citizenship question in the application as a "non-U.S. citizen." Each college has their own affidavit or Tuition Equity Statement for you to complete. Feel free to discuss your situation openly with the admissions office staff at each university; it is their job to help you navigate the admission and tuition equity process.

Oregon Promise

Oregon Promise is a state grant that helps cover tuition at any Oregon community college for recent high school graduates and GED® test graduates. To receive the Oregon Promise Grant, students must meet the following criteria:

• Be a recent Oregon high school or GED test graduate

• Have been an Oregon resident for at least 12 months prior to community college enrollment

• Enroll in community college within six months of completing high school or GED

• Have a cumulative high school GPA of 2.0 or higher or a 145 grade on all GED tests

• Have no more than 90 college credits completed or attempted

Applications for the Oregon Promise can be found at https://app. oregonstudentaid.gov. Even if your plans don't currently include community

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college attendance, you should still complete the application. This will give you a solid back-up college in case your plans change over the year.

Students may be subject to a Student Aid Index (SAI) limit. The SAI limit changes annually based upon availability of funding for the program. In 2024-25, the SAI limit is $25,000 for new Oregon Promise applicants.

Oregon Opportunity Grant

Undocumented students who qualify based on financial need are able to receive Oregon Opportunity Grant (OOG) funds for their attendance at an Oregon community college, Oregon public university or participating nonprofit Oregon independent college. Students apply through the Office of Student Access and Completion (OSAC), using the Oregon State Aid Application (ORSAA) in place of the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA).

ORSAA and additional details may be found at https://app.oregonstudentaid.gov.

OSAC Scholarships

Oregon is unique in that more than 600 scholarships for Oregon students share a common application and common due date of April 1 each year.

Although not every scholarship is open to undocumented students, you may search through the OSAC catalog for those scholarships that do not require the FAFSA. To access scholarship information and search for those that do not require the FAFSA, go to https://oregonstudentaid.gov/scholarships.

Most importantly, many of these scholarships can be used for expenses other than tuition, such as fees, books, supplies, housing, food, transportation, study abroad and personal expenses.

Other Scholarships

There are many scholarship providers who are interested in helping students, regardless of their immigration status. The following resources have scholarships, both nationally and Oregon-based, that undocumented students may be eligible for:

- www.thedream.us/scholarships
- www.maldef.org/resources/scholarship-resources
- https://scholarshipsaz.org/scholarships
- https://immigrantsrising.org/resource/list-of-scholarships-and-fellowships
- www.edvisors.com/plan-for-college/scholarships/college-scholarships/undocumented-student-scholarships
- https://getschooled.com/article/1320-scholarships-for-undocumented-daca-mented-students-get-that-money

You may also do our own online scholarship search using terms such as "non-need based," "merit based" or "no FAFSA required."

Help Yourself

If your high school offers Dual Credit (attending a course at your high school and earning both high school and college credit for the course), take advantage of the program. These are some of the cheapest college credits you will ever earn, and some colleges, such as Portland Community College, offer Dual Credit free of charge.

Make yourself a competitive candidate for college admissions and scholarship applications by keeping your grades up, taking challenging classes and participating in extracurricular activities. Some highly selective private colleges and universities offer very generous financial aid packages to outstanding high school students, regardless of immigration status. The more comprehensive your application is, the more options you will have for your education beyond high school.

Some of Oregon's independent colleges offer an Individual Development Account (IDA) where they will match your college savings with SIX dollars for every ONE dollar you save. (Note: These funds can only be used at the sponsoring colleges.) Go to https://e3savings.org for more information.

Even if you don't plan on attending a private college and, therefore, don't qualify for the 6:1 match, saving as much money as possible for your college education is a good idea. Go to https://oregonidainitiative.org/overview/our-ida-partners for a list of other IDA programs in Oregon that may match your college savings.

Need More Information?

The College Place is here to help you with free college-planning resources and personal advice. Visit our website at www.ecmc.org/TCP.