

## **How to get a Music Scholarship for College**

### **What's out there?**

Many four year colleges offer a range of scholarships based on what you are capable of and are willing to contribute to the program.

- Some schools will offer small scholarships of a few hundred dollars just for joining the school marching band. This can be a great way to help yourself financially even if you do not plan to get a degree in music. Joining the marching band is also a great way to meet people and get a large group of friends right away in college.
- Most schools will offer larger scholarships to people that decide to major or minor in music. Possible degrees include:
  - Music Performance (Get a job playing your instrument)
  - Music Education (Get a license to teach music)
  - Composition (Get a job writing music)
  - Music Therapy (Learn to use music as a tool for healing)
  - Jazz Studies (This is a performance degree that focuses on the art of Jazz)
  - Music Business (Get involved with the recording industry by learning about producing and concert promotion, among other things)
- Be prepared to keep your grades up if you are awarded a scholarship. They can also be taken away.

### **How do I get a scholarship for music?**

Most of the scholarships available for musicians, and all of the large ones, are awarded on the basis of ability. You need good *grades* to get into the school, but you need advanced *skills* to get a scholarship for music. Depending on what you play, competition can be fierce. This is what you should expect as a minimum level of preparation:

- Take private lessons with a specialist on your instrument. Your chances of getting a scholarship for college increase with the number of years that you take lessons for. You are not likely to be awarded any money without having taken private lessons.
- Learn to play all of the major scales for the full range of your instrument.
- Prepare the audition music for All-State ensembles, and actually do the audition each year.
- Find recordings of professionals that play your instrument, and try to emulate that sound.

### **When can I try to get a scholarship?**

Scholarships are awarded based on auditions. Most schools have audition deadlines at the end of February or early March. You should be completely prepared to audition for this money by the middle of your senior year. Contact the music department of the schools you are looking at to set up an audition time.

### **What else can help?**

Participating in honor ensembles like All State Band can greatly increase your reputation, and so can being an officer of an active Tri-M chapter. Remember, colleges are looking for students that will fill their ensembles and reflect favorably back on the school. It is in their best interest to recruit the best players and leaders that they can find.

Get started. They want to see that you have been aiming for this since before your senior year.