CATCHING THE DREAM
www.catchingthedream.org
"Education is the seed that provides spiritual and individual growth."

A NONPROFIT ORGANIZATION

January 5, 2018

Dear Colleague,

We want to offer your college-bound Native students the chance of a lifetime. They can attend any college in the U. S., take any course of study they desire, and attend college **without any loans**. The way they can do this is with scholarships.

There are now over **three million** scholarships in the U. S. Our all-time leader, Isaiah Rodriguez, found 102 scholarships eight years ago. And even though he was a five-year dropout, with our help he won 70 of them. I challenge you to get all your seniors to beat Isaiah's record. (His story is at Indiancountrytodaymedianetwork, Isaiah Rodriguez.) We got three students into Stanford last year, all three with no loans.

Students need to start their scholarship work early in their senior year. They will need to start applying in October, when a few scholarships have a deadline. And they will finish seven months later, in April. The big four months are January to April.

We will help them with their scholarship search and their essays. They will need to have an A+ level essay to win. They will not win with a C- essay. Isaiah's first draft was a C- but by the fifth draft he had an A level essay. The essay is the most important part of the process. I estimate that it is 60-70% of the points. Most students think their grades or their ACT scores are the most important part. But it is **what they are going to do in this world before they die** that is the most important part. If they have not thought about this yet, now is a great time to start.

They can get started by going to our website, www.catchingthedream.org, and reading the article "How to Find and Win Scholarships." That will lead them into their scholarship search. I will be glad to review their list and help them with it. Do not let them make the mistake of looking only for Indian scholarships. There are only 150 or so of them, and if you divide 150 by 3,000,000, you get zero. They want to look for **scholarships, period.** They also need to read the essay outline in the application on our website.

We wanted 80 applicants this year, but only got 47. We are funding them all. So if your students do their application to us properly, there is well over a 95% chance that they will win ours. We only fund Native American college students, but we will help any student of any ethnicity, no charge. We will also pay for Native students to take the ACT or SAT if they cannot afford it. They should start taking it as sophomores, by the way.

We have produced 918 graduates in the last 30 years, but need many more. Doctors, lawyers, teachers, engineers, business people, accountants, nurses, and scientists are sorely needed in Indian Country. **All** our graduates are working. I would love to hear from you personally; my e-mail is CTD4DeanChavers@aol.com. And if you will give me the names and e-mails of your seniors, I will contact them personally.

Yours truly,

Dean Chavers

Dean Chavers, Ph. D.

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ESSAY OUTLINE

INTRODUCTION: Please introduce yourself using your full name and your tribe. Please put your name and page number on each page.

ACADEMICS: State your grade point average, class rank, and ACT/SAT test scores from high school. State any test scores from standardized tests such as CTBS, ITBS, LSAT, MCAT, GRE, WRAT, CAT, or Stanford. State why/how you made the grades and test scores that you did. State what grades you made in your field of interest and why. State how much time you spend studying each day or week. Describe any awards won in high school or college and their significance. List any clubs and honors and their significance. List any scholarships and how you won them. Describe any leadership positions you have held in high school or college, how you were elected and what your responsibilities were. Describe what courses you have taken to prepare you for college and your career and what you have learned so far that has inspired you. Tell us who or what inspired you to pursue your chosen field of study, and how that inspiration came to you.

CAREER PLANS: Explain what you plan to do after you finish college. Tell what your ultimate career goals are. Describe your personal interests and tell how they are related to your planned career. Describe your strengths and explain how they are used in your study for your planned career. Describe the requirements for the completion of your degree.

SERVICE TO INDIANS: Describe your plans on working with the Indian community. Tell how your work will directly benefit Indians. Tell us about your Indian heritage and what this means to you. Describe your ties to your Indian community and your experience in this community. Explain how your college education will directly contribute to your work with Indians.

LEADERSHIP AND SCHOLARSHIPS: Describe any elected or appointed positions in school or college and how they relate to your planned career. Describe any summer work relevant to your planned career and/or your service to Indians. Describe your membership in clubs and how it relates to your future. Describe all other sources of funds that you applied to and the results. Tell us what scholarships you have won and the amounts of funding you will receive from these scholarships. Explain what you will do if you do not receive a scholarship from Catching the Dream.

IMPORTANT!! YOUR ESSAY MUST BE TYPED AND DOUBLE-SPACED 5 PAGES! MANDATORY: YOU MUST ALSO EMAIL YOUR ESSAY TO DR. DEAN CHAVERS AT CTD4deanchavers@aol.com

March 3, 2017

HOW TO FIND AND WIN SCHOLARSHIPS

By Dean Chavers, Ph. D.

BACKGROUND

Catching the Dream, formerly known as the Native American Scholarship Fund, makes grants to Native college students and works to improve Indian schools. Since 1986, CTD has made scholarship awards to 920 students and has produced 891 graduates. Our retention rate is 85.2%, a very high rate compared to the 82% dropout rate that prevails nationwide with Native students. Contrary to what students often think, CTD rewards students for finding and winning scholarships. Many students think the fewer scholarships they find and win, the more we will like it. The opposite is true. The more scholarships you find and win, the more we like it, and the more money we will give you. Our ultimate goal is to have you being able to go to college with **no loans** and have your expenses **totally covered.**

Many students think they cannot afford to go to Stanford or Harvard. The total cost for a year at the Ivy League colleges is now $75,000. But really solid, hardworking, dedicated, serious students can win enough money in scholarships to be able to attend Stanford or Harvard. The secret is scholarships.

We will help students with their scholarship search, with their scholarship planning, and with their essay. Please call us with **any questions whatsoever.** Nothing is too unimportant to ask us about. The only silly or stupid question is the one you do not ask. Please use us freely as a resource.

We require students to apply to **all other sources of funds** before they apply to CTD. This includes financial aid, college work study, Perkins and Stafford loans, tribal scholarships, and other scholarships. We want students to be able to go to Stanford Medical School, not have to take out any loans, and still be able to give their momma money.

We have students doing this now. You can do it too, if you are willing to do just a little work. One of our students is at Northern Arizona University. He did a thorough scholarship search and won 18 scholarships that pay him $26,000 a year. His total college cost is $12,000, so he has $14,000 left over. That is totally legitimate, and something we encourage.

We will process your application if you apply to ten (10) others scholarships, but we encourage you to apply for all scholarships that you are eligible for. If you do not do a thorough scholarship search and make applications to the others before you apply to CTD, we will hold your application for up to three years. At the end of three years, if you have still not completed the process, we will destroy your records. At any time during the three years that you complete the process, notify us, give us documentation of the places you have applied, and we will then process your application. Use our scholarship search record.

The **maximum number** of scholarships a student in the U. S. has won, apparently, was 200. Marianne Ragins, a Black girl in Macon, Georgia, in 1991 found 200 scholarships, applied to all 200, and won all 200. The total amount of money she won was $315,000, which was much more than she needed to attend any U. S. college. Her average amount per scholarship was $1,575, which is about what you will find. It was such a feat that Parade magazine did a two-page spread on her.

It helped that she had a 4.0 GPA on a 4.0 scale, and that she worked at a fast food restaurant 25 hours a week. Her father was deceased, and her mother was supporting the two of them on the meager salary of a seamstress. And it helped that she wanted to go to medical school.

Students should Google Marianne to learn what is on her website, and to learn the names of over a dozen books she has had published since she finished college. If your library does not have any of these books, **request the librarian to order at least one of them.** Marianne now spends all her time working with students on finding and winning scholarships.

Fastweb, the most comprehensive scholarship site, has over 1,300,000 scholarships in its database. We urge students to find all the scholarships they are eligible for, and apply to them. Scholarships are not all equal. The most popular fields for scholarships are engineering, and the least popular fields are performing arts.

The following minimum numbers apply to the various fields. Students can easily exceed these numbers:

Engineering	60
Medicine	45
Business	40
Social science	35
Education	35
Performing arts	30

FINDING SCHOLARSHIPS

There are four ways to find scholarships: (1) on the Internet, (2) using scholarship directories, (3) from your university, and (4) in your community. Motivated students will use all four methods.

THE INTERNET: The best and most comprehensive website is www.fastweb.com, another excellent comprehensive site is www.scholarships.com. and www.thesalliemaefund.org In addition to these three, there are hundreds of other sites. Some list one scholarship, and others list many. A student can always Google something like "Scholarships for Native Americans," or "Scholarships for Engineering," and go through the many sites that will appear.

But this method is counterproductive, highly inefficient, and frustrating. It is much better to use a comprehensive site. And contrary to conventional thinking, Native students should not look only for Native scholarships. The reason is simple; there are fewer than 200 Native scholarships in the Fastweb database, and only seven of them have real money. Native scholarships represent less than one-tenth of one percent of all scholarships.

The six large ones, in order of money given away each year, are

1. American Indian College Fund ($1 million)
2. American Indian Science and Engineering Society ($500,000)
3. Catching the Dream ($400,000)
4. American Indian Education Foundation ($300,000)
5. National Society of the Daughters of the American Revolution ($100,000)
6. Association on American Indian Affairs ($40,000).

After these six, the amounts are very small. You should apply to all scholarships, including the small Indian scholarships that pay $250 a year. In four years, that $250 is $1,000, not a bad payoff for half an hour of work.

The key to success in using the Internet is to have an adequate list of keywords. In addition to using **Native American, American Indian, Indian, female/male, woman, and minority,** students should use these eight master words to help them come up with a list of keywords. The eight master words are:

1. **Honors**
2. **Awards**
3. **Clubs**
4. **Elected positions**
5. **Appointed positions**
6. **Work experience**
7. **Hobbies**
8. **Your major**

Students should send us their list of keywords before they run Fastweb so we can tell them whether or not we think it is adequate. It will also help greatly if the student sends us a resume, send to CTD4deanchavers@aol.com

These honors, awards, etc., apply at school, in your community, and at church. Elected positions are such things as class secretary, class senator, and student body president. Appointed positions are such things as editor of the yearbook, baseball team manager, etc. If you are not in any clubs now, **join something.** What you do now will follow you for the next 50 years. I am 76 years old, and I am still sending out resumes.