

SCHOLARSHIPS & FINANCIAL AID

Trap

Barbara graduated from high school last year and lives with her mother. She works for a company that provides temporary office help. Barbara likes the work, but it doesn't provide a strong career path. She wants to become a nurse but doesn't have the money for school. A friend told her about an Internet advertisement. The company guarantees financial aid to all applicants who pay a registration fee and attend a four-hour seminar at a local hotel. It sounds a little too easy. What could go wrong?

Tips

Before using a financial aid service, check them out thoroughly. Contact your high school guidance counselor or local college financial aid office for information, and watch out for these red flags:

- **“Apply now before it’s too late.”** Resist high pressure tactics. You may end up paying for information you can get free.
- **“Millions of dollars of aid go unclaimed...”** The “millions” represent an estimated national total of employee/member benefits that are only available to employees and/or their families of companies or unions that have made funds available.
- **“We guarantee you’ll get aid.”** The company may charge \$1,000 and provide a \$200 scholarship and then claim this fulfills the promise.
- **“You can’t get this information anywhere else.”** Actually, scholarship information is available from libraries, schools, government offices and FREE Internet scholarship sites if you’re willing to search for it.

If you need more information, visit the U.S. Department of Education’s Web site, <http://studentaid.ed.gov>

OR

Call Palm Beach County Consumer Affairs at
561-712-6600 (Boca/Delray 888-852-7362 toll free)